



North to South Highlights

Travel the heart of the North Island exploring Auckland City, Rotorua, the Art Deco City of Napier and onto Wellington before crossing to the South Island. Continue down the east coast through Marlborough, Kaikoura and Christchurch before crossing the plains and into the Southern Alps and Mt. Cook. The alpine resort of Queenstown is next before heading north through Wanaka and onto the West Coast Glaciers. Return to Christchurch via the Tranz Alpine train.



Starts in: Auckland
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 20days / 19nights
 Accommodation: Boutique Lodges & Hotels
 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

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

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

Included activity: Christchurch Triple Pass - Tram, Punting and Gondola

Included activity: Glacier Explorers

Included activity: Milford Sound Business Class with Real NZ and Altitude Tours - Includes Canapes

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

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

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

: 19 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 special dinners

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

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

Included activity: 30 Minute Whale Watch Explorer with Wings over Whales Kaikoura

Included activity: Big Sky Stargazing

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

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

Included activity: Shared Transfer from Christchurch Train Station to Christchurch CBD Accommodation with Christchurch Touring Company

Included activity: Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

Included activity: Bluebridge Ferry Wellington to Picton - vehicle + passengers

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

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. 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 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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Harbour Sailing Cruise with Explore

Enjoy the City of Sails from the water on a relaxed harbour sailing yacht. This cruise offers a uniquely local experience experiencing the harbour under sail with a small vessel with an intimate and engaging atmosphere. View the stunning city sights while sailing on the inner Waitemata Harbour. Sail where the wind takes us while enjoying Auckland's city highlights; including sailing under the Harbour Bridge and other well-known landmarks along the harbour's edge. The crew's local knowledge will give you the best harbour sailing experience Auckland has to offer. Become the crew and help participate with the sailing experience take the helm while you carve through the water, or if you prefer just sit back and relax above deck.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wētā Workshop Unleashed

A jaw-dropping, senses-shattering, awe-inspiring adventure into the heart of movie magic! Get hands-on and immerse yourself in an extraordinary world of practical effects, props and larger-than-life sets. On this award-winning tour, you can explore three movie projects imagined by the Weta crew and uncover how they bring big screen concepts to life. Discover a mind-blowing world of robots, monsters, dinosaurs and more - step right into the action to see, play and experience movie-making up close.

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: Fable Auckland

Located right on Queen Street the Fable Auckland is boutique and stylish property with an ideal location to enjoy and explore the vibrant heart of the 'City of Sails'.



Day 2



Collect Rental Car

This tour's from price includes an intermediate-sized vehicle, setting you up for comfortable travels. Yet, we understand every adventure is unique! Feel free to select the perfect wheels from our incredible collection of rental cars, spanning from economy hatchbacks to premium SUVs.

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. 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. Venture to the top of Auckland's highest volcano, Mt Eden, for soaring views of the Hauraki Gulf or hop on the short ferry to Rangitoto Island and hike to the top of the volcanic island. Immerse yourself in nature at the expansive Auckland Botanic Gardens, sprawled across 156 acres of native forest, pack a picnic, soak up the sunshine, and enjoy the birdsong. Head up to the Sky Tower, standing over 300m tall, and have a meal in the 360-degree revolving restaurant. Scale the outermost perimeter of the Harbour Bridge or test your stomach with a bungee jump, then end your day on Ponsonby Road sampling upmarket culinary delights.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Ferry from Auckland to Rangitoto Island and return with Fullers

A short cruise through the Waitemata Harbour to the Hauraki Gulf delivers you to Rangitoto Island. Rangitoto Island is the largest and youngest of the many volcanoes that make up the Auckland volcanic field. It erupted around 600 years ago, but is extinct now and safe to explore. During your cruise to and from the island enjoy fantastic views of Rangitoto Island and Auckland. On reaching the island you can walk to the summit (1 hour direct) for great views of the Hauraki Gulf and over Waitemata Harbour looking back towards Auckland. There are a number of walking trails to explore this volcanic island, further information can be found at the Department of Conservation website.

Your accommodation: Fable Auckland

Located right on Queen Street the Fable Auckland is boutique and stylish property with an ideal location to enjoy and explore the vibrant heart of the 'City of Sails'.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Auckland to Hobbiton via Matamata

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.

Rotorua

Discover the geothermal, adventure, and cultural wonderland of Rotorua. As you explore, you may see steam rising from cracks in the road, bubbling and hissing water in pools along the lake's edge, and the unmistakable smell of Sulfur. Rotorua is rich in Māori culture and history, with many Māori inhabitants recognising the great potential of the volcanic land. For an outdoor adventure, head to The Redwoods and experience the rainforest treetops from high up. There are a few accessible trails for disabled hikers and great biking trails as well. If you're lucky, you might spot some of New Zealand's native birds, such as the Pīwakawaka (Fantail) and the Tūī. Alternatively, enjoy the Lake Tikitapu Blue Lake Walk or explore Kuirau Park, where you'll find bubbling mud pools and steaming lakes. Don't miss the private thermal reserves such as Te Puia and Wai-O-Tapu, where you can walk among bubbling mud pools, spouting geysers, and Sulfur ponds. Just a few minutes from the town centre, the Agrodome and National Kiwi Hatchery offer an insight into nature. Rotorua's rich Māori culture is a must-see. Spend an evening with Te Pā Tū, complete with a traditional-style dinner or stroll along the lake edge to reach one of the country's oldest Māori villages at Ohinemutu. When hunger strikes, visit Eat Street in Rotorua CBD, a vibrant street lined with delicious eateries and restaurants to satisfy any craving. No visit to Rotorua would be complete without experiencing Rotorua's original tourist attraction - a relaxing spa treatment. This town boasts an array of wellness experiences to unwind in. Whether you are seeking adventure, culture, or relaxation, Rotorua offers an unforgettable experience.

Your accommodation: Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel

Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel combines old world charm with a modern funky twist. Set in one acre of outstanding gardens on the edge of Lake Rotorua, the lodge is an intimate retreat just a short drive from the centre of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast



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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland

Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland is a spectacular showcase of New Zealand's colourful and unique geothermal elements sculpted by thousands of years of volcanic activity. You will be introduced to a diversely different natural landscape, extending over 18-sq. km. Enjoy viewing the volcanic features as you walk at your own pace along well-defined tracks. Relax in the first-class Visitor Centre, home to the Gift Shop and Caf'e facilities. Visit the Mud Pool, the largest in New Zealand, it was originally the site of a large mud volcano which was destroyed through erosion in the 1920s. See the history and beauty of the Lady Knox Geyser at 10:15 am every day where a daily eruption happens of up to 20 metres.

Your accommodation: Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel

Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel combines old world charm with a modern funky twist. Set in one acre of outstanding gardens on the edge of Lake Rotorua, the lodge is an intimate retreat just a short drive from the centre of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner



Day 5



Rotorua to Napier via Taupō

This drive will take you through the thermal region just south of Rotorua. Home to a plethora of unique geothermal attractions including boiling mud pits, natural hot springs and steaming geysers, this area is a must do before you move on to Napier. Notable attractions are Wai-O-Tapu, Waimangu and Craters of the Moon. Continue on to Taupō and marvel at the lake, a giant crater formed following a volcanic eruption in the year 180 CE. As you approach the town, be sure to stop at Huka Falls to view the spectacular sight of hundreds of cubic metres of water spilling every second down the narrow 11 metre drop. For an extra thrill take a jet-boat ride at the base of the falls. Leaving Taupō, follow the road as it climbs the rugged Ahimanawa Range before descending back down the Pacific Coast to art deco coastal township of Napier.

Napier City

Napier, a coastal gem, is famed for its 1930s Art Deco architecture, the annual Art Deco Weekend, stately Norfolk pines, nearby wineries, and fresh local produce. With a Mediterranean climate and over 2,200 hours of sunshine annually, it boasts a thriving cafe culture set against stunning heritage buildings. The city center has around 30 cafes within walking distance, while Ahuriri, just beyond Bluff Hill, offers more upscale dining. Marine Parade overlooks the Pacific Ocean and Cape Kidnappers, home to the world's largest mainland gannet colony. Visitors can explore Ocean Spa, the Hawke's Bay Museum, and the National Aquarium of New Zealand. Bluff Hill, a key landmark, provides sweeping views of Napier, Perfume Point, Westshore Beach, and the busy Port of Napier, which exports timber, fruit, and meat worldwide.

In 1931, Napier was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake, New Zealand's worst natural disaster. Fires ravaged the city. Rebuilding efforts transformed Napier and Hastings into modern cities, while the uplifted Ahuriri Lagoon created much-needed land for expansion.

Your accommodation: Art Deco Masonic Hotel

The Art Deco Masonic Hotel occupies a significant historic building on Napier's waterfront and has been richly refurbished in keeping with the Art Deco architecture. With its central location and decadent décor, this is the best place to experience what Napier is famous for.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Explore Hawke's Bay

Discover Hawke's Bay, known in Māori as Te Matau-a-Māui or the fish hook of Māui. This is a region renowned for its Mediterranean charm, iconic Art Deco architecture, and award-winning wineries. Explore Mission Estate, the birthplace of New Zealand wine, or tour vineyards for a deeper dive into its winemaking legacy. Fans of the 1930s can enjoy a Vintage Car Tour, showcasing Napier's architectural gems. Outdoor enthusiasts can cycle over 200km of scenic trails or unwind at pristine beaches like Ocean and Waimarama. Indulge your taste buds with local delights, from honey and chocolate to fresh orchard produce. The Hawke's Bay is also home to an abundance of wildlife, head out on a Gannet Safari or educate yourself at the National Aquarium of New Zealand.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Gannet Safaris

Drive along the scenic coast from Napier to Te Awanga and join Gannet Safaris Overland and the world's largest, most accessible gannet colony at Cape Kidnappers. Gannet Safaris has been guiding visitors over Cape Kidnappers for over 35 years and their safaris are the only way to be driven right to within a few feet of these remarkable birds. You will travel in comfort in air-conditioned 4 x 4 wheeled vehicles, through Cape Kidnappers Station - traversing riverbeds, broad rolling pastures, stands of native bush, steep gullies and breath-taking inclines. There is a stop on the way at a spectacular cliff top with panoramic views of Hawke's Bay right across to Mahia peninsular. The 36km, three hour trip includes a commentary by your tour guide/driver on the farming operation on Cape Kidnappers Station and an introduction to the gannets. On arrival at the gannets you can stretch your legs and take in the scenery from your position at the brink of the cliff's edge, 100 metres above the ocean!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Hawke's Bay Wine and Dine Tour with Grape Escape

Experience a fun-filled Grape Escape wine and dine tour in the sun driving through absolutely stunning scenery. Meet like-minded people and share an appreciation of this region's fantastic wine. We visit four to five boutique wineries. Later, we enjoy a light cheese platter on the grounds of Ngatarawa or Sileni, weather dependent. You will taste around 30 different wines along with the main varieties, including Merlot, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Viognier, and lesser-known aromatics such as Cabernet Franc, Gewurztraminer, and Riesling.

Your accommodation: Art Deco Masonic Hotel

The Art Deco Masonic Hotel occupies a significant historic building on Napier's waterfront and has been richly refurbished in keeping with the Art Deco architecture. With its central location and decadent décor, this is the best place to experience what Napier is famous for.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Napier to Wellington City via Masterton

The rolling countryside of the Hawke's Bay leads you into some of New Zealand's richest farmland, located around the Manawatu region. Passing along the Manawatu Gorge the Wairarapa welcomes you. Masterton is home to the golden shears sheep shearing competition while just further south Greytown boasts the largest concentration of historic wooden buildings in the country. Nearby Martinborough is home to dozens of boutique wineries. The route takes you over the Remutaka Range and along the magnificent natural harbour that the capital city of Wellington sits upon.

Wellington

Wellington known in Māori as Te Whanganui-a-Tara 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.

Your accommodation: Ohtel Wellington

Ohtel is adjacent to Wellington's principal entertainment precinct. Major attractions such as Te Papa, Oriental Bay beach, theatres, restaurants & clubs, are a stone's throw away. Beyond, the city hub creates a picturesque night-time back-drop.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Explore Wellington

Wellington, known in Māori as Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui ("The Head of the Fish of Maui") or Te Whanganui a Tara ("The Great Harbour of Tara"), is New Zealand's vibrant capital. Often called a 'mini-Melbourne', this cosmopolitan city blends art, culture, food, and fashion with quirky laneway bars, hip eateries, and underground art shows. Stroll the waterfront to Te Papa, New Zealand's national museum, or ride the historic cable car from Lambton Quay for stunning city views. Explore Cuba Street's unique boutiques and visit the iconic 'Beehive' at Parliament. Fans of The Lord of the Rings can tour Weta Workshop, the Oscar-winning design studio behind Middle-earth. Just an hour away, Martinborough offers a culinary escape with top-notch food and wine. Nature lovers can't miss Zealandia, the world's first fully fenced eco-sanctuary. End your day sampling Wellington's renowned dining scene—search 'Metro Eats' for the city's best spots.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wellington Half Day Private Tour with Capital Personalized Tour

Witness the best sights of New Zealand's capital city up close and personal, before experiencing the beauty of the coastline that surrounds central Wellington and its harbour. On this tour, you will head for the hills of Mt Victoria to witness the stunning landscape of Wellington and its harbour below. You will then follow the coastline round to the Weta Cave Museum, which is the showpiece of Peter Jackson's film empire. After a drive around the south coast, you will head back into the city for a ride on the Cable Car and a walk around the lady Norwood rose gardens. The tour concludes with a visit to the Beehive and our Parliament buildings.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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: Ohtel Wellington

Ohtel is adjacent to Wellington's principal entertainment precinct. Major attractions such as Te Papa, Oriental Bay beach, theatres, restaurants & clubs, are a stone's throw away. Beyond, the city hub creates a picturesque night-time back-drop.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



Bluebridge Ferry Wellington to Picton - vehicle + passengers

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Bluebridge Ferry - All Inclusive Pōhutukawa Lounge

Elevate your travel experience! Experience the next level of comfort in adults only Pōhutukawa Lounge, where you can relax in comfortable seating and a peaceful child-free environment, perfect for unwinding before the next leg of your journey. Indulge in an all-inclusive food and drink selection, featuring delicious gourmet snacks, freshly prepared meals, and a variety of beverages. Make your travel truly memorable in Pōhutukawa Lounge.

Picton to Blenheim

It is a short 30 minute drive, as 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 Marlborough Wine Tour with Sounds Connection

An afternoon among the vines! Be immersed in the Marlborough wine country with the Sounds Connection half day wine tour. Get collected from your accommodation and taken through three or four hand-picked wineries to taste the award-winning produce this region is known for. Hear about the history of winemaking in Marlborough as well as learning the unique processes each winery goes through.

Your accommodation: The Peppertree

The Peppertree is situated in the midst of an extensive country garden a boutique vineyard and an olive grove. Choose from one of the five spacious suites, each of which reflects a different character. Days at The Peppertree begin with a delicious breakfast, served in the Dining Room or on the verandah.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10



Blenheim to Kaikōura

Cross Marlborough and head towards one of the most spectacular coastlines of the South Island, the Kaikōura Coast. The road hugs the shore for around 50 kms and offers many chances to view native wildlife. To the east is the South Pacific Ocean and to the west the towering Kaikōura Ranges. Kaikōura 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.

Kaikōura

Kaikōura is a stunning coastal town known for its rich marine life and dramatic scenery. Visit the fur seal colony, take a whale-watching cruise, or swim with playful dusky dolphins. 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, for bird lovers, spot the impressive native albatross. Just be sure to keep a respectful distance from any sea lions you meet. Highlights like Ohau Point and historic Fyffe House offer insight into the region's wildlife and whaling past. Finish your visit by sampling the fresh local seafood, renowned for having some of the best fish and chips in the country, or by taking a relaxing wander through the tranquil Lavendyl Lavender Farm.

Your accommodation: Kaikoura Boutique Hotel

Kaikoura Boutique Hotel sits on the Esplanade overlooking Kaikoura's waterfront, just a short walk from tourist attractions, shops and cafes. The hotel has been lovingly refurbished with modern décor and a uniquely New Zealand design.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 11



30 Minute Whale Watch Explorer with Wings over Whales Kaikoura

In a typical 30 minute flight you will see the majestic Sperm Whale preparing for his next dive and up to 500 Dusky Dolphins cavorting with each other. On occasion, sightings include Southern Right, Humpback, Fin, Sei, Brydes, Pilot, Southern Bottlenose and the mighty Blue Whales. You may also spot Hector's, Risso's, Southern Right Whale Dolphins, and Orca, although these are all less frequent visitors to the area. Gain an aerial perspective of this fantastic marine environment in a high-winged aircraft with optimal, unobstructed viewing.

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.

Christchurch

Christchurch known in Māori as Ōtautahi, is the largest metro area in the South Island. Commonly referred to as New Zealand's "Garden City", Christchurch is home to one of the biggest public parks in the country, and beautiful botanic gardens. The city was hit with devastating earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, now the city crosses the line between its English heritage and a new modern architecture. To take in some arts and culture, pay a visit to the Canterbury Museum or the Christchurch Art Gallery. Take a step back in time with a tram around the city or punt along the Avon River. If tasting your way around the city is your means of travel, try out a cultural eating tour. A short drive from the CBD will lead you to the outskirts of the Banks Peninsula beachside suburb of Sumner or through the tunnel to Lyttleton Harbour which hosts fantastic markets on Saturday mornings.

Your accommodation: Merivale Manor House

Originally built in the 1880's, Merivale Manor has been transformed into elegant motel and apartment accommodation. Less than 200 metres to central Merivale with its premier shopping, restaurants, cafes and bars.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12



Explore Christchurch

Following earthquakes that razed its centre and much of the outlying suburbs, Ōtautahi-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 & Banks Peninsula and tour the vines in Waipara for an authentic New Zealand wine-tasting experience.

Christchurch Triple Pass - Tram, Punting and Gondola

Experience three of Christchurch's iconic attractions in one day: the Christchurch Tram, Christchurch Gondola, and Punting on the Avon River. The historic tram is a delightful way to explore the evolving inner city, taking in the various sights with the hop-on hop-off pass and learning about the city from the live commentary. You'll also enjoy a bird's eye view of Christchurch and the Canterbury region including the distant peaks of the Southern Alps when you ride the gondola cableway to the top of the Port Hills in Heathcote Valley. Punting on the Avon River takes you through the city's green belt: a relaxing way to explore what is affectionately known as the 'Garden City'.

Your accommodation: Merivale Manor House

Originally built in the 1880's, Merivale Manor has been transformed into elegant motel and apartment accommodation. Less than 200 metres to central Merivale with its premier shopping, restaurants, cafes and bars.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 13



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.

Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park

At 3754m Aoraki-Mt Cook is Aotearoa-New Zealand's highest mountain, located deep in the heart of the Southern Alps. As well as its impressive beauty, Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park is also home to a huge range of awe-inspiring sights and activities. Take to the air with Mt Cook Ski Planes for a scenic flight that includes a glacier landing. At around 27 kilometres long the Tasman Glacier is New Zealand's longest and a Glacier Explorers tour allows you to see its unique features up close.

There are many short hikes in and around the park and these are well signposted around the village. Those with an interest in the night sky should take a Big Sky Stargazing tour with the Hermitage Hotel. The region is considered to have one of the clearest night skies in the world and is one of the few gold-rated dark sky reserves worldwide.

Visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre for insight into this region's mountain climbing history. You'll also learn of Sir Ed's incredible achievements and his dedication to helping others around the world.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - The Panorama Room 3-course Dinner with The Hermitage Hotel

Since first opening its doors in 1969, The Panorama Room has gained a reputation as being one of the best restaurants in New Zealand. This reputation is reflected in the numerous awards the restaurant has received over the years. A simple philosophy of using just the freshest, local ingredients, in particular from New Zealand's South Island, is still the secret to its success today. The menu has a strong international influence and reflects both the establishment's taste and the fact that most of the chefs have travelled and worked widely throughout the world.

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, 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, 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.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 14



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.

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 bungee 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.

Queenstown

Queenstown known in Māori as Tāhuna, is home to many adrenaline-inducing activities. Nestled on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, this alpine town has very distinct seasons, and most adrenaline-filled activities can be accessed year-round. Queenstown is home to jet boating, bungee jumping, rafting, skydiving, paragliding, and even indoor thrills. If you want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon Swing, or Zip line the Gondola. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand's crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. If you're looking for a slightly slower pace, there are plenty of recreational activities, including hiking and biking trails to explore, guided tours, boat cruises, scenic flights, or spa and wellness options to help you get away. Head to the lakefront, eat at one of the al fresco eateries, and soak up the local vibes; catch a ride on the iconic 100-year-old steamship the TSS Earnslaw; or take the Skyline Gondola and enjoy bird's-eye views of the Remarkables mountain ranges and Lake Wakatipu. Pack a picnic and go for a hike, only 20 minutes from Central Queenstown, Coronet Peak opens for summer sightseeing. You can ride the Peak Gondola to the top for panoramic views and hike the trails, or go for a bike ride on many excellent biking trails. In winter, Queenstown becomes a world-class winter resort, with four ski areas and a range of activities, bars, restaurants, and ways to relax and unwind.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - The Original Onsen Evening Session

Enjoy the most memorable experience in Queenstown and surround yourself with a sky of stars and 14 Japanese lanterns as you soak up the warm waters of the Onsen Hot Pools. Nestled high into a cliff-side overlooking the magnificent Shotover River canyon, the experience is all about unwinding and soaking-up Queenstown's spectacular scenery, enjoying the pure waters and the fresh mountain air as your mind and body surrenders to the deep penetrating warmth and gentle massage of the private pools. Water temperature is set according to the day - generally between 37.8C on a hot day, to 39.8C during a snow-storm and in the summer one of the pools is kept cold for those who relish the thought of a cold plunge!

Your accommodation: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown's original 'dairy' (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 15



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 many 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-hike.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Shotover Jet Canyon Jet Boat Ride

Shotover Jet is the only company permitted to operate in the Shotover River Canyons. It's a thrilling ride! Skim past rocky outcrops at close range in your Shotover Jet 'Big Red', as you twist and turn through the narrow canyons at breathtaking speeds. And a major highlight - hold tight for the world-famous Shotover Jet full 360-degree spins! It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Gondola and 3 Luge Rides with Skyline Queenstown

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.

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 ambiance 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, or New Zealand cheeses. 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: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown's original 'dairy' (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner



Day 16



Milford Sound Business Class with Real NZ and Altitude Tours - Includes Canapes

Embrace the spirit of Milford Sound in this exclusive tour, where rich storytelling and intimate encounters with the land and sea create an experience like no other. From the moment you step onto your high-end transfer in Queenstown, your journey becomes part of the adventure, with cultural storytelling, scenic stops, and exceptional service. Spacious reclining seats, curated refreshments, and panoramic windows ensure you travel in style. In Milford Sound, immerse yourself in the iconic beauty with a glass of New Zealand bubbles in hand, aboard the masterfully redesigned MV Sinbad. Relax in an elegant lounge, indulge in a generous selection of canapés, and take in the fresh Fiordland air from the top deck as expert storytelling brings the history, wildlife, and legends of this extraordinary place to life.

It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information, see here.

Your accommodation: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown's original 'dairy' (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 17



Queenstown to Franz Josef Glacier via Wānaka

From Queenstown you'll cross the Crown Range, the highest sealed road in New Zealand to arrive in the Alpine town of Wānaka, gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park. Skirting the shores of both Lake Wanaka and Hawea, you will enter the small town of Makarora. Stop at Blue Pools for a 1-hour return walk through the native beech forest to a glacier-fed swimming hole. Continue on through the remote seaside settlement of Haast before heading up the wild West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beaches occasionally. Keep heading North and be sure to enjoy the view of the ever-changing towering snowcapped Southern Alps Mountain Range. Fox Glacier welcomes you first, then comes your destination for the night Franz Josef township.

Franz Josef

Franz Josef, named after both the local village and the nearby glacier, holds special significance in Māori culture as "Ko Roimata o Hine Hukatere" – The Tears of the Ice Maiden. This rare glacier is one of only three in the world that descends from alpine heights into a temperate rainforest, almost reaching sea level. New Zealand is home to two of these unique glaciers, Franz Josef and Fox Glacier, both highly accessible and popular with visitors. The best ways to experience the glacier are through scenic flights or, for the adventurous, a heli-hike. You can also enjoy glacier views with a short drive from the village and walking tracks. Beyond the glacier, Franz Josef offers a wealth of adventure activities and beautiful forest and alpine walks, making it a must-visit destination.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - One Hour Private Tub with Waiho Hot Tubs

Relax and unwind in the soothing comfort of fresh, warm water and aromatic wood smoke. Enjoy your own private tubs, nestled in a lush rainforest setting on New Zealand's West Coast. These wood-fired hot tubs combine the soothing comfort of warm water with the unique atmosphere of wood smoke to give you an unforgettable experience.

Your accommodation: Westwood Lodge

Westwood is a purpose built lodge, crafted entirely from wood and exquisitely decorated throughout. The lounge is the place to meet to watch the Southern Alps turn a soft pink in the setting sun.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 18



Explore Franz Josef

Franz Josef is a small yet lively town in the heart of New Zealand's West Coast, best known for its spectacular 12 km-long glacier. The township is surrounded by lush, rainforest-clad mountains and has a vibrant atmosphere with plenty to explore. A variety of scenic walking trails offer incredible views of the glacier, but for a truly up-close experience, a licensed helicopter tour is the only way to set foot on the ice. Beyond the glacier, unwind in the rejuvenating Hot Pools or visit the West Coast Wildlife Centre to spot rare kiwi birds. If you're in the mood for a more relaxed day, the township is home to charming souvenir and gift shops, as well as great dining spots like SnakeBite Brewery and King Tiger. Whether you're chasing adventure or relaxation, Franz Josef is a stunning blend of wild beauty and welcoming hospitality.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Kayak Classic with Franz Josef Wilderness Tours

Glide effortlessly across the water taking in the panoramic views of the Southern Alps, glaciers, and untouched Jurassic rainforest reflected on the glassy waters of Lake Mapourika. Paddle into the heart of the Okarito Kiwi Sanctuary, exploring the protected area with your knowledgeable guide. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

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. It is important to read and understand the risks associated with this activity. A full risk disclosure can be found here.

Your accommodation: Westwood Lodge

Westwood is a purpose built lodge, crafted entirely from wood and exquisitely decorated throughout. The lounge is the place to meet to watch the Southern Alps turn a soft pink in the setting sun.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 19



Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station (Return Rental Car)

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.

Shared Transfer from Christchurch Train Station to Christchurch CBD Accommodation with Christchurch Touring Company

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: Merivale Manor House

Originally built in the 1880's, Merivale Manor has been transformed into elegant motel and apartment accommodation. Less than 200 metres to central Merivale with its premier shopping, restaurants, cafes and bars.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 20



Private Transfer from Accommodation to Airport with Christchurch Touring Company

Enjoy a seamless, private transfer from your Christchurch city accommodation directly to the Christchurch Airport in time for your departing flight.

Farewell from Aotearoa / New Zealand

Bid farewell to Aotearoa / New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Māori, 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:	20
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Fable Auckland
Day 2	Fable Auckland
Day 3	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 4	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 5	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 6	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 7	Ohtel Wellington
Day 8	Ohtel Wellington
Day 9	The Peppertree
Day 10	Kaikoura Boutique Hotel
Day 11	Merivale Manor House
Day 12	Merivale Manor House
Day 13	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 14	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 15	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 16	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 17	Westwood Lodge
Day 18	Westwood Lodge
Day 19	Merivale Manor House