

CONNECTION

This English Section appears bi-weekly
Edited by : Wendy Y.C. Yeh

Profile

Spectacular Auckland, New Zealand (3)



When I was in Auckland, I enjoyed heading to the Sky Tower for dazzling 360-degree views of the spectacular city, the exhilarating SkyJump and SkyWalk, plus dining and entertainment. It was a delightful experience.

My tour guide announced, "If you are only in Auckland for a day, going up the Sky Tower to take in the stunning panoramic views of Auckland and its harbor is a must. If you are here for longer, you will be spoiled for choice with a world-class casino and the best in local cuisine. They will all be served up with genuine kiwi service."

At 328 meters, the cloud-piercing Sky Tower is the southern hemisphere's tallest structure. It is impossible to miss. Fabulous lighting renders it space-age at night and the colors change for special events. A lift takes me up to the observation decks in 40 stomach-lurching seconds. The Sky Tower is also home to the SkyWalk and SkyJump.

Skywalk involves circling the outside halo of the Sky tower with a safety harness, of course. SkyJump is a thrilling 85 km/hour base wire leap from the observation deck of the Sky Tower. It is more like a parachute jump than a bungee jump. It usually lasts approximately 11 seconds only.

I also saw some people attempting to have fun with bungee jumping off the Harbour Bridge. Their bravery is to be commended.

Auckland's event calendar is packed all year round with cultural festivals, arts events, major sports competitions, superstar concerts, and international stage shows.

New Zealand received its first influx of Chinese migrants in the 1850's gold rush era. Chinese gold miners fast became part of the New Zealand society. Auckland's Chinatown is one of the smaller ones in comparison to the other famous Chinatowns

around the world. Ti Rakau Drive represents the Chinese community on the North Island, and provides an insight into the fascinating Chinese culture. The beautiful turn-of-the-century gold rush settlement of Arrowtown is now a tourist attraction.

Auckland Lantern Festival is usually held in February each year. Hundreds of outdoor lanterns and exciting live performances light up Auckland in celebration of Chinese New Year.

Auckland has hundreds of walking tracks for people who love exploring nature on foot, from hikes to walks. There are so many options to choose from for every age and ability level. It was from these long walks that I discovered the region's magnificent scenery and diverse landscapes – lush native forest, wide open countryside, wild surf beaches, and trickling streams.

The triumph of the explorer will be that of the place; but the place will never have any limelight or recognition if its explorer does not bring it about. The only way for a place to exist is to be experienced by people. From my personal experience, I feel

that Auckland is truly a cosmopolitan and dynamic city.



▲Auckland's event calendar is packed all year round with cultural festivals ready to be a happiness hunter



▲Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra was opened in 1911



▲the cloud-piercing Sky Tower is the southern hemisphere's tallest structure



▲visiting the spectacular Auckland Art Gallery

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