

Getting to New Zealand & Touring Auckland

Day 1- Monday, March 18: Honolulu

Flight from San Diego to Honolulu:

A beautiful sunny morning in San Diego for the first leg of our trip. The flight is not completely full so we have time to enjoy a little aloha welcome before take off.





Farewell San Diego - till we return!



We have arrived in Honolulu. Smooth flight, great weather, lots of luggage! 🤪 2 people, 2 months, 3 climate zones, yikes 😂.



Ohana Waikiki East by Outrigger:

All checked into a gorgeous hotel. As soon as they heard we are celebrating our 40th Anniversary, they gave us a free upgrade to a one bedroom suite on the top floor and refunded for the one night we had to cancel!! We are CELEBRATING 😊.





View from our lanai.



Late lunch/early dinner at Dukes on the beach.

Day 2-4 - Tuesday, March 19 - 22: Auckland

Flight from Honolulu to Auckland:

Checkin in Honolulu was crazy, very crowded and disorganized. The airport is undergoing a lot of remodeling.

We were in first class on this flight which was very quiet and with 180 degree lie flat seats I was able to sleep for 3 hours. Of course the complementary Mai Tais helped. The flight was bumpy, but with unlimited movies and great food choices it made the 9 hour 15 minutes very comfortable.







Cross the International Dateline

(loose one day)

We landed in Auckland at about 9:50pm so it was dark and all we could see were some city lights and light freeway traffic.

Terry zipped through the first border check point with his new ePassport. Unfortunately the ePassport reader rejected mine so I had to wait in a long queue. That's okay because I have an official NZ stamp in my passport and Terry doesn't!

We found our luggage and made it through customs with no problems. After a few minutes we found our driver who had been waiting an hour for us to arrive. He was very nice and answered all our questions about Auckland.

Ridges Auckland Hotel:

We lucked out and got a king instead of the double room we were suppose to have. Very nice hotel and we have a corner room with a view of the Sky Tower. Sky Tower is usually lit up at night, but has been dark since last week's mass shootings at 2 Mosques.



Terry's corner office in our room.



Sunrise views from out room.





Our view of Sky Tower.

Touring Auckland:

We bought a 2 day pass on the Hop On Hop Off bus. It's a great way to see the city and many of the surrounding areas. It also includes a pass for the ferry to Devonport Village, a historical seaside village on a small island in the harbor. Devonport consists of 2 volcanoes, Mount Victoria to the west and Mount Head to the east.











Gluten free raspberry black forest gelato. Ooh, so good!







Arrived ferry terminal Auckland.

Japanese Garden in Western Springs Park, near the Auckland Zoo

revitalised space.

Designed by the expert garden maker - Professor Kubota and colleagues from Fukuoka. Constructed collaboratively by Japanese artisans and local landscapers.

Designed as a viewing garden, please keep to the platform and paved paths.



Professor Kubota - master garden designer.



The mayors of Fukuoka and Auckland, Seichiro Takashima and Phil Goff at the opening ceremony

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The Fukuoka Garden

Open 10am

Closed Summer - 6.30pm
(during daylight saving)

Winter - 5.30pm

For enquiries please phone (09) 301 0101




A Japanese garden for Aucklanders

This garden is a manifestation of Auckland's sister city relationship with Fukuoka.

It is a taste of Japan, a gesture of friendship and an urban sanctuary.

A feast for the eyes

This garden is a visual treat and a soundscape, with tumbling and trickling water and twittering birds.

Bridges, stepping stones and water link elements and the dry garden (karesansui) by the entry and the tea pavilion provide spaces to pause and reflect.

The features of this garden are delicately composed and symbolise elements of a grander landscape. The waterfall emulates rain falling, the pond suggests the sea and the stream represents a river.

This is a landscape in miniature, almost a living sculpture. Watch it grow and evolve over the seasons.

The lanterns (toro), stone basin (tsukubai), exit gate and many specially selected stones from the previous Japanese garden have been re-utilised in this bigger, revitalised space.



This is a bespoke garden: a fusion of Japanese garden types with some New Zealand materials and plants. Spot the Japanese roof tiles and the Auckland basalt.

To preserve the garden and acknowledge its design as a viewing garden, please keep to the platform and paved paths.

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St. Patricks catholic church near our hotel. The sky looked very threatening but not a drop off rain and it was very warm.







"All shall be well" in the park at the side of the church.