

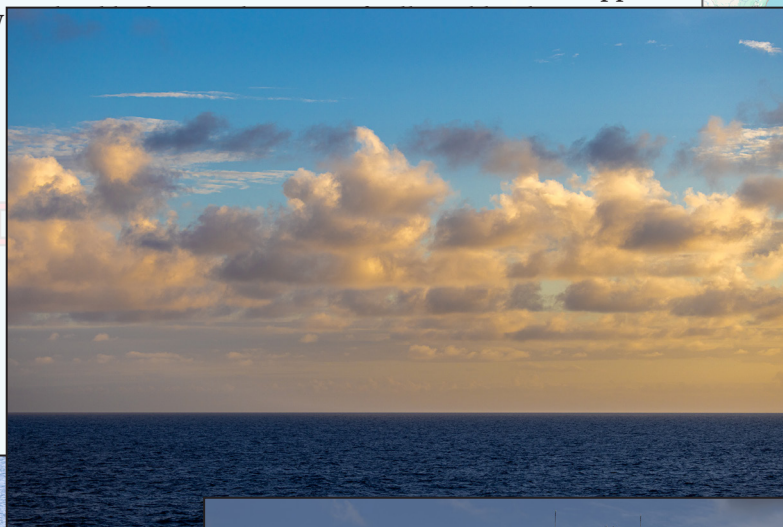
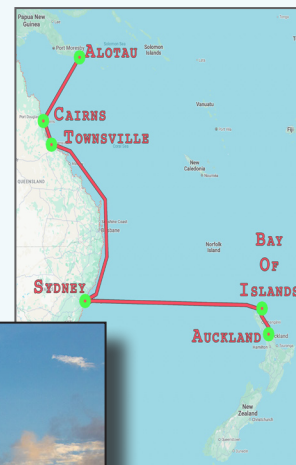
# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

The last legs of our journey to New Zealand were from Papua New Guinea south to Australia (with stops in Cairns, Townsville, and Sydney), then east across the Tasman Sea to New Zealand. We stopped at Bay of Islands as our first port of call in New Zealand before our last port of call in Auckland where we disembarked the ship to begin exploring New Zealand by car, boat and train.

It took a couple nights and a day of cruising from Alotau, Papua New Guinea to make Cairns, Australia. The seas were calm and offered a nice sunrise or two along the way.

We were escorted in the Cairns Harbors and berthed in a nice central location to explore on our own.





# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

On our own, we Uber'd to the Cairns Botanical Gardens and did some birding. The Cairns Botanical Garden is a large park with forests and wetlands that host many birds. It was pretty warm and we did not last but a couple three hours even though the majority of the gardens we walked were in shade.



Vanuatu

Port Vila



Torresian Imperial-Pigeon



Masked Lapwing (Spur-Winged Plover)



Black Butcherbird



Masked Lapwing (Spur-Winged Plover)



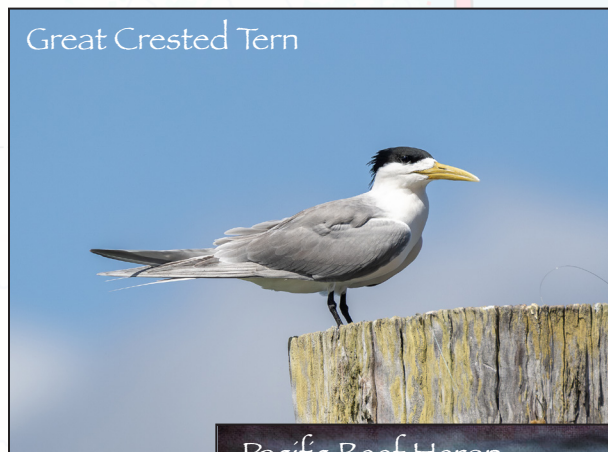
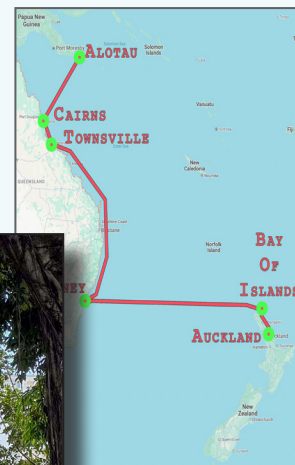
# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

After our birding walk at the Cairns Botanical Gardens we Uber'd back into downtown Cairns to have lunch and walk around a bit. We came across the Hog's Breath Cafe and wondered if there was a connection to the famous Carmel Hog's Breath Inn that Clint Eastwood owned until 1999. It turns out it does not, but does have it's own controversial connection to another Hog's Breath Cafe that was founded in 1976 in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. At one time, the down-under version had almost 70 stores in Australia and a few others scattered across the southern hemisphere. Now it is down to about 20 and just in Australia. Here is a link to more information about it:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hog%27s\\_Breath\\_Cafe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hog%27s_Breath_Cafe)

Our walk back to the ship along the Cairns Harbor Promenade provided a few more bird views.



Great Crested Tern



Varied Honeyeater



Pacific Reef Heron



Common Myna



# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

Back on the ship there was a little time to do some late afternoon bird watching from our room balcony and to watch the harbor activity.



Great Crested Tern



Norfolk Island

BAY  
OF  
ISLANDS

That evening, under cover of another great sunset, we set sail for Townsville. It was just down the coast and an short overnight cruise.

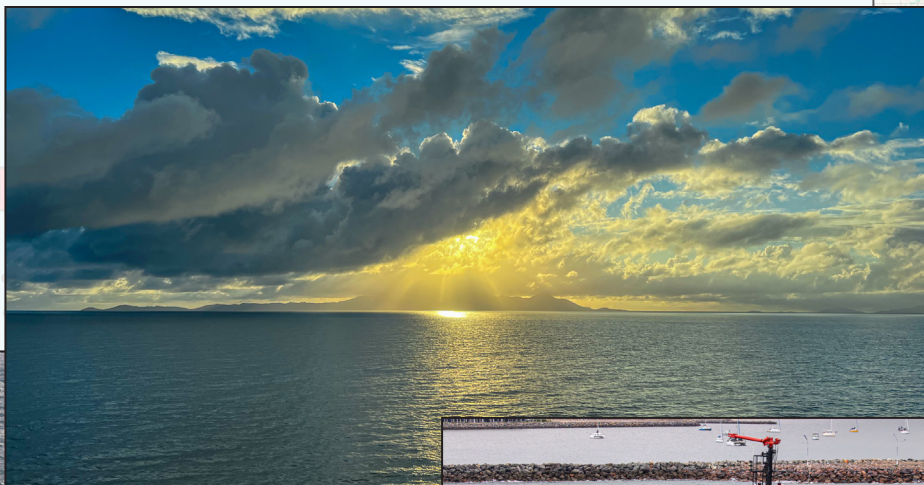
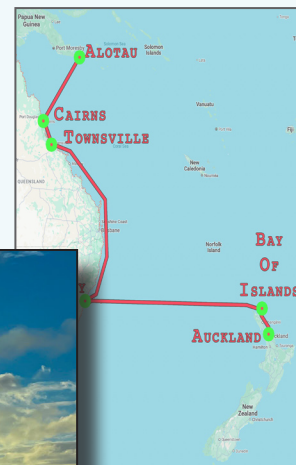




# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

The next morning was another glorious sky as we entered the Townsville harbor with help of pilots and tugs.



At this port we did take one of the cruise line's excursions as they went to the Billabong Sanctuary, a place where we wanted to do some birding. It is some distance south of Townsville and we felt uncomfortable going that distance on our own with the limited time available. The excursion would also take in a short stop at couple of Townsville locations that seemed interesting as well.

The Billabong Sanctuary is a 27 acre wildlife sanctuary south of Townsville. The sanctuary is a permanent home to over 70 species of Australian mammals, birds and reptiles. As well as many birds, there are kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, wombats, crocodiles, goannas. and meerkats from Africa. The natural billabong (lake) at the center of the sanctuary is host to many visiting animals, some of which will breed and raise their young at the sanctuary.

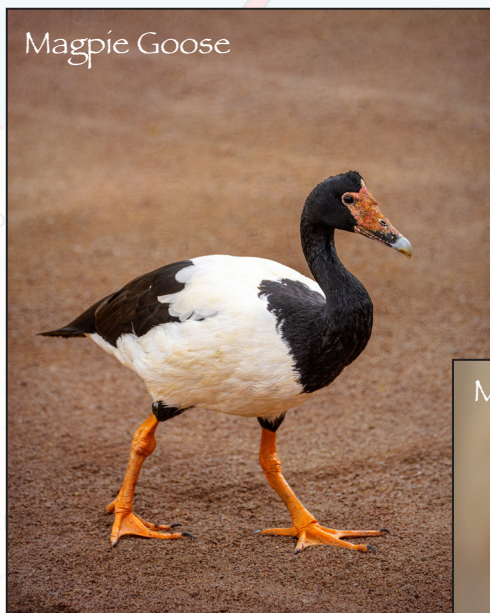


# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA



Magpie Goose



Red-Tailed Black-Cockatoo



Muscovy Duck



Plumed Whistling-Duck



Australian Ibis



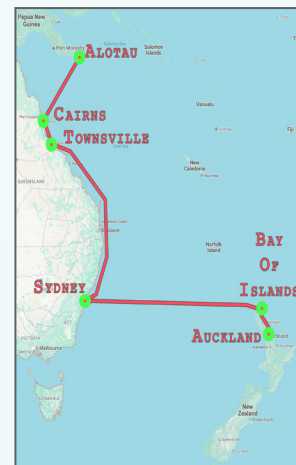
Dusky Moorhen



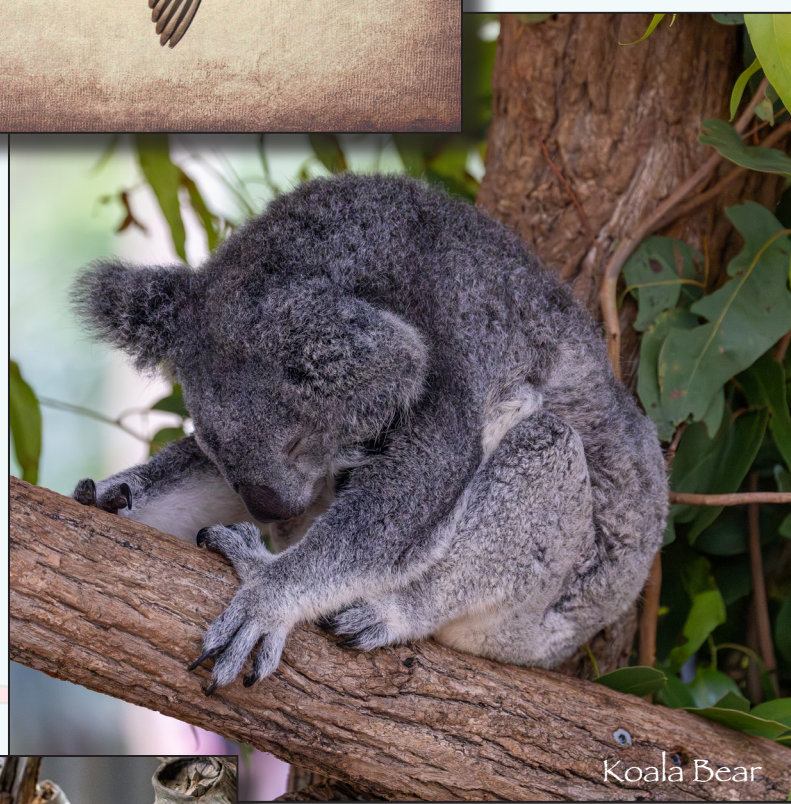


# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA



Koalas generally spend most of their time in deep contemplative thought trances. However, the one below woke enough to flip me off as I was photographing it.



Even the meerkat was shocked at seeing the koala act like that!

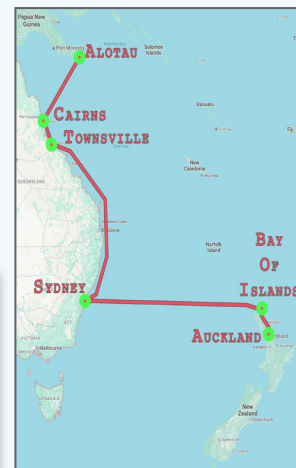




# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025 PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

We stopped by Kissing Point where there is a memorial to the United States 5th Air Force. It is dedicated to the men and women who gave their lives and to the many thousands who gave up their youth to serve their country in the U.S. 5th Air Force during World War II in the Southwest Pacific.

It was dedicated May 8, 1992 - the 50th anniversary of the American 5th Air Force - and the Battle of the Coral Sea. It was nice to see the USA was getting along with at least one other country. Well... back in 1992 anyway.



New Caledonia

If you want to read more, where is a link to the the monument (or just click the text box):

<https://monumentaustalia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/92837-united-states-5th-air-force-memorial/>

Back on the ship we got a fly-by from a squadron of Rainbow Lorikeets before we headed out to sea and a three night / two day cruise south to Sydney.



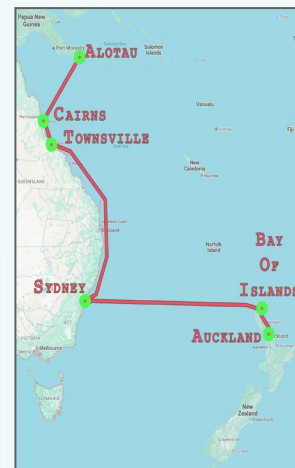
New Zealand  
 Christchurch



# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

The seas were pleasant and calm for the cruise down to Sydney.



We got the usual help and then some upon our entry into Sydney Harbor. On the way in we got plenty of interesting views.



They offered help from the air as well... or possibly we were the subjects of tourist flights. It is a busy harbor for sure!





# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025 PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

We passed by the "NCIS Sydney" stage sets.





# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

The ship docked well into Sydney Harbor, at the White Bay Cruise Terminal. It was not walking distance to anything, but a free shuttle was provided to the downtown area we wanted to visit. The docking spot, while some distance from the downtown area the really big ships get to dock at, provided us with some nice views of the city over the two days we were there.

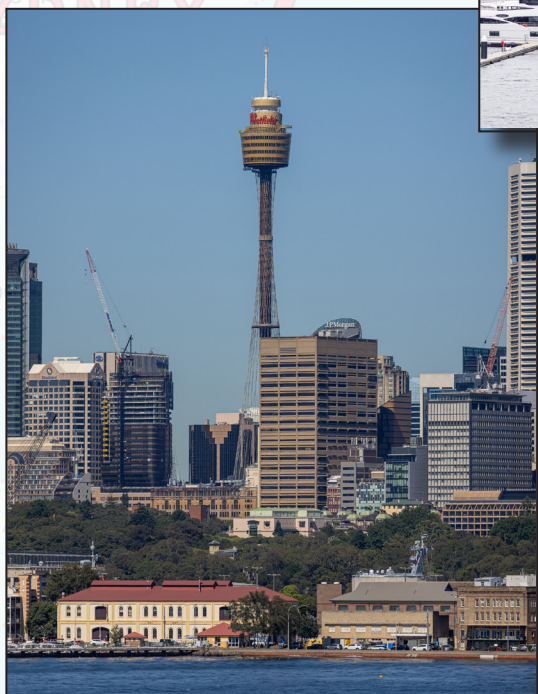
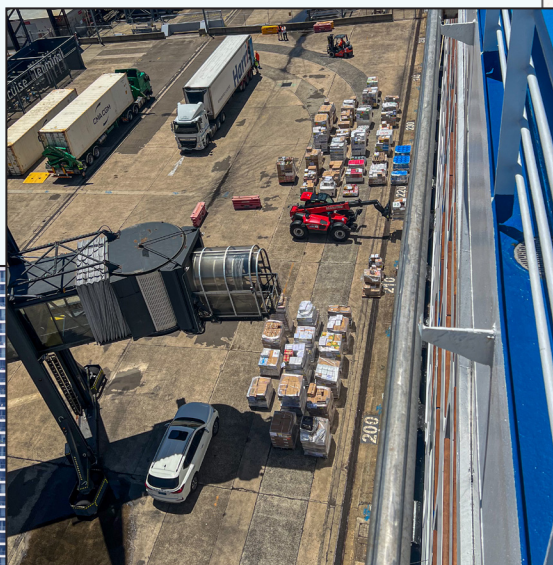
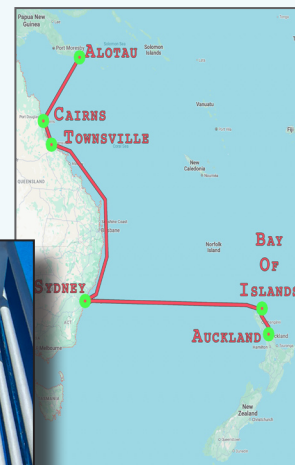




# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025 PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

In Sydney, the ship jettisoned garbage and took on supplies for the journey onward. The view to the right is from over the railing on one of the ship's upper decks looking down at the loading activity.

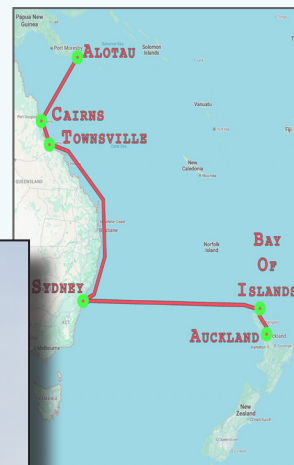
We left Sydney on an overcast late afternoon but it still provided for some more interesting scenes of Sydney and the suburbs.





# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025 PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

As this A380 plane passed overhead, it was a bit odd to think that depending upon the plane's configuration there probably were nearly as many passengers on that plane as there were on this ship. As many as 850 in the 230' x 21.5" x 2 decks tall of an A380 and as many as 670 passengers and 400 crew in the 600' x 83' x 11 decks tall of the ship we were on.

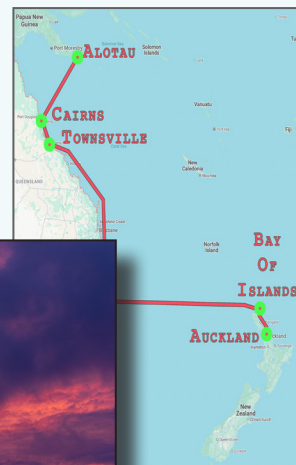
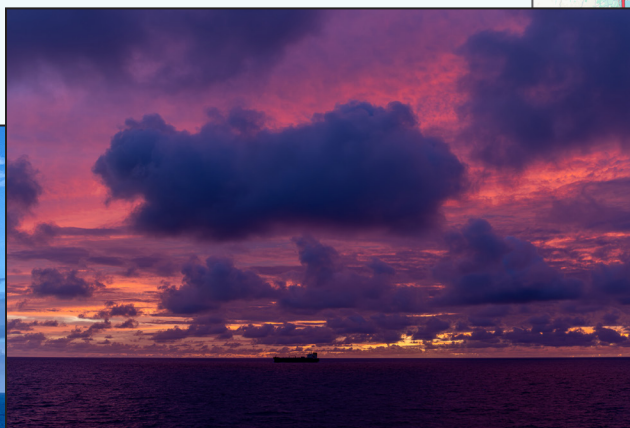




# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

It was another three nights and two days of cruising east across the Tasman Sea before we would round the northern tip of New Zealand and make a stop at the Bay of Islands.



We didn't go ashore because in just a few days we were going to spend five days here on our own. It will be our first stop after getting our rental car and supplies in Auckland. Instead we spent the day enjoying the views from the ship and getting ready for our exit in Auckland in a couple days.



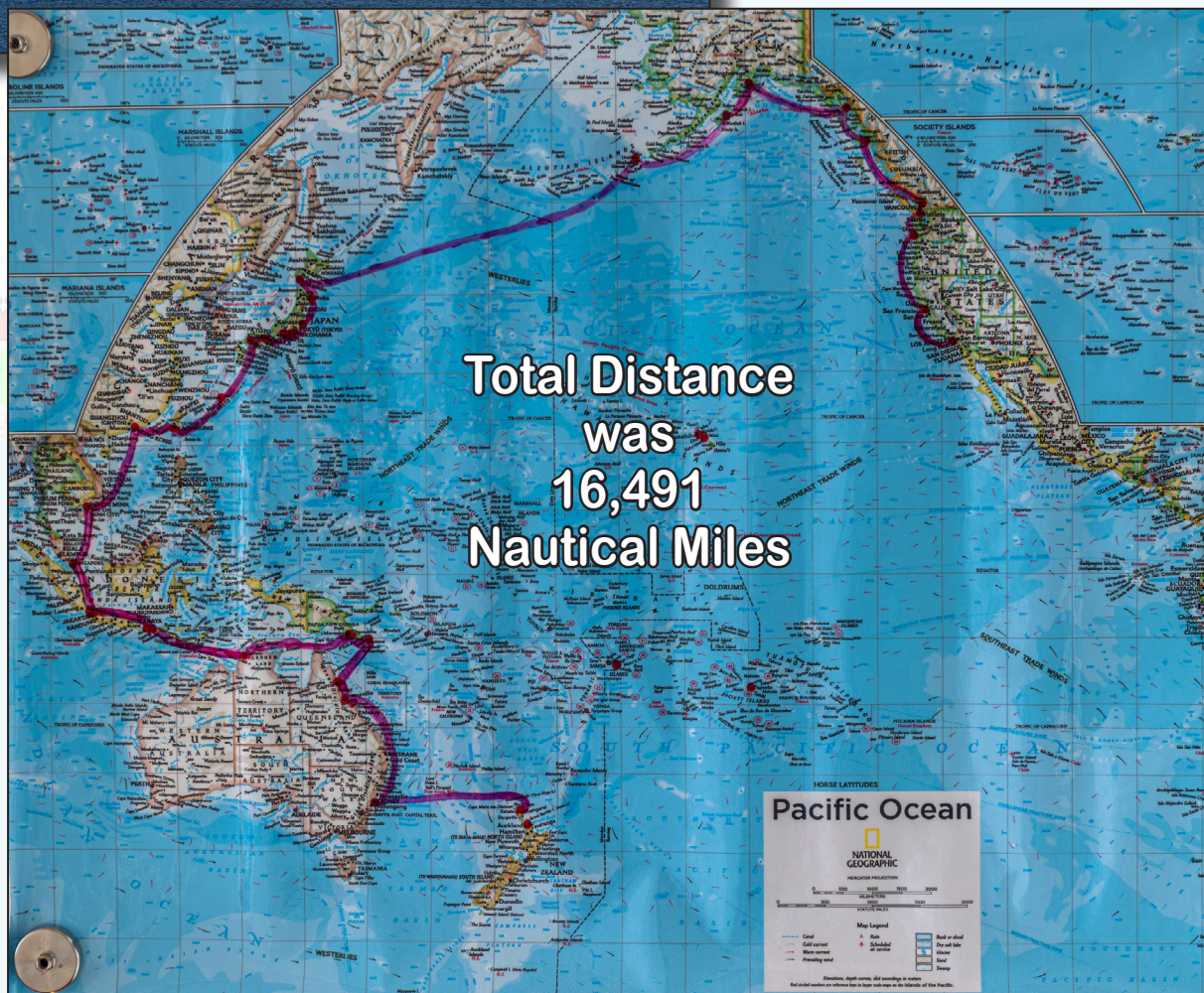


# NEW ZEALAND 2024 /2025

## PART VI: PNG TO NEW ZEALAND VIA AUSTRALIA

With our arrival in Auckland, we completed our journey to New Zealand... from Poulsbo to Los Angeles via car and then Los Angeles to Auckland via ship along the edges of the Pacific Ocean.

For the next four months we explored both the North Island and South Island of New Zealand, primarily car, but occasionally by water and rail. In the end, we pretty much circumnavigated both islands. The next several *Flying Pig Adventures* travelogues will be about those travels, but publishing them will be a bit slower than normal as we plan to move to a new home over the next few months.



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