



## WHERE TO FIND THE LORD OF THE RINGS IN NEW ZEALAND

Visitors to New Zealand can easily find out for themselves why New Zealand was the ideal location to film *The Lord of The Rings* trilogy.

In a few weeks visitors can explore the regions used for filming - a road trip that will take them from mountains and volcanoes to farmland and forests.

The set constructions are no longer in place - but visitors can still stand on a special spot in which part of the film was made. It's a great excuse to explore some of the most beautiful places in the world.

A *The Lord of the Rings* film road trip would begin in the north, as most international visitors arrive in New Zealand through its largest city, Auckland. From there you'd drive to the farming area of the Waikato plains, to **Matamata**.

Matamata is a mainly dairy farming centre (population 12,000 with a 50/50 split between rural and town) and is typical of small rural settlements in New Zealand. Just outside Matamata is a private farm that became **Hobbiton**.

Five thousand cubic metres of vegetable and flower gardens were planted at the farm a year before filming began, to give them a chance to age naturally. When the actors and production crew entered Hobbiton for the first time, they were astounded at how "real" it felt. For a similar feel, check out the farm-stay accommodation available in Matamata. Farm-stay accommodation is popular in many parts of New Zealand, giving visitors the chance to experience the agricultural lifestyle at the heart of the New Zealand economy.

The Waitomo Caves are a must if you're in the Waikato region. Famous for their glow worms, and vast underground caverns, these limestone caves also provide a range of activity such as abseiling and rafting for the more adventurous.

### The journey continues

Heading south on a two to three hour journey to the central North Island, you'll drive past some of the best trout fishing in the world at Lake Taupo. Then it's on to **Tongariro National Park**. The park, a World Heritage site, is made up of three volcanoes, Mt Ruapehu (still active), Mt Tongariro and Mt Ngauruhoe. The Tongariro region was used for a range of *The Lord of the Rings* locations including the **Slopes of Mt Doom**.

Filming some of the scenes in such rugged terrain required stamina and respect for the environment and natural forces. Four weeks was spent filming at **Whakapapa**, with cast including Elijah Wood and Sean Astin sitting on hot-water bottles in between takes to keep warm.

While many of the cast stayed in the historic Chateau Lodge at the foot of Mount Ruapehu, other crew members mixed with the down-to-earth ski set at Ohakune - a town that thrives during the ski-season.

In winter, this area provides the best skiing in the North Island. For the rest of the year, it's a popular destination for hiking. The Tongariro Crossing is an excellent one-day hike, but 3-4 day hikes allow visitors to see everything from herb fields to forests, tranquil lakes to desert-like plateau and active volcanoes. The Tongariro Northern Circuit passes through unique and stunning landforms that include volcanic craters and glacial valleys. It is one of the eight major walking tracks in New Zealand known as the Great Walks.

### **Distractions along the way**

On the way down to the capital city Wellington, which sits at the very south of the North Island, is the Wairarapa region which is known for its wine and leisurely rural lifestyle. The area is just an hour from Wellington and the perfect rural retreat.

There are many food and wine-related pastimes to be enjoyed in this region -- so you might get sidetracked from your film location mission. Martinborough produces award-winning wines and is definitely worth a visit. Each November, Toast Martinborough, a wine and food festival, sees thousands of people flock to the area for wine, food and music celebrations.

### **Home of the master**

Not far from all this is the **Kaitoke Regional Park**, a bush area in which you can camp, hike, go swimming or whitewater rafting. It's around 12km from Upper Hutt City, north of Wellington, and became **Rivendell** and the **River Anduin**.

Scenic jewels can be found even in suburban New Zealand, and in Wellington you are never more than 15 minutes from a gorgeous bush walk, lake or river.

From here, head on to the home of the master himself, Peter Jackson, and the base for all filming of *The Lord of the Rings*. The **Wellington** region was widely used in the movie and you could sit in the same chair as any of the actors in the film by lunching at one of the cafés in the Miramar area near Weta Workshop. 'Two Rooms' and 'Eva Dixon's Place' in Miramar and 'The Chocolate Fish' in Scorching Bay became regular haunts of many of the film's cast and crew.

Or you could try surfing at nearby Lyall Bay - where Liv Tyler (Arwen), Elijah Wood (Frodo), Sean Bean (Boromir), Sean Astin (Sam Gamgee) Dominic Monaghan (Meriadoc "Merry" Brandybuck), Billy Boyd (Peregrin "Pippin" Took) and Orlando Bloom (Legolas) becoming part of the local surfer set.

## Across the water

Many scenes were filmed in the South Island, which necessitates a short ferry ride or plane trip.

**Nelson**, at the top of the south, is home to **Mt Owen**, the scene for the **Dimrill Dale hillside**. Nelson has a large arts and crafts community, and many of the local artisans were involved in prop-making for the film.

While in the area, the popular Abel Tasman Coastal Track hike is a must. Found in New Zealand's smallest National Park, it is a 51-kilometre (31-mile) easy-to-moderate walking track that passes through coastal forests and golden sandy beaches. Around 60,000 visitors walked the Abel Tasman in 2000, making it one of New Zealand's most popular tracks.

There are several stops on the way down south if you have the time, but heading to the Central Otago region including Queenstown, Arrowtown and Glenorchy will provide plenty of rewards. **Twizel** is best known for its rowing regattas and power station, but it was a sheep station that took central stage in *The Lord of the Rings*. The **Ben Ohau sheep station** is historically significant in the area, and has now become cinematically significant in the trilogy.

## The adventure continues

**Queenstown**, New Zealand's adventure capital, famous for its bungy jumping and jetboats, was the setting for numerous scenes including the **Summit of Amon Hen**. Many overseas filmmakers are using Queenstown to shoot, because of its beautiful alpine scenery, clear rivers and lively town. The area is renowned for its burgeoning wine industry and amongst local winemakers is actor, Sam Neill, who calls the place home.

About 40 minutes from Queenstown is the serene township of Glenorchy (population 200). It has an area known as **Paradise** and this became the setting for the **slopes of Amon Hen**. A jet boat ride up the Dart River is a must, as is a horse ride from the Dart River stables.

You can stay in the area in style at Blanket Bay, another world-class luxury lodge on the banks of the Glenorchy River. This lodge has had such illustrious visitors as Kiwi filmstar Russell Crowe lay their heads on their pillows.

Alternatively, head back to Queenstown and kick back with the locals. Given that many of them had their "five minutes of fame" as extras in the film, you may even make friends with a hobbit...

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS - FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

## Locations and tourism attractions

Location	Middle Earth Location	Tourism attractions in vicinity
<b>North Island (from north to south)</b>		
Waikato Region - Matamata	Hobbiton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haggis Honking Holes - abseil caving adventure with underground waterfalls and rock climbs</li> <li>• Lost World - 100 metre abseil into a sheer chasm</li> <li>• Waitomo glow-worm caves</li> <li>• Black Water Rafting &amp; Tumu Tumu Toobing - cave tubing</li> <li>• hang gliding and gliding</li> <li>• skydiving</li> <li>• 4WD bikes</li> <li>• drive yourself jetboating</li> <li>• horse trekking</li> </ul>
Tongariro Region	Gorgorath Plains, Emyn Muil, Slopes of Mount Doom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tramping / hiking the Tongariro Crossing</li> <li>• skiing / snowboarding Whakapapa ski area</li> <li>• staying at The Grand Chateau or many world-renowned fishing lodges</li> <li>• fishing (fly or spin) Lake Taupo and rivers in area</li> <li>• kayaking rivers and Lake Taupo</li> <li>• white water rafting</li> <li>• jet boating</li> <li>• ice climbing / mountain climbing Mt Ruapehu, Mt Ngauruhoe</li> </ul>
Manuwatu Region - Otaki Totara Forest	Hobbiton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• river rafting</li> <li>• kayaking</li> <li>• abseiling</li> <li>• Southern Crossing Otaki (Kapiti to Wairarapa)</li> <li>• tramping / hiking tracks</li> <li>• native bush</li> <li>• gardens</li> </ul>
Wellington Region	Rivendell, Silverlode Riverbank, Outer Shire, Ferry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• camping, tramping / hiking</li> </ul>

Location		
- Kaitoke Regional Park, Fernside, Featherstone, Hutt Valley	Lane, Trollshaw Forest, Weathertop Hillside, Bree Streets, Isengard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whitewater rafting</li> <li>• visit vineyards</li> <li>• stay at historic Fernside Lodge</li> <li>• food &amp; wine festivals</li> <li>• Te Papa (national museum)</li> <li>• theatres, opera, ballet, art galleries</li> <li>• shopping (fashion, art)</li> <li>• restaurants, waterfront cafes</li> <li>• surfing</li> <li>• sea kayaking</li> <li>• mountain biking</li> <li>• cable car</li> <li>• Parliament</li> <li>• wildlife tours - seals</li> <li>• outdoor adventure tours - 4x4 tours</li> <li>• Karori Wildlife Sanctuary</li> <li>• Maori Treasures tour</li> <li>• Dowse Art Museum</li> <li>• ferry tours</li> </ul>
<b>South Island (from north to south)</b>		
Nelson Region - Takaka Hill, Mt Olympus, Mt Owen	Chetwood Forest, Eregion Hills, Rivendell, Dimrill Dale Hillside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visit Abel Tasman National Park by either tramping / hiking, sea kayaking or boating</li> <li>• arts and crafts</li> <li>• vineyards and orchards</li> <li>• visit Cape Farewell Spit</li> <li>• World of Wearable Art Museum</li> <li>• restaurants</li> <li>• 4WD motorbikes</li> </ul>
Canterbury Region - Ben Ohau Station, Twizel	White Mountain Foothills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visit Mount Cook</li> <li>• skiplane Tasman Glacier</li> </ul>

Location		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• heli-mountain bike</li> <li>• salmon farm</li> <li>• farmstay</li> <li>• big game hunting and fishing</li> <li>• skiing / snowboarding Ohau ski area</li> <li>• tramping / hiking tracks</li> </ul>
<p>Queenstown Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arrowtown Recreational Reserve</li> <li>- Paradise, Glenorchy</li> <li>- Kinloch</li> <li>- Wanaka</li> </ul>	<p>The West Road, Eregion Hills, Misty Mountains, Summit of Amon Hen, Osgiliath Hilltop, Pillars of Argonath, Ford of Bruinen, Lochlorien Woods, Slopes of Amon Hen, Outskirts of Fangorn Forest, Plains / Village of Rohan, Dimrill Dale Hillside, East Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adventure tourism - home of bungy jumping</li> <li>• white water rafting, jetboating</li> <li>• canyoning</li> <li>• hang-gliding, parapenting, sky diving</li> <li>• skiing, snowboarding, heli skiing / snowboarding</li> <li>• 4WD safaris</li> <li>• horse trekking</li> <li>• vineyards</li> <li>• arts and crafts</li> <li>• restaurants and nightlife</li> <li>• shopping</li> <li>• golf</li> <li>• fishing (fly and spin)</li> <li>• stay in world-renowned lodges</li> <li>• tramping / hiking - particularly the Greenstone Track</li> <li>• ice climbing, rock climbing</li> <li>• mountain biking</li> </ul>
<p>Fiordland region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Te Anau</li> </ul>	<p>Dead Marshes, Midgewater Marshes, Weathertop Countryside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tramping / hiking is a popular option in the Fiordland area - with the Kepler, Routeburn, Hollyford and Milford Tracks being the most well known</li> <li>• day and overnight cruising or kayaking on Milford or Doubtful Sounds</li> <li>• Te Anau glow-worm caves</li> <li>• flight seeing</li> </ul>