

New Zealand

Our first port of call in New Zealand is "the city of sails" Auckland. It is a clean, modern city with high rise buildings of mirrored glass, open squares with modern sculptures and parkland. A central 1,076 foot sky tower gives a 360 degree view from the top, and digital displays inform viewers of the time remaining for the next cable controlled base jumpers, who hurtle past the large windows.



For the cost of around £10 a series of "hop-on-hop-off" tourist buses visit all areas of the city, including the zoo, beaches, antarctic experience, motor museum and Mount

Eden extinct volcano. The traffic is busy but never impatient - no tooting horns, and the pedestrian lights count down the remaining seconds left to cross the roads.

The second port, Mount Manganui is an up market suburb in the kiwi growing region of the Bay of Plenty. An 8 hour excursion involves a buffet lunch in a swish hotel, a performance by a Maori dancing troupe and a visit to the town of Rotorua, famous for its geothermal springs, bubbling mud pools, and geysers. The smell of hydrogen sulphide is everywhere, and hot gasses bubble up into brooks and out of multicoloured fissures in the hot rocks. It feels as if the very earth is a living, fire breathing, creature. Also a visit to the "Agridome", where we are treated to a display of various breeds of sheep, one of which is sheared on the spot, together with sheep dog display, and cow milking.



Geyser at Rotorua New Zealand



You know this geezer at the geyser!

Our last port of call in NZ is to the beautiful Bay of Islands. Idyllically set in sunshine, greenery, and with very friendly local inhabitants. Here we take to the waters in an amphibious craft, which is equally at home on land as in water!



Amphibious craft Bay of Islands



View from inside craft

So, we are treated to three different views of New Zealand, and more than sufficient to be sure that this country is one which we would love to return to at some later date!

We write this on our first night in the country of Australia - and here again we are visiting three different regions!