



South Island Coast to Coast Explorer

Starting and finishing in Christchurch this tour visits Mount Cook National Park, travels through the Southern Lakes region and into the deep south. Time to explore Dunedin and wildlife of the Otago Peninsular before crossing the rich farmland of Southland toward Te Anau and Fiordland National Park. There is a full day to explore Milford Sound including a Real Journeys Nature Cruise. Then to Queenstown for two nights with time to relax or enjoy the countless activities here. The West Coast Glaciers are next and two nights allow time to enjoy one of the many guided walk options or scenic flights. Return to Christchurch aboard the world famous Tranz Alpine Scenic Train.



Starts in: Christchurch
Finishes in: Christchurch
Length: 13days / 12nights
Accommodation: Hotel 3 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: 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 Christchurch International Airport to your accommodation

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

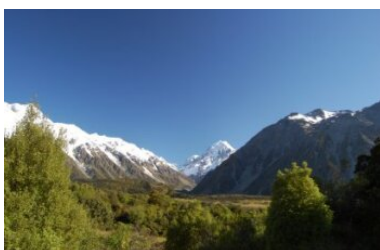
Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Included activity: Shared Transfer from the Railway Station to a City Hotel with Christchurch Touring Company

Included activity: Private transfer accommodation to Christchurch Airport

Included activity: Milford Sound Cruise and picnic lunch with RealNZ

: 12 breakfasts, 1 lunch



Day 1



Private transfer Christchurch International Airport to your accommodation

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

Welcome to Christchurch City

Christchurch New Zealand's garden city is steadily being transformed into a vibrant urban destination. Encompassing a large green belt, it is known for its wide tree lined avenues and lush gardens. A great way to explore the city or easy way to see the sights or ride the historic trams across town to the renowned botanic gardens and the unique cardboard Transitional Cathedral, that's right it is built of cardboard!

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Cotswold

The Scenic Hotel Cotswold is just a few minutes walk to boutique shopping at Merivale and Hagley Park. The distinctive architecture of the Scenic Hotel Cotswold reflects Christchurch's image as the most English of cities outside of England.



Day 2



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.

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.

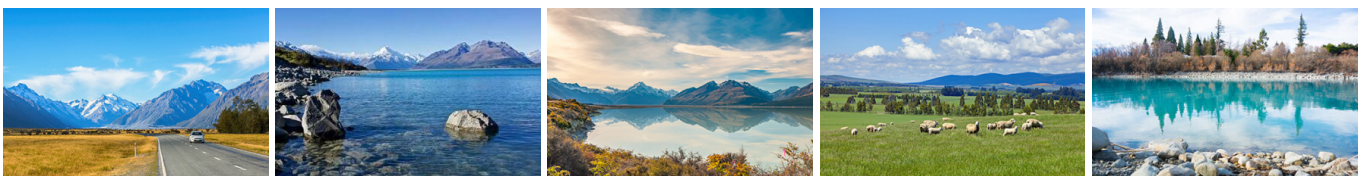
Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Cotswold

The Scenic Hotel Cotswold is just a few minutes walk to boutique shopping at Merivale and Hagley Park. The distinctive architecture of the Scenic Hotel Cotswold reflects Christchurch's image as the most English of cities outside of England.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



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: Hermitage Hotel Room Mount Cook View

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.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Dunedin

Today you'll 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, be sure to stop at The Wrinkly Ram, a quirky local cafe and souvenir store. Driving through 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. 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: Dunedin Leisure Lodge – A Distinction Hotel

Nestled in landscaped gardens, the Heritage Dunedin Leisure Lodge is located within two acres of beautifully kept garden, and just a short drive to the city centre.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Explore Dunedin and the Otago Peninsula

Known as the Edinburgh of the South, Dunedin City has a heavy Scottish influence. Surrounded by rugged coastal plains and windswept beaches it's home to an eclectic mix of historical and modern architecture as well as industrial technology. Renowned for its Flemish Baroque-inspired 'gingerbread house' Railway Station, this university town is bustling with life. Head to the Saturday farmers market held in the aforementioned railway grounds for a taste of organic produce, handmade crepes and local honey. Explore the many cafes and wine bars in The Octagon, then continue on a self-guided walking tour of the internationally acclaimed Street Art dotted around the city. Drive to the coast and watch the freighters passing in the distance while you sunbathe, or hire a mountain bike and test your legs on one of the many trails available in the area. For a more immersive historical experience, follow the coast to New Zealand's only castle, Larnach Castle. On your way back be sure to head to the Otago Peninsula to see the largest mainland Albatross colony in the world.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Elm Wildlife Peninsula Encounter Tour Including Wildlife Cruise

A small-group bus tour from Dunedin. Join a local guide for a journey across the Otago Peninsula. Travel over the high road with postcard views of the harbour and coast. You'll travel past quaint communities and rural farms. Spot wading birds as your mini-bus explores around the inlets and the wetland eco-systems. Your tour will visit a remote Otago Peninsula beach. A short walk from the mini-bus will provide dramatic views of rugged coastal cliffs, offshore islands and perhaps some huge sea lions. The trip continues to Wellers Rock Wharf, for a Monarch Wildlife Cruise. You'll travel out of the harbour, around Taiaroa Head, and out to sea. Watch royal albatross glide across the water and return to their breeding colony. Beneath a historic lighthouse is a colony of playful fur seals. You'll spot other rare seabirds and maybe blue penguins or other marine mammals. You are also welcome to bring a pre-packed meal on tour with you. Snacks and drinks can be purchased whilst aboard the MV Monarch. We recommend having a good-sized lunch before the tour departs Dunedin. The final stop is at a Yellow-eyed Penguin conservation reserve. Visit the on-site rehab centre before a tour of the reserve. You'll take trails through native bushland, walking through tunnels and trenches to different viewing hides scattered around the reserve. Watch as the world's rarest penguin returns ashore and interacts around their nesting sites. The tour ends with a relaxed drive, following the harbour, back to Dunedin.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Speights Brewery Tour

Founded in 1876, the Speights Brewery still occupies its original Dunedin site - with several of its buildings dating back to the late 1800's. One of the only remaining 'gravity breweries' in the world, this 60-minute tour explains its inner workings. There is an opportunity to taste six different beers as well as bottle, cap and brew your own personal Speights Gold Medal Ale - the brewery's flagship beer.

Your accommodation: Dunedin Leisure Lodge – A Distinction Hotel

Nestled in landscaped gardens, the Heritage Dunedin Leisure Lodge is located within two acres of beautifully kept garden, and just a short drive to the city centre.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Dunedin to Te Anau

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Te Anau to Milford Sound and return 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 metres long. Arriving into 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 Fiord before back-tracking the way you came.

Please note: Make sure to allow 2.5hrs to Milford Sound, this takes into account the current road works on the Milford Road.

Milford Sound Cruise with RealNZ

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Milford Premium Cruise with RealNZ

Get up close and personal with Milford Sound on a leisurely cruise of this spectacular fiord aboard the M.V Sinbad, an exclusive vessel for a premium experience. 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. With a glass of bubbles on arrival and canapes provided throughout the journey, this is the perfect way to explore Milford Sound. At a capped capacity of 40 people and a roaming nature guide providing informative commentary throughout the extended cruise, this experience allows guests to enjoy the Fiord at a relaxing pace.

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: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 8



Te Anau to Queenstown

Today you'll cross vast tussock lands on your way to Queenstown. Pass through Mossburn, the deer capital of the nation. Continue on through the Southland countryside where the road begins to hug the lake edge and the Remarkables mountain range towers over your approach into the adventure capital of New Zealand.

Your accommodation: Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview

Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview is located on Frankton Road, the main arterial route into Queenstown - With the centre of town only a short 10-minute stroll away.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



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: Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview

Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview is located on Frankton Road, the main arterial route into Queenstown - With the centre of town only a short 10-minute stroll away.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10



Queenstown to Fox Glacier

Crossing the Crown Range the highest sealed road in the country, you'll pass through the alpine town of Wanaka. Following the shores of both Lake Wanaka and Hawea, you'll enter the township of Makarora, gateway to Mt. Aspiring National Park. Stretch your legs on a walk to Blue Pools, a ten minute stroll through lush rainforest. Marvel at the native beech and countless waterfalls as you continue toward the West Coast.

Crossing the Haast River you are now truly in the wild west, a 600 kilometre stretch of bush, rainforest and podocarp forest. Continue on to arrive in Fox Glacier, your destination for the night. Home to the largest glacier on the west coast, Fox is 13 kilometres long and ends in rainforest only 250 metres above sea level.

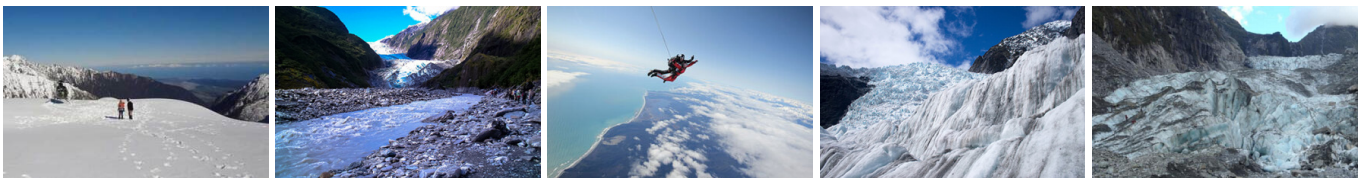
Your accommodation: Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier

The Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier is nestled at the base of the majestic Southern Alps, in the Westland World Heritage Park. Originally built in 1928 it has been refurbished to retain its charming atmosphere.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 11



Fox Glacier

The mighty Fox is the largest and longest of the magnificent West Coast glaciers. Remarkably, it ends in temperate rainforest, 250 metres above sea level only twelve kilometres from the sea.

There are more peaks at the head of the Fox Glacier than in any other valley in New Zealand.

The Fox Glacier, like all glaciers, advances and retreats. Evidence of the latest surge forward can be seen in the bulging lower ice fall. Alpine Guides has access onto the lower part of the glacier via a secret track that climbs through regenerating native forest. From the track, you will have stunning views into the upper parts of the glacier. Fox Glacier township is the more "laid back" of the twin Glacier Country townships of Fox and Franz Josef, and people often comment on having chosen Fox for its relaxed atmosphere.

An excellent selection of caf  s and a wide range of accommodations are available. The township enjoys breathtaking views of New Zealand's highest peaks, Mount Cook and Mount Tasman. Lake Matheson, the famous reflection lake, is a five-minute drive west of Fox Township and historic Gillespie's Beach, known for its crashing surf and distant snow-capped mountains, is only 25 minutes west by car.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Half Day Lake Matheson Eco Tour

Nature has combine three ingredients to create the stunning vista that is Lake Matheson. Explore the crystal clear waters and learn about flora, fauna, glaciation, geology and natural history of this beautiful area.

You'll be collected from your accommodation in Franz Josef and driven to the stunning Lake Matheson, where you'll walk the 3km gentle track that follows the lake edge. Along the way take in the reflective qualities of the lake and the surrounding lush rainforest which make for fantastic photo opportunities.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

Explore the glacial icefalls of not one but two glaciers - Fox Glacier and Franz Josef Glacier. Discover up close their neve and unusual ice formations - landing on the snowfields is a highlight and will make for superb photos, snowballs and memories. A 30 minute flight with snow landing. Should weather not be suitable to take this flight you are able to transfer your booking onto a similar tour on any of the Helicopter Line's operations in Queenstown or Mt Cook.

Your accommodation: Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier

The Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier is nestled at the base of the majestic Southern Alps, in the Westland World Heritage Park. Originally built in 1928 it has been refurbished to retain its charming atmosphere.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12



Fox Glacier to Greymouth Train Station

The drive north from Fox and Franz Josef takes you through the historic gold mining region of Ross and the town of Hokitika, a great place to explore the craft stores, in particular the jade or greenstone. The largest town on the West Coast, Greymouth is also the starting point for the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Drop your rental car at the Greymouth Train Station depot located inside the train station building.

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. You'll 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.

Shared Transfer from the Railway Station to a City Hotel with Christchurch Touring

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

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TranzAlpine Scenic Plus Addon - KiwiRail

Feel like luxurious service, exclusive meals, inclusive drinks and priority check in and boarding? The Scenic Plus add-on option is for you. Enjoy personal service with panoramic windows, spacious carriages and comfortable seating. The exclusive open-air viewing carriage is available if you feel like capturing the ultimate photo or simply wish to experience the great outdoors whilst travelling through the Southern Alps. Your food is prepared exclusively in a kitchen carriage, with paired drinks and a paddock to plate regionally inspired food menu all your senses will be fully engaged on this journey.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Cotswold

The Scenic Hotel Cotswold is just a few minutes walk to boutique shopping at Merivale and Hagley Park. The distinctive architecture of the Scenic Hotel Cotswold reflects Christchurch's image as the most English of cities outside of England.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 13



Private transfer accommodation to Christchurch Airport

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

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	South Island Self Drive
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	13
Accommodation:	Hotel 3 star
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	12 breakfasts
Includes	Private train station transfers
Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Greymouth to Christchurch
Includes	Real Journeys Milford Sound Cruise

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Scenic Hotel Cotswold
Day 2	Scenic Hotel Cotswold
Day 3	Hermitage Hotel Room Mount Cook View
Day 4	Dunedin Leisure Lodge – A Distinction Hotel
Day 5	Dunedin Leisure Lodge – A Distinction Hotel
Day 6	Distinction Luxmore Hotel
Day 7	Distinction Luxmore Hotel
Day 8	Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview
Day 9	Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview
Day 10	Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier
Day 11	Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier
Day 12	Scenic Hotel Cotswold