

"The Grand North Island Railtour" - 2020

Trip #2001

Issued 19.08.20

ITINERARIES

*These Itineraries are subject to variation / change for train scheduling alterations or other circumstances.
An updated Final Itinerary will be issued a week prior to the Railtour commencing.*

'A-1' (Southbound) - Eight Days, (7 nights), Pukekohe to Wellington

Day 1: Monday 12 Oct: (Auckland) to Pukekohe to Rotorua

07.00: (Connecting service) - Depart Britomart on AT's Southern Line train for Papakura and Pukekohe arriving at 08.49. GVR's Railtour Leader will be on board to act as group escort from Britomart.

09.00: - Depart Pukekohe for Tokoroa direct on our special **GVR train**.

09.37: - Te Kauwhata passenger pick up (if required)

10.45: - Arrive Hamilton - passenger pick up.

12.03: - Arrive Matamata - (special charter group passenger drop off)

Free time for purchasing lunch from (adjacent) main street shops.

13.00: - Depart Matamata on our special **GVR train**.

Planned Photo stop scheduled near Putaruru

14.30 - Arrive Tokoroa. Change to chartered road coach for transfer direct to Rotorua, arriving around 15.30.

Group check in at hotel. Remainder of day and evening free in Rotorua!

Accommodation: Rotorua

Day 2: Tue 13 Oct: - Free Day in Rotorua!

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

Optional Activities: Rotorua District road coach tour

09.00: - **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby. Board our chartered road coach for a leisurely day visiting local attractions and places of interest. Booked passengers will be contacted and asked for preferences from a variety of options which may include:

- Rotorua Redwood Park to take a 40 minute Tree Tops Walk
- Blue & Green Lakes and Lake Tarawera tour. Maybe 'Buried Village' on return.
- Around Lake Rotorua to Okere Falls, Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoma with visit to Deep Hamurana Springs on return tour.
- Other suggestions you may have...

Late afternoon and evening free in Rotorua!

Accommodation: Rotorua

Day 3: Wed 14 Oct: - Rotorua to Waioapu to Atiamuri through Pureora Forest to Waitomo/Hamilton

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

08.30: - Check out of hotel with luggage. **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby.

-Depart Rotorua by road coach for Waioapu Thermal Reserve, arriving around 09.15.

Optional visit and tour of this thermal park, considered as being the best of its type on the Central Volcanic Plateau.

c10.30: - Continue touring west to Atiamuri. Follow the Waikato River through Whakamaru to Mangakino. Traverse the Scenic Pureora Park Forest to Benneydale and follow the NIMT Railway into Te Kuiti.

c13.30: - Arrive Te Kuiti (Railway Stn) for *lunch stop* from main street shops.

14.30: - Depart Te Kuiti for Waitomo Caves arriving at 15.00. *Optional visit to Waitomo Glow Worm Caves.*

16.30: - Depart Waitomo travelling on SH 39 via 'west road' to Pirongia to Hamilton for overnight stay, arriving around 17.45. Group check in at hotel. Evening free!

Accommodation: Hamilton

Day 4: Thur 15 Oct: - Hamilton to Taumarunui to National Park to Ohakune

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

- 08.15: - Check out of hotel with luggage. **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby. Depart hotel by road coach for Hamilton Railway Station. Transfer to **GVR train**.
- 09.00: - Depart Hamilton for Taumarunui and points south...
Planned Photo stop scheduled at Raurimu Spiral.
- 13.30: - Arrive at National Park (*special charter group passenger drop off*)
- 13.35: - Depart National Park for Ohakune (crossing Makatote and Hapuawhenua viaducts en route).
- 14.20: - Arrive Ohakune. Change to road coach for short transfers to local overnight accommodation.
Late lunch in Ohakune. Evening free!

Accommodation: Ohakune

Day 5: Fri 16 Oct: - Free Day in Ohakune!

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

Optional Activities: "Around the Mountains" Full day scenic road coach tour

- 09.00: - **BRIEFING** on board road coach. Depart Ohakune for Tangiwai on SH49.
Call in to Tangiwai Memorial and railway bridge on Whangaehu River.
- c10.00: - Depart Tangiwai for Waiouru Army Museum, arriving around 10.30.
Free time to tour this comprehensive museum, research records of past servicemen on the Museum's database and then purchase an early lunch at the Army Museum cafe.
- 12.30: - Depart Waiouru and travel north almost the full length of the Desert Rd on SH1 as far as Rangipo. Turn west onto SH 46, past Lake Rotoaira, joining SH 37 with its spectacular views of all three mountains, Tongariro, Ngauruhoe, Ruapehu and skirting the Tongariro National Park on to SH 4 at National Park township. Then follow the NIMT down to Horopito for a stop and look around "Smash Palace", a vast car wrecking yard made famous by the 1981 film of the same name.
- 16.30: - ETA back in Ohakune. Drop off at local overnight accommodation. Evening free!

Accommodation: Ohakune

Day 6: Sat 17 Oct: - Ohakune to Palmerston North to Wellington

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

- 08.00: - Check out from overnight accommodation with luggage.
Transfer back to Ohakune Station. **GVR train** arrives from National Park.
- 09.00: - Depart Ohakune for Wellington direct on **GVR train**.
- 09.35: - Arrive at Waiouru.
Planned Photo stop scheduled
- 10.05: - Depart Waiouru for Taihape, Marton and Feilding
- 12.55: - Arrive Feilding
Free time for purchasing lunch from (adjacent) main street shops.
- 14.15: - Depart Feilding for Palmerston North, Otaki, Waikanae, Porirua and Wellington.
- 17.10: - Arrive Wellington and disembark train.
Following the Tour Leader walk 900 metres (10 minutes) to Wellington hotel accommodation.
Group check in. *Evening free!*

Accommodation: Wellington

Day 7: Sun 18 Oct: Free Day in Wellington!

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

Optional Activities: Train and road coach trip up the Wairarapa to Masterton and beyond...

- 09.00: - **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby. Walk back down to Wellington Railway Station and board Wellington's 'Metlink' **'Wairarapa Connection'** train to Masterton. 'Super Gold Card' holders travel free all day on Sundays so no train fare has been budgeted for inclusion in your Basic Fare Package Cost. If you are not a 'Super Gold Card holder we recommend that you purchase a concessional 'Metlink Explorer Day Pass' for \$25 at the Wellington Station ticket office prior to departure.

Day 7: Sun 18 Oct: (continued) - Free Day in **Wellington!**

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- 09.55: - Depart Wellington for Masterton, travelling around the harbour's edge, up the Hutt Valley and through the Rimutaka Tunnel to the Wairarapa.
- 11.35: - Arrive Masterton. Join our chartered road coach to travel on to Pahiatua & Mangatainoka.
- c12.40:- Call into the Pahiatua Railcar Society for a short visit to this operational railway museum.
View three different types of ex NZR railcars at different stages of restoration.
- c13.15: - Visit the Tui Brewery at Mangatainoka. Take a tour of the Tui HQ Museum, followed by lunch.
- c14.30: - Depart Mangatainoka southbound for Martinborough township, travelling through the centre of the nationally important wine producing district of Southern Wairarapa, arriving around 16.00.
- c16.30: - Depart Martinborough for Featherston, briefly visiting (time permitting) Fell Locomotive Museum.
- 17.25: - Depart Featherston on 'Metlink' **'Wairarapa Connection'** train for Wellington, arriving at 18.25.
Walk back to Wellington hotel. Evening free in Wellington!

Accommodation: Wellington

Day 8: Mon 19 Oct: Wellington

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

- By 11.00: - Check out of hotel with luggage.
End of 'A-1' Railtour!
Own arrangements returning north...

OR: - Join 'A-2' Railtour! (see below)

'A-2' (Northbound) - Six Days, (5 nights) Wellington to Pukekohe

(with a connection back to Britomart)

Day 1: Sat 17 Oct: - Wellington

Make your own travel arrangements to Wellington
Individual check in at Wellington Hotel

Accommodation: Wellington

Day 2: Sun 18 Oct: Free Day in Wellington!

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

Optional Activities: Train and road coach trip up the Wairarapa to Masterton and beyond...

- 09.00: - **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby. Walk back down to Wellington Railway Station and board Wellington's 'Metlink' **'Wairarapa Connection'** train to Masterton. 'Super Gold Card' holders travel free all day on Sundays so no train fare has been budgeted for inclusion in your Basic Fare Package Cost. If you are not a 'Super Gold Card holder we recommend that you purchase a concessional 'Metlink Explorer Day Pass' for \$25 at the Wellington Station ticket office prior to departure.
- 09.55: - Depart Wellington for Masterton, travelling around the harbour's edge, up the Hutt Valley and through the Rimutaka Tunnel to the Wairarapa.
- 11.35: - Arrive Masterton. Join our chartered road coach to travel on to Pahiatua & Mangatainoka.
- c12.40:- Call into the Pahiatua Railcar Society for a short visit to this operational railway museum.
View three different types of ex NZR railcars at different stages of restoration.
- c13.15: - Visit the Tui Brewery at Mangatainoka. Take a tour of the Tui HQ Museum, followed by lunch.
- c14.30: - Depart Mangatainoka southbound for Martinborough township, travelling through the centre of the nationally important wine producing district of Southern Wairarapa, arriving around 16.00.
- c16.30: - Depart Martinborough for Featherston, briefly visiting (time permitting) Fell Locomotive Museum.
- 17.25: - Depart Featherston on 'Metlink' **'Wairarapa Connection'** train for Wellington, arriving at 18.25.
Walk back to Wellington hotel. Evening free in Wellington!

Accommodation: Wellington

Day 3: Mon 19 Oct: Wellington to Palmerston North to Woodville to Whanganui

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

- 08.00: - Check out of hotel with luggage. **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby. Walk back down to Wellington Station
*Purchase your take away lunch from 'New World' Supermarket at eastern end of station concourse.
This shop specializes in providing a wide range of well priced prepackaged food for rail travellers.*
- Board Special **GVR Train**.
- 08.40: - Depart Wellington on **GVR train** for Palmerston North arriving at 11.10.
- 11.20: - Depart Palmerston North for Woodville via the Manawatu Gorge arriving at 12.00.
Watch as the loco 'runs around' Woodville's 'Balloon Loop'- Photo opportunities.
- 12.40: - Depart Woodville returning to Palmerston North arriving at 13.20. *Loco detaches to turn.*
- 13.20: - Depart Palmerston North for Marton, Aramoho and Whanganui Taupo Quay arriving at 15.30.
Transfer from train by road coach to hotel
Group check in at hotel. *Remainder of day and evening free in Whanganui!*
Optional Activity: *Walk down main street to and across the Whanganui River bridge to Anzac Parade.
Take the Durie Hill Elevator from the riverside up to the Memorial Tower and suburb of Durie Hill.
This public elevator is ranked by Heritage New Zealand as a Category 1 Historic Place
and is New Zealand's only public underground elevator. There are magnificent views of Whanganui
City and the River from the top.*

Accommodation: Whanganui

Day 4: Tue 20 Oct: Free Day in Whanganui!

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

'Optional Activities' to be confirmed...

*Likely to include **GVR Train** trip on up Westmere Bank & back OR Back country road coach tour
following the Whanganui River Rd to Pipiriki, Raetihi, Taihape and return on SH1 and SH3.*

Accommodation: Whanganui

Day 5: Wed 21 Oct: Whanganui to Marton to National Park to Chateau Tongariro

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

- 09.30: - Check out of hotel with luggage. **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby.
Transfer by road coach to Whanganui Taupo Quay. Board **GVR Train**
- 10.15: - Depart Whanganui Taupo Quay on **GVR Train** for Aramoho and Marton, arriving 11.15.
- 12.00: - Depart Marton for Taihape arriving at 13.10.
Time to purchase lunch at main street shops.
- 14.15: - Depart Taihape for Waiouru, Ohakune and National Park.
Planned Photo stop scheduled at Hapuawhenua Viaduct
- 17.00: - Arrive National Park. Transfer to road coach for journey to Chateau Tongariro, Mt Ruapehu.
Group check in.
- 19.00: - Sumptuous 3-course Railtour Farewell buffet dinner! **Accommodation: National Park**

Day 6: Thur 22 Oct: Chateau Tongariro to National Park to Te Kuiti to Hamilton to Pukekohe

From 07.00 Breakfast at hotel.

- 08.15: - Check out of hotel with luggage. **BRIEFING** in hotel lobby.
Transfer by road coach to National Park Station. Board **GVR Train**
- 09.00: - Depart National Park on **GVR Train** direct to Pukekohe (*Auckland*)
Planned Photo stop scheduled at Piriaka (south of Taumarunui)
- 12.10: - Arrive Te Kuiti. *Time to purchase lunch at main street shops .*
- 13.00 - Depart Te Kuiti *Planned Photo stop scheduled at Te Kawa (south of Te Awamutu)*
- 14.10: - Arrive Hamilton. (*some passengers disembark*)
- 14.15 - Depart Hamilton for Pukekohe arriving at 16.00.
Disembark train.
End of '**A-2**' Railtour !
- 16.10: (*Connecting service*) - Depart Pukekohe on AT's Southern Line train for Papakura and then on to
Britomart arriving at 17.03. Later trains run every 40 minutes. Note this a new 'slower' timetable.