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THE MICHELIN GUIDE EXPANDS ITS GLOBAL FOOTPRINT WITH THE ARRIVAL IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

- The arrival in Aotearoa New Zealand marks its first-ever expansion into Oceania
- MICHELIN Guide Inspectors are already on the ground preparing their restaurant selection for Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown
- The inaugural selection will be revealed in 2026



Michelin is pleased to announce the arrival of the MICHELIN Guide in Aotearoa New Zealand, marking its first-ever expansion into Oceania. The inaugural edition will cover four vibrant culinary destinations: Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Queenstown.

Set to be unveiled in the middle of 2026, the restaurant selection is already under way, as MICHELIN Guide Inspectors are currently on the ground, dining anonymously to identify the very best restaurants that showcase the unique character of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Queenstown culinary scenes.

Gwendal Poullennec, International director of the MICHELIN Guide states: *"We are thrilled to bring the MICHELIN Guide to Aotearoa New Zealand for the*

very first time. The country offers a rich and diverse culinary landscape, shaped by its indigenous Māori heritage, Pacific influences, and a new generation of chefs who champion local produce with creativity and passion. By highlighting the exceptional restaurants of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Queenstown, we hope to share with the world the unique flavours and talent that make New Zealand such an exciting gastronomic destination."

The expansion of the MICHELIN Guide to Aotearoa New Zealand is made possible through the valued support of Tourism New Zealand.

New Zealand's **Minister for Tourism and Hospitality Louise Upston** said: *"This recognition is more than a win for our chefs and winemakers — it's a triumph for our entire hospitality and tourism sector. It celebrates the incredible dedication and talent of the people who bring our food and beverage experiences to life every day."*

Tourism New Zealand Chief Executive René de Monchy said:

"We couldn't be prouder of our vibrant food and beverage scene, and it's thrilling to see it now shining on the international stage through the prestigious MICHELIN Guide. The recognition not only celebrates our culinary excellence but also signals to the world that New Zealand is a must-visit destination. We warmly invite the world to come and experience it for themselves — to taste the flavours of this land and discover the stories behind every plate and pour."



Caption: Piha Beach, Auckland, New Zealand

Photo credit: ©Al Guthrie

A Gourmet Destination

Aotearoa New Zealand is a land shaped by a fusion of cultures, and contemporary cosmopolitan influences. Its cuisine reflects this melting pot of traditions, combined with an abundance of world-class local produce. From fresh seasonal vegetables to iconic grass-fed lamb and beef, New Zealand ingredients are elevated into modern cuisine which include international flair and paired with some of the world's most acclaimed wines.

In **Auckland**, while New Zealand cuisine remains at the heart of the dining experience, the city's vibrant urban landscape, diverse international offerings and rich coastal resources cement its reputation as a culinary hotspot with global appeal. From inclusive fine dining that celebrates Aotearoa's multicultural identity to wine lists showcasing the best of local vineyards, Auckland serves up a world class gastronomic experience that is welcoming and refined.

Wellington, New Zealand's creative capital, thrives on bold ideas and big flavours. The cosmopolitan city has a multicultural culinary scene, and a deep-rooted commitment to organic and sustainable produce encourages farm to table practices. As one of the world's top coffee cities, Wellington celebrates coffee culture, with roasteries and coffee nooks around every corner.

In the South Island, **Christchurch** restaurants capitalize on the region's natural abundance, from Banks Peninsula seafood to fresh produce from Canterbury's fertile plains. Local produce is celebrated through value-driven, farm-to-table dining. Blending New Zealand staples with Pacific Rim flavours, they contribute to the nation's evolving culinary identity.

Queenstown is a world-renowned resort town nestled amongst the dramatic peaks of the Southern Alps, offering a culinary landscape that marries natural bounty with eco-conscious innovation. The Central Otago terroir shapes the world's southernmost wine region and its organic seasonal produce, paired with wild-caught venison and premium lamb sourced from the surrounding high country.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, every journey is a chance to find your 100%, to connect with people, the land, the flavours, and the spirit of the place. From the moment you arrive, the embrace of *manaakitanga* – a warm, genuine welcome – turns visitors into *whānau* (family).

Food and wine is a gateway to culture, community and connection - sipping a world-class pinot noir or enjoying freshly caught *kaimoana* (seafood) on a coastal foraging tour. Each bite and sip are infused with the *wairua* (spirit) of the land, offering a taste of something authentic and unforgettable.

Joining the MICHELIN Guide puts New Zealand on the global culinary map, a destination where food is an experience worth travelling for. It validates the excellence of New Zealand's chefs, producers and hospitality and invites discerning travellers to explore through taste. With Michelin's spotlight, New Zealand's food story becomes part of a global conversation - driving tourism, elevating local talent and deepening international appreciation for its unique flavours and manaakitanga.

The MICHELIN Keys

125 years after its creation as a guide for discerning travellers, the MICHELIN Guide is once again redefining excellence — this time in the world of hospitality. The announcement of the MICHELIN Guide's debut in New Zealand follows swiftly on the heels of the 2025 MICHELIN Global Keys reveal, in which 19 New Zealand hotels received MICHELIN Key distinction for excellence in design, architecture, service and personality.

The MICHELIN Guide Methodology

The MICHELIN Guide was created in 1900 by the Michelin tire company to support the growth of automobile mobility. Since then, it has remained loyal to its original mission: to settle in mature gastronomic destinations, to guide international travellers and local foodies to the best restaurants, to highlight world culinary scenes, and to promote travel culture.

The restaurant selection in Aotearoa New Zealand will be made according to the MICHELIN Guide's historic methodology, focusing only on the quality of the cuisine proposed by the restaurants, which the anonymous MICHELIN Guide Inspectors evaluate by following five universal criteria:

- The quality of the ingredients
- The mastery of cooking techniques
- The harmony of flavours
- The personality of the cuisine
- The consistency both over time and across the menu

The MICHELIN Guide is committed to maintaining the highest global standards in its restaurant selection process. Its team of anonymous, experienced, and expert inspectors conduct continuous and rigorous evaluations of restaurants. These evaluations are carried out objectively and independently, without implication of any third-party stakeholder or partner, ensuring that external factors do not influence the results. This dedication to impartiality and excellence guarantees that only outstanding dining establishments are recognized.

The MICHELIN Guide Restaurant Selection

The MICHELIN Guide conveys its restaurant reviews through an extensive system of distinctions, which are awarded to special restaurants within its full selection. The most famous distinctions are its globally renowned MICHELIN Stars awarded to the restaurant offering the best culinary experiences. One MICHELIN Star is awarded to restaurants for “high-quality cooking that is worth a stop,” two MICHELIN Stars for “excellent cooking that is worth a detour,” and three MICHELIN Stars for “exceptional cuisine that is worth a special journey.”



Alongside the coveted Star ratings, the selection also includes the popular Bib Gourmand category, a distinction awarded to restaurants that provide good quality food at a moderate price.

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To learn more about the MICHELIN Guide history, methodology or selection organization, please visit guide.michelin.com or follow updates on facebook.com/MichelinGuideAsia and instagram.com/michelinguide.



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