

# Escape to One of These New Zealand Vacation Villas

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JULY 23, 2016

New Zealand is one of the most beautiful countries in the world thanks to its varied and largely unpopulated landscapes, which range from rugged mountains to the scenic coastline. While the country has its fair share of upscale lodges and hotels, a new crop of luxury villas are offering a more intimate way to enjoy the scenery with all the comforts of a five-star hotel. From an urban retreat in Auckland to a rustic modern villa on a nature preserve near Queenstown, here are five vacation rentals that will make you feel right at home in Kiwi country.

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## Wyuna House, Glenorchy

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Set within a nature preserve an hour from Queenstown on the South Island, Wyuna House is surrounded by stunning scenery on all sides, including Lake Wakatipu, Mount Bonpland, and Tooth Peak. The four-bedroom villa has a unique floor plan: Each room is situated in its own pavilion and anchored around a central courtyard. With walls clad in both local schist and cedar, the house feels slightly rustic, but it is also outfitted with state-of-the-art amenities such as in-floor heating and a contemporary kitchen with an island and stainless-steel refrigerator. A large outdoor area equipped with a fireplace and barbecue make the house well suited for entertaining.

[touchofspice.co.nz](http://touchofspice.co.nz)

## Briar Bank, Lake Wanaka

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The stark, minimalist Briar Bank cottage became available as a vacation rental in March. The three-bedroom wood-and-steel house features floor-to-ceiling windows and an outdoor patio that can serve as an extension of the living area when the sliding glass doors in the dining room are opened. It also has a gourmet kitchen with shiny black cabinets and blond wood counters, as well as a large gray-marble bathroom. The property is landscaped with kanuka and fruit trees and has stunning views of Lake Wanaka, the Southern Alps, and Roy's Peak. Briar Bank is close to hiking and mountain-biking trails and makes a great destination in the winter, when private heli-skiing and snowboarding in the nearby mountains can be arranged. ([releasenz.com](http://releasenz.com))



## Marino Ridge, Waiheke Island

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Home to vineyards and beautiful beaches, idyllic Waiheke Island—just a 40-minute ferry ride from Auckland—is a popular vacation spot for well-to-do New Zealanders. The Marino Ridge luxury guesthouse (which can be rented as an exclusive-use property) looks out from a stunning perch above Owhanake Bay. A beautiful swimming beach can be accessed from the house, and from the breakfast veranda guests can watch seabirds hunting and even spot the occasional dolphin or orca. With its straight lines and angular roof, the modern gray-and-white house, set on 3.5 acres, slightly resembles the bow of a ship. Guest rooms include rain showers, throws made of New Zealand wool, and Artemide Tolomeo lamps. A private helipad on the ridge behind the house permits convenient arrivals and departures. ([marinoridge.co.nz](http://marinoridge.co.nz))

## The Managers House, Lake Wanaka

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California's Marmol Radziner architects (who restored Richard Neutra's famed midcentury-modern Kaufmann House in Palm Springs, Calif.) collaborated with local architects to create the Managers House, a striking luxury vacation rental that merges into a barren hillside along Lake Wanaka. The long, thin footprint—a signature Marmol design element—allows for views of the mountains from every room. The great room incorporates a kitchen, a living room with an open fireplace, and an indoor/outdoor dining room. A wall made of shimmering gray Gibbston Valley schist runs from the living room to the patio and includes an outdoor fireplace and benches. The master suite and two other bedrooms are located in an adjacent wing. From the heated outdoor swimming pool, guests can take in views of rolling farmland and vineyards. ([releasenz.com](http://releasenz.com))

## St Marys Residence, Auckland

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The owners of the new St Marys Residence, which opened in November, worked in the hotel industry for years, so it makes sense that the villa seamlessly combines the opulence of a presidential suite with the comfort of a private residence. The urban retreat features three suites with spa-style bathrooms, and it is available with a private chef. (A plunge pool is scheduled for completion in November.) The spacious 1,600-square-foot master suite has a rooftop terrace, super-king-size bed, and private lounge. The split-level foyer includes an eye-catching Swarovski crystal chandelier, but the wow factor comes from the abundant outdoor spaces overlooking the Auckland harbor. ([stmarysresidence.co.nz](http://stmarysresidence.co.nz))