

The Quietly Extraordinary New Zealand Retreat Recognized by Condé Nast Traveler - for the Second Year Running

Pīhopa Retreat - a six-suite sanctuary tucked into the hills above Nelson - has been named New Zealand's #2 Hotel in the US Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards for the second consecutive year, alongside a #1 ranking from Condé Nast Traveller UK and a perfect sweep of the world's most coveted travel accolades.

NELSON, NEW ZEALAND - For discerning North American travelers planning the New Zealand journey of a lifetime, there is a clear answer to where to stay.

Pīhopa Retreat - a quietly extraordinary boutique hotel set on a historic estate just minutes from the city of Nelson - has been voted New Zealand's #2 Hotel in the Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards 2026, ranking #6 in Australia & New Zealand in a vote by more than 750,000 readers of the world's most authoritative voice in luxury travel.

This is the second consecutive year Pīhopa has been recognized by US readers.

Pīhopa Retreat's global standing was further cemented by the UK edition of Condé Nast Traveller, which named it #1 Hotel in New Zealand in its Readers' Choice Awards 2026 (#9 in Australasia and the highest-placed New Zealand property) - also for the second year running, and a rare double recognition from the world's most respected travel title.

The accolade places Pīhopa firmly on the global stage, alongside the world's great intimate luxury hotels and lodges. An independently owned six-suite retreat, Pīhopa ranks alongside international names including Ritz-Carlton, Capella, The Fullerton and The Langham.

The accolade does not stand alone. The retreat holds a perfect 10/10 on Booking.com - a flawless score calculated across every verified guest review over three consecutive years - TripAdvisor's Best of the Best (top 1% of hotels worldwide), and New Zealand's Qualmark 5-Star and Gold Tier rating - a complete and flawless sweep of travel's most respected recognition.

"Just WOW. This was our favorite place over a six-week vacation in New Zealand and Australia. Only sorry we couldn't stay more than two nights. It is perfection."

- TripAdvisor Guest, New York City

The New Zealand Experience, Reimagined

New Zealand has long captured the North American imagination - its dramatic landscapes, clean air, and unhurried way of life offering a rare counterpoint to the pace of everyday life. Pīhopa Retreat distills all of that into six private suites set within 5.5 acres of heritage gardens on a historic estate dating back to 1859, neighbouring a 2.4-hectare reserve and shaded by protected landscape trees more than a century old.

Hosted by Sarah Mellor and her team, every detail of a guest's stay is considered and deeply personalised - in a way that only a six-suite retreat can achieve. Restaurant reservations are arranged in advance with complimentary taxis to and from Nelson's city centre. Evenings begin with complimentary drinks and canapés served poolside. A curated selection of wines and cocktails, freshly baked afternoon treats, and a sumptuous chef-prepared breakfast served in the historic 1877 chapel complete the picture. Between it all, guests wander at their own pace - pathways weaving through heritage plantings, native birds overhead, the stillness of a place that feels entirely, gloriously private.

It is this calibre of unhurried, genuine hospitality - something the world's grand hotels rarely achieve - that has earned Pīhopa a remarkable depth of loyalty among its guests, many of whom return from across North America, season after season.

"The owners and staff are so very gracious and their hospitality absolutely unmatched. You'll never forget this amazing experience."

- Nancy M, Guest

A Gateway to One of the World's Great Wilderness Regions

Pīhopa Retreat sits at the threshold of three of New Zealand's most spectacular National Parks - Abel Tasman, Kahurangi, and Nelson Lakes - placing guests at the heart of some of the most breathtaking and accessible wilderness on earth. Golden beaches, ancient beech forests, and mountain trails are within easy reach, as is the region's celebrated food, wine, and arts scene. Nelson consistently ranks as New Zealand's sunniest city - and for North American visitors making the journey across the Pacific, it rewards every mile.

New This Season

Pīhopa Retreat's new Wellness Centre - incorporating a massage studio, reformer Pilates, sauna and ice bath - opened in Winter 2026, further strengthening the retreat's offering for guests seeking restoration alongside exploration. The team has also planted 3,000 native trees on the property this winter, with a new walking trail and curated journeys through the emerging forest landscape - both reflecting the constant desire to refine and elevate the guest experience, and to deepen the sense of sanctuary that defines every stay. The suites have also been refreshed for the new season, with new paint, curtains and furnishings.

Sustainable by Nature

Pīhopa Retreat is carbon positive certified, a Kaitiaki member of the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary, and a signatory of New Zealand's Tiaki Promise - a

commitment to care for the land, sea, and community. The retreat holds Qualmark 5-Star and Gold Tier Sustainable Tourism accreditation - New Zealand's official quality mark for tourism, independently benchmarked against Global Sustainable Tourism Council standards. For guests who care as much about how they travel as where they go, Pihopa offers luxury with a light footprint.

Practical Information for North American Travelers

Pihopa Retreat is bookable direct at www.pihoparetreat.nz. Air New Zealand and major North American carriers operate direct long-haul services into Auckland from cities including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston and New York. Nelson is then a short domestic flight, connecting via Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch. Given near-full occupancy through the peak summer season (November–April), early booking is strongly recommended for travelers planning a New Zealand itinerary.

About Pihopa Retreat

Tucked away in a tranquil pocket just minutes from Nelson's city centre on New Zealand's South Island, Pihopa Retreat is New Zealand's most acclaimed small luxury hotel. Six private suites set amid 5.5 acres of heritage gardens on a historic estate dating to 1859. Highest-ranked New Zealand hotel in Condé Nast Traveller UK's Readers' Choice Awards 2026 (#9 in Australasia) and second-highest in the US edition (#6 in Australia & New Zealand) - for the second consecutive year. Perfect 10/10 on Booking.com (three-year verified score). TripAdvisor Best of the Best (top 1% globally). Qualmark 5-Star and Gold Tier Sustainable Tourism accreditation, verified against Global Sustainable Tourism Council standards. Carbon positive certified and signatory of the Tiaki Promise.

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