



LIFESTYLE self-guided HOLIDAYS – NEW ZEALAND

Wine Trail Cycling & Wine Tasting Tour – 5 days ex Blenheim



Experience the dramatic transformation of the fruit of the vine into a bottle on a Wine Trail tour by bicycle. Cycle at your pace and sample some of Marlborough's finest foods and wines. Take in the superb scenery while biking through vineyards, olive groves, orchards and farmland. Marlborough is renowned as one of the world's top 10 wine regions. What better way to experience the dramatic transformation from vine to bottle than on a leisurely cycling journey of just 20-30km per day. Each day's end sees your baggage transported ahead to your accommodation base and a choice of superb dinner venues.

Wineries and viticulture Marlborough is internationally recognised for its distinctive, herbaceous Sauvignon Blanc and is New Zealand's largest wine making region with about 65 wineries, 290 grape growers and over 4,000 hectares planted in grapes, mainly Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer. Marlborough is also establishing a strong reputation for its methode traditionnelle wines.

New Zealand's sunniest region: Marlborough is located on New Zealand's east coast with mountains to the west and is one of the country's sunniest and driest regions. In these sunny yet comparatively cool conditions the grapes benefit from a long slow, flavour-intensifying ripening period. Enjoy a leisurely cycle each day (20-30 kms), while your luggage is transported ahead to your next place of accommodation. The wineries you visit will be happy to deliver any bottles you purchase throughout the day to your accommodation.

Stay in comfort: Our accommodation caters for the discerning traveller in boutique or 'character' lodges and resorts with excellent cuisine in comfortable surroundings. Experience a choice of superb dinner venues each evening.

Tour Itinerary

Day 1. Arrival in Blenheim

Blenheim, in the heart of New Zealand's Marlborough district, is a busy country town full of interesting shops and cafes. An hour's stroll will take you from historical buildings to modern architecture. Pollard Park nearby has wonderful gardens, a nine-hole golf course, tennis courts and a fitness trail.

Hotel d'Urville is a fine and elegant boutique hotel situated within the historic Public Trust Building in the centre of Blenheim. We suggest you spend the afternoon exploring the local area. For an excellent evening meal in a delightful setting, the d'Urville Wine Bar and Brasserie may be just the perfect place.



Day 2. Blenheim to The Bell Tower

We suggest you start your first cycling day in a leisurely fashion. Your destination today is a boutique lodge, situated amidst stunning scenery overlooking Marlborough's vineyards. En route, why not cycle to the Wither Hills Walkway and enjoy a brisk walk to the Lookout? From here you have an excellent view over Blenheim and the Wairau Plains. Then cycle halfway back, turn left into New Renwick Road and after a couple of kilometres, left again into Ben Morven Road, which starts off very flat but gradually takes you to the elevated site of Fran Maguire's pottery studio. Fran is an artist with a passion for clay and food, which is reflected in her brightly coloured, unique tableware. Visit Villa Maria Estate on Paynters Road before turning left into New Renwick Road where you can visit Matua Marlborough and Fromm Winery, which are two well established vineyards. Take a late lunch at the Tuscan-style Highfield Estate Winery. Arrive at The Bell Tower Boutique Lodge on Dog Point early afternoon ready to be spoiled.

Cycling: approx. 25km

Day 3. The Bell Tower to Old Saint Mary's Convent

Wake to the calls of a host of native song birds. Enjoy a delicious breakfast and prepare yourself for a day of quality wine tasting. Cycling from The Bell Tower Boutique Lodge, turn left into Dog Point Road, then right onto Hawkesbury Road and left to Middle Renwick Road. On your left is Waihopai Valley Road, where you can explore Grove Mill winery with its award winning wines, extensive wine library and gallery. Seresin Estate in Bedford Road is another exciting and stylish winery. Only the grapes grown on the estate are used in the production of the wine.

Framingham Wine Company on Conders Bend Road is a must see with Rex Brooke Taylor being a terrific host.

Then turn right onto Highway 6 and make your way to Cellier le Brun with its unique underground cellars. It is a perfect place to have lunch before you go back along Highway 6 to Forrest Estate, which is run by John and Brigid Forrest who produce and market their own diverse range of wines. Perhaps call in at the well-known Hunter's winery on Rapaura Rd before continuing on to the charming and character-full Old Saint Mary's Convent built in 1901. We suggest you choose Gibbs Restaurant for your dinner venue tonight. Your hosts will be happy to assist with a reservation and transport.

Cycling: approx. 20km

Day 4. Old Saint Mary's Convent to The Peppertree

Your route today will offer at least four other vineyards of note. At the family-owned Allan Scott Winery in Jackson Road taste premium award winning wines in a unique setting. Just opposite is the winery that took New Zealand's Sauvignon Blanc wine from curiosity to respectability - Cloudy Bay. Then turn left into Old Renwick Road and left again into Hammerichs Road to visit Drylands Estate, which offers state-of-the-art wine production. Saint Clair, back on the corner of Rapaura and Selmes Road is a good place for lunch, before the final stop for the day which could be Price's Traditional Country Preserves.

If today is your last day's cycling, follow the route map via Dwers and Thompsons Roads to Spokesman Cycles in Blenheim, where you can leave your bikes (by 4.30pm please). Here you can ring Werner at the Peppertree and ask him to transfer you to his gracious Edwardian villa.

Alternatively, cycle to The Peppertree via the scenic route. From Thompsons Road go straight ahead into Murphy's Road which leads into Batty's Road. Then turn left into Alabama Road until you reach State Highway 1, where you turn right and cycle approximately 1km (this short section of road can be busy). The Peppertree entrance will be on your right-hand side. Enjoy your last evening at this historic homestead.

There are many good restaurants to choose locally or let your hosts Heidi and Werner know that you would like to have dinner at their place.

Cycling: approx. 25km



Day 5. Departure from Blenheim

Enjoy a country-style breakfast in the rich ambience of the dining room and stroll around the lovely garden before your tour ends. If you dropped your bikes off at Spokesman Cycles yesterday, Marlborough Supershuttle will collect you and your luggage around mid-morning and transfer you to a location of your choice in the Blenheim town centre. If you need the transfer at a specific time, please call Bryon Schwass in advance on 03-572-9910. If you cycled to 'The Peppertree' yesterday, you will need to return your bikes to Spokesman Cycles today (by 4.30pm please). Your luggage will be transferred to the bike shop approx. mid-morning.

Tour Information



Included in the tour price:

- 4 nights' accommodation in 4-5 star boutique hotels and lodges
- 4 breakfasts
- Luggage transfers between accommodation properties
- Multi-gear bicycle with helmet and pannier
- Suggested route notes, map and regional information

Tour Grade

This tour is graded 1/2 or Easy (on a scale of 1-10 with 9/10 being extreme).

Fitness Required

A low level of fitness is required, exercising at least once a week prior to the tour.