



Destination Queenstown

North America Roadshow

New York, Toronto, Minneapolis, Seattle, San Francisco

24 March – 1 April 2025

1. Overview

This North America activity is the third time in market as part of our MoU agreement for engagement between Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, Auckland Airport and Destination Queenstown.

We have continued to build on visiting cities from previous roadshows to include feeder city locations, outside of the main airport hubs with the exception of New York, visiting five locations and delivering eight events.

Locations included: New York, Toronto, Minneapolis, Seattle and San Francisco.

The favourable exchange rate and excellent connectivity — with up to 80 direct flights per week — are driving strong interest from the market. Advisors are keen to learn more about our regional offering, including the 3+3-night lead-in proposition and the suggested 6-night itinerary in New Zealand. This aligns well with typical annual leave allocations and highlights the ease of travel to and within New Zealand.

Companies that participated:

1. Terra and Tide
2. Te Manu Taupua Ltd
3. Fullers360
4. SkyCity
5. Cordis
6. Millennium Hotels
7. The Big Foody
8. Hilton North Island Cluster
9. TIME Unlimited Tours
10. Glenorchy Air
11. Altitude Tours & BLACK NZ
12. Cheeky Kiwi Travel limited
13. Heliworks Queenstown
14. Accor New Zealand
15. Alpine Luxury Tours

Our event partners were Goway (New York and Toronto), Southern World (Minneapolis) and Travel Answers Group (Seattle and San Francisco).

Our airline partners included – Air New Zealand, Qantas, United Airlines and Hawaiian/Alaska Airlines. Each provided an update at the events and provided flights to be won for each roadshow event as a giveaway (post event). Spot prizes were also given away on the day via a Mentimeter interactive presentation to support and deepen the level of knowledge shared.

Air New Zealand is also supporting our NAM Roadshow with a premium family that will take place in Auckland and Queenstown to further encourage our 3+3 proposition (end August/beginning September) for nine people.

The core objective to deliver this activity:

- Build strong selling capability of travel sellers and increase Auckland and Queenstown product knowledge.
- Share Tiaki, our care for New Zealand with advisors.
- Provide a platform for strengthening and establishing new relationships.
- Collectively educate agents on destination Auckland and Queenstown, each region's key selling messages and showcase new products.
- Support airline connectivity between North America and Auckland.

2. Market Background

The US economy is poised to outperform expectations, driven by strong fundamentals and moderate inflation.

The US dollar increased 7% in 2024 and is expected to remain strong in 2025 due mainly to growth in the US economy, and the new administration's policies. Outlook for Canada is cautiously optimistic. After a period of sluggish growth, the economy is expected to rebound, although slower than the US.

However, some consumers still concerned. Wage growth has outpaced inflation, but US consumers are still feeling pinched and are conservatively spending on big ticket items. Consumers are also saving at a lower rate, 4.4.% vs pre pandemic rate of 8.4%.

Travel continues to be the number one discretionary expense, with leisure travel spend forecasted to grow across all generations in 2025, except Millennials (Gen Z +13.4%, Millennials -20%, Gen X 12.7%, Boomers +8%).

International air travel by US citizens continues to grow rapidly, with departures in 2024 up 24% from 2019 and 9% higher than 2023.

North America travel bookings are forecasted to reach \$568.5 billion in 2025, up 4.5% YOY.

Notably the new administration continues to create uncertainty.

Average stay is 6.1 nights in the Queenstown Lakes region.

Average spend is \$5,181 for holiday visitors.

Top US drivers for active considers:

- To experience beautiful landscape/scenery
- To feel relaxed and refreshed
- To enjoy local food and beverages

The top growing drivers:

- To indulge and pamper myself up 5.4% to 26%

- To interact with people of a different culture or lifestyle up 1.9% to 30%
- To enjoy local food and beverages up 2.6% to 33%

Annual leave –

USA - the number of days varies from employer to employer, but on average, US workers receive around ten days of paid holiday each year.

Canada - employees are generally entitled to a minimum of two weeks of paid vacation leave after one year of continuous employment. This entitlement increases to three weeks after five years and four weeks after ten years of continuous employment.

Exchange rate –

Strength of the US dollar continues to make new international destinations attractive, and which is an advantage for New Zealand. As of April 2025, the USD to NZD exchange rate has been favourable for American travellers, with 1 USD equating to approximately 1.76 NZD. US visitors receive more New Zealand dollars for each dollar exchanged, enhancing their purchasing power in New Zealand when building travel itineraries. Consequently, expenses such as accommodation, dining, and activities become more affordable, allowing travellers to experience more.

It is important to note that New Zealand increased its International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy from NZ\$35 to NZ\$100 on October 1, 2024. This increase aims to ensure that tourists contribute more to the maintenance and improvement of public services and infrastructure impacted by tourism. However, despite this higher entry fee, the overall cost-effectiveness for American travellers remains positive due to the advantageous exchange rate, making it an opportune time to visit.

3. Cities/Attendance/Format

Each event (trade day and showcase) included a formal introduction, followed by destination presentations and overview.

New York

Trade day (6.5-minute appointments with each advisor) and showcase event (open networking).

Event partner – Goway.

Airline partner – Qantas and United Airlines

Toronto

Kensington, valued partner lunch and showcase event (open networking).

Event partner – Goway.

Airline partner – Air New Zealand

Minneapolis St Paul

Open networking with encouraged drop-in times in two sessions (afternoon and after work).

Event partner – Southern World

Airline partner – Air New Zealand

Seattle

Trade day (6.5-minute appointments with each advisor)

Event partner – Travel Answers Group

Airline partner – Alaska and Hawaiian Airlines

San Francisco

Trade day (6.5-minute appointments with each advisor) and showcase event (open networking)

Event partner – Travel Answers Group

Airline partner – Air New Zealand and United Airlines

For these events we received over 450 registrations for attendance.

4. Summary

From our survey feedback, we have three key learnings from attendees of our roadshow events:

1. New Zealand is a Year-Round Destination with Diverse Experiences

Visitors learned that New Zealand offers activities in every season, making it an attractive destination beyond the peak summer months. Adventure tourism, cultural experiences, food and wine tours, and scenic landscapes provide something for every traveller year-round.

2. Strong Connectivity and Ease of Travel

The availability of direct flights from major cities, favourable exchange rates, and seamless logistics through well-connected tour operators make traveling to New Zealand convenient. Airlines like Air New Zealand, the Skycouch feature, and flexible tour packages contribute to a smooth travel experience. Also, the time to get there is not as excessive as their initial perception – e.g. less than 24 hours.

3. Rich Cultural and Natural Attractions

Visitors appreciated learning about Māori culture, sustainable tourism efforts (Tiaki Promise), and unique experiences such as heli-tours, indigenous traditions, and local food and wine. The emphasis on preserving nature and engaging with the local culture made a strong impression.

This MoU activity with Auckland Unlimited and Auckland Airport will be reviewed. Our intent is to build on the opportunity we have laid in foundation over the past three years and continue to explore additional feeder cities and hot spots. If we are successful as an RTO to attend Kiwi Link North America (October 2025), we will likely move to push dates for the next roadshow to Q3 26/27 (every two years).

Overall, this roadshow was very successful, with great operator numbers participating, keen interest and support from both our travel and airlines partners and great registrations from advisors in each of the cities we visited.

5. Event Images

