

**Dream drive: New Zealand in a campervan**

**Make it come true:** Campervanning is all about views. And nowhere on Earth are they more spectacular per square kilometre than in New Zealand. NZ's two islands deliver the snow-capped peaks of the Alps, the epic fjords of Norway and the temperate rainforests of North America's Pacific Northwest. You'll need at least three weeks to do both North and South Islands — a week in the volcanic, verdant North, saving two for the mountains and glaciers of the South. New Zealand is a land of detours, and therefore the perfect place for campervanning. It's made easier by the fact that there are plenty of RV and caravan parks, while campsites — both

private and government-run — are widespread (though not all have electricity on tap).

Pick up your camper in Auckland, the country's central hub. From here, hang a left towards the gorgeous Coromandel Peninsula to unwind from your 27-hour flight in your own self-dug thermal sand bath at Hot Water Beach. Over the next week, pick your way south, via Rotorua, the island's volcanic heart, to the bijou capital of Wellington. Indulge in its food and coffee scene before taking a three-and-a-half-hour ferry across the scenic Cook Strait to South Island.

Disembarking into the world-famous Marlborough wine country, fill the mini fridge with bottles of crisp Sauvignon Blanc, then negotiate the island counter-clockwise, following Highway 6 along the coast. Gawp at the white-capped Southern Alps rising up to your left as you approach Westland Tai Poutini

National Park, a cloud-wreathed landscape of Maori myths. Road traffic significantly thins here, but the tourist infrastructure remains excellent. Make a quick stop in Queenstown for bungee thrills and grilled fish beneath the stars by Lake Wanaka, before filling the tank further south in Te Anau — it's the last fuel stop before Milford Sound, in primeval Fiordland — all misty dawns and lichen-strewn forests. Heading back up to Auckland along the east coast, you'll find penguins on the Otago Peninsula and farewell drinks in Christchurch.

**Travel's tip:** Avoid July and August — the best sites get snaffled and biting sandflies are rife.

**Get me there:** Air New Zealand has returns to Auckland and Christchurch from Heathrow from £1,168. Britz (britz.com) has modern, comfortable campervan rentals from about £25 a day.

Chris Allsop ➔



Freewheeling: pit stop with a view of Hokianga Harbour on North Island

and clean your windows, then bring over a card machine so you can pay. Carrentals.com has a handy infographic of some of the other quirks to look out for