



PRESS RELEASE



AUTUMNAL ADVENTURES IN NEW ZEALAND

Lingering sunny days, leaves bursting with colour and a lack of crowds; autumn is an idyllic time to visit New Zealand.



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Tourism New Zealand has therefore rounded up the very best New Zealand has to offer during autumn season, from dazzling destinations to action-packed activities, eclectic events and fabulous food.

BEST AUTUMN DESTINATIONS...

Arrowtown and Glenorchy, Otago - Visitors will discover New Zealand's richest autumn foliage in Arrowtown in the South Island, where the hillsides are ablaze with colour. In nearby Glenorchy, walk the Glenorchy Lagoon Walkway, taking in the beautiful sights of autumnal trees which surround the lagoon and spotting the black swans that frequent the area.

Mackenzie Country, Canterbury - The area running from Tekapo to Lake Pukaki and onto Twizel and Omarama is the ideal place for a spot of leaf peeping. Lake Tekapo, the remarkable turquoise lake, is surrounded by yellow trees and golden leaves dot the lake in the autumn. Head to Lake Alexandrina and Lake McGregor, accessible via the Godley Peaks Road, for even more colours.

Wanaka and the Cardrona Valley, Central Otago - Visitors will find poplars here, there and everywhere in Central Otago. The shores of Lake Wanaka in particular, and especially near Roys Bay, are populated by yellow poplars in autumn. For endless poplar patches, drive down the Cardrona Valley before heading to Glendhu Bay and along the Matukituki River.

BEST AUTUMN ACTIVITIES...

Trout fishing - March is by far the best month for fishing. The

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weather is generally settled and trout are starting to get ready for the leaner winter months. Head to the West Coast, known for its large rivers and rugged, untouched scenery where trout feed throughout the day.

Hiking - Being one of the most settled seasons and while the flora colours are glorious, autumn is one of the best times for hikers in New Zealand. Head to the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, New Zealand's greatest day walk across a remarkable volcanic landscape. This time of year offers clear skies, perfect for spotting Emerald Lake from miles away.

Wine tasting - Autumn is harvest time in many of New Zealand's wine regions, including Marlborough, which grows some of the world's most popular Sauvignon Blanc grapes. For the best Chardonnay, head to Northland, Auckland and Gisborne in early March, and to Central Otago in late April as the grapes are harvested throughout these regions.

Cycling - With crisp mornings, sunny days and colourful flora, autumn is a prime time of year for cycling. Try the Otago Central Rail Trail, New Zealand's original Great Ride, and discover old historic gold-mining villages, country pubs, rugged scenery and off-trail adventures.

Stargazing - With the New Zealand skies at their clearest, visitors will find many ways to experience and appreciate the southern stars - from simply stepping outside on a fine night to gaze up at the Milky Way, to the complete guided experience viewing the celestial wonders through giant telescopes at Lake Tekapo's Mt. John Observatory.

BEST AUTUMN EVENTS...

PASIFIKA FESTIVAL, AUCKLAND - 12th - 13th March 2016

Pasifika Festival is a celebration of New Zealand's diverse Pacific communities, which has developed into a multi-day, multi-venue event. The festival, which attracts more than 200,000 people including 1,000 performers, is a colourful celebration of Pacific Island food, dance and cultural workshops. Dates change each year but it is usually held in early March.

www.aucklandnz.com/pasifika

HOKITIKA WILDFOODS FESTIVAL, HOKITIKA - 12th March 2016

Creative foodies with a taste for wild fare have put the small town of Hokitika - on the South Island's West Coast - on the international culinary map. Wild and wacky is the name of the game with everything from snails, seagull eggs, grasshoppers and mountain oysters to huhu beetle grubs served live, cooked, or chocolate-coated on the menu. www.wildfoods.co.nz

QUEENSTOWN BIKE FESTIVAL, QUEENSTOWN - 13th - 22nd March 2016

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. Highlights include the Mountain Bike Night Ride, the technically-demanding course of the Vertigo Bikes Dirtmasters Downhill and the Queenstown Bike Tours' Coffee to Grape is an afternoon of wine, food and spectacular scenery from Arrowtown to Gibbston Valley.

www.queenstownbikefestival.com

MARCHFEST, NELSON - 19th March 2016

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 The Gypsy Pickers, The Nudge and Tahuna Breaks, as well as local food stalls serving scallops, venison and hokey-pokey ice cream. Not to mention the BrewZone, providing guests the opportunity to learn about the ingredients and process involved in making beer and cider.

www.marchfest.com

BLUFF OYSTER FESTIVAL - 21st May 2016

With the tag line 'unsophisticated and proud of it', you're guaranteed a real Kiwi experience at this annual festival, held on the South Island's most southerly point in the salty seaside town of Bluff. The festival is held annually to celebrate the seasonal harvest of what are said to be the most flavoursome oysters in the world. Festival entertainment is oyster-related, starting with the 'piping in the oyster' and everything from oyster opening and eating competitions, to oyster sack creativity awards, set to a backdrop of live local music.

www.bluffoysterfest.co.nz

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For more information on autumn in New Zealand visit

<http://www.newzealand.com/uk/feature/discover-autumn-in-new-zealand/>

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