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Dear adventurer,

Thank you for choosing to travel with Heritage Expeditions aboard our purpose-built flagship *Heritage Adventurer* exploring the lush wilderness of Ulva & Stewart Islands, the towering fiords of Fiordland and some of New Zealand's most iconic and least-explored destinations.

We hope you enjoy reliving your adventure when reading the below Expedition Log from your voyage. If you have any problems viewing this document please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please download your copy of our Slide Show presentation which screened on the final night of our voyage and a downloadable PDF of this expedition log [here](#). (Please note this slideshow will be available to download until 17 May 2024)

If you have not already shared your experience, photography skills or memories with us, we invite you to take a few minutes to submit your comments, testimonial or images from the expedition [here](#).

Please note we may choose to place your comments and photographs in the public viewing gallery, so whatever you submit may be viewed by any visitor to our website unless requested otherwise.

And don't forget, as a returning guest we'll give you a 5% discount off your next voyage with Heritage Expeditions.

Yours in adventure,

The Heritage Expeditions Team

THE BEST OF NEW ZEALAND
on board HERITAGE ADVENTURER
7 March - 21 March 2024



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Day 1

7 March

Queenstown

We, intrepid travellers from around the globe, arrived in Queenstown to a touch of snow on The Remarkables and made our way to our hotel. Here we met some of our Expedition Team, Tamzin and Thijs, before dining together in preparation for our The Best of New Zealand expedition to begin.

Day 2

8 March

Bluff/Fiordland

We started the day with an exploration of the bustling remote alpine holiday town Queenstown, before making our way to Bluff via a scenic coach transfer. As we left the spiny Central Otago Mountain range we entered the rolling plains of Southland, driving over the Southland Syncline before descending to Invercargill then Bluff. On board *Heritage Adventurer*, we were greeted by the rest of our Expedition Team and crew, before settling in and exploring our home for the upcoming voyage. Making our way into Foveaux Strait, we undertook a lifeboat drill. After introductions, we enjoyed the first of many delicious dinners as we made our way around Puysegur Point, our adventure underway.



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Day 3

9 March

Dusky Sound

Awakening in the calm waters of Dusky Sound we anchored for the morning at Cascade Cove, with stunning views of the sound and the Cascade Waterfall. Making our way out in the morning light for our excursions we headed to Indian Island, where we learned of Cook's encounter with a Māori family and where they lived. We then journeyed to Astronomer's Point where we learned of the history of Cook and the Forsters – naturalists on board the *HMS Resolution*, with Glenda and Stella also pointing out some of the native vegetation including orchids and liverworts.

After lunch, we relocated to Anchor Island and some of us boarded an additional helicopter excursion for a spectacular ride to Mount Pender. The rest of us had the option of a walk on Anchor Island or a Zodiac cruise around Anchor Island and the Many Islands. The pest-free Anchor and Many Islands provided an abundance of birdlife including Karearea/New Zealand Falcon, Mohua/Yellowhead, Tīeke/Saddleback, Kākā and Brown Creeper. Around the islands, there were several New Zealand Fur Seals, some in creches with their pups, while others soaked up the sun on the rocks among the kelp and seaweed.

After our excursions for the day, we made the most of the evening light and headed up Acheron Passage for a scenic ship cruise.



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Day 4

10 March

Doubtful/Dusky Sound

A different fiord greeted us this morning as we entered Thompson Sound against the rising sun, arriving at our anchorage at Grono Bay between Secretary and Bauza Islands. The long walkers started first, leaving Grono Bay and walking to the Department of Conservation Gut Hut on the other side of a tight gap called The Gut. Walking through the regenerating forest on this pest-free island we saw New Zealand Wood Pigeon/Kereru, Mohua/Yellowhead, Brown Creeper/Pipipi, Kākā and Karearea/New Zealand Falcon. The forest also held fragrant Easter Orchids, tiny Lantern Berries and Bracket Fungi. Arriving at the Gut Hut we were greeted by the sounds of Kea and a friendly Weka before heading down to the beach where we saw Fuchsia and New Zealand Mistletoe as well as the gneiss rocks shimmering with mica and garnet.

During lunch, we sailed down the coast past Dagg Sound and into Breaksea Sound. Along the way, we passed Breaksea Island, one of New Zealand's first pest-free islands, and home to species such as South Island Saddleback/Tīeke and Mohua/Yellowhead.

Cruising down Acheron Passage and Wet Jacket Arm we were treated to commentary by Genevieve, Glenda and Daniel about the surrounding geology, history and botany. Heading around Resolution Island to the blustery Pigeon Island, a hearty few braved the wind and rain to head to Pigeon Island to learn about one of New Zealand's first conservationists Richard Henry, who translocated hundreds of Kākāpō and Kiwi onto Resolution Island. We then braved the gusts of wind and pelting rain for a Zodiac cruise through Facile Harbour where another New Zealand first occurred, the first shipwreck of a vessel called the *Endeavour*. We also marvelled at the looming gneiss rock wall that towered above and sheltered us from the elements.



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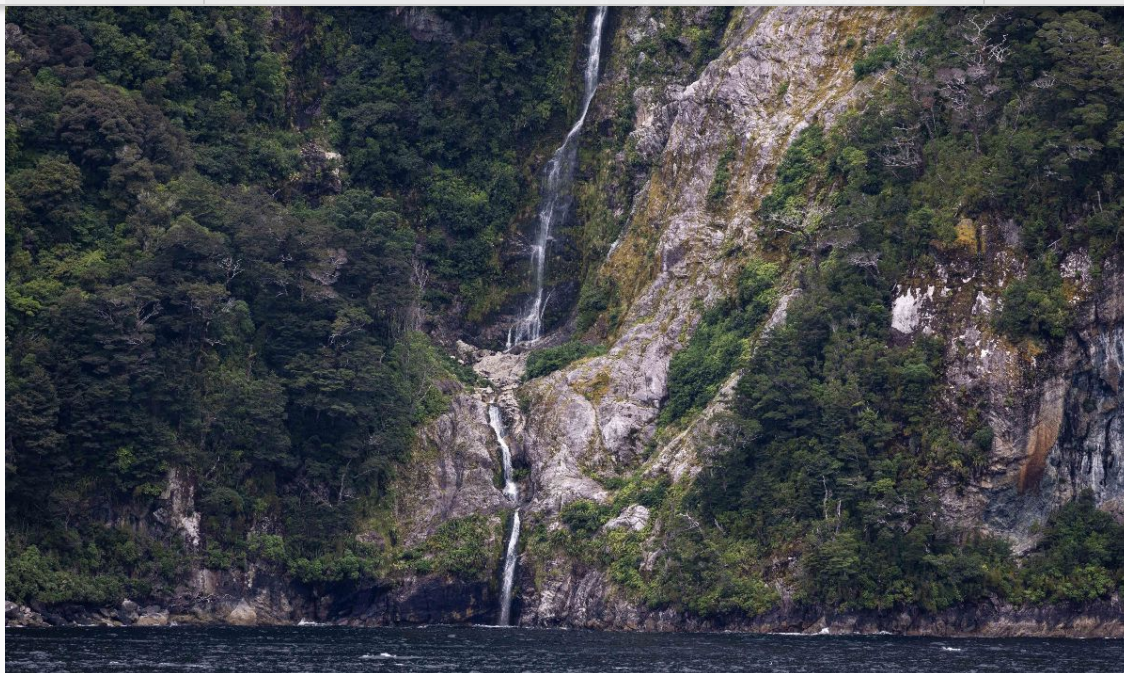
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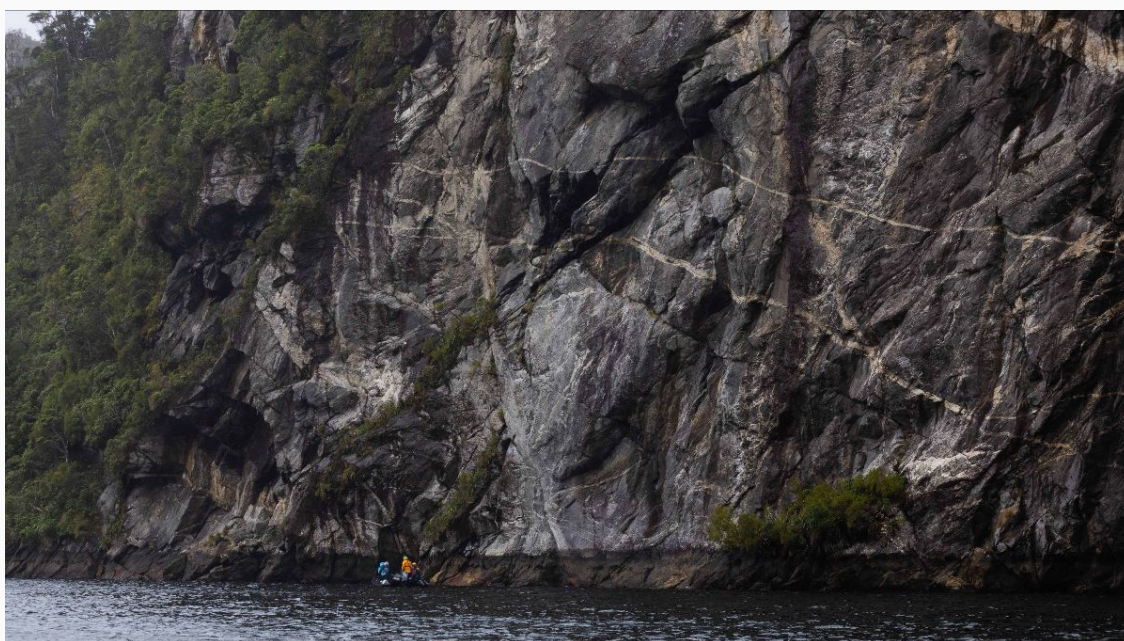
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Day 5

11 March

Ulva and Stewart Island

After a more settled night rounding Puysegur Point, we cruised into Paterson Inlet near Stewart Island.

As we anchored, we were greeted with birdsong from the nearby Ulva Island, which was where we began our morning. Heading on to Ulva Island we spent the morning soaking in the history, plants and birdlife – including Mohua/Yellowhead, Brown Creeper/Pipipi, Kaka and more. The fragrance of the Easter Orchid heavy in the forest guided us through bush and beach, with viewings of New Zealand/Hooker's Sea Lions and for those of us who were lucky, a Southern Brown Kiwi/Rakiura Tokoeka.

After another delicious lunch on board *Heritage Adventurer*, we made our way to Golden Bay and the island's only township, Oban. Here we took in the sights of the museum, jade carving studio and the various gift shops cafes and pub. Back on board our trusty expedition vessel, we cruised past some of the Titi/Muttonbird Islands where local Māori traditionally harvest these birds from April to May, before heading north with a glowing sky.





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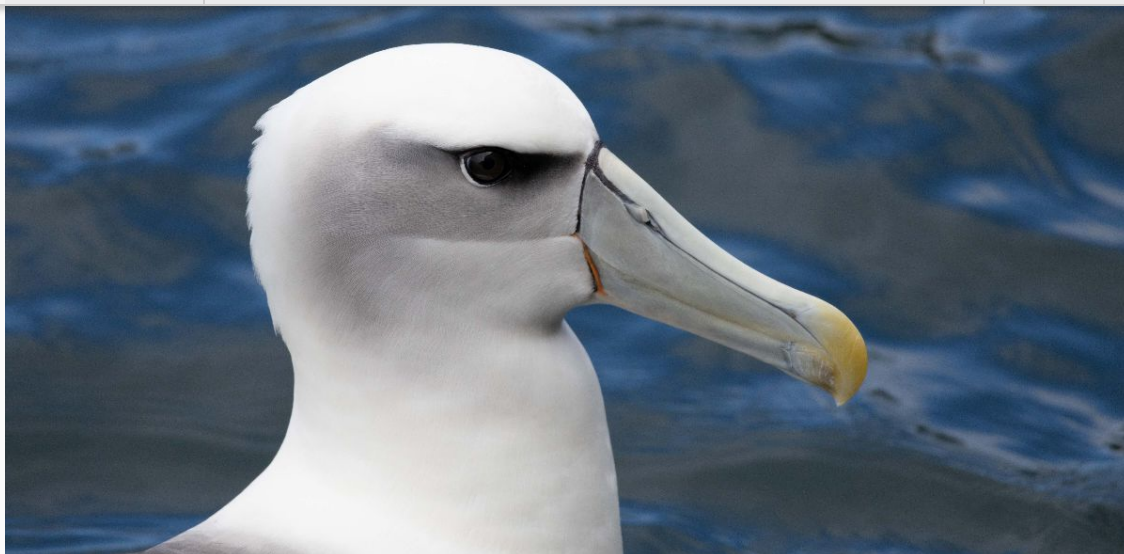
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Day 6

12 March

Dunedin

Zig-zagging our way up Otago Harbour we reached the Scottish-infused city of Dunedin, where we headed off for the day exploring the Otago Museum and Botanical Gardens. Genevieve and Stella helped us identify the various trees and plants as we marvelled at species from around the world on show in the carefully curated gardens. At the museum, we learned about early Māori and European settlers. We then visited exhibits about the extant and extinct wildlife before heading into the butterfly house filled with many exotic species of butterflies which flew around us enjoying the warmer temperatures than the typical breezy Dunedin day. After exploring the city, we headed out to the Otago Peninsula stopping for lunch on the way at Portobello Bistro before heading further out to Taiaroa Head for a tour around the Northern Royal Albatross colony.

At Taiaroa Head we saw these large birds glide around before landing at their nest sites, with different views of parents and fluffy chicks that call this area home alongside the cacophony of hundreds of Red-

...billed Gulls. We returned to the city to visit the aquarium where a multitude of marine wonders awaited us. We got up close and personal with the local marine fishes and delved into the deep on a virtual field trip to the deep-sea canyons that surround this coast.



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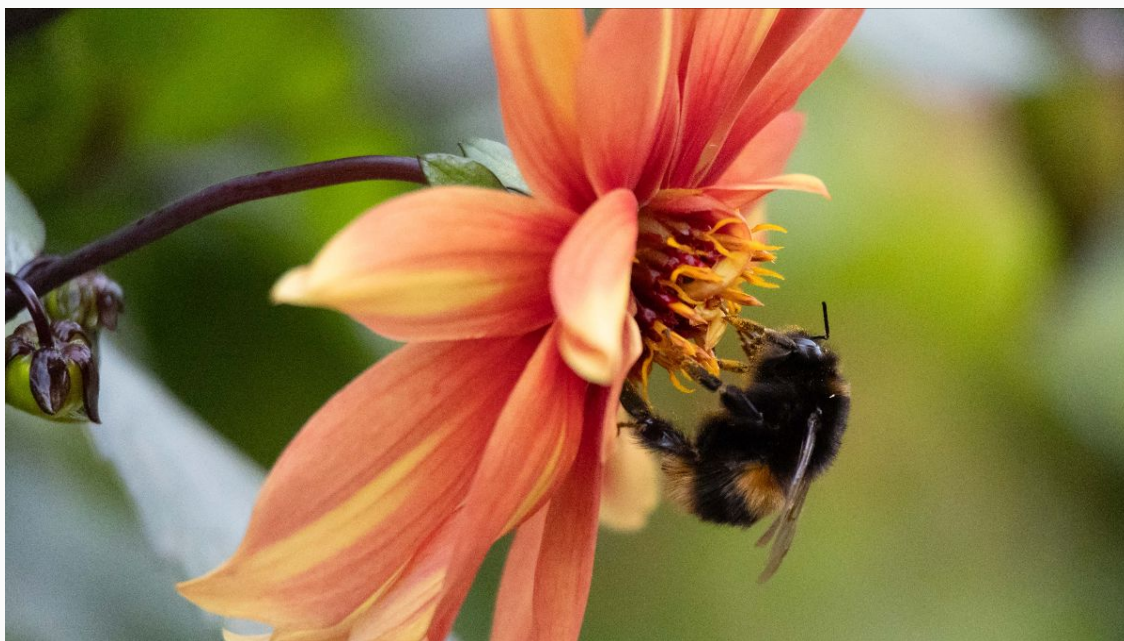
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Day 7

13 March

Lyttelton/Christchurch

This morning, we were greeted by the Banks Peninsula coastline as we made our way into Lyttelton Harbour. Some of us headed to Quail Island, where we explored the island taking in the multitude of history it had to offer, from a place of Mahinga kai/food gathering to farming; a colony for lepers and immigrants; and where Scott and Shackleton trained dogs and Manchurian ponies for their Antarctic expeditions.

Others went to Ōhinetahi Gardens which held a bountiful garden setting along with its charming historical cottage and orchard, and a more modern sculptural and art gallery; and not to forget the friendly dog.

After returning to *Heritage Adventurer* for lunch some of us went to Rossendale Winery for wine tastings and a chat to chat, with both groups ultimately ending up in Christchurch's CBD spending the afternoon exploring the many historical and modern buildings, and the home of Heritage Expeditions.



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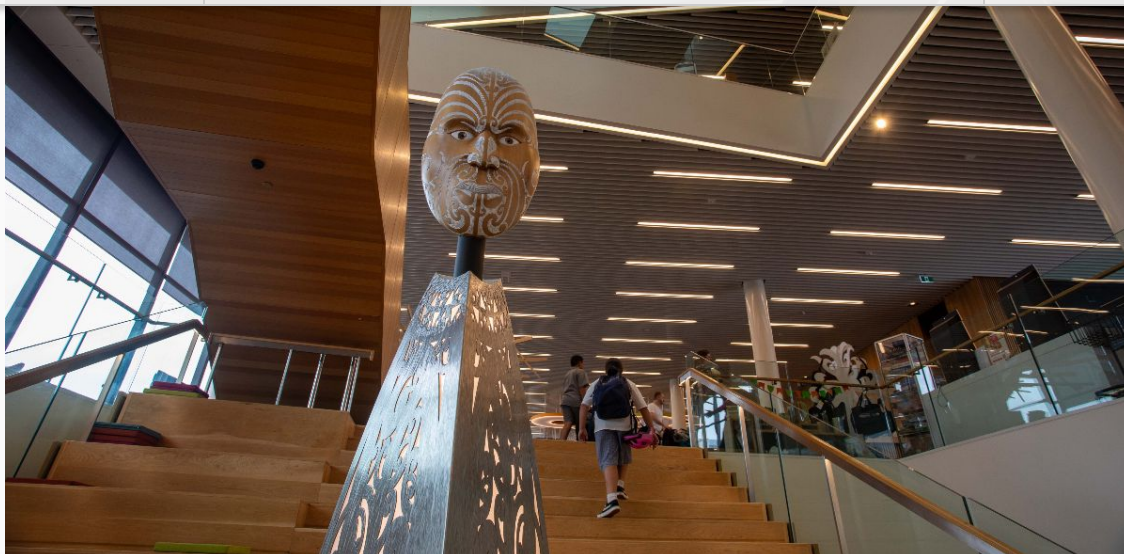
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Day 8

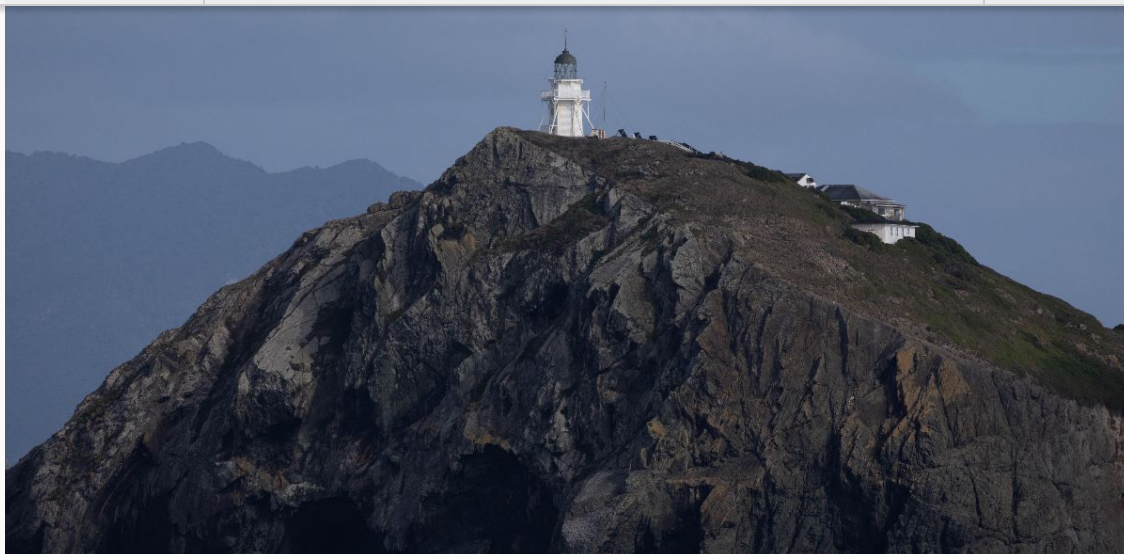
14 March

Marlborough Sounds

This morning, we had a short sea passage before arriving in the Marlborough Sounds. We made the most of this time by honing our creative skills with workshops by Cathy on phone photography, and a workshop on the use of cyanotype which some of us would try out in the afternoon. Nearing the entrance to Queen Charlotte Sound we stopped at White Rocks, home to most of Marlborough's King Shag population.

The afternoon saw us exploring the pest-free Motuara Island, sighting species such as Tieke/Saddleback, Mohua/Yellowhead and Little Blue Penguins cuddled up in their nesting boxes. We also headed to explore Ship Cove/Meretoto, bountiful in local Māori and European history, with James Cook frequenting this area five times. A multitude of options awaited us at Ship Cove with some admiring the sculptures and information boards, while others explored nearby waterfalls, and some enjoyed a longer walk at the start of the Queen Charlotte Track up to a lookout.

Getting in touch with our creative side some of us tried the art of cyanotype using beach and forest combed items, to cast shadows and create our works of art. Appreciating the warmer waters we enjoyed a swim in the tranquil waters. What a day in the Marlborough Sounds!



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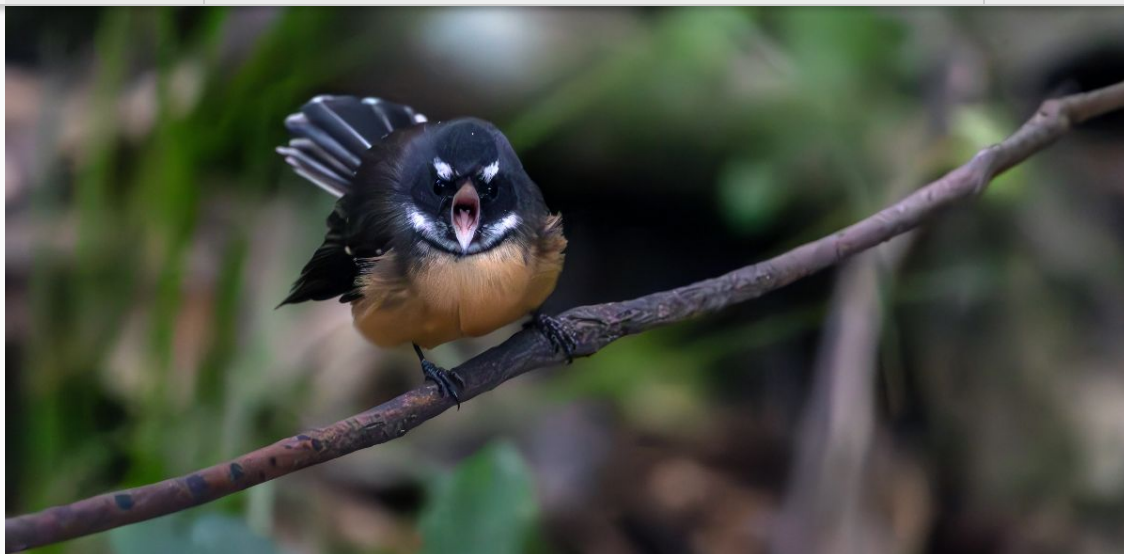
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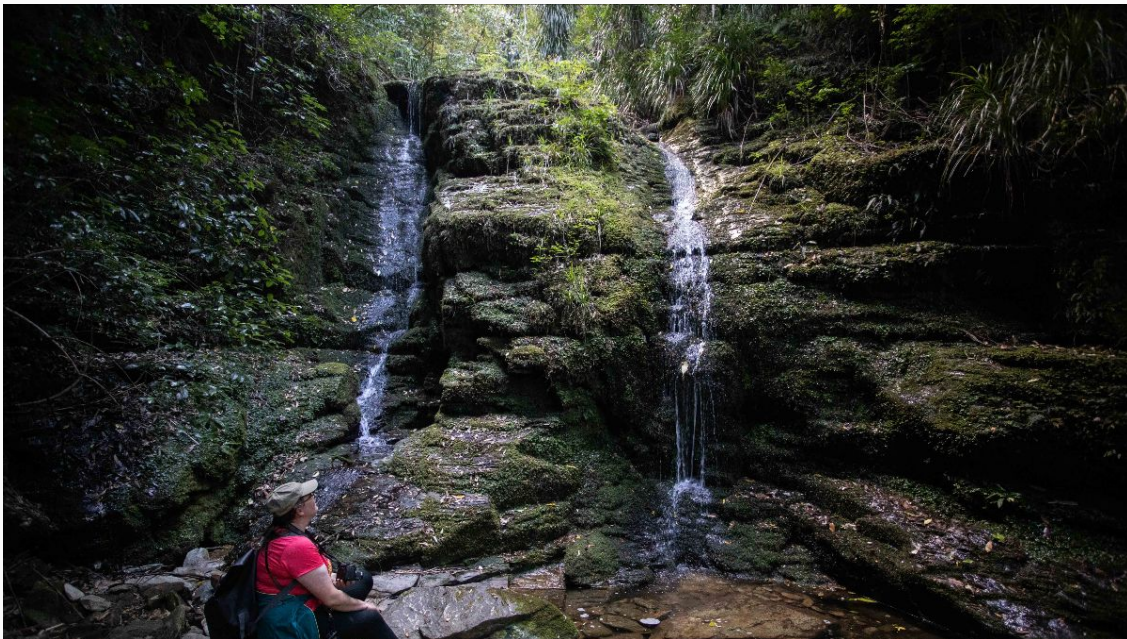
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Day 9

15 March

Abel Tasman National Park

As light descended, we enjoyed the views of the golden beaches of Abel Tasman National Park. A variety of walks were on offer, including a long walk from Awaroa Bay to Torrent Bay. For those who wanted a gentle stroll, there were a variety of options to choose from at Anchorage Bay. Our walks flowed into a multitude of golden sandy beaches, through native bushes where the iconic symbol of New Zealand, the Silver Fern, greeted us along our paths. Winding along the enticing coastline we made our way over the rolling hills along swing bridges and past tranquil pools. Reaching our final destinations of Anchorage and Torrent Bays – some chose to soak up the sun whilst others enjoyed a refreshing dip in the clear blue waters of these bays.

After enjoying the beach life, we returned to *Heritage Adventurer* with an afternoon and evening of lectures presented by Chris Todd – on the first contact between Māori and Pakeha and the subsequent trade and warfare. After dinner, we enjoyed a presentation by Aaron Russ about Heritage Expeditions' beginnings to the present day.



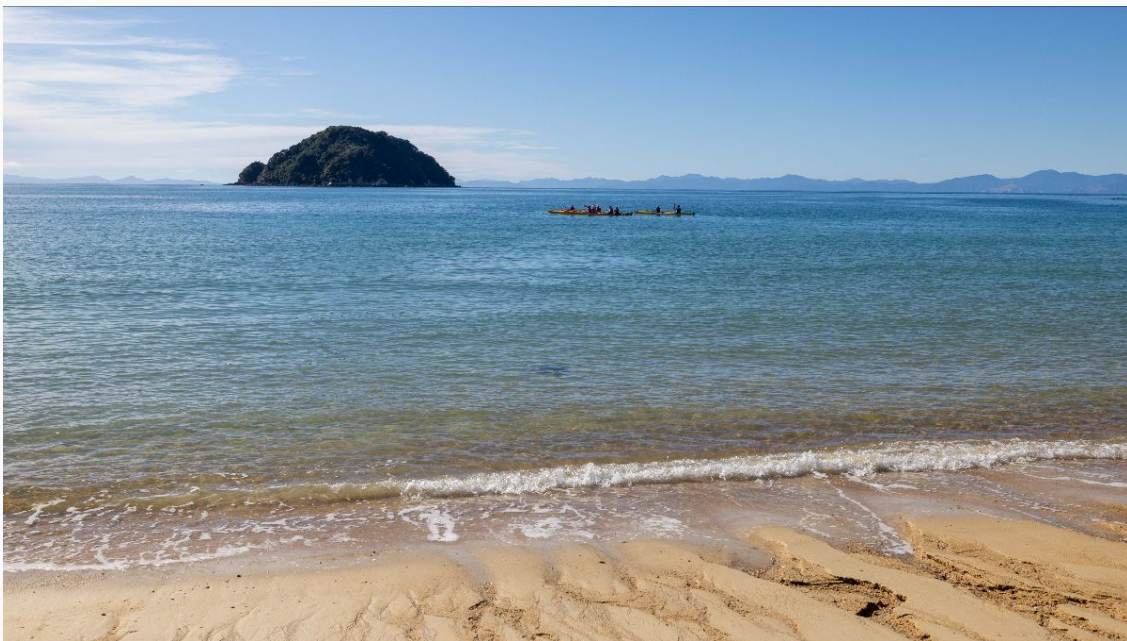
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Day 10

16 March

Wellington

It was a slightly rocky start to the morning as the cool southerly rolled us into Wellington. We headed off to explore the city as the wind died down into a beautiful sunny day, filled with the sound of Kiwi bands at the Homegrown Music Festival on the waterfront. We made our way to explore New Zealand's quirky capital at our own pace with its many green spaces and niche cafes.

A mix of nature and culture filled the city with some of us enjoying the iconic Wellington Cable Car ride to a beautiful lookout point of the city and the Botanical Gardens. Some ventured a little further on to Zealandia in search of an array of native flora and fauna in the centre of the city. Those who went to Zealandia were not disappointed with sightings of Kākā, North Island Saddleback, Kereru/New Zealand Wood Pigeon, Takahe and even smaller creatures such as Tuatara and Weta.

Others chose to explore Te Papa, New Zealand's national museum with a multitude of exhibits showcasing New Zealand's fauna and flora, geology, Māori culture, art, and its societal and environmental issues. After rejoining *Heritage Adventurer*, we welcomed our new guide Murray who gave a talk on New Zealand's unique ecology and why many of the species and places we have ventured to are at risk.



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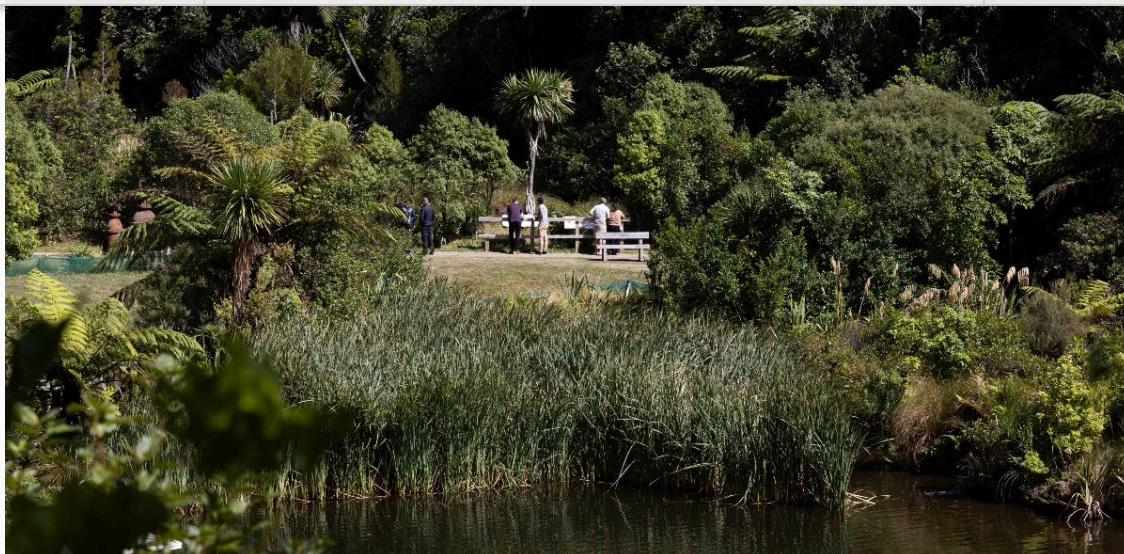
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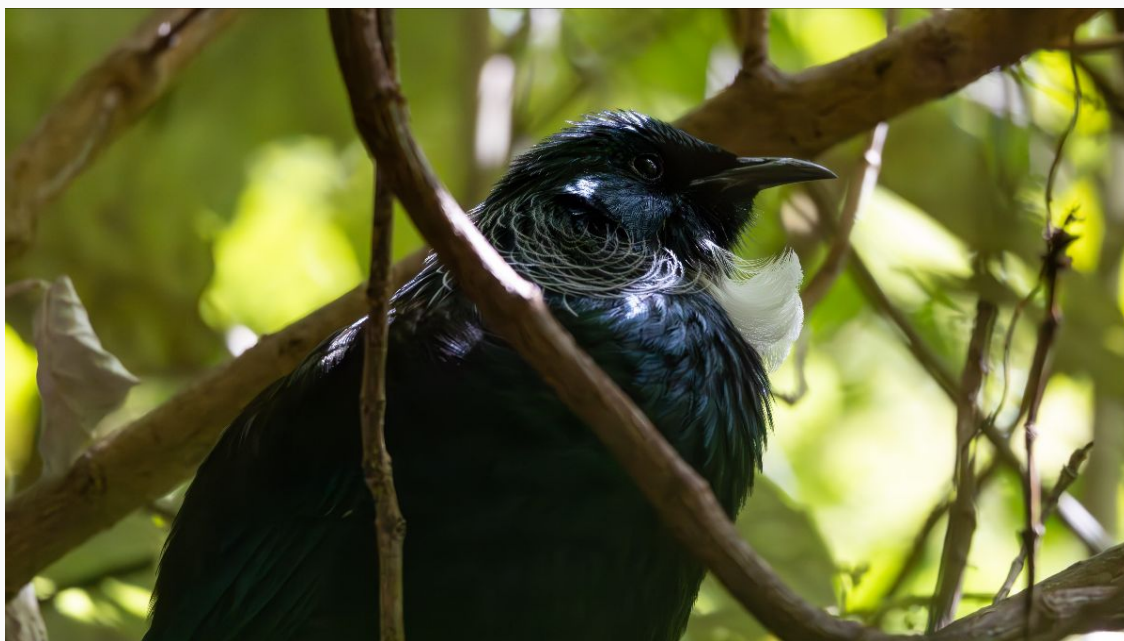
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Day 11

17 March

Napier

We cruised smooth waters this morning and arrived at the Art Deco capital of New Zealand, Napier. First up, we headed to Cape Kidnappers Gannet colony, which is the largest mainland Gannet colony in the world. Heading over regenerating farmland we passed private lodges, golf courses and pools which held species protected by the predator control work on the peninsula such as Brown Teal/Pateke. Arriving at the Gannet colony we saw thousands of Australasian Gannets at various stages of life including those about to fledge, who would soon make their 3-4 years Trans-Tasman journey before returning.

Returning to the Gannet colony base we enjoyed a lunch of local delicacies and headed back to Napier township to spend the rest of the afternoon soaking up the sights of the town or heading on a local Art Deco walking tour.



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Day 12

18 March

Gisborne

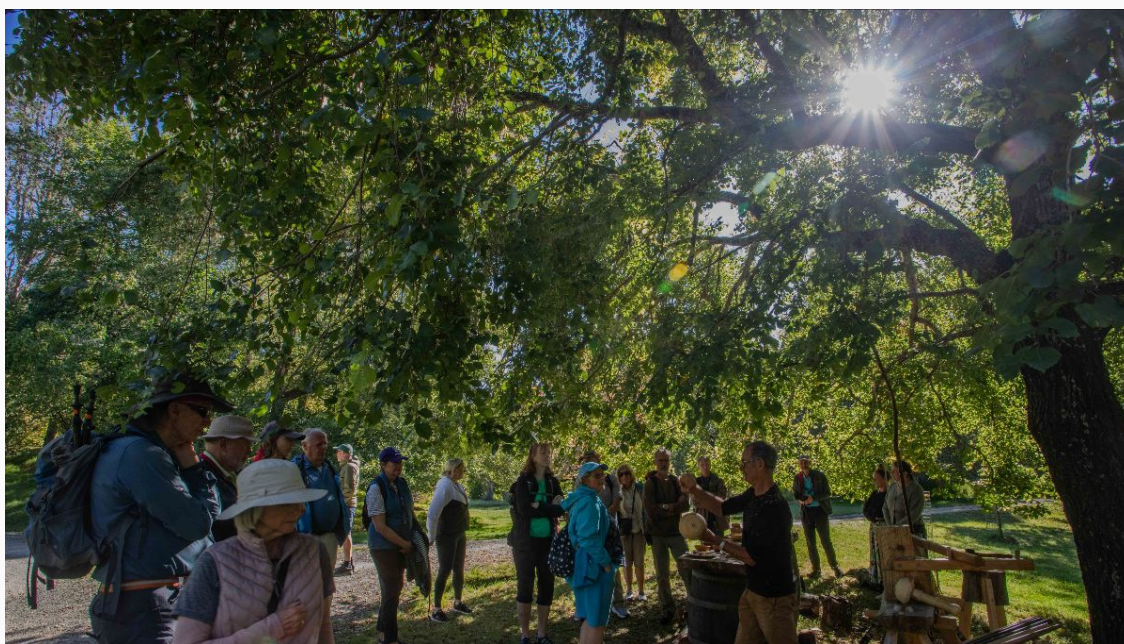
The first of New Zealand's sun greeted us near Gisborne as we cruised past Young Nick's Head, sighted by Cook's men on his first voyage around New Zealand. We Zodiac cruised into Gisborne's port, home to a bustling logging industry. Touring our way to the Eastwoodhill Arboretum we wound our way through fields full of Maise, Kiwifruit, citrus and grapes, that grow in the fertile soils.

Reaching the Arboretum nestled in the foothills of Gisborne, we learned how one man's passion for conserving a variety of species grew into a beautiful garden and reserve for species that are endangered elsewhere. A mix of walking and vehicle tours were enjoyed before a delicious morning tea provided in a stunning setting, where native birds flourished, and autumnal colours started to turn. We also watched

Returning to *Heritage Adventurer* we enjoyed an afternoon of talks and relaxing as we made our way up to Great Barrier Island.



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Day 13

19 March

Great Barrier Island

This morning started with lectures from Tamzin, Murray and Glenda on Great Barrier Island and the conservation work that some of the team had undertaken. We then welcomed Steve from Glenfern Sanctuary on board who told us the story of Glenfern and the actions they were taking to reduce predators in its protected area.

After a delicious barbeque lunch, we headed off to Glenfern where we explored the beautiful gardens and stunning native bush. We met Rodney Ngawaka at Sunset Rock, a trustee of Glenfern and local iwi. The lookout points at Sunset Rock provided us with spectacular views of Port Fitzroy and the surrounding area. Heading further up we walked along the boardwalk to a grand Kauri tree which was saved from logging, and those brave enough took the swing bridge into its canopy for a different view of the forest. Some made their way back down via the bush walk, past a Black Petrel nest, seeing Brown Teal and Banded Rail along the way.

Passing the beautiful, restored gardens and historic homestead some of us hopped on a Zodiac to explore the coves off Port Fitzroy and the surrounding islands. Our cruise saw us go into sea caves, checking out local spots such as Man of War Passage and Smokehouse Bay, with great observations of Gannet and a Little Blue Penguin.



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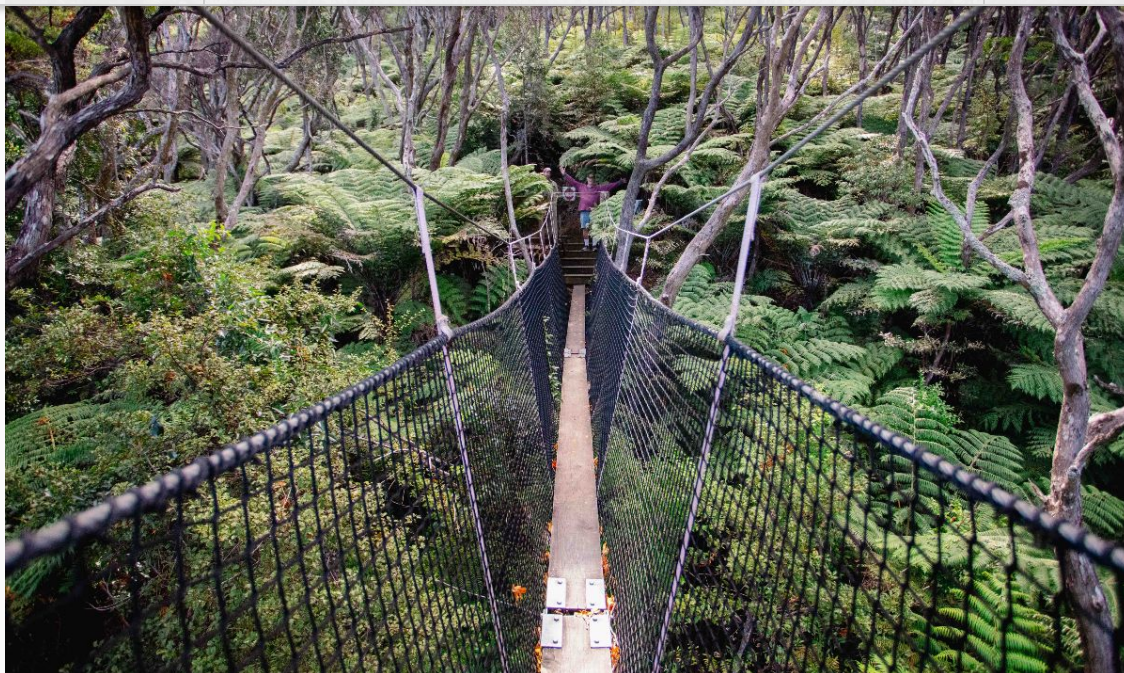
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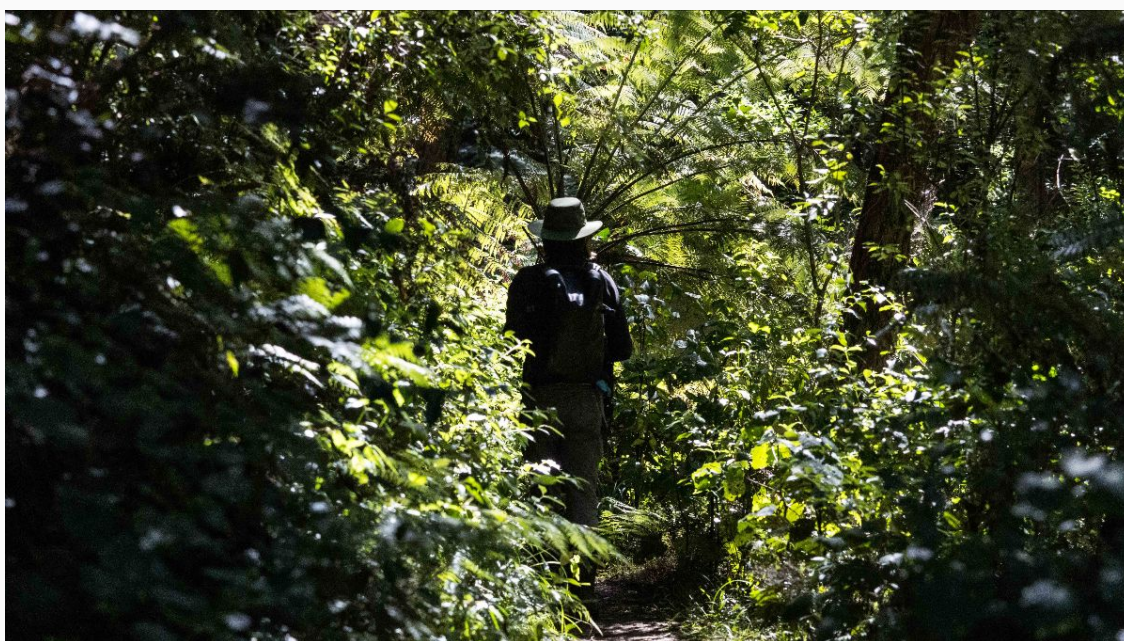
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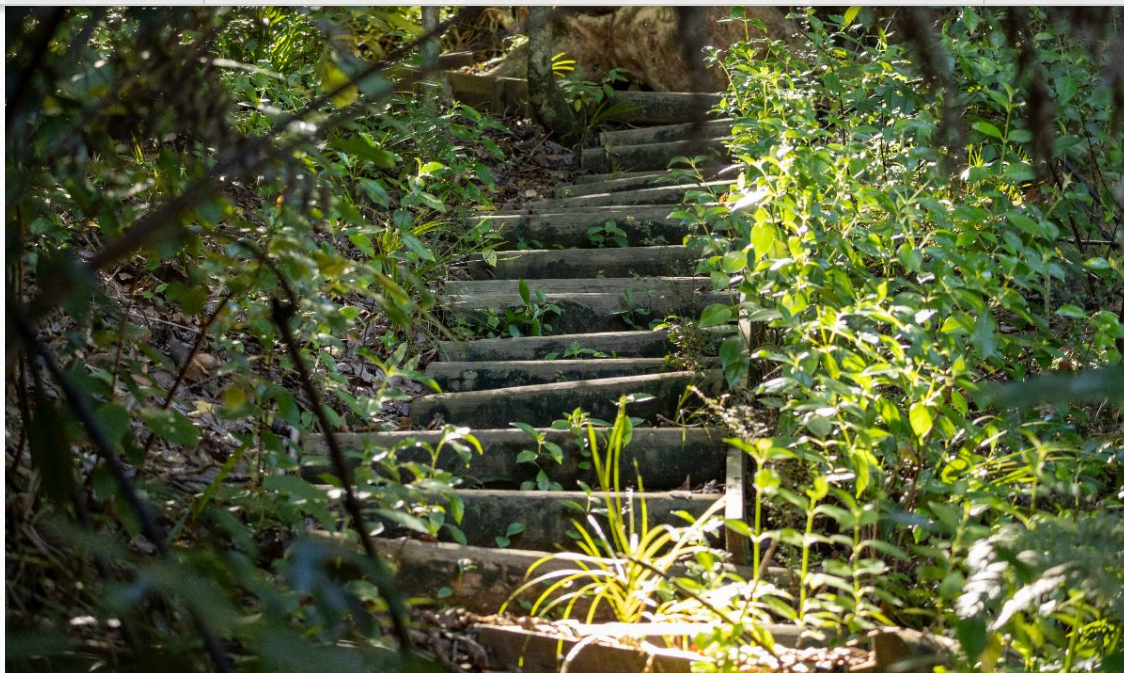
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Day 14
20 March
Bay of Islands

Our last full day aboard *Heritage Adventurer* began at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds. Here we partook in a guided tour around the grounds and learned about the history of one of New Zealand's foundational documents, The Treaty of Waitangi. After our tour, we had the chance to visit the museum and experience the traditional carving demonstration. We then were welcomed with a traditional performance of Waiata/songs and Kapa Haka/traditional dances before making our way back to *Heritage Adventurer* for our last delicious lunch aboard.

After lunch we headed to the charming town of Russell where we explored the many heritage buildings – some of which are among the oldest in New Zealand, being one of New Zealand's first capitals. Some ventured into the museum, around the cafes and gift shops and those looking to stretch their legs headed up to Flagstaff Hill for beautiful views over the township and bays.



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Day 15
21 March
Auckland

An early start in the Port of Auckland saw us enjoy one last breakfast with our ship friends and family before departing for home or onward adventures. We said our final farewells to the crew and expedition team as we made our way into the bustling city of Auckland.



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