

# Volcanic Loop Highway

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North Island – ~7 Days Itineraries





## Day 1: Auckland → Hamilton (≈125 km, ~1 h 45 min)

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- **Mode:** Car
- **Day overview:** Depart Auckland via Waikato's rolling countryside. Stop at Zealong Tea Estate for gourmet tea experiences, then explore Hamilton Gardens. In the afternoon, opt for a trip to Hobbiton Movie Set in Matamata.
- **Highlight:** Hobbiton™ adds cinematic magic—perfect for clients craving immersive storytelling experiences.

## Day 2 Hamilton → Waitomo → Pureora Forest (≈150 km, ~2–2 h 15 min)

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- **Mode:** Car
- **Day overview:** Drive to Waitomo to explore glowworm-lit caves, with options from gentle boat rides to adventurous blackwater rafting. Continue into upland forests and cycle the Timber Trail, passing through ancient timberlands and suspension bridges, ending near National Park village.
- **Highlight:** Glow-worm mystique and the forest-scenic Timber Trail route.

## Day 3: Pureora → Taumarunui → Ohakune (≈120 km, ~1 h 45 min)

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- **Mode:** Car / bike for trail
- **Day overview:** Continue cycling or driving through Pureora Forest. Transfer to rail-carts or a Forgotten World Adventures tour through remote river valleys and tunnels, finishing in Taumarunui. Then head to Ohakune, gateway to Tongariro.
- **Highlight:** Rustic rail-cart adventure through Forgotten World Highway followed by forest immersion

## Day 4: Ohakune → Tongariro Alpine Crossing → Taupō (≈20 min drive + ~19 km hike)

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- **Mode:** Car to trailhead, then hike
- **Day overview:** Early drive to the crossing trailhead. Hike the world-famous **Tongariro Alpine Crossing**, navigating lava flows, steam vents, emerald lakes and volcanic craters. Late afternoon drive to Taupō and unwind at a geothermal spa.
- **Highlight:** Alpine trek through dramatic volcanic terrain—an unforgettable client experience.

## Day 5: Lake Taupō Adventures

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- **Mode:** Car or boat
- **Day overview:** Morning paddle or cruise to **Mine Bay Māori rock carvings**. Afternoon adrenaline: jet boat ride at **Huka Falls** or optional skydiving over the caldera. Evening soak at DeBretts Hot Springs or Wairakei Terraces.
- **Highlight:** Maori cliff carvings and the thunderous energy of Huka Falls.

## Day 6: Taupō → Tīrau → Hobbiton → Auckland (≈270 km, ~3 h drive)

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- **Mode:** Car
- **Day overview:** Depart after breakfast, stop at quirky Tīrau for its corrugated iron art. Detour to Blue Springs near Putāruru, then return to Hobbiton for sunset ambience. Arrive in Auckland late afternoon for a scenic walk up Mt Eden or dining in Ponsonby.
- **Highlight:** Hobbiton at sunset and urban volcanic views from Mt Eden.

## Day 7: Auckland & Waiheke Island (no drive)

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- **Mode:** Ferry + walking
- **Day overview:** Take a ferry to Waiheke Island for a day of boutique wineries, beaches, and hiking. Return to Auckland and enjoy waterfront dining at Wynyard Quarter or Ponsonby.
- **Highlight:** Relaxed ending at island wineries and city waterfront culture