



## PRESS RELEASE



# GAP YEAR NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND

A\* is for adventure...



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New Zealand has long been one of the most popular gap year destinations, offering both a 23 month working holiday visa for those who want to stay a little longer and a compact and diverse country of incredible landscapes and adrenalin thrills, all easily explored on an epic road trip adventure.

From a 'battle of the buns' burger contest in Wellington and the chance to pedal your way around the craft breweries in Nelson, to trying your hand at the new craze of 'zurfing' or following in the footsteps of the England cricket team, New Zealand has a few surprises up its sleeve for those on the adventure of a lifetime this year.

## NEWS AND TRENDS...

### PEDAL YOUR WAY TO A PINT

New Zealand's wine rightly garners international attention and no trip is complete without a trip to a few cellar doors. Less well known is New Zealand's burgeoning craft beer scene giving visitors the chance to refine their beer tasting skills with a growing range of craft brewery tours. With more craft breweries per head of the population than anywhere else in the country, Nelson is establishing itself as somewhat of a Mecca for hop lovers. Gentle Cycling offers guided cycling tours, giving beer lovers the chance to combine eating local produce with a bike tour of craft breweries such as Bays Brewery and Lighthouse Brewery and to taste the likes of Bays Devon Stout, Rhino Ale and Windfall Cider. The beer doesn't stop flowing in the North Island either as Wellington's Pete Gillespie and Jos Ruffell have created The Garage Project, brewing 24 different beers in 24

days including the famous Cockswain's Courage brew, which won silver at the prestigious Beer World Cup. Head to the Garage Project Cellar Door to try some of their exclusive beers including the Umami Monster, the almost pitch black beer brewed with seaweed, fish extract and sea water.

**HOW?** Gentle Cycling offers brewery cycling tours from £40 including return city shuttles, half-day bike hire, tours and tastings at various breweries and lunch at McCashins Brewery Café. [www.gentlecycling.co.nz](http://www.gentlecycling.co.nz)

For more information on the New Zealand Cycle Trail visit [www.nzcycletrail.com](http://www.nzcycletrail.com)

For more information on the Garage Project visit [www.garageproject.co.nz](http://www.garageproject.co.nz)

### **FROM ZURFING TO ZIPLINING IN ROTORUA**

Zorbing (the Kiwi invention of rolling down a slope in an inflatable hamster ball like contraption) is having an upgrade. It's now all about zurfing, the ultimate on-land surfboard-like experience and the latest craze to hit Rotorua - perfect for adventurers and thrill seekers. Using a water-filled Zydro zorb, participants use a specially developed body board to surf their way down the slopes and replicate the sensation of surfing. Skyline has also launched Zoom Zipline, a thrilling high-speed twin zipline that descends 383 metres down the side of Mount Ngongotaha, dropping a total of 48 vertical metres at a speed of 80km/h. Guests will have spectacular views over Lake Rotorua as they fly 450 metres above sea level. Still up for more? Canopy Tours recently launched a unique and inspiring adventure, Creatures of the Night. Departing at dusk, guests will be taken on a guided ziplining tour through the forest where it is not uncommon to see a range of insects unique to New Zealand including Weta, Morepork and glow worms. Standing on the highest platform situated 22 metres above the forest floor, guests can launch themselves into the darkness under the clear night sky for a truly unique experience.

**HOW?** Single zurfing rides from ZORB cost from £21 per person. [www.zorb.com](http://www.zorb.com)

The Zoom Zipline by Skyline costs from £40 per person. [www.skyline.co.nz](http://www.skyline.co.nz)

Creatures of the Night by Canopy Tours costs from £68 per person [www.canopytours.co.nz](http://www.canopytours.co.nz)

### **ON THE ROAD...**

#### **NEW COACHES AND ITINERARIES WITH THE HOP-O-HOP-OFF KIWI EXPERIENCE BUS TOUR**

Kiwi Experience's big green buses and Kiwi Driver Guides have a legendary status amongst backpackers from around the globe and this year the company is celebrating 25 years in the business. Kiwi Experience delivers passengers to the doorstep of New Zealand's natural wonders, man-made marvels and the most exciting activities and with new state-of-the-art coaches

and newly launched tours and routes, the options are endless. New this year, Lake Tekapo has been added as an overnight stop so passengers can make the most of the world's largest dark sky reserve and check out the night-time views of the starry skies. Hobbit fan? Kiwi Experience now stops at Hobbiton Movie Set Tours on the route from Waitomo to Rotorua, giving travellers the chance to look around *The Hobbit* movie set, from Bag End to the Green Dragon Inn. The newest overnight activity from Kiwi Experience is a stay at the Tamaki Maori Village in Rotorua, the Maori cultural capital of New Zealand, offering a taste of the special Tamaki hospitality with a traditional Maori welcoming ceremony, dinner and concert as well as an open-air cinema, spa pools and a fire pit for sharing stories and marshmallows.

**HOW?** Visitors can choose from 34 passes, with prices starting from £58 and validity of up to a year. [www.kiwiexperience.com](http://www.kiwiexperience.com)

### **CAMPERFLEX AROUND NEW ZEALAND WITH STA TRAVEL**

The best way for independent travellers to see New Zealand at their own pace is by campervan and with STA Travel's exclusive new Camperflex pass, it is easier than ever. Choose from a 30, 40 or 50-day pass and for ultimate flexibility, guests can buy now and travel later. Guests can choose from one of five different 'Mighty Campervans' including the new Funky Jackpot van. As transportation and accommodation all in one, it's the best way to get close to nature by stepping out of the door and into the rainforest, ocean or wherever is decided to be home that day.

**HOW?** STA Travel offers return flights from London to Auckland, plus a 30-day Camperflex Pass from £2085. For more information visit [www.statravel.co.uk](http://www.statravel.co.uk) or call 0800 988 0390.

### **WILD CAMPING - DOC LAUNCHES NEW PASS**

For the true nature lovers, The Department of Conservation (DOC) has launched a new weekly campsite pass. This pass is valid for up to a year and gives the flexibility to pay once and stay up to seven nights at 100 different DOC campsites around New Zealand, from the Kapowairua Spirits Bay campsite in Kaitaia to the Kumeti campsite in Hawke's Bay. Stand out spots include Uretiti in the Whangarei area in the North Island, offering campers the chance to camp behind sand dunes at Uretiti Beach and explore the nearby Waipu caves. In the South Island, head to Butchers Flat, which was once a gold mining site and close to Mount Richmond Forest Park, perfect for long nature walks. For those who fancy a bit more luxury, glamping options are also available from the Hot Water Beach campsite in Te Rata Bay or Pelorus Bridge campsite in the Marlborough region.

**HOW?** A weekly campsite pass costs from £11 per person. For more information visit [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

**FOR FESTIVAL GOERS...**

## **BE THE FIRST IN THE WORLD TO SEE IN THE NEW YEAR AT RHYTHM AND VINES, GISBORNE**

UK travellers can be among the first in the world to see in the New Year, party with more than 30,000 people and enjoy over a hundred acts on five different stages at the increasingly popular festival, Rhythm and Vines held in the stunning Waiohika Estate in North Island's Gisborne. Bastille are amongst the acts in the line up for this year and visitors can expect DJ's, drum and bass artists and electronic sets.

**HOW?** Rhythm and Vines takes place from 29<sup>th</sup> December 2014 to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 and tickets cost from £121 per person for the full three days without accommodation. Camping, glamping and teepee stays are also available. [www.rhythmandvines.co.nz](http://www.rhythmandvines.co.nz)

## **NIGHT RIDING AND WINE TOURS AT THE QUEENSTOWN BIKE FESTIVAL**

Set in the stunning surroundings of Queenstown - New Zealand's number one tourist destination - the Queenstown Bike Festival combines the best of mountain bikes, downhill and road bikes through a diverse series of events suitable for all ages and abilities. Some of the highlights are the Mountain Bike Night Ride for riders who want to try the unique experience of riding and navigating at night. The technically demanding course of the Vertigo Bikes Dirtmasters Downhill will push world-class downhill riders to their limits, while the Queenstown Bike Tours Coffee to Grape is an afternoon of wine, food and spectacular scenery from Arrowtown to Gibbston Valley.

**HOW?** The festival takes place from 13<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015. For more information visit [www.queenstownbikefestival.com](http://www.queenstownbikefestival.com)

## **EXPERIENCE THE MARCHFEST MADDNESS, NELSON**

Set in the beautiful Founders Heritage Park in Nelson, MarchFest is a unique craft beer and music festival where guests can enjoy eclectic music while trying a range of local craft beers brewed especially for the occasion. Highlights include local, national and international acts such as Iva Lamkum, The Eastern and The Electric Fleas, as well as local food stalls including scallops, venison and hokey-pokey ice cream and not to mention the BrewZone, giving guests the opportunity to learn about the ingredients and process involved in making beer and cider. With Nelson being the sunniest region in New Zealand, it is the ideal festival location and with its long beaches, rugged mountains and freshwater springs, festivalgoers will have the chance to explore a wealth of outdoor activities pre or post festival.

**HOW?** MarchFest takes places on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and tickets cost from £21. Add a Beer & Food Matching Lunch from £50 including entry to the festival. [www.marchfest.com](http://www.marchfest.com)

## **FOR SPORTS LOVERS...**

## **JOIN AN ARMY (A BARMY ONE...)**

New Zealand is gearing up to co-host the Cricket World Cup 2015 and what better excuse to head to New Zealand than to immerse yourself with the world's cricket fans and soak up the guaranteed buzz across the cricket mad country. Next February, seven cities around New Zealand will host a wealth of cricket matches including Wellington, Auckland, Dunedin and Christchurch to name a few. Football fans keen to see if England's youth squad have any promise should stick around for the FIFA U-20 World Cup, which will also take place in New Zealand in May 2015. Both events will also offer once-in-a-lifetime job opportunities for those looking to work their way around the country,

**HOW?** ICC Cricket World Cup tickets are available to buy online from just £11 per adult for pool matches at

[www.cricketworldcup.com](http://www.cricketworldcup.com)

Thomson Sport offers Cricket World Cup packages from £289 per person including a guaranteed official ticket to the England vs. New Zealand match as well as two nights in the Amora Hotel. For more information visit [www.thomsonsport.com](http://www.thomsonsport.com)

For more information on FIFA U-20 visit

[www.fifa.com/u20worldcup](http://www.fifa.com/u20worldcup)

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

For more information on taking a gap year in New Zealand visit

[www.newzealand.com](http://www.newzealand.com)

For more information on working holiday visas in New Zealand visit

[www.newzealand.com/uk/article/working-holiday-scheme-in-new-zealand](http://www.newzealand.com/uk/article/working-holiday-scheme-in-new-zealand)

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