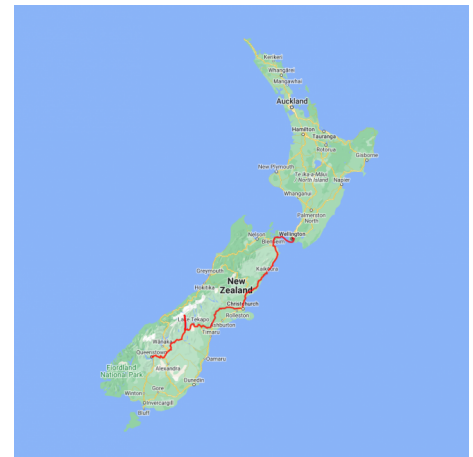


Wellington to Queenstown Self Drive Tour

From Wellington take the stunning journey on the Interislander ferry across the Cook Strait to Picton where you'll follow the Pacific Ocean coast south through the marine wildlife mecca of Kaikoura to Christchurch. After 2 nights in Christchurch, you'll cross the Canterbury Plains to the Southern Alps and Mt. Cook National Park. The final leg of your travels takes you to the alpine resort of Queenstown.

Starts in: Wellington
 Finishes in: Queenstown
 Length: 8days / 7nights
 Accommodation: Motels
 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: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)
- Includes: Unlimited kms
- Includes: GPS navigation
- Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees
- Includes: Additional drivers
- Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)
- Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand
- Included activity: Private transfer Wellington hotel to Interislander Ferry (IST)
- Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
- Included activity: Interislander Ferry Wellington to Picton



Day 1



Private transfer to Interislander ferry terminal

You will be collected from your hotel and transferred to the Interislander ferry terminal in time for your ferry check in.

Interislander Ferry Wellington to Picton

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 offer remarkable photographic opportunities. The final leg of your cruise travels through Queen Charlotte Sound before coming to an end in the picturesque town of Picton.

Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Picton to Blenheim

Only short 30 minute drive, you'll follow the valley south to arrive in Blenheim, located in the heart of Marlborough - New Zealand's largest wine producing region. Go through acres of leafy green vines and marvel at the magnificent 'dry hills' of Marlborough in the distance.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Half Day Wine Tour

An afternoon among the vines! Be immersed in the Marlborough wine country with the Sounds Connection half day wine tour. You'll be collected from your accommodation and taken through three or four hand-picked wineries to taste the award-winning produce this region is known for. You'll also hear about the history of winemaking in Marlborough as well as learning the unique processes each winery goes through. A lunch stop is not included in this tour so we do advise you have something to eat prior to this activity.

Your accommodation: Blenheim Palms Motel

Located 100 m from the central shops and eateries, the Blenheim Palms Motel offers tasteful individually designed apartment-styled rooms.



Day 2



Blenheim to Kaikoura

Cross the 'dry hills' of Marlborough and 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 native wildlife. To the east is the South Pacific Ocean and to the west the towering Kaikoura Ranges. Kaikoura Township is a bustling little place with many cafes, restaurants and shops, but the main reason for visiting here is the wildlife and it's one of the only places in New Zealand you can see whales year round.

Your accommodation: The White Morph, Kaikoura

Set on the Esplanade in Kaikōura, The White Morph enjoys commanding views of the ocean and mountains. Just a 10-minute walk into town, The White Morph has been beautifully placed so that you can take in the spectacular scenery of Kaikoura while enjoying the variety of attractions on offer.



Day 3



Kaikoura to Christchurch

Today you travel down the coast before heading inland through the North Canterbury wine region - the Waipara Valley. As you drive through this area you'll be greeted by one of New Zealand's most notorious animals, the sheep. 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 earthquake.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Ocean's Cabin with Whale Watch Kaikoura

Experience New Zealand's only marine based whale watching company. Whale Watch Kaikoura offer a once-in-a-lifetime, up close encounter with the giant Sperm Whale. You are also likely to encounter New Zealand fur seals, dusky 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.

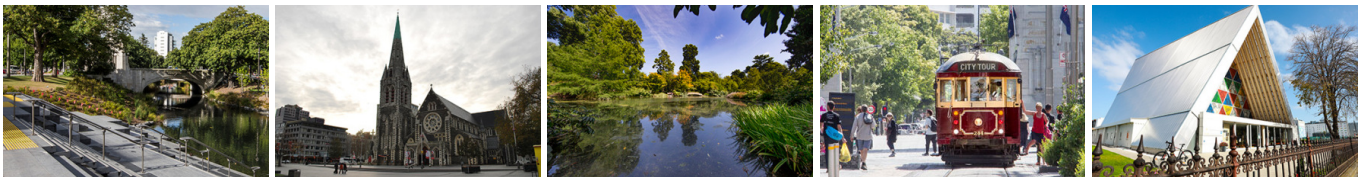
Cruise in style on modern catamarans, specifically designed for whale watching, featuring large passenger cabins and outside viewing decks. Passenger numbers for each tour are kept below the vessel carrying capacity to ensure your tour experience remains a personal one.

Your accommodation: Quest on Cambridge

Quest on Cambridge serviced apartment-style hotel rooms offer guests a relaxed and comfortable Christchurch accommodation experience. Each room has an open-plan living area, a fully equipped kitchen, and natural light. Quest on Cambridge is a short walk from the south shopping center and only a short walk to the Botanic Gardens.



Day 4



Explore Christchurch City

Following the 2011 earthquake that razed its centre and much of the outlying suburbs, Christchurch is well into a billion-dollar makeover. In the middle of the Canterbury Plains, bordering the Pacific Ocean, New Zealand's newest city is an ideal gateway to exploring the middle of the South.

Go punting on the Avon River, take a historic tram ride, catch the gondola to the rim of an extinct volcano or do all three! See the world's only Cardboard Cathedral and for nature enthusiasts - wander the renowned Christchurch Botanic Gardens, or head to Oxford Terrace in the city to find a great spot to eat or drink.

Drive an hour in any direction to ski, mountain bike, wine taste, whale-watch, bungee jump or play golf. Take the winding Port Hills road to the French settlement of Akaroa and tour the vines in Waipara for an authentic New Zealand wine-tasting experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Christchurch Gondola

In the Heathcote Valley, just fifteen minutes from the heart of Christchurch City, ride the Christchurch Gondola for nearly a kilometer to the collapsed rim of an extinct volcano, which exploded six million years ago. Take in the spectacular panoramic views of the central city, Lyttelton Harbour, Banks Peninsula, Canterbury Plains, and the distant peaks of the Southern Alps. Wander the summit complex, enjoy a coffee or lunch in the cafe, and choose one of many nature walks to explore or visit the Christchurch Discovery Rice, a dramatic reconstruction of the history of the Port Hills and Christchurch.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Willowbank Wildlife Reserve

Nowhere else in New Zealand will you find such a wide range of New Zealand wildlife so close to you. Willowbank provides you with a "Kiwi Guarantee" and is home to New Zealand's largest and most accessible kiwi viewing area. With this unique experience, you will see New Zealand's natural splendour first hand, and view Kiwis that are not hidden behind glass. You will explore one of the most complete selections of New Zealand native and introduced wildlife in natural bush surroundings. Much of the Willowbank wildlife wander free and is able to be petted and fed.

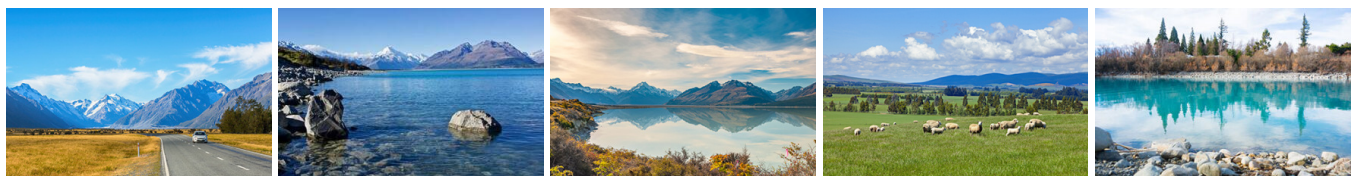
Choose to explore the reserve yourself, or for an up-close Kiwi experience, you can take a guided tour.

Your accommodation: Quest on Cambridge

Quest on Cambridge serviced apartment-style hotel rooms offer guests a relaxed and comfortable Christchurch accommodation experience. Each room has an open-plan living area, a fully equipped kitchen, and natural light. Quest on Cambridge is a short walk from the south shopping center and only a short walk to the Botanic Gardens.



Day 5



Christchurch to Aoraki Mt Cook National Park

Today you'll 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 lakeside town of 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 Mt Cook Village.

Please note: There are no food shops at Mt Cook, and dinner options are limited to one restaurant. If you wish to self-cater, you must stock up before arriving in Mt Cook, or make dinner reservations in advance.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Glacier Explorers Mt. Cook

Experience 500 year old icebergs up-close on the 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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Big Sky Stargazing

Mt Cook is far from the city lights and therefore has some of the darkest skies in New Zealand, perfect for viewing the night sky! Their fully trained guides are delighted to show you the beautiful southern night sky using the naked eye, state of the art astronomy telescopes and binoculars at the outdoor viewing platform. If the weather is not favourable then there will be an indoor alternative featuring New Zealand's first full dome digital Planetarium, a high-definition video images on a suspended 9m wide x 4.5m high full dome. Unleash your imagination as you discover the night sky including the Southern Cross, seasonal ecliptic objects, planets, star clusters, moons, distant galaxies and even our very own galaxy, the spectacular Milky Way!

Your accommodation: Mt Cook Motel

Mt Cook Motel is located in the centre of Mt. Cook village. The self-contained units are spacious and all are surrounded by alpine mountain views.



Day 6



Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Queenstown

Leaving the alpine region of Aoraki Mt Cook, you'll travel through the lakeside town of Twizel, then a little further to Omarama the gliding capital of New Zealand. Continue on over the Lindis Pass, one of New Zealand's highest roads with a summit of 971 metres. Arrive in the quaint village of Tarras, then continue on a short way to the historic Bendigo Reserve, one of Otago's original gold mining settlements. Follow the road to Cromwell, and keep going through the sheer cliffs of the Kawarau Gorge towards Gibbston, one of New Zealand's premier wine growing regions. See the historic Kawarau Bridge where you can bungy jump or relax and watch others take the plunge. Approaching Queenstown, the Remarkables mountain range comes into view as you arrive into the adventure capital of New Zealand.

Your accommodation: Scenic Suites Queenstown

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style, comfort and spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu and the Southern Alps. The hotel prides itself on its four star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



Day 7



Explore Queenstown

Well-known as New Zealand's 'adventure capital', Queenstown is home to a range of adventures, from the world's first and most famous bungy jumps to jet boat thrills, white-water rafting, and skydiving. However, Queenstown offers far more than a fast-paced, action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of beautiful Lake Wakatipu beneath a soaring panorama of the Remarkables Mountain Range, this alpine town is surrounded by a plethora of historic, gastronomic, and scenic wonders. Take a stroll through the beautiful lakefront parks and gardens, browse through market stalls on weekends, dine in wonderful al-fresco restaurants, or ride on the 100-year-old historic Steamship - TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station. Take the Queenstown Gondola up to Bob's Peak and soak up the panoramic views of the magnificent lake and mountain ranges. And after all of that, if you do want the adrenaline rush, Queenstown is known for taking your pick from the Shotover Jet, Canyon Swing, Zipline, Luge, or Heli-ski.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Shotover Canyon River Jet Boat Adventure

Riding the iconic 'Big Red' Jet Boat through the narrow Shotover Canyon is an exhilarating experience not to be missed. Your skilled jet boat driver pushes the boat to 85 kph, skimming across shallow water and past towering canyon walls. This 25 minute white water ride includes 360 degree spins and maximum thrills.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Skyline Gondola Queenstown and 3 Luge Rides

In the heart of Queenstown, located 450 metres above town in the Ben Lomond Scenic Reserve is the Skyline Complex. A gondola ride to the summit makes for awe-inspiring views of the city surround. Arrive at the complex and wander the outside viewing decks for a picture perfect outlook. Then onto the Luge! The 800 metre luge track offers an exhilarating journey through banked corners, tunnels and dippers.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TSS Earnslaw cruise to Walter Peak including gourmet BBQ dinner and a farm tour

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: Scenic Suites Queenstown

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style, comfort and spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu and the Southern Alps. The hotel prides itself on its four star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



Day 8



Your final morning in Queenstown before driving to the airport and catching your next flight

Depending on when your flight departs you might have time for one last Queenstown adventure before dropping your car off at the airport and catching your flight.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Nationwide Self Drive
Starts: Wellington
Finishes: Queenstown
Tour length: 8
Accommodation: Motels
Car/transport type:

Included activities

Includes Interislander ferry crossing

Accommodation summary

Day 1 Blenheim Palms Motel
Day 2 The White Morph, Kaikoura
Day 3 Quest on Cambridge
Day 4 Quest on Cambridge
Day 5 Mt Cook Motel
Day 6 Scenic Suites Queenstown
Day 7 Scenic Suites Queenstown