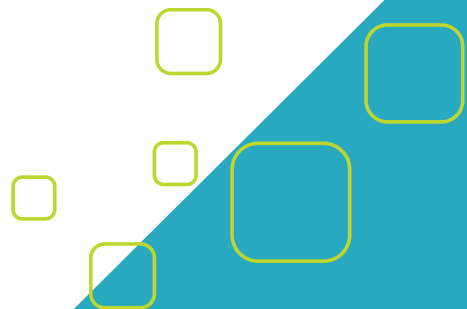




**New Zealand's 10 top spots to visit that you can only reach by car!**





If you're wanting to get 'off the beaten track' (so to speak), then maybe you'll be keen to check out some of the places around New Zealand that you can only reach by car.

Everyone can head to popular tourist hot spots like Auckland, Wellington and Queenstown (which are great too of course). But if you're looking for a truly unique New Zealand experience, perhaps you'd like to add a few of these locations to your itinerary.

## Cape Reinga, Northland

There's only one way to get to the northern tip of New Zealand, and that's on four wheels. Here's where the Tasman Sea meets the Pacific Ocean, and you'll also find a twisted pohutukawa tree, which is a very spiritual place for Maori. According to oral history, spirits of the deceased will leap from the tree into the ocean, returning to their ancestral homeland of Hawaiki.

There's something incredibly breathtaking about knowing nothing lies ahead of you, aside from the vast open sea, for hundreds of kilometres.



## Kerikeri, Northland

Located in the Bay of Islands Kerikeri is a gorgeous town, surrounded by vineyards and orchards, and home to New Zealand's oldest house - Kemp House - which was constructed around 1821/1822.

Kerikeri is a foodies paradise, with an abundance of boutique food producers as well as the infamous Farmer's Market on Sunday mornings, where you'll find the freshest produce around. It's a town also well known for its art galleries, cafes and crafts, all set in a beautiful, natural environment. From bush and riverside walks, to beaches and waterfalls, you'll find it all here.



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## Coromandel Town, Coromandel Peninsula

The Coromandel township is located on the western shores of the Coromandel Peninsula, and is every bit as exciting as the more well known towns of Whitianga and Whangamata.

In the morning you could explore the town centre, where buildings are reminiscent of its gold digging past, and in the afternoon get the heart racing with a ride on the zipline through native forest or onboard the train on the Driving Creek Railway - New Zealand's only narrow-gauge mountain railway.

Rich with arts, culture, history and natural scenery, Coromandel Town is a must for any road trip.



## Raglan, Waikato

You'll need to head west to find Raglan, a picturesque coastal town in the Waikato region. It's famous for its black sand beaches and world-class surf break, but is also the perfect place to relax by the seaside, if a slower pace is what you had in mind.

Art galleries and other boutique operators are nestled amongst the bush-clad hillsides, and there are also a number of beautiful walks to hidden waterfalls that are well worth putting on your itinerary. The food and coffee is great here, and it's also a favourite spot for gigs and live music, so you'll never know what you might find going on when you're in town.

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## Waihi, Western Bay of Plenty

Waihi's gold mining history is past and present, with New Zealand's richest gold mine still operating to this day, and there's all sorts of ways you can get in on the action. From hands-on experience with modern mining techniques, you can also explore the mine pit itself, deep inside or with a walk around the rim.

Many heritage buildings are dotted throughout Waihi town, and you'll also find a number of heritage trails that take you through some stunning scenery, with many historic places of interest along the way.

Waihi is also home to a beautiful, classic Kiwi beach, where the sand is golden and the waves are always rolling in along its wide expanse of 9km - perfect for surfing, bodyboarding, paddle boarding, or simply splashes in the shallows.



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## Cape Palliser, Wairarapa

It's not everyday you can get up close and personal with a lighthouse, but you can if you visit Cape Palliser, two hours drive from Wellington's CBD. You just might need to do a few leg warm ups before you begin, as there's 253 steps to count on your way up to the base of the lighthouse.

The cast iron lighthouse has been in place here since 1897, and not only does it still operate (albeit remotely, via mains electricity), it also watches over the North Island's largest seal colony. If you're here between November and January, you might be able to sneak a peek (from a distance of course) at a gorgeous seal pup!



## Golden Bay, Nelson/Tasman

There are a number of towns located along the coastline of Golden Bay, and every one of them is so very lucky to be there. At the western point you'll find Farewell Spit, one of the world's largest natural sand spits in the world and home to incredible sand dunes that create a breathtaking landscape. You'll also want to take in the crystal clear waters of Tata Beach and visit the local artists and artisans who call Golden Bay home.

This is truly one of New Zealand's most scenic locations, and driving here is easy from the city of Nelson. Just make sure you leave a few days in the schedule to soak up everything this region has to offer.



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## Hanmer Springs, Canterbury

Hanmer Springs is a beautiful alpine-resort town that is well known for its thermal pool and spa resort - a place the whole family can enjoy. Here you can indulge in a range of pools, from relaxing rock pools, to soothing sulphur pools, or for something a bit more energetic there's the activity pool, water slides and lap pool.

Outside of the Hanmer Springs Hot Pools, there's a number of mountain biking, walking and horse trails, as well as a village well-stocked with artisan cafes and boutique retailers. It's a fantastic year-round holiday destination, only an hour and a half drive from Christchurch.



## Lake Tekapo, Mackenzie Country

From world-class star gazing to lakeside scenery that will take your breath away, Lake Tekapo may be small, but it certainly packs a punch. How about floating in a hot pool, while experiencing the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve?

In the winter you'll have front row seats to the snow capped Southern Alps, and in summer, the vast, uninhabited landscape is a sight to behold, where from certain angles it can be hard to see where the lake ends and the sky begins.

And don't forget to grab your photo in front of the Church of the Good Shepherd, it's a must when you're in town.



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## Te Anau, Fiordland

Known as the gateway to Milford Sound and Fiordland National Park, Te Anau is a nature-lovers paradise. But it's not just a base for these spectacular locations, as it also offers a range of amazing activities and places to visit.

The town's cafes and restaurants treat visitors to incredible local venison, lobster and other seafood, and to build up an appetite for all the delicious food on offer, take a hike on one of the many walkways around the town, jump onboard a scenic flight, going cruising on the lake in a kayak or explore the Te Anau Glowworm Caves.



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