

# 📍 North Island: Lord of the Rings 5-Day Highlights

Explore the magical filming locations that brought Middle-earth to life across the North Island.

**Best For:** Movie fans, nature lovers, self-drive travellers

**Duration:** 5 Days

**Start/End:** Tāmaki Makaurau – Auckland

**Recommended Vehicle:** Car or Campervan

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## Day 1: Auckland → Matamata (Hobbiton)

**What to Do:**

- Take the guided Hobbiton Movie Set tour
- Enjoy a drink at the Green Dragon Inn
- Explore the lush Waikato countryside

**Where to Stay:**

- 🚐 *Freedom camping:* Firth Tower Reserve (self-contained only)
- 🏜 *Campground:* Opal Hot Springs & Holiday Park

**Must-Try Flavours:**

- Hobbiton's Ale at the Green Dragon
- Local cheeses from Putaruru

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## Day 2: Matamata → Piopio (Trollshaw Forest)

**What to Do:**

- Hike part of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing
- View Mount Ngauruhoe, aka Mount Doom
- Explore volcanic landscapes in the national park

**Where to Stay:**

- 🚐 *Freedom camping:* Mangahuia DOC Campsite
- 🏜 *Campground:* Discovery Lodge

**Travel Tip:**

- Weather can change rapidly — pack layers and start early if hiking.

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## Day 3: Piopio (Trollshaw Forest) → Tongariro National Park (Mount Doom)

### What to Do:

- Visit Hairy Feet Scenic Film Location Tour
- Take photos among limestone cliffs and native bush

### Where to Stay:

-  *Freedom camping*: Piopio Domain
-  *Campground*: Waitomo TOP 10

### Need to Know:

- Tours are guided only — book ahead online.

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## Day 4: Tongariro National Park (Mount Doom) → Wellington (Rivendell & Wētā Workshop)

### What to Do:

- Visit Kaitoke Regional Park (Rivendell)
- Take a studio tour at Wētā Workshop
- Walk around Mount Victoria's forest (used for the Nazgûl chase)

### Where to Stay:

-  *Freedom camping*: Evans Bay Marina
-  *Campground*: Wellington Top 10 Holiday Park

### Must-Try Flavours:

- Fresh seafood on the Wellington waterfront
- Craft beer at a local brewery

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## Day 5: Explore Wellington

### What to Do:

- Visit Te Papa Museum
- Optional: Take a guided LOTR location tour

- Shop for souvenirs and Middle-earth memorabilia

**Final Tip:**

- The Interislander ferry to the South Island departs from here — perfect if you're doing the full LOTR loop!

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