

Romantic garden, near Blenheim
© Sandy Pratten

Country Gardens of New Zealand

IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH ISLANDS

with Sandy Pratten
25 October – 08 November 2017 (15 days)

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IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH ISLANDS



TOUR LEADER

Sandy Pratten has been director of her own Landscape Design business for the past 30 years and trained at Ryde College of Horticulture. She lived 20 years in rural NSW, but now lives in Sydney. She is a guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and has lectured and written about horticulture for 20 years. Passionate about travelling and exploring new landscapes and a professional artist, she is interested in the sense of place in a country and the culture as a whole which contributes to the land use. She has taken several garden tours to India, China, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Cuba, Sicily and Malta for Foundation & Friends.

Dear Garden Lovers

I have just returned from New Zealand where everything is on a grand scale in horticulture, all set in a breathtaking landscape.

This tour travels from Auckland to Christchurch to explore a selection of hand-picked gardens in a range of settings, visit galleries and learn about their viticulture. After Gibbs Farm, an exciting private sculpture park, the next highlight will be the newly discovered PowerCo Taranaki Garden Spectacular in and around New Plymouth. Dominated by Mt Taranaki and surrounded by lush farmland, New Plymouth is a port city with a bubbling arts scene and some fabulous cafes.

Throughout the tour we will meet the garden owners, some generously welcoming us into their houses for lunch. In Wellington wander through the excellent national Te Papa Museum. Next, cross to the South Island by ferry to the Marlborough region, known for its vineyards and stunning gardens. Also experience the distinct biodiversity of flora and fauna offered by the west coast on the way to Christchurch. New Zealand is still a hidden gem, so close, yet so wonderfully different. It's inspirational.

Sandy Pratten

At a glance...

- Visit a wonderful selection of private gardens – including many 'Gardens of National Significance'
- Spend two full days at the PowerCo Taranaki Garden Festival
- Experience the Gibbs Farm Sculpture Park (Auckland) and Te Papa Museum (Wellington)
- Visit the botanical gardens of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch
- Enjoy the best of fine New Zealand hospitality, cuisine and wines



Wed 25 Oct 2017

Arrive Auckland

Suggested morning departure from Australia on Air New Zealand, Qantas or Emirates flights to Auckland. Renaissance Tours or your travel agent can assist with these travel arrangements.

This evening join Sandy and fellow travellers for a welcome dinner in the hotel. **D**

Thu 26 Oct

Auckland

Enjoy a day tour to the north of Auckland, beginning with a morning visit to **Gibbs Farm** on Kaipara Harbour. Alan Gibbs is one of New Zealand's leading art collectors, and since 1991 has established a sprawling 1,000 acres (4.0 km²) sculpture park which contains the largest collection of large-scale outdoor sculptures in New Zealand.

After a picnic lunch return to Auckland, stopping at **Mincher Gardens**. A Georgian styled home is the centrepiece of this large rural garden set amongst the remnants of an old orchard. Behind the house is the formal area. To one side a cottage garden and whimsical garden shed lead to "kissing gates" which are romantically placed under trailing weeping willow.

Late afternoon return to your hotel. **B Picnic L**

Fri 27 Oct

Auckland

Spend the day in Auckland's three major public and private gardens. In the morning visit **Ayrlies**, situated in the gently rolling country of east Auckland. This is one of New Zealand's best known gardens, characterised by sweeping lawns and informal but detailed plantings by ponds and waterways.

Continue to the **Auckland Botanic Gardens** for lunch and an afternoon at leisure to explore this young botanic garden that has been created from gently contoured farmland. The mild temperate climate allows the gardens to display a wide variety of plants.

Finish with a visit to the Winter Garden at the **Auckland Domain**. Rare and spectacular plants in an ever-changing display can be seen in each of the two barrel-vaulted Victorian style glass houses. **B L**



The snaking corten wall art installation Gibbs Farm, Auckland © gpparker/Flickr

Sat 28 Oct

Auckland – Hamilton – New Plymouth

Depart Auckland for a leisurely day's drive to New Plymouth. En route, stop in Hamilton to visit the **Hamilton Garden**. Often (incorrectly) referred to as a 'botanic garden' Hamilton Garden is rather a collection of themed gardens, exploring different civilisations and recreating historically important garden styles from around the world.

In the afternoon continue to New Plymouth, your base for the next two days. **B D**

Sun 29 – Mon 30 Oct

New Plymouth

New Plymouth is home to the annual ten-day **PowerCo Taranaki Garden Spectacular** (formerly the Taranaki Rhododendron & Garden Festival) which showcases some of New Zealand's most stunning private and public gardens.

The festival features over 40 diverse and inspiring gardens, including many gardens of significance, new gardens and more than a dozen exciting events. Nearly all of the gardens are private gardens and are opened exclusively for the duration of the festival. The 2017 festival will take place 27 October – 05 November 2017.

The festival includes a mixture of free and paid events, including house and garden tours, celebrity chef demonstrations, guided walks, workshops and a diverse garden speaker series.

From the huge range of gardens and events on offer, Sandy and the festival organiser will choose a stimulating program over the three days spent here.

In addition to its beautiful parks and gardens, the city of New Plymouth is known for its sunny climate and art galleries. The conical shape of Mount Taranaki provides a dramatic backdrop to the city. Down at the waterfront are located Puke Ariki museum and heritage centre, and the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre - New Zealand's first and only museum of contemporary art.

B L or **D** daily



A 5-acre garden with mature trees and sculptured landscape, New Plymouth. © Sandy Pratten

Tue 31 Oct New Plymouth – Wellington

Depart New Plymouth for a leisurely drive to Wellington. En route, stop for lunch and a visit to Nicki and Clive Higgin's garden, **Paloma**, near Wanganui.

Awarded *Garden of National Significance* by the New Zealand Gardens Trust (NZGT) for the past seven years, the exotic gardens of Paloma are landscaped with plants from all over the world, and are presented as several distinct zones, including the Palm Garden, the Desert House, the Garden of Death, the Bamboo Forests, the Jardin Exotique, the Wedding Lawn and the two Arboreta.

In the afternoon continue to Wellington, arriving late afternoon.

B L

Wed 01 Nov Wellington

Begin with an orientation tour of the vibrant city of Wellington, nestled around the harbour and surrounded by natural scenery. See the famous Beehive and Parliament Buildings, visit Saint Paul's Cathedral and the **Lady Norwood Rose Gardens** within the Wellington Botanic Gardens.

Drive out of Wellington into the picturesque Ohariu Valley to **Pepped Warbeck** garden, a *NZ Garden of Significance*. The garden consists of a majestic entrance and long curving drive, planted with Marlborough daisies and many different native trees and shrubs. Extensive lawns sweep down to the re-modelled bog garden which features five adjoining ponds planted with primulas, bog irises, hostas and gunnera.

Following lunch, return to Wellington for a visit to Te Papa Tongawera Museum, a fascinating centre dedicated to art, history and Maori culture. **B L**

Thu 02 Nov Wellington – Blenheim

Today enjoy the scenic crossing on the Interislander ferry between Wellington and Picton. After sailing out of the picturesque harbour of Wellington, cross Cook Strait before entering the magnificent Marlborough Sounds. The three hour journey between Wellington and Picton is considered one of the most spectacular cruises in the world.

Arrive in Picton and continue to Allan Scott Wines, the family owned winery established by Allan and Catherine Scott. Enjoy a wine tasting followed by lunch which is served in the European-style courtyard with its exceptional gardens and vistas to the vineyards beyond.

Late afternoon arrival at your hotel in Blenheim, your base for the next three nights. **B L**

Fri 03 Nov Blenheim

Begin your exploration of the Marlborough area and its gardens with **Bankhouse Garden**, one of the highlights of the Wairau Valley. Meander through the lower level into a shaded gully that hosts rhododendrons and bog plants. Continue towards the house and onto the upper level garden terraces where you find rambling roses and a variety of drought resistant plants.

Continue to **Barewood** garden for lunch and a tour. Recognised as a *NZ Garden of National Significance*, Barewood garden is designed to complement the 100 year old homestead, and features formal allees of hawthorn and malus, plantings of unusual trees and shrubs and a classic potager featuring espaliered fruit.

Continue to **Paripuma Garden**, with its unique collection of indigenous and rare plant species that have created a haven for wildlife on what was once a bare sandy paddock. **B L**

Sat 04 Nov Blenheim

Begin with a visit to Huguette Michel's **Hortensia** House. The Monet-inspired garden is informal in design and is loosely themed on blue and yellow, capturing an essence of serenity and reflecting the colours of the house. Huguette's favourite shade of hydrangea is blue and these, along with lavenders, forget-me-not's, love-in-a-mists and others provide the blue tones throughout the garden. Yellow is provided by varieties of roses, pansies, daisies, aquilegias and gazanias.

Following a wine-tasting and lunch at a local winery, visit **Upton Oaks**, the English-inspired garden of Dave and Sue Monahan developed around a restored 1911 Victorian villa. Brick walls, ponds, perennial



borders, and a 17th century style 'knot garden' are divided into sections by colour and a rustic kitchen garden. Upton Oaks is also recognised as a NZ *Garden of National Significance*.

B L

Sun 05 Nov Blenheim – Greymouth

Departing Blenheim travel via the old gold mining town of Murchison to the port town of Westport. After a break for lunch, continue down the scenic West Coast, stopping to see the fur seal colony at Cape Foulwind and the Punakaiki pancake rocks and blowholes.

Late afternoon arrival and overnight in Greymouth, known for its gold mining heritage, local brewery Monteiths and pounamu (New Zealand jade). **B D**

Mon 06 Nov Greymouth – Christchurch

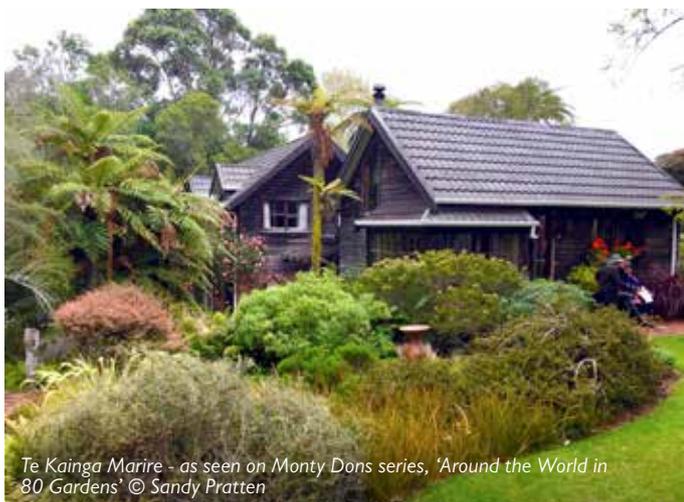
Depart Greymouth for a very scenic morning's drive over the Southern Alps to Christchurch. Climb to more than 900 metres through Arthur's Pass National Park, before descending to Christchurch across the Canterbury Plain.

After lunch at the **Christchurch Botanic Gardens**, enjoy an afternoon to explore the gardens. Founded in 1863 with the planting of an English oak tree, over the years natural wetlands and sand dunes have been transformed into an elegantly cultivated 21 hectare park with more than 10 different gardens framed by mature trees and expansive lawns, which are mostly contained within a loop of the Avon River.

Late afternoon arrival at your hotel. **B L**

Tue 07 Nov Christchurch

Today visit two outstanding gardens. First visit **Broadfield NZ Landscape Gardens**, a 3.5 hectare showcase garden established 20 years. Many natives are used formally and informally as are NZ raised varieties of azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias, cherry cornus, maples, peony perennials, daffodils, lily, and roses. It includes a Kauri forest with over 100 trees and 100 species of other Kauri forest trees, shrubs, climbers and ferns.



Te Kainga Marire - as seen on Monty Dons series, 'Around the World in 80 Gardens' © Sandy Pratten

Continue to the seaside town of Governor's Bay for a farewell lunch.

This afternoon visit **Ohinetahi**, a well-structured, carefully designed garden created by architect Sir Miles Warren which consists of a number of formal rooms, of differing style and character. The garden houses an important sculpture collection and small art gallery. Hedges are used to shelter plants that would otherwise struggle in the high winds. Features include an herb potager, box-edged rose garden, herbaceous borders, Red Garden, gazebo, rectangular pond, arched bridge and statues. There are spectacular views down to Lyttleton Harbour.

Return to your hotel for an evening at leisure. **B L**

Wed 08 Nov Depart Christchurch

Tour arrangements conclude after breakfast.

Most return flights to Australia depart in the afternoon or evening, allowing a further day of exploration at your leisure. If you would like to extend your stay in Christchurch or New Zealand, please talk to one of our dedicated travel team for options and prices. **B**



© Paripuma Garden, Blenheim



English inspired garden at Blenheim © Upton Oaks



Old St. Paul's 1865, Wellington, constructed from fine native timbers
© D.S. Pemberton Wikimedia



Ohinetahi Garden, Lyttelton Harbour © brewbooks/Flickr



Punakaiki Pancake Rocks, West Coast

Tour prices

Per person, twin-share	AUD 6,350
Single supplement*	AUD 2,250
Deposit (per person) at time of booking	AUD 500
Final payment due	28 AUG 2017

*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

Tour code RB1701

Fitness level Moderate

Please see booking conditions for fitness level definitions.

Airline

Please contact Renaissance Tours or your travel agent for current airfares and flight reservations.

Visa

Australian Passport holders do not require a visa for New Zealand.

Tour price includes

- Accommodation in centrally located hotels with private facilities and daily breakfast (B)
- Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner). Wines with meals
- Comfortable air-conditioned coach transport throughout
- Comprehensive sightseeing, including local guides and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (where service is offered)

Tour price does not include

- Flights to/from New Zealand
- Transfers on arrival or departure
- Items of a personal nature (e.g. telephone, laundry, mini-bar, taxis etc.)
- Travel insurance (recommended)

Your hotels★★★★

Auckland – Grand Millennium

New Plymouth – Waterfront

Wellington – Novotel

Blenheim – Chateau Marlborough

Greymouth – Kingsgate Hotel

Christchurch – to be confirmed

NB. Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted

Terms & Conditions

HOW TO BOOK

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit and page one of your passport.

DEPOSITS / PAYMENTS

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

For tours that include international flights, the international airfare payment is due 120 days before departure.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payment by cash, cheque, direct deposit, American Express, MasterCard and Visa is accepted. 1.5% service charge applies to payment made by MasterCard and Visa. 3% service charge applies to payment made by American Express.

Payments for some international airfares can be made by credit card without a service fee. Please check for details.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

a) Cancellation by You – Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
59 – 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 – 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 – 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us – We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

PASSPORTS, VISAS AND VACCINATIONS

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

TOUR PRICES

Prices quoted in our tour information are based on exchange rates, cost of services and applicable taxes at the time of publication. Prices may be subject to change in the event of significant currency fluctuations or the introduction of new taxes, up until final payment is received.

In the event of a price increase, whether because of a currency fluctuation, increase in taxes or a correction in advertised prices, we will advise you and you have the option of accepting the amended prices, inclusions and booking conditions or withdrawing from the tour and receiving a full refund of all monies paid.

Once final payment is received, all prices will be guaranteed and no surcharges will apply.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

FITNESS AND PARTICIPATION

Most of our tours require a MODERATE level of fitness.

However, in certain destinations (e.g. Silk Road, Central Asia, Outback Australia, tropical destinations) or in certain seasons (e.g. mid-winter, mid-summer) or because of the nature of travel (e.g. remote rail), certain tours will require an ABOVE AVERAGE or CHALLENGING level of fitness.

If you (or we) have any doubts about your level of fitness, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require your doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour, including the fitness level, and provide you (and us) with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

MODERATE

For the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 1–2 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark / disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

ABOVE AVERAGE

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- undertake walking tours of 2–3 hours
- climb staircases of 100 or more steps

CHALLENGING

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- handle extremes of temperature (e.g. below 0 or above 35 degrees)
- handle extremes of altitudes (e.g. 4000 metres and above).

You can find the full terms & conditions at renaissancetours.com.au/booking-conditions or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.



The Avon River, Christchurch Botanic Gardens © RobB7/Flickr



Taranaki area A country garden folding quietly around a hilltop site. Clever design for unused tennis court © Sandy Pratten



Coast Haven, Oakura/Okato. Photo courtesy of PowerCo Taranaki Garden Spectacular (Clivia, Chatham Island Forget Me Nots & coastal daisies feature amongst perennials)



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