



21 day Ultimate NZ Explorer

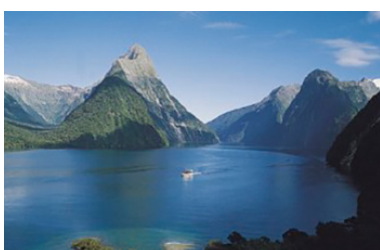
This 21 day ultimate explorer self-drive package is exclusive to Barrhead Travel. Travel the length of New Zealand experiencing wonderful scenery, unique adventures and of course the friendly kiwi hospitality. This itinerary visits Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington, Picton, Kaikoura, Christchurch, Mt Cook, Dunedin, Te Anau, Milford Sound, Queenstown, Wanaka, Franz Josef Glacier and more. An ideal and complete package that can be customised indefinitely to suit you.



Starts in: Auckland
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 21days / 20nights
 Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
 Can be customised: Yes



This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

Includes: Late model rental cars

Includes: Unlimited kms

Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees

Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App

Included activity: Castle to Cruise Tour and Penguin Experience with Monarch

Included activity: Milford Sound Cruise with Real NZ - Lunch Included

Included activity: Lake Wanaka Happy Hour Cruise

Included activity: Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch Train Station to Accommodation

Included activity: Private Transfer from Christchurch Accommodation to Christchurch Airport with Christchurch Touring Company

Included activity: Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

plus much more...

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: GPS navigation

Includes: Additional drivers

Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

Included activity: Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

Included activity: TSS Earnslaw Cruise and Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Dinner

Included activity: Jet Boat and Wilderness Walk with Wanaka River Journeys

Included activity: America's Cup Sailing Experience with Explore

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Included activity: Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

Included activity: Zealandia by Night Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

Day 1



Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

You will be met at the Auckland airport by the driver and transferred to your Auckland accommodation.

Welcome to Auckland

Kia ora! Welcome to Auckland, known in Māori as Tāmaki Makaurau. Auckland is New Zealand's vibrant "City of Sails," and the country's largest metropolitan area. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, it offers something for everyone. Surrounded by native bush, lush rainforests, and pristine beaches, Auckland is a haven for both adventurers and urban explorers. Wander through world-class museums and galleries in the city centre or enjoy a peaceful retreat at the Auckland Gardens, where stunning landscapes showcase New Zealand's diverse flora. Stroll along the lively waterfront to savour fresh seafood and international cuisine at the Viaduct restaurants. For an unforgettable perspective, ascend the iconic SkyTower, New Zealand's tallest structure, and take in panoramic views of the city and its picturesque islands.

Your accommodation: M Social Hotel Auckland

A contemporary hotel for the curious, the explorers and those who thrive on new experiences. Functionally chic, this contemporary hotel overlooks the vibrant Princes Wharf that is home to a good array of dining, entertainment and shopping experiences.



Day 2



Explore Auckland

Perched on the edge of a large natural harbour, New Zealand's "City of Sails" offers the best of both worlds. Sandy beaches, native bush and lush rainforests give way to a vibrant urban culture, humming with life. Spend time in the Viaduct Harbour, try your hand at sailing an America's Cup yacht or take the ferry to nearby Waiheke Island for a gourmet food and wine experience. If you're looking for a lovely walk, venture to the top of Auckland's highest volcano, Mt Eden, and take in soaring views of the gulf or hop on the short ferry to Rangitoto Island and hike to the top of the volcanic island. Immerse yourself in nature's beauty at the expansive Auckland Botanical Garden's, sprawled across 156 acres of lush land and native forest on Hill Road. Pack a picnic, soak up the sunshine, and delight in the melodious birdsong during a peaceful lunch. Head up to the Sky Tower, standing at just over 300m tall (about 1,000 feet) and have a meal in the 360-degree revolving restaurant. Scale the outermost perimeter of the Harbour Bridge or test your stomach and bungee off both. To end your day, catch a cab to Ponsonby Road and sample some upmarket culinary delights.

America's Cup Sailing Experience with Explore

Participate as crew on an authentic America's Cup yacht. Take the helm, exert energy on the grinders or sit back and enjoy the action and scenery as you sail the beautiful Waitemata Harbour. Experience the excitement of sailing, no experience necessary. Feel the thrill of the wind in your face as you tack and jibe. These powerful and highly engineered race vessels are usually the domain of billionaires and elite professional yachters but this unique two-hour sailing experience offers everyone the opportunity to sail these Grand Prix racing machines. America's Cup is the world's oldest and most prestigious sporting trophy and ultimate yachting regatta. Experience it first hand sailing these remarkable vessels on the harbour that hosted the America's Cup in 2000 and 2003.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wētā Workshop Unleashed

Explore worlds of horror, sci-fi and fantasy in the making. An exciting, realistic, and authentic experience, with three fully developed and original film concepts: A nail-biting horror Fauna, a fantasy epic Age of the Ever-Clan, and the mind-bending sci-fi Origins. A 90-minute guided experience through fully themed environments, including immersive horror, fantasy, and sci-fi story worlds. Be immersed by a specially-created unique sweeping cinematic soundtrack, animatronic creatures, physical and digital interactives, hyper-realistic sculpted giants and characters, a horror house experience, and much more.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - All Blacks Experience

See what it takes to make, shape and be an All Black. Experience first-hand the excitement and emotion of game day. Discover the stories behind some of world rugby's most famous players, moments, and matches. This guided experience introduces you to the game of rugby including state-of-the-art displays combining sound, images, interactive technology, and hands-on activities. Discover New Zealand's deep passion for our national sport, experience the full force of the All Blacks haka, and tackle interactive zones where you can try out your kicking, catching, line-out, and accuracy skills against legendary All Blacks.

Your accommodation: M Social Hotel Auckland

A contemporary hotel for the curious, the explorers and those who thrive on new experiences. Functionally chic, this contemporary hotel overlooks the vibrant Princes Wharf that is home to a good array of dining, entertainment and shopping experiences.



Day 3



Collect Rental Car

Choose a car to best suit your needs from our fantastic rental car range. From compact economy, hatchbacks to prestige SUVs.

Auckland to Matamata and Hobbiton

Head southbound on State Highway one through the lush farmland and dairy pastures of the Waikato region. The Bombay Hills mark the outer boundary of the greater Auckland area and its here you turn inland towards Matamata. This is the real Middle Earth, and you'll see many locations used in the filming of The Lord of The Rings and The Hobbit, as well as visiting the actual set of Hobbiton.

Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

In the heart of New Zealand, you can step into the lush pastures of the Shire with a guided tour of Hobbiton, as featured in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit Trilogies. Hobbiton is located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region. Here you can visit such iconic Hobbit locations as Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree with a guide sharing behind-the-scenes tales and insight into the making of the films. Spend time wandering through Bagshot Row before being led inside a Hobbit Hole to view the detailed interior, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Matamata to Rotorua

Just south of Matamata is the township of Tirau, home to the largest tin sheep and sheepdog, but it also offers a surprising number of bric-a-brac, art, craft, and antique stores if you feel like browsing.

Arriving into the City of Rotorua the region's geothermal activity becomes evident as you see steam rising from the roadside and surrounding hills.

Considered the cultural center for the Maori people, Rotorua is the ideal place to gain an insight into the history and culture. Nearby Ohinemutu Village is the original site of the first Maori settlers in the area and despite its modern surroundings and buildings, you can still gain a sense of what the original village was like. The magnificent meeting house and historic carvings along with the unique 'Tudor-style' St Faiths Church feature in many visitors' photo albums.

One of the most popular introductions to the Maori Culture is through an evening at Mitai Maori Village where you can enjoy performances and demonstrations followed by a traditionally cooked hangi meal.

Of course, Rotorua is also a great place to enjoy many other activities including, fishing, 4WD trips, relaxing spa treatments, mountain biking, walking, and hiking plus helicopter and float plane trips.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Rotorua

Millennium Hotel is Rotorua's largest 4-star deluxe hotel. Perfectly situated in the heart of the city overlooking Lake Rotorua. Five levels of accommodation offer guests a wide variety of scenic views.



Day 4



Explore Rotorua

Peppered with natural hot springs, boiling mud pools and steaming geysers, Rotorua sits within one of the world's most active volcanic regions. Geothermal landmarks aside, this city of sulphur has a rich indigenous history. Home to several prominent Māori tribes, a visit to one of the Māori experiences should be high on your agenda, learn about the special meaning of pounamu-Greenstone with Mountain Jade, explore the geysers and arts of Te Puia or immerse in an evening with Te Pā Tū. An excursion to one of the area's wellness spas is also a must! Try the Polynesian Spa for an invigorating soak in its natural mineral hot springs, Wai Ariki offers an indulging and unwinding restorative journey or pay a quick visit to Secret Spot for a soak and a delicious smash burger!

If it is a thrill you are looking for, spike your adrenaline at Rotorua Canopy Tours, soaring above the ancient native forest below. Alternatively, head up the Skyline Rotorua Gondola for soaring lake views, and ride the luge at night for an extra thrill.

Make the most of your time in Rotorua with an excursion through the Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, one of the area's most colourful volcanic attractions. Whatever you are after, Rotorua is almost certain to have it!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - National Kiwi Hatchery Experience

The National Kiwi Hatchery Experience is a special opportunity to gain insight into and view this highly regarded conservation centre. Developed with the visitor experience in mind, the hatchery boasts special viewing opportunities and is hosted by kiwi expert guides who ensure guests leave fully informed and all questions answered. Learn all about New Zealand's intriguing national icon and the efforts of the kiwi husbandry team, see and discover what it takes to hatch and rare chicks, and if you're lucky see baby chicks in person!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Original Ziplining Experience with Rotorua Canopy Tours

Embark on a three-hour adventure through the native New Zealand forest. Journey through the beautiful forest canopy via an incredible network of trails, tree platforms, Ziplines and swing bridges. See breathtaking views of the woodland valleys and hills as you fly through tight openings in the trees. In between the thrill of the ziplines and suspended tree bridges, your guides will share their passion and knowledge for the forest and the conservation challenges to preserve it. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see [here](#).

Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

New Zealand's Most Awarded Cultural Attraction, presenting Te Pā Tū. Feast on song, drama, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) blanketed by towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and a forest-formed amphitheatre. Te Pā Tū shares Māori history, traditions, and cultural aspirations across 4-hours of celebration and feasting. These events change with each season of the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Rotorua

Millennium Hotel is Rotorua's largest 4-star deluxe hotel. Perfectly situated in the heart of the city overlooking Lake Rotorua. Five levels of accommodation offer guests a wide variety of scenic views.

Meals included: Speciality Dinner



Day 5

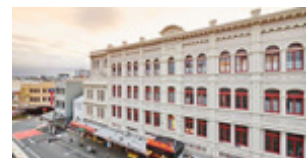


Rotorua to Wellington

The drive from Rotorua to Wellington takes you via the township of Taupō home to New Zealand's largest lake. Following the lakeshore South you'll pass Turangi and then ascend the central plateau onto the high country Rangipo Desert. Skirting the edge of Tongariro National Park, you'll reach the military town of Waiouru before descending through rich farmland and the rural towns of Taihape And Mangaweka. Follow the coast through Paraparaumu, Paekakariki and Plimmerton to arrive at your destination, Wellington.

Your accommodation: Naumi Hotel Wellington

Naumi Studio Wellington, an iconic heritage landmark in the heart of the Cuba Street precinct. After an extensive renovation, this 116-room property has transformed into visual feast for the senses, entralling guests with eclectic spaces inspired from seafaring, the library world and enduring love.



Day 6



Wellington

Wellington known in Māori as Te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui is home to New Zealand's centre of government. Often referred to as 'mini Melbourne', this windy city is a melting pot of art, culture, food, and fashion. Quirky laneway bars, underground art shows, and hipster eateries make up its inner-city vibe, while a host of sandy beaches outside the urban bustle bring a cheerful holiday feel. Head to Te Papa Museum for a history lesson and a ticket to one of its many international exhibitions or jump aboard the Wellington Cable Car - the only running funicular railway in the country. For those with an eye for boutique, fashion wander through Cuba St to sample some of the city's best vintage stores. Break for coffee at a hipster cafe and be sure to snap a pic outside the 'Beehive', New Zealand's parliamentary debate chamber. Go behind the scenes at Weta Workshop Experience, the Oscar Award Winning design studio behind Lord Of The Rings, The Hobbit, and Avatar. If you're a foodie at heart, a two-hour round trip to Martinborough is a must-do. Take your time as you wind through spectacular wine country. For an educational day out, learn about New Zealand's native species at Zealandia, the world's first fully-fenced eco-sanctuary and home to over 40 types of endangered and native birds.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Lord Of The Rings Half Day Tour - Wellington

With some of the best Lord of the Rings tours Wellington has to offer, you will not be disappointed on this tour. You'll visit local filming locations, view a short documentary showing the filmmaking exploits of Peter Jackson and his remarkable team and be guided through the sights and sounds of the Weta Workshop in Miramar. This is followed by a fascinating 'Window into the workshop' exhibition, showing film props and weaponry, with the artists themselves describing how the artefacts were created.

Zealandia By Night Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

Taking a night tour of Zealandia wildlife eco-sanctuary is an unforgettable experience and one that comes highly recommended. A conservation success and safe haven for some of New Zealand's rarest native animals, Zealandia is home to many remarkable species of birds, reptiles and insects living wild within a beautiful 225 hectare (one square mile) valley, just 10 minutes from the central city.

Your accommodation: Naumi Hotel Wellington

Naumi Studio Wellington, an iconic heritage landmark in the heart of the Cuba Street precinct. After an extensive renovation, this 116-room property has transformed into visual feast for the senses, entralling guests with eclectic spaces inspired from seafaring, the library world and enduring love.



Day 7



Interislander Ferry Wellington to Picton with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

The 92 km journey between Wellington and Picton takes around 3 hours and has been described as 'one of the most beautiful ferry rides in the world'. Leaving Wellington Harbour you pass many interesting points such as Pencarrow Head on top of which is New Zealand's oldest lighthouse (1859). Red Rocks is home to a seal colony and Oterangi Bay is the site which recorded the country's highest ever wind speed of 268 kph (167 mph). From the Cook Strait, spectacular views of the Kaikoura Ranges on the South Island can be enjoyed and dolphins and many sea birds are often seen.

Around one hour of the cruise takes you through the Marlborough Sounds - and this region of bush covered mountains, small islands, crystal clear waters and secluded bays is a remarkable photographic opportunity. At the end of Queen Charlotte Sound the cruise comes to an end in the picturesque town of Picton.

When you're not out on the deck enjoying the amazing views, you can retreat to the exclusive Premium Plus lounge which is the most comfortable and relaxing way to travel across the Cook Strait. You'll enjoy complimentary beverages, light snacks, lunch or breakfast, internet access, magazines and newspapers and the most comfortable seating, so you can sit back and enjoy the journey.

Collect Rental Car

Choose a car to best suit your needs from our fantastic rental car range. From compact economy, hatchbacks to prestige SUVs.

Your accommodation: Picton Yacht Club Hotel

Located in the heart of Picton, only a short walk to the marina, shopping & dining precinct and the ferry terminal. Being in the Marlborough region, it is the gateway to the top of the picturesque South Island and Queen Charlotte Sound.



Day 8



Picton to Kaikoura

From Picton head south on State Highway One towards Blenheim, and the wine producing region of Marlborough. Ideally located to enjoy an afternoon sampling the local produce, stop for a guided wine tour with Full Day Marlborough Wine Tour.

Crossing the dry hills of the Marlborough ranges you head towards one of the most spectacular coastlines of the South Island, the Kaikoura Coast. The road hugs the shore for around 50 kilometres and offers many chances to view the native wildlife such as seabirds and New Zealand fur seals. To the east is the Pacific Ocean and to the west you'll follow alongside the Kaikoura Ranges before arriving into the bustling Kaikoura Township.

Kaikōura

Kaikōura is a breathtaking seaside town teeming with marine life and natural beauty. As you wander through this coastal paradise, you'll be enveloped by the fresh sea breeze and the sounds of the ocean. Begin your adventure by observing the lively fur seal colony at the tip of the peninsula. For an unforgettable experience, board a boat to go whale watching and marvel at the majestic whales that call these waters home year-round. If you're feeling adventurous, take the plunge and swim with the playful dusky dolphins in their natural habitat. For bird enthusiasts, Kaikōura offers the chance to get up close with the native albatross, an awe-inspiring sight. The town is rich with attractions, walking tracks, and activities for every visitor. A walk around the Kaikōura Peninsula is a must, where you can explore tide pools teeming with marine life, observe sea creatures basking on the rocks, and watch seabirds soaring above. Be sure to keep a respectful distance from the sleeping sea lions you might encounter along the way. Ohau Point is another highlight, where you can watch fur seals frolic in their natural environment. To delve into Kaikōura's fascinating history, visit Fyffe House. This historic whaler's cottage offers a glimpse into the town's whaling past and its evolution over the years. No trip to Kaikōura is complete without sampling the local seafood. Renowned for having some of the best fish and chips in the country, Kaikōura's eateries serve fresh catches straight from the morning's haul, ensuring a delicious and authentic dining experience. If you need a break from the action, unwind at Lavendyl Lavender Farm. Stroll through the fragrant lavender fields, relax in the serene atmosphere, and browse the gift shop for a variety of lavender products. Kaikōura seamlessly blends adventure, history, and relaxation, making it a perfect destination for travellers seeking a unique and enriching experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Marlborough Icons Tour with Marlborough Tour Company - Lunch Included

Marlborough has become world famous for two iconic areas, the Marlborough wine region and the Marlborough Sounds. Enjoy the perfect combo tour through both areas on the Marlborough Icons Tour. This tour starts in the heart of the Marlborough wine region with two fine wine experiences including Cloudy Bay winery, then in the afternoon enjoy a totally unique Seafood Cruise in the Marlborough Sounds. Learn about seafood farming, take in the stunning scenery and enjoy fresh local seafood with a glass of award winning Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Zipline & Native Forest Tour with EcoZip Kaikoura

Enjoy a scenic journey to Kaikōura's beachfront airfield, followed by a 4WD adventure crossing the braided Kahutara River to Rakanui Station. Take in panoramic views of rolling farmland, lush valleys, and snowcapped mountains before embarking on an exhilarating 5-zipline course, including twin lines for side-by-side rides. Learn fascinating local history from expert guides and enjoy a walk through native forest, with a chance to plant a tree during winter as part of Eco Zip's conservation program. An unforgettable eco-adventure awaits! It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity before travel. For more information please see [here](#)

Your accommodation: The Factory

Located on the beachfront at Hapuku, 10 minutes North of Kaikoura The Factory offers luxury accommodation in the 100-year-old Hapuku Dairy Factory with dramatic views of snow-covered mountains on one side and the ocean on the other.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



Ocean's Cabin with Whale Watch Kaikōura

Experience New Zealand's only marine based whale watching company. Whale Watch Kaikōura offer a once-in-a-lifetime, up close encounter with the giant Sperm Whale. You are also likely to encounter New Zealand fur seals, dolphins and albatross. Depending on the season you may also see Pilot, Blue and Southern Right whales as well as migrating humpbacks. Often orcas can be spotted here and the world's smallest dolphin, the Hector's, occasionally make an appearance. Cruise in style on modern catamarans, specifically designed for whale watching. The VIP Captain's Cabin is situated in the wheelhouse alongside the captain. This cabin provides guests with exclusive access to the captain as well as a dedicated tour host for the duration of the tour.

Kaikōura to Christchurch

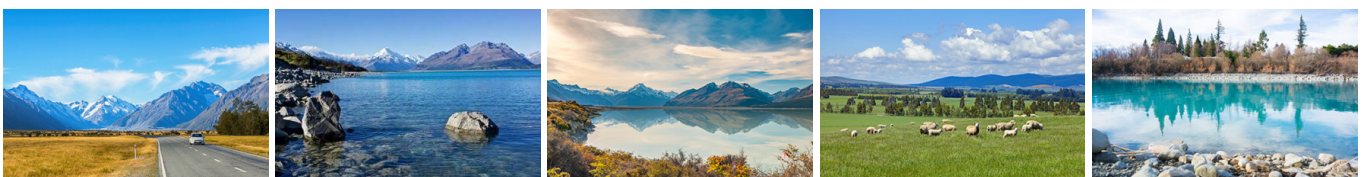
Travel down the coast before heading inland through the North Canterbury wine region - the Waipara Valley. If you've time on your hands we recommend taking a detour to Hanmer Springs for relaxing dip in its thermal pools. Arriving into Christchurch you'll see a new and improved city, steadily rising from the ruins of the 2011 and 2010 earthquakes.

Your accommodation: Distinction Hotel Christchurch

This luxury hotel is centrally located in the revitalised Cathedral Square in the heart of the city, a short stroll from the Avon River, Botanical Gardens, Christchurch Casino, Cashel Mall and new Christchurch Convention Centre.



Day 10



Christchurch to Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park

Drive through the heart of the South Island, crossing the vast Canterbury plains. Catch your breath in Geraldine before continuing through Fairlie. Ascending Burkes pass you'll come to the picturesque town of Lake Tekapo. Follow the road and take in the view of Aoraki-Mt Cook (New Zealand's tallest mountain) from the shores of Lake Pukaki, known for its glacier fed turquoise blue colour. Continue along the lake to your final destination Aoraki-Mt Cook Village.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Glacier Explorers

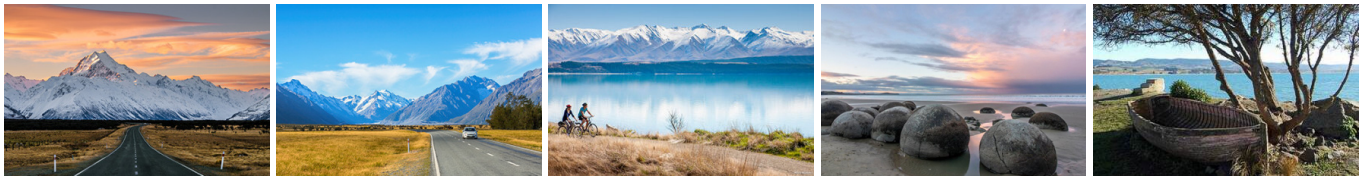
Experience 500-year-old icebergs up close on the Aoraki-Mt Cook terminal lake. The Glacier Explorers tour is the only one of its kind in New Zealand and one of only three in the world! Very few glaciers terminate into lakes and even fewer of them are accessible. See towering ice cliffs and floating icebergs from the safety of a specially designed boat. These boats provide a safe way to view unseen and inaccessible areas of New Zealand's largest glacier The Tasman.

Your accommodation: Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium

The Hermitage Hotel ringed by magnificent snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps, is a world-renowned tourist destination and has been an icon of superior accommodation and dining since 1884.



Day 11

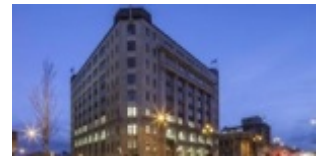


Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Dunedin

Leave Aoraki Mt Cook National Park and travel past Twizel, one of the locations for the Lord of the Rings films. Go through Oamaru, the gliding capital of New Zealand. Continue down the Waitaki Valley follow the hydro power generating system towards the east coast. Stretch your legs in Oamaru, known for its white stone buildings constructed with the local Oamaru Stone and Steampunk influence. If you were a little late off the mark this morning you may get the chance to see the blue penguins come ashore at dusk. Continue south down the coast to Moeraki, and take a detour towards the beach to see the Moeraki Boulders, a unique geological feature well worth a look. As you arrive in Dunedin, take in the city's Edwardian and Scottish heritage reflected in the buildings around the city centre The Octagon.

Your accommodation: Distinction Dunedin Hotel

Distinction Dunedin Hotel occupies the grand Chief Post Office built in the 1930's. This art deco inspired building has recently been transformed into a 4 star hotel with elegant décor, set in the heart of the city.



Day 12

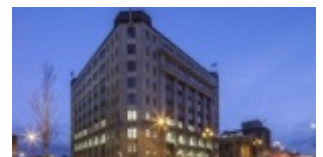


Castle to Cruise Tour and Penguin Experience with Monarch

Today you'll explore the wildlife and history of the Otago Peninsula You'll be welcomed to the MV Monarch for a wildlife cruise around Taiaoroa Head, home to the world's only mainland nesting site for royal albatross. Scattered along the rocks you'll also see fur seals basking in the sun and possibly sea lions on the beach. In the water, you may also see penguins, dolphins, and other marine birds. Back on land, you'll take a guided tour of New Zealand's only castle, Larnach Castle built in 1871. Learn of the scandals and history of the castle and explore the beautiful garden of international significance. Your final stop of the day is to The Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance (formally Penguin Place), a natural nesting site for the rarest penguin in the world, the Yellow Eyed Penguin.

Your accommodation: Distinction Dunedin Hotel

Distinction Dunedin Hotel occupies the grand Chief Post Office built in the 1930's. This art deco inspired building has recently been transformed into a 4 star hotel with elegant décor, set in the heart of the city.



Day 13



Dunedin to Te Anau (via Invercargill)

The drive to Te Anau takes you through classic Southland farming scenery. Head off-the-beaten-track today and follow the coastline instead of the inland route. Go through The Catlins area and be sure to take a detour to Kaka Point to view its majestic cliffs and pounding surf. Continue through Invercargill to Riverton and Colac Bay, and then head north to Manapouri. From here you can embark on a day or overnight cruise to the remote Doubtful Sound, renowned for its natural beauty. Just a short way further will bring you to your lakeside destination of Te Anau, gateway to Fiordland National Park and Milford Sound.

Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

Begin your Te Anau Glowworm experience with a scenic cruise across Lake Te Anau on board the luxury catamaran, Luminosa, to the western side of the lake. On arrival, you'll enter the caves through Cavern House, where informative displays detail the history of this 12,000 year old underground network. You'll then explore by limestone pathway while your guide points out hidden whirlpools, sculpted rock formations, and a rushing underground waterfall. See a magical display of thousands of glowworms as you glide through the darkness in a small boat.

Your accommodation: Distinction Luxmore Hotel

The perfect base for all your Fiordland travel, Distinction Luxmore Hotel provides comfortable accommodation right in the heart of Te Anau.



Day 14



Te Anau to Milford Sound, returning to Te Anau

The road to Milford Sound offers some of the most beautiful and iconic scenery in the country. From crystal-clear lakes and towering mountains to lush glacier-formed meadows, this area is dramatic and unyielding. Stretch your legs on the Chasm Walk, a short stroll through native beech forest to see several powerful waterfalls. Continue on through the Homer Tunnel, an engineering marvel at 1219 meters long. Arriving in the village of Milford, you will be greeted with an amazing view of Mitre Peak. A day cruise into the heart of the sound is not to be missed. You'll learn about how this magnificent area was formed and experience the wonder of the falls that line the Fjord before back-tracking the way you came.

Milford Sound Cruise with Real NZ - Lunch Included

Get up close and personal with Milford Sound on a leisurely cruise of this spectacular fiord. From thundering waterfalls to sky-high mountains to lush rainforests, Milford has it all. Experience the spray of a waterfall as you cruise close to sheer rock faces. Informative, participative and relaxed, this is the perfect way to experience Milford Sound to the fullest.

Your accommodation: Distinction Luxmore Hotel

The perfect base for all your Fiordland travel, Distinction Luxmore Hotel provides comfortable accommodation right in the heart of Te Anau.

Meals included: Lunch



Day 15



Te Anau to Queenstown

Journey across expansive tussock lands en route to Queenstown. Pass through Mossburn, renowned as the deer capital of New Zealand, and continue through the picturesque Southland countryside. As the road begins to trace the edge of Lake Wakatipu, marvel at the breathtaking views from the Devil's Staircase. Finally, approach Queenstown, the adventure capital of New Zealand, with the Remarkables mountain range standing majestically in the backdrop.

TSS Earnslaw Cruise and Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Dinner

Enjoy a quintessential Kiwi experience, a delicious gourmet BBQ buffet meal and a farm demonstration in a stunning lakeside setting. Take in the stunning views of Lake Wakatipu and its surroundings as you cruise across the lake to the historic Walter Peak high country farm aboard the TSS Earnslaw Steamship. Enjoy the ambience of the heart of the stately homestead while your Colonel's Homestead Restaurant chef prepares a gourmet BBQ dinner. Your seasonal menu includes an extensive selection of local New Zealand produce, including succulent meats and a selection of delicious vegetables and salads. Complete your meal with your choice of delicious desserts, New Zealand cheeses, tea, and coffee. After dinner, watch the farm dogs in action with a sheep-herding demonstration and say hello to the other farm animals. Finally, cruise home under the southern stars and enjoy the fresh night air as the lights of Queenstown draw ever closer.

Your accommodation: Hotel St Moritz Queenstown

Awarded the best hotel in the New Zealand Tourism Awards 3 times running this luxury apartment-style hotel is built on an elevated hillside position offering spectacular lake and mountain views. Only a 2 minute walk to the centre of Queenstown's vibrant attractions and activities.

Meals included: Speciality Dinner



Day 16



Queenstown to Wanaka

Leaving Queenstown you'll drive over New Zealand's highest sealed road, the Crown Range before arriving into the resort town of Wanaka.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wanaka Wine Tours Boutique Central Otago Wine Trail

This small group wine tour (maximum 8) offers a relaxed and personal introduction to the wines and scenery of the Central Otago region. This tour is a great way to explore award-winning vineyards hidden amongst the rugged landscape of Central Otago. Visit and enjoy tastings at 4 Central Otago vineyards including a delicious mid-afternoon platter to enjoy with your tastings. You'll also discover the history of the region with a visit to Old Cromwell Town, a charming heritage precinct that has been revitalised into a boutique arts and crafts village.

Lake Wanaka Happy Hour Cruise

Leaving from the Wanaka lakefront, take a gentle cruise around picturesque Lake Wanaka while relaxing with a glass of local wine or beer and a selection of cheeses. The cruise is fully licensed so further drinks can be purchased on board.

The cruise takes you toward the 'Wanaka Tree' before tracking up to Waterfall Creek and Ruby Island. You then head across to Stevensons Peninsula before returning via Beacon Point and Eely Point.

Your accommodation: Edgewater

Edgewater is Wanaka's leading hotel located right on the edge of Lake Wanaka. A short stroll to the town centres shops, cafes and restaurants and close to many walking trails the resort is ideal to explore this wonderful Alpine setting.



Day 17



Wānaka

Nestled on the shores of one of New Zealand's largest lakes and framed by the stunning Southern Alps. Wānaka is an alpine village that perfectly blends adventure, breathtaking scenery, and a laid-back vibe. In winter, Wānaka transforms into a bustling hub as snow sports enthusiasts flock to its renowned ski fields, Treble Cone and Cardrona. As the gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park, it offers endless opportunities for hikers, with trails winding through remote wilderness, majestic peaks, and serene river valleys. Closer to town, you'll find a network of scenic walking tracks, such as the popular Mount Iron Track and from the lakefront, it is a short walk to "That Wanaka Tree". For thrill-seekers, Wānaka is an adrenaline playground, offering skydiving, rock climbing, and jet boating. If you're seeking a sweet treat be sure to try out Black Peak Gelato or if you're after something delicious and nutritious a stop at Big Fig is a must!

Jet Boat and Wilderness Walk with Wanaka River Journeys

The Matukituki River is one of New Zealand's great jet boating rivers. Powerful and braided, the Matukituki flows from the glaciers and mountains of the Mount Aspiring National Park, part of Te Wahipounamu World Heritage area. Travel past Lord of The Rings film locations beneath stunning views of Mount Aspiring and Glaciers on this half day, glacier focused jet boat journey. During several photo stops on the river, learn from your guide how this amazing landscape was carved by ice and of Maori heritage special to this area. Deep in the mountains, disembark for a 50 minute wilderness walk into native beech forest, beneath the towering mountains and waterfalls of the Matukituki Valley. This is a great introduction to the New Zealand wilderness while walking easy terrain suitable for people of all ages.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Puzzling World Great Maze and Illusion Rooms

Puzzling World is a world unique attraction specialising in puzzling eccentricity. For over 35 years this remarkable business has entertained and amazed visitors of all ages. Offering the world's first "modern-styled" Great Maze, incredible Illusion Rooms, a Puzzle Centre/Cafe and eccentric architecture and oddities. Each remarkable illusion room is an illusion in its own right. On entering you pass through the Hologram Hall. As there is nothing quite like this in the world we can only assure you that you will find the collection of amazing 3-D holograms fascinating! Carry on into the Ames Forced Perspective Room. The technique of this illusion was used in The Lord of the Rings film to create tall people and little people. Move on into the Hall of Following Faces illusion room where 168 giant models of famous faces seem to turn and follow you around the room. This illusion room offers visitors a world unique encounter of being followed left and right, up and down by some very illustrious company. The newest room, the Sculptillusion Room is themed around an illusionary sculpture garden, the gallery invites visitors to wander around the various larger-than-life exhibits that showcase visual trickery at its best. Featuring over 20 large sculptures, artworks and displays the building itself offers illusionary aspects within its design. From Living Walls, wave ceilings, stone carpet and hanging waterfalls the visitor is met with stunning creations from some of NZ's finest artists. All of this is located in the heart of the breathtaking Southern Lakes region of the South Island of New Zealand, set amongst 7 acres of rolling lawns, trees and gardens.

Your accommodation: Edgewater

Edgewater is Wanaka's leading hotel located right on the edge of Lake Wanaka. A short stroll to the town centres shops, cafes and restaurants and close to many walking trails the resort is ideal to explore this wonderful Alpine setting.



Day 18



Wanaka to Franz Josef

The route follows the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea before you enter the village of Makarora, the gateway to Mt. Aspiring National Park. The Blue Pools, just outside Makarora, are a wonderful 30-minute walk through pristine native beech forest. Descending into Mt. Aspiring National Park and towards the Haast Pass, crashing rivers and waterfalls are around every corner. Crossing the Haast River you are now truly on the wild West Coast, a 600-kilometre stretch of bush, rainforest, and podocarp forest. Paringa Salmon Farm is a great halfway stop to stretch your legs, feed the fish, and stop for lunch or refreshment. First Fox Glacier welcomes you to the glacier region and Franz Josef township is just a further 45 minutes' drive over the impressive Fox Hills.

Your accommodation: Te Waonui Forest Retreat

Nestled amongst native West Coast rainforest at Franz Josef is a very special five-star retreat. Designed with utmost care of its precious environment, guests at Te Waonui Forest Retreat will find themselves encircled by rainforest and accommodated in natural and sustainable luxury.



Day 19



Explore Franz Josef

Franz Josef is a small but lively town in the heart of the West Coast, known for its 12km long glacier. Surrounded by lush rainforest-clad mountains the township has a vibrant and bustling atmosphere. To see the ice from a viewpoint you can walk along the valley floor to the viewpoint below the terminal face. However, to go on the glacier itself you must take a licensed helicopter tour. If walking is not your thing you can explore the township full of souvenir and gift shops, some great spots for a bite to eat are SnakeBite Brewery or King Tiger.

Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

A spectacular scenic flight soaring over two of New Zealand's most famous glaciers, Fox and Franz Josef. Landing at the head of one and view the incredible sight of this frozen river as it winds its way through ancient carved valleys.

Your accommodation: Te Waonui Forest Retreat

Nestled amongst native West Coast rainforest at Franz Josef is a very special five-star retreat. Designed with utmost care of its precious environment, guests at Te Waonui Forest Retreat will find themselves encircled by rainforest and accommodated in natural and sustainable luxury.



Day 20



Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station

Head north along the mighty West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beach occasionally. Whataroa is the next town where you can see one of the world's rarest birds, the Kōtuku - White Heron. The Kōtuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve, only accessible with a guided tour from October to March. The next town is Ross which is the site of an old gold mining settlement where the local information centre offers you the chance to pan for gold. Hokitika is a great place to explore craft and gift stores and head to the coast and take in the endless sea views. The Pounamu-Greenstone on offer in Hokitika is probably some of the best you will see in the country. Continue on to Greymouth, the largest town on the West Coast and the starting point for the next leg of your journey the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Drop your rental car at the Greymouth Train Station depot located at the train station building before boarding your train to Christchurch.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Considered one of the world's great train journeys, the TranzAlpine Scenic Train takes you from Greymouth to Christchurch. Travel across the South Island from the west to the east coast through Arthur's Pass National Park. From the comfort of your carriage see lush beech forest, deep river valleys and the spectacular peaks of the Southern Alps. Descend to the windswept Canterbury Plains before arriving in the city of Christchurch.

Private Transfer Christchurch Train Station to Accommodation

On arrival at the Christchurch train station, you will be met by a private driver and transferred to your accommodation.

Your accommodation: Distinction Hotel Christchurch

This luxury hotel is centrally located in the revitalised Cathedral Square in the heart of the city, a short stroll from the Avon River, Botanical Gardens, Christchurch Casino, Cashel Mall and new Christchurch Convention Centre.



Day 21



Private Transfer from Christchurch Accommodation to Christchurch Airport with Christchurch Touring Company

A private transfer will collect you from your accommodation and transfer you to Christchurch Airport in time for your departing flight.

Farewell from Aotearoa-New Zealand

Bid farewell to New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Maori, it is said mā te wā, which is not goodbye, it is see you soon!

Tour details

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Departures: | Daily |
| Tour type: | Nationwide Self Drive |
| Starts: | Auckland |
| Finishes: | Christchurch |
| Tour length: | 21 |
| Accommodation: | Hotel 4 star |
| Car/transport type: | |

Included activities

| | |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Includes | All breakfasts |
| Includes | Private train station transfers |
| Includes | Private airport transfers |
| Includes | TranzAlpine Train from Greymouth to Christchurch |
| Includes | Interislander ferry crossing |
| Includes | Sail an Americas Cup Yacht |
| Includes | Hobbiton Movie Set Tour, Matamata |
| Includes | Mitai Maori Village Concert & Buffet Dinner, Rotorua |
| Includes | Zealandia Wildlife Sanctuary Night Tour, Wellington |
| Includes | Whale Watch Kaikoura tour |
| Includes | Otago Peninsula Wildlife Premier tour including Larnach Castle |
| Includes | TSS Earnslaw cruise and dinner at Walter Peak high country farm, Queenstown |
| Includes | Tiger Moth Wanaka Highlights scenic flight, Wanaka |
| Includes | River Journeys Jet Boat & Walk |
| Includes | Te Anau Glow Worm Caves |
| Includes | Real Journeys Milford Sound Cruise |
| Includes | Twin Glaciers Scenic Helicopter Flight, Franz Josef |

Accommodation summary

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| Day 1 | M Social Hotel Auckland |
| Day 2 | M Social Hotel Auckland |
| Day 3 | Millennium Hotel Rotorua |
| Day 4 | Millennium Hotel Rotorua |
| Day 5 | Naumi Hotel Wellington |
| Day 6 | Naumi Hotel Wellington |
| Day 7 | Picton Yacht Club Hotel |
| Day 8 | The Factory |
| Day 9 | Distinction Hotel Christchurch |
| Day 10 | Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium |
| Day 11 | Distinction Dunedin Hotel |
| Day 12 | Distinction Dunedin Hotel |
| Day 13 | Distinction Luxmore Hotel |
| Day 14 | Distinction Luxmore Hotel |
| Day 15 | Hotel St Moritz Queenstown |
| Day 16 | Edgewater |
| Day 17 | Edgewater |
| Day 18 | Te Waonui Forest Retreat |
| Day 19 | Te Waonui Forest Retreat |
