PARTNERS

PROGRAMME

SAMPLE DAY & MULTI DAY PROGRAMMES

Heritage & Nationhood

Wellington has a rich heritage, from politics and history to literature and nature. Be sure to include the following in your itinerary.

Start your day aboard the historic Wellington Cable Car to reach panoramic views of the city. Grab a bite at No 1 Upland Road Bistro and Wine Bar, and wander down through the Wellington Botanic Garden.

From the bottom of the Botanic Garden, follow the Thorndon Heritage Trail through New Zealand's oldest suburb. Step back in time at the Katherine Mansfield Birthplace or visit the beautiful gothic cathedral Old St Paul's.

You could tour through Parliament Buildings and explore New Zealand's political past and present.

Discover Wellington on foot with a walking tour. Leaving from the Wellington i-SITE Visitor Centre in Civic Square, it is hosted by guides who are passionate about the city. Make sure you take the time to visit Wellington's oldest department store, Kirkcaldie & Stains.

Experience dynamic contemporary artwork at the City Gallery and then learn about Wellington's maritime past, present and future at the Museum of Wellington.

In keeping with the heritage theme, dine at the Boulcott Street Bistro, Bouquet Garni, Shed 5, Dockside or Logan Brown; all are housed in restored historic buildings.

Finish your Wellington heritage tour by taking in a show at one of its historic theatre companies - Circa, Downstage, or the St James Theatre. Or catch a movie at the recently restored Embassy Theatre, the cinema where Lord of the Rings had its World Premiere.

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Be sure to pop into Blondini's Café and Bar at the Embassy for live jazz on the weekends.

Nature Close to the City

Here are some ideas for at least two days of getting back to nature in Wellington.

DAY 1

Take a picnic tea to the Karori Sanctuary. This is a unique protected area for New Zealand's endangered wildlife. Over 35 kilometres of bush tracks and paths criss-cross 252 hectares of regenerating forest, offering walks, activities and even boat rides for people of all ages. Allow 2 hours.

Have lunch and a latté with the animals at Wellington Zoo. Wellington's renowned Eva Dixon's Café serves great food with the added attraction of red pandas, lions and tigers. Te Papa has three fantastic exhibitions devoted to different aspects of New Zealand's nature; Awesome Forces, Mountains to Sea, and Bush City. Allow at least 2 hours.

Experience a seal tour, beginning with a four wheel drive for 20 rugged kilometres along the beach and rocks of Wellington's spectacular South Coast. Allow 3 hours.

Head out to the beautiful Akatarawa Valley and visit Staglands Wildlife Reserve. Hand feed New Zealand wildlife and discover the rural history of Wellington. Allow 3 hours.

For a special evening, the Karori Sanctuary also offers nocturnal tours – so if you haven't had the chance to check this out during the day, book a Sanctuary by Night tour, which starts at sunset. Allow 2 hours.

For a relaxing night after all that activity, reserve a room at Quest on the Terrace and unwind in a spa bath with a glass of fine New Zealand wine. Allow all night.

DAY 2

After a hearty breakfast in your hotel or at a local café, take a ferry ride out to Matiu/Somes Island in the middle of Wellington harbour. Walk around the perimeter of this beautiful island and enjoy its history, which includes time as a prisoner-of-war camp. Allow 2 hours.

Catch the ferry to Eastbourne and dine al fresco, or head back to the city to Oriental Bay's Vista or Parade cafés, situated across from the golden sand beach. Let lunch digest, and take a ride aboard an ex-Army four wheel drive Mercedes-Benz Unimog and discover the backblocks of wild Wellington in style. Allow 3 hours.

Wellington city is set among some of New Zealand's most stunning natural areas. Whether on a bike, walking a bush track or watching the seals - let nature thrill your senses.

If you'd like to spend the whole day in one place, explore Kapiti Island, just 40 minutes drive from Wellington city, an internationally-renowned nature reserve rich in Maori heritage and history. Join a Kapiti Island tour and let a boat whisk you away to this unique and beautiful island, rich in bird life and isolated bays and beaches - make sure you take a picnic!

Spend the evening on the Kapiti Coast and enjoy the tranquillity. Greenmantle Estate and Te Horo Lodge both offer restful retreats.