

the best day-walks of the **ROTORUA LAKES**

This 1-week walking itinerary focuses on the diverse landscapes of Rotorua, from towering redwood forests and geothermal wonders to the pristine shores of its many lakes. It affords the opportunity to visit a spa town without the snow.

DATES		11-17 October 2026	
DATE REGISTRATIONS CLOSE		11 August 2026 2026	
STARTING POINT		Rotorua	8.00 a.m.
FINISHING POINT		Rotorua	8.00 p.m.
COST		6pax\$1500, 5pax\$1600, 4pax\$1700	
DAY	POSSIBLE WALKS		
<p>All times given are for a return (out and back) walk, a loop walk, or a linear walk with transport to/from each end.</p> <p>Participants should be in Rotorua by Saturday evening, 10 October.</p> <p>The order of the days may change, especially according to weather conditions.</p>			
<p>Day 1 Sunday 11 October</p>	<p>The Redwoods & Geothermal Edge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Whakarewarewa Forest (approx. 5 km). • Pohaturoa (Yellow) Track (7.5 km, 2–2.5 hours). This moderate walk offers panoramic views of the Whakarewarewa geothermal valley and the city. • Lunch Break at the Redwoods Visitor Centre picnic area. • Redwood Memorial Grove Walk (2 km, 1 hour). An easy stroll through the iconic 100-year-old giants. • Drive to Sulphur Point (approx. 4 km). • Sulphur Point Loop Walk (4.7 km, 1.5 hours). An easy walk through steaming vents and bubbling mud pools on the edge of Lake Rotorua. • Explore the Government Gardens and Lakefront area before returning to base. 		
<p>Day 2 Monday 12 October</p>	<p>The Blue & Green Lakes (Tikitapu & Rotokakahi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Lake Tikitapu (approx. 10 km). • Blue Lake Track (5.5 km, 1.5 hours). A popular easy loop around the clear blue waters with native bush and beach sections. • Drive to the Blue and Green Lake Lookout. • Tikitapu Nature Walk and shoreline exploration (approx. 1.5 hours). Enjoy the striking colour contrast between the lakes. • Lunch Break at the Lake Tikitapu picnic area. • Green Lake (Rotokakahi) Walk (Sections, approx. 3 hours). A moderate walk along the shore of this sacred lake. • 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.: Leisurely drive back to Rotorua with a stop at Kuirau Park to soak feet in the thermal foot baths. 		
<p>Day 3 Tuesday 13 October</p>	<p>The Long Walk – Tarawera Trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Te Wairoa car park at Lake Tarawera. • Tarawera Trail to Hot Water Beach (15 km, 4.5 hours). This moderate-to-long walk winds through native bush with stunning lake views. • Lunch Break and relaxation at Hot Water Beach (Te Rata Bay), where you can soak in natural hot pools. • Continue exploring the bay or enjoy a swim. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return via Water Taxi (Pre-booking required) back to the trailhead to save the walk back. (own expense) • Drive back to Rotorua, with possible pause at the Buried Village (own expense). <p>Alternative: Commercial trip to the summit of Mount Tarawera with Kaitiaki Adventures (own expense)</p>
<p>Day 4 Wednesday 14 October</p>	<p>Springs & Waterfalls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Hamurana Springs (approx. 15 km). • Hamurana Springs Walk (2.5 km, 1.5 hours). An easy loop under redwoods beside crystal-clear turquoise spring water. Entry fee own expense. • Drive to Okere Falls Scenic Reserve (approx. 12 km). • Okere Falls Track (3 km, 1.5 hours). Easy walk passing three waterfalls; watch rafters drop over the 7m Tutea Falls. • Lunch Break at the Okere Falls picnic area. • Drive to Lake Okareka (approx. 20 km). • Lake Okareka Walkway (5.5 km return, 1.5 hours). An easy boardwalk and gravel track known for excellent birdwatching. • Relax at the Lake Okareka Reserve before returning to town.
<p>Day 5 Thursday 15 October</p>	<p>Volcanic Valleys & Mountains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Waimangu Volcanic Valley (approx. 25 km). • Waimangu Hiking Trails (Approx. 3 hours). Moderate walk through the world's youngest geothermal system, featuring Frying Pan Lake and Inferno Crater. Entry fee own expense. • Lunch Break at the Waimangu Visitor Centre Cafe. • Drive to Rainbow Mountain (Maunga Kākaramaea) (approx. 10 km). • Summit Track (5 km return, 2.5–3 hours). Moderate to steep walk passing turquoise crater lakes to reach a 360-degree viewpoint. • Return to Rotorua, perhaps stopping at the Kerosene Creek hot spring if time permits. <p>Alternative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Area (entry fee own expense) and walk to Echo Lake in Wai-O-Tapu Forest.
<p>Day 6 Friday 16 October</p>	<p>Native Forest & Wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to Mt Ngongotaha (approx. 10 km). • Jubilee Track & Nature Loop (Approx. 2.5 hours). A moderate climb through native forest featuring massive Rata trees. • Drive to the Rotorua Lakefront. • Lunch Break at one of the cafes along the lakefront. • Drive to Hannahs Bay Reserve (approx. 8 km). • Hannahs Bay Loop (2 km, 1 hour). An easy, flat walk along the shores of Lake Rotorua through wetlands. • Visit Te Puia for a 1.5-hour guided geothermal and cultural walk (Pōhutu Geyser) (entry fee own expense)
<p>Day 7 Saturday 17 October</p>	<p>The Rotoiti/Okataina Wilderness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to the eastern end of Lake Rotoiti (approx. 25 km). • Hinehopu/Hongi's Track (1h). This track goes through the bush between lakes Rotoiti and Rotoehu. The name recalls the time in 1823 when Hongi Hika and his Ngāpuhi warriors hauled their waka

(canoes) along the track, enabling them to attack the Te Arawa people on Mokoia Island in Lake Rotorua.

- Drive to **Lake Okataina** (approx. 20 km).
- **Western Okataina (to Summit)** (Approx. 3 hours return). A moderate walk through lush, untouched native forest to a spectacular viewpoint. **Lunch Break** at the trig.
OR The Bullring Track (Te Ruato Bay to Outdoor Centre) (2h).
- **Te Auheke (Cascades) Track** (1.5 hours return). A moderate walk to a beautiful hidden waterfall.
- Exploration of the shorter **Lake Okataina tracks** near the lodge (approx. 1.5 hours): Anaha, Kepa, Tarawai, Ngahopua.
- Final scenic drive back to Rotorua.

Farewell Dinner. Trip concludes.



Hotwater Beach, Lake Tarawera

FOOTSTEPS WALKING AND TRAVEL CLUB OF AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Booking Conditions for excursions within New Zealand

1. Participants agree to all terms and conditions by signing the Registration Form.
2. Phillip Donnell and *Footsteps Walking and Travel Club* are not responsible or liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may arise from weather, defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, or through the acts or default of any person or company engaged in carrying out any of the arrangements of the trip. Everyone participates entirely at their own risk. The separate waiver form must be completed.
3. We reserve the right to cancel the trip if minimum numbers don't eventuate. In such an event, all monies paid will be refunded. The minimum number for any given trip is four participants.
4. *Footsteps* reserves the right to make any modifications to the trip that may be necessary. The walks undertaken each day are determined by group consensus, but as far as possible we endeavour to meet your personal preferences and aspirations.
5. Registrations should be made *as early as possible* in order to obtain optimal outcomes. Once we reach "critical mass" the trip moves from "orange light" status to "green light" status and the earlier that happens the better because people can then book flights and make arrangements with confidence.
6. Registrations are accepted in good faith on a first comer's basis on receipt of the Registration Form. A deposit of \$250 per person is paid at the time of registration. The balance is paid *one month* prior to the trip's commencement date.
7. Our preferred method of payment is internet banking to Kiwibank 38-9002-0435674-03 (*Footsteps*: PJ Donnell/Katrina Tulip). Please write your surname and the name of the trip (=geographical area) in the reference box.
8. The final decision on whether a trip will proceed is made *two months* prior to its projected commencement date, or *earlier if the minimum number is met*. If booking transport/flights to and from the trip, it is recommended that you wait until after the trip is confirmed to proceed, or have travel insurance cover, or are able to change flight bookings to another timeframe. All participants will be informed *immediately* if a trip becomes viable *ahead of time*.
9. Cancellations. If you need to cancel your registration for any reason, you must advise *Footsteps* in writing as soon as possible. An email is acceptable, a phone call alone is not.
It will be appreciated that any trip requires bookings to be made on behalf of each participant, and the closer we get to a trip's commencement, the more difficult it becomes to alter these and thereby recover costs, usually because the availability of alternatives shrinks, or because of the policies imposed by our suppliers. That is why we need a buffer, but we endeavour to keep cancellation fees to a bare minimum. Under "normal" conditions, cancellations up to 60 days prior incur a \$50 cancellation fee. For 59-30 days prior, \$100 is deducted. For 29-15 days prior, \$150 is deducted. After 14 days prior, you lose your deposit of \$250. However, every case is determined on its merits and these fees may be modified or waived. If you find a suitable replacement person, the cancellation fees will be waived.
10. Personal travel insurance is highly recommended.

Registration and waiver forms are below...

FOOTSTEPS WALKING AND TRAVEL CLUB OF AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND
Trip Registration Form (for excursions within New Zealand)

Complete and send this (and the Waiver form) to our postal address (see base of page) or scan and email. The deposit required is \$250 per person. Our preferred payment method is internet banking into Kiwibank Footsteps P J Donnell/Katrina Tulip 38-9002-0435674-03 (with covering email please, or your surname/name of trip in reference column).

Trip(s) for which you are registering:

Trip Dates:

Your full name(s) and please underline or highlight your preferred first name(s)

Postal address

Day phone

Night phone

Mobile

Email

Date(s) of birth

Are you comfortable in close contact with like-minded travellers with all the give and take needed for harmony? Please extend your answers overleaf or on separate paper, or by email.

Specify any dietary requirements, allergies or medical conditions

Contact person in NZ for any emergencies : name, address, contact phone numbers, email and the relationship to you. In the event of any emergency, this is the sole person you are authorizing us to liaise with

I/We have read the trip information and booking conditions. I / We enclose the deposit of \$250pp. I / We agree to pay the remainder of trip costs by the due date (one month before the trip commences).

Signed and dated by each person registering:

Send to : Footsteps Walking and Travel Club, 3/B Te Arawa Place, Welcome Bay, Tauranga 3112.
Email: footstepsanz@gmail.com (scanned forms are acceptable).

FOOTSTEPS WALKING and TRAVEL CLUB OF AOTEAROA / NEW ZEALAND

RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY FORM

PROVIDER: Footsteps Walking and Travel Club (Phillip John Donnell)(“Footsteps”)

PARTICIPANT:

(“the Participant”)

I, the Participant, release and forever discharge and hold harmless Footsteps from all and any liability, claims, demands and damages, of whatsoever kind or nature, whether foreseeable or otherwise, either at law or in equity, which arise or may arise from the services and activities provided and arranged by Footsteps.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release and Waiver discharges Footsteps from any liability or claim that I may have against Footsteps in respect of personal injury, illness, medical treatment, death, property loss or damage, and otherwise howsoever, resulting from the services and activities provided and arranged by Footsteps. I hereby waive all such rights and remedies.

I accept that I participate in the services and activities entirely at my own risk.

I acknowledge and accept that this Release and Waiver:

- (a) Extends to and covers all contractors, agents, volunteers and employees of Footsteps; and
- (b) Binds the executors, administrators, successors, attorneys and assigns of both parties.

Signed by the Participant:

Date:
