



THE RIVER VALLEY RIDE  
NORTH ISLAND, NEW ZEALAND



## GLOBETROTTING THROUGH NZ THE RIVER VALLEY RIDE

There is SO much goodness to our NEWEST ride in the North Island of New Zealand known as The River Valley Ride. As a point-to-point ride, you'll start at your guide, Nicola Megaw's family home: River Valley Lodge – a fifth generation family-owned lodge that sits poised on the wild Rangitikei River. And you'll end at Maori Elder, Tommy Waara's ancestral land known as the Valley of a Thousand Hills. With the on-the-move nature of this ride you'll traverse jaw-dropping, ever-changing scenery. Just imagine: dreamy canters across bowling green pastures dotted with flocks of happy sheep, getting lost in pristine native bush where the silver ferns tickle your horses belly, loping across wispy pampas and bareback swimming. The absolute gift of an eight day ride is the flow that comes with consistent time in the saddle. You'll fall into a gentle rhythm with your horse, your fellow globetrotters and your guides, giving yourself the time to disconnect so that you can re-connect. Not only that, you'll get a lovely sense of Kiwi farming way-of-life with long-time local and host Nicola, personally guiding you through generational farming properties that aren't accessible to the general public. You'll share a drink with local farmers in a pop-up bar in the middle of a paddock (you can't get any more Kiwi-centric than that!). Another night you'll spend a night at a local Marae which is the focal point of Māori communities. For those Globetrotters who yearn for the rhythm and sense of accomplishment that comes with eight glorious days in the saddle, and hold a deep desire to return to mother nature and to lift the veil on this enchanting part of New Zealand while being swathed in Maori culture, THEN – The River Valley Ride is for YOU. It's a fire-cracker of an itinerary with the feeling of freedom and adventure at its very core.



### GLOBETROTTING THROUGH NEW ZEALAND THE RIVER VALLEY RIDE FAST FACTS

#### HOURS IN THE SADDLE

On average from 4 to 6 hours daily. Please note, this is dependent on the pace of your group, so on some days it could take a little longer to reach your campsite.

#### BREED OF HORSES

A mix of Kaimanawa (NZ wild horse) and NZ Station Bred, which is a cross of Clydesdale, Standardbred, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and Arabian. There are also a few Tennessee Walking Horses and American Saddlebreds in the herd.

#### PACE

The pace varies from a walk right through to a canter when the terrain allows.

#### RIDING ABILITY

Suitable for intermediate to experienced riders. All riders MUST be confident riding outside an arena at all paces over uneven ground.

\*Please keep in mind that this ride involves 8 days in the saddle, so suitable saddle fitness is a MUST.

#### WEIGHT LIMIT

Maximum of 95kg / 210lbs \*please contact us for a further assessment if you're above this weight.

#### TYPE OF TACK

Both Australian Stock saddles and Western tack are used.

\*All horses are ridden barefoot and bitless.

#### ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation varies throughout the ride.

While staying at River Valley Lodge (2 nights), you'll enjoy comfortable twin share rooms with en-suites. For the rest of the itinerary you'll be camping (tents and bedding provided) and will have access to basic shower and toilet facilities. You will be required to assist with camp set up and pack up each day, and your guides will be on hand to help out where necessary.

\*\*There is no single accommodation available.

For our solo globetrotters, you'll share with another solo traveller of the same gender.

#### GROUP SIZE

A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 8 guests.

#### RIDE LENGTH

8 days, 7 nights (with 8 riding days)

#### SET DEPARTURES FOR 2020

February 10 to 17, 2020

#### RATES FOR 2020 NZD RATE PER PERSON 8 DAYS, 7 NIGHTS

\$3,795 NZD per person, based on twin share (plus 2% credit card surcharge).

#### WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE?

Twin share accommodation, riding, meals (from dinner on day 1 through to lunch on day 8), and transfers to and from Taupo on days 1 and 8.

#### WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE?

International and regional flights, travel insurance (compulsory), accommodation in Taupo the day

before and after the ride, alcohol (BYO is welcome) and lunch on day 1.

#### TRANSFER INFORMATION

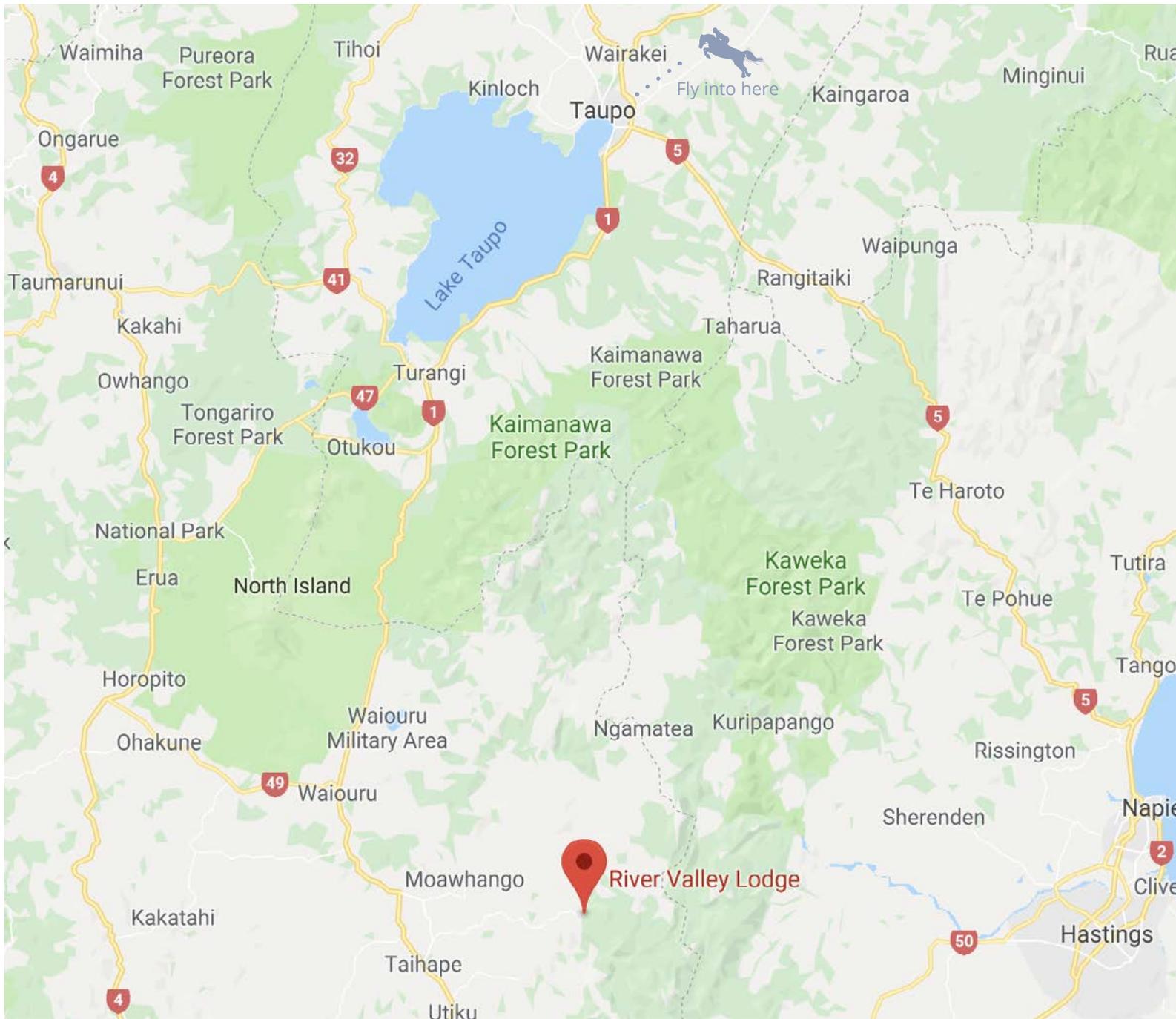
Transfers to and from Taupo are included in the price (on days 1 and 8 only). The travel time each way is approximately 2 hours. Please refer to page 3 of this fact sheet for further information on when to arrive and depart.

#### PAYMENT OPTIONS

Payment can only be made by credit card. There is a 2% surcharge on all credit card payments. Since you'll be paying in NZD, we believe paying via credit card is the most cost-effective and easiest option for you.

#### ABOUT YOUR GUIDES (pictured above)

You'll be hosted and guided by Nicola Megaw and Maori Elder, (Kaumatua), Tommy Waara. Best of friends, Nicola and Tommy met from a shared love of the New Zealand wild horse, the Kaimanawa. Days in the saddle will be narrated with Nicola and Tommy's in-depth knowledge of the land that you'll be traversing while drawing on the diversity and vibrance of their cultures. Nicola lives and breathes horses and is proud to have a string of naturally educated horses (majority are Kaimanawa) who are blissfully happy bit-less and barefoot. The Maori culture is omnipresent throughout this itinerary thanks to your kind-hearted, guide Tommy who you'll have the unique privilege of riding shoulder-to-shoulder with while discovering his ancestral lands on days six, seven and eight.



## TRANSFERS

Transfers to and from Taupo are included in the ride price. To avoid travel delays, we ask that all guests arrive and stay in Taupo (at your own expense) the day before the ride begins, so you're ready to be collected from your accommodation at approximately 9.30am on day one. And please also book another night's accommodation in Taupo on the final day of your ride, so the group isn't rushed getting back into town. You can fly home the following day.

Being a tourist destination, Taupo has a vast number of accommodation options available to suit all budgets. We suggest staying near the town centre so you're within walking distance of plenty of restaurants. Here are a few hotels your hosts have suggested:

[Sails on the Lake](#)

[The Lake Motel](#)

[Hilton Lake Taupo](#) (not in the middle of town but has its own bar/restaurant and close to the thermal baths)

\*\*Please note that if you're flying into Auckland International Airport, give yourself a three hour buffer to clear customs {especially with horse riding equipment - helmets, chaps} before your regional flight directly into Taupo. Our travel agent can assist in booking your international and regional flights as she's familiar with this ride itinerary.

# SUGGESTED ITINERARY FOR 8 DAY, 7 NIGHT RIDE



\*Please note, this is a suggested itinerary only and subject to change due to weather and other influencing factors. This itinerary can also be run in either direction i.e. River Valley to Tommy's as per below, or Tommy's to River Valley. The direction you are to ride will be determined by the departure date you choose.

## DAY 1

Hooray! Your adventure in New Zealand is about to begin! This morning you'll be picked up from your accommodation in Taupo at 9.30am and driven to River Valley Lodge. Your host, Nicola, has lived in River Valley her whole life, and her family has been running the business for five generations. Along the way you'll have the chance to purchase any last minute supplies, alcohol if you'd like and a tasty lunch for the day ahead (lunch today is not included in the ride price). Once you reach the stables, you'll meet your guides, be introduced to

the horse that will be your partner for the next week, and get a briefing on the trip ahead. Today is about getting to know your horse, building a connection, feeling comfortable with one another and understanding the principles of riding your horse in a rope halter. To begin with, you'll spend some time working together on the ground, then you'll ride out over River Valley. After a beautiful day's riding, you'll feel connected and confident in the saddle. Over a dinner of home-grown meat and vegetables, you'll enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of River Valley Lodge and get to know your guides and fellow guests. By now your comfortable, cosy bed will be calling - make sure you get plenty of beauty sleep tonight, globetrotters!

## DAY 2

After packing your lunch and filling up on a hearty breakfast at the lodge, everyone will head out to catch, groom, saddle and feed the horses together. This hands-on time strengthens your relationship

with your horse and will form part of your trip each day (don't worry, there's always help on hand if you're unsure of how to do anything). Mounting up, you will explore the beautiful countryside around River Valley for a full day, with a break for lunch in a beautiful spot along the trail. Tonight is your last night at River Valley Lodge, so be sure to savour the family-style, locally grown and home cooked fare! Before bed this evening, you'll pack what you need for camping, leaving anything you don't need at the lodge - it will be transported to Tommy's farm, ready for your arrival in a few days.

## DAY 3

Getting into the morning rhythm, you'll pack your lunch and enjoy a filling breakfast, then prepare your horse for the day ahead. Today's ride is a picturesque journey through the local farmlands, crossing eight private properties before reaching Moawhango. Moawhango is a small country settlement with a rich history. Here you will get to meet some of the locals from both European and Maori cultures, who will share their love of the land and their ancestral stories with you. Tonight you will be staying on the community's marae (pictured above), or meeting ground. The marae is the focal point of Māori communities throughout New Zealand, who see it as tūrangawaewae - their place to stand and belong. As a group, you will be welcomed onto the marae and experience the warm hospitality of the Maori people as you're treated to a traditional Maori meal.

## DAY 4

This morning you will wave goodbye to Moawhango and journey on for an adventurous day's ride through the high country. You'll cross Maunganui Station, as well as two more farms. This is private land where few tourists never get to set foot on, so lap it up, globetrotters! On top of that, you're riding right on the edge of wild horse country, where the wild Kaimanawa horses roam. Finally, you'll pull your horse up at Mark's

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Woolshed and enjoy a seasonal summer barbecue beneath the magnificent volcano, Mount Ruapehu. Basic shower facilities will be available at the campsite should you wish to freshen up. As the stars twinkle in the night sky, you'll snuggle down inside your tent and rest up for another epic day in the saddle.

## DAY 5

After breakfast at Mark's Woolshed, you'll saddle up and spend the day riding through native bushland, swampland, manuka, tussock-covered hills and picture-perfect farmland, each mile laden with tales of early pioneering history. You'll enjoy another picnic lunch along the way, and reach Lloyd's Country Bar in the late afternoon. This one-of-a-kind bar is situated on Lloyd's farm - literally in the middle of a field where he grazes his sheep and cows. Tonight is 'locals night' and you'll order dinner from the bar menu before sitting down with the locals (dinner is included

in the ride price, but you'll need to purchase your drinks). The people who live near Lloyd either own or work on nearby farms. This evening promises you a snapshot of genuine country culture as you share stories and laughs with Lloyd and his many friends! When you've had your fill at the bar, you'll retire to your tent, washing off the day's dust in the basic on-site shower if you so please.

## DAY 6

As usual, the day will begin with a delicious breakfast and time spent bonding with your trusty trail horse as you prepare for the ride ahead. The journey continues through Lloyd's farm, with spectacular views galore and ample opportunity to give your horse its head and canter across the farmland before stopping for a break at Toddy's farm, another local farmer. From here, you and your horse will be transported by vehicle to the start of your ride through Atihau land. This is Tommy's ancestral land, with over 50,000 hectares

of land divided up into 10 farms. Tommy grew up in this country and has worked here all his life. He will guide you through this impressive, hilly country to bring you to your campsite at his home this evening. Dinner will be cooked over the campfire tonight, and you'll share stories around the fire before once again bedding down in your tent.

\*Due to the long hours in the saddle today and the kilometres needing to be covered to reach your campsite, your horses will be trucked a short distance so you don't have to ride along the road. This will no doubt be a much welcome break for both horse and rider.

## DAY 7

Today gets off to a leisurely start, with time

to sit and watch the world go by, spend some quality time with your horse, or get involved in putting the hangi down (a traditional Maori feast steamed in the ground using hot rocks). Tommy's campsite is the perfect place to enjoy outdoor living, especially as you get to stay here again tonight. There are outdoor toilet and shower facilities available on site. Later in the day, you will experience another side of Atihau land as you discover your surrounds on horseback, and in the evening you get to feast on the freshly steamed hangi! This is your last night, and you'll no doubt share plenty of laughs, stories and memories with your fellow riders around the campfire!

## DAY 8

Today will be a day to explore the bond you've made with your horse. Tommy's place boasts plenty of natural and man-made obstacles around to play with from your horse's back. This is a great opportunity to hone your horsemanship skills with the help of your knowledgeable guides, or just spend time exploring the beautiful bush below Tommy's house. Your day concludes with a picnic to celebrate the journey you've undertaken, and at 4:00pm you'll take a shuttle back to your accommodation in Taupo. The trip takes roughly two hours, so you'll need to book a night's accommodation in Taupo this evening so the group isn't rushed getting back into town. You can fly home anytime the following day.