

# Wine And Food New Zealand Itinerary

## **Day 1: Arrive Auckland**

Upon arrival in Auckland you will be transferred to your accommodation. Optional sightseeing to include The Sky Tower, Kelly Tarltons Underwater World, sail aboard an America's Cup Yacht, take a short ferry ride to Devonport. Accommodation for one night including breakfast at The Sebel Suites.

## **Day 2: Auckland to Napier**

This morning you will be transferred to Auckland Airport, fly to Napier – pick up your medium size rental car at the airport. In Hawkes Bay the sparkling Pacific Ocean forms a stunning backdrop to internationally renowned vineyards that produce award-winning wines. Hawkes Bay wineries are among the oldest in New Zealand and have a proud tradition. We recommend lunch in one of the boutique vineyards; take a walking tour of Art Décor Napier. Accommodation for two nights including dinner and breakfast at McHardy House.

## **Day 3: Napier**

Discover the flavour of Hawke's Bay – a tradition of taste. Today, Hawke's Bay is known as New Zealand's most diverse wine-producing region. But the area has much more to offer than superb wines. With the abundance of fine foods the area is a gourmet's paradise. Take a full day bicycle winery tour; wineries to visit are Ngatarawa, Trinity Hill, Te Awa Farm, Matariki, Sileni Estates and Alpha Domus. A picnic lunch is included as well as a cell phone, should you run out of puff and want a ride home.

## **Day 4: Napier to Martinborough**

Drive to Martinborough through Tararua's rolling pastures. Stop en route at the Mt Bruce Wildlife Reserve to see some of New Zealand endangered wildlife before a late afternoon wine tasting of some of the region's outstanding Pinot Noir. Accommodation for one night including breakfast at The Martinborough Hotel.

## **Day 5: Martinborough to Blenheim via Wellington**

Enjoy a walking tour of the local vineyards including Palliser Estate and Martinborough Vineyard. Visit the Martinborough Wine Centre with its extensive cellar. Drive to Wellington; drop off your rental car at the Ferry Terminal, cross Cook Strait by fast ferry to Picton. Pick up your rental car on arrival and drive to Blenheim. Two nights accommodation including dinner and breakfast at The Bell Tower.

## **Day 6: Blenheim**

Marlborough is the biggest grape-growing region in New Zealand, where vineyards seem to stretch in every direction, yet it was not so long ago that industry experts were claiming no wine could successfully be grown in the South Island. They said 'too cold and too far south'. A wonderful day awaits you; first visit Seresin Estate, Marlborough's only organic vineyard and olive grove. Move on to the unique Nutt Ranch where you will hear all about the magnificent little hazelnut empire, you are able to indulge in some of the tasty products. After a picnic lunch visit Ormond Aquaculture where quinnat or king salmon together with koura, native freshwater crayfish are organically farmed. Continue

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on to Grove Mill Winery for a wine tasting and mini gourmet food matching session. This evening enjoy the freshest and tastiest produce from the Marlborough region – a local winemaker will join you for dinner

### **Day 7: Blenheim to Waipara via Kaikoura**

Drive south to Kaikoura, one of the leading eco-tourism destinations in the country. We have included a helicopter flight to view the magnificent sperm whale. Within minutes of being airborne you will fly over the Kaikoura Canyon, a deep-sea trench where the sperm whales hunt the depths, in search of giant squid. Once a whale is located, you will get a unique birds-eye view as he rests on the surface preparing for his next dive. Flying at 500 feet you will not only see what is above the water, but what is below as well. Most flights you are able to see Dusky Dolphins, Fur Seals, Sharks, you may also see Orca, Pilot, Humpback or Southern Right Whales. Accommodation for two nights including dinner and breakfast at Claremont Country Estate.

### **Day 8: Waipara Valley**

Sheltered from the sea breezes to the East by a range of hills, and the Main Divide to the West, the Waipara Valley surprisingly often records New Zealand's highest temperatures. Award winning wines are regularly produced here, and the original boutique plantings are being joined by large-scale national and international ventures. Today enjoy a tour with your personal guide. A wine tasting at Pegasus Bay a lovely monastery-style winery complex, they make acclaimed Riesling, Sauvignon/Semillon, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Cabernet/Merlot. Where grapes do well, so do olives: at Athena Olives, Helen Clausen produced Canterbury's first olive oil. She will take you on a tour of the olive grove and mill house, and give you a tasting of her beautiful oil and other olive products. Visit nearby Mountford Estate, painter Michael Eaton and his interior designer wife Buffy have created a stunning home overlooking their vineyard and the Waipara Valley, where you will get a chance to try their outstanding Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Further up the valley, at Omihi, Canterbury wine pioneer Daniel Schuster has planted his dream vineyard on the limestone hills, where he specialises in pinot noir. With barrel samples from the various vineyard blocks, he will introduce you to the art of blending fine wine. Born and trained in Europe, Danny also acts as consultant to some top wine estates in Italy and the United States and is a fund of fascinating stories. It is a delightful place to end the tour.

### **Day 10: Depart Waipara Valley**

This morning enjoy a 4WD tour of the property, drive through the deer farm and pristine New Zealand native bush, swish along the river bed fording the river several times to view the stunning 50 million year old 1 metre limestone spheres - 'God's Marbles'. Pause on the top edge of the breath-taking limestone escarpment overlooking the Waipara River with views of the remarkable 2 kilometre long 'natural limestone glacier'. This afternoon drive south to Christchurch; drop off your rental car at Christchurch Airport prior to your departing flight.

### **Arrangements Conclude**