

Queenstown to Queenstown South Island Highlights

Starting and finishing in the 'adventure capital' of Queenstown This comprehensive South Island itinerary visits every South Island must see location including Milford Sound, Mt Cook National Park, Christchurch and Akaroa, Kaikoura, Abel Tasman National Park and Nelson, Hanmer Springs and the West Coast Glaciers.



Starts in: Queenstown
 Finishes in: Queenstown
 Length: 16days / 15nights
 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: Unlimited kms

Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees

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

Included activity: Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

Included activity: Private transfer accommodation to Christchurch Train Station with Christchurch Touring

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

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

Includes: GPS navigation

Includes: Additional drivers

Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

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

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Christchurch to Greymouth

: 1 lunch

Day 1



Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

On arrival you will be met by a private driver and delivered to your Queenstown accommodation.

Welcome to Queenstown

Renowned for its adrenaline inducing activities Queenstown is synonymous with adventure. Parked on the shores of Lake Wakatipu this small alpine town is nestled below soaring vistas of The Remarkables Mountain Range. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand's crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. Spend time on the Gibbston wine trail and end with a meal at Michelin star chef Josh Emmet's restaurant, Rata. Take a trip down memory lane on a 100 year old steamship the TSS Earnslaw. Soak in the scenery on your walk around the lake, or venture further afield into Fiordland National Park. Head over the hill to resort town Wanaka, or re-live scenes from Lord Of The Rings by four wheel drive. But - if you really do want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon swing or Zip line the Gondola. Just be sure it's done on an empty stomach – don't say we didn't warn you!

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - The Ledge Bungy Jump with AJ Hackett

Queenstown is where bungy jumping was pioneered by AJ Hackett and the first commercial jump started in 1988 at the Kawarau Bridge (on the main road into Queenstown from the east). Take The Ledge Bungy - located 400 metres above Queenstown the Ledge operates from the Skyline Gondola Complex. A unique location for a unique experience.(47m jump). It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see here.

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 4-star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



Day 2



Collect Rental Car

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

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. Steamer Wharf is full of delicious eateries and the O'Connells Pavillion is great for a spot of shopping. 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!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TSS Earnslaw Cruise and Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Dinner

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

Your accommodation: 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 4-star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



Day 3



Queenstown to Te Anau

Passing through the bustling suburb of Frankton, follow the shores of Lake Wakatipu. The Remarkables mountain range towers over you on the stretch of road known as "The Devil's Staircase" leading you to the township of Kingston. You'll venture into Southland before crossing the rolling tussock lands of Mossburn (deer capital of New Zealand) and shortly arriving at Te Anau, the gateway to Fiordland National Park.

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: Lakefront Lodge

Stylish self-contained motel units less than a minute walk from Te Anau Lakefront. Enjoy a close walk to shops, cafes and restaurants.



Day 4



Te Anau to Milford Sound, returning to Te Anau

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

You'll learn about how this magnificent area was formed and experience the wonder of the falls that line the Fjord before back-tracking the way you came.

Milford Sound Cruise with Real NZ - Lunch Included

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

Your accommodation: Lakefront Lodge

Stylish self-contained motel units less than a minute walk from Te Anau Lakefront. Enjoy a close walk to shops, cafes and restaurants.

Meals included: Lunch



Day 5



Te Anau to Aoraki Mt Cook National Park

Crossing the rolling tussock lands you pass through Mossburn, the deer capital of New Zealand. Following Lake Wakatipu north the Remarkable mountain range towers over you as you approach the adventure capital of Queenstown, before heading east over the historic Kawarau Bridge and if you haven't already done so you can take a bungy jump from the bridge, or sit back and watch others throw themselves off. For a more sedate activity, Gibbston which borders the Kawarau River has many vineyards which are open for tastings.

The Kawarau Gorge guides you towards Cromwell and for more wine tastings a side trip to Bannockburn is a must, with many award winning vineyards and winery restaurants to enjoy. Cromwell sits at the head of the Kawarau Gorge and the historic old town is well worth the visit, the buildings are now home to quaint shops and cafes. The old town buildings were relocated from the valley that now sits deep under Lake Dunstan. Continue along Lake Dunstan until you reach the historic and scenic Bendigo Reserve, which was one of Otago's original gold mining settlements. Well marked paths will guide you to the remains of stone cottages and other buildings from this bygone era.

The Lindis Pass is one of New Zealand's highest roads with the summit reaching 971 metres. The tussock covered hills offer an unusual contrast as you pass from Central Otago into the Mackenzie Basin. The towns of Omarama and Twizel are the last stops before you arrive at Lake Pukaki and take the Mt Cook Highway along the shores to the village. In Aoraki Mt Cook Village a myriad of activities are available scenic ski plane or helicopter flights with glacier landings to kayaking on a glacial lake and a host of walks to suit all abilities. At The Hermitage Hotel the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre is a must see.

Please note: There are no food shops at Mt Cook, and dinner options are limited to three restaurants. 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

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

Your accommodation: Mt Cook Motel

Mt Cook Motel, nestled in the heart of Mt. Cook Village, offers spacious self-contained units that provide comfort and convenience. Each unit is surrounded by breathtaking alpine mountain views, making it the perfect retreat for nature lovers and adventurers alike.



Day 6



Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Akaroa

Your first stop today should be the visitor centre on the southern shores of Lake Pukaki. As well as a great presentation detailing the formation of the region over thousands of years you are also often rewarded with uninterrupted views of over 50 kilometres to the peak of Aoraki Mt Cook. Lake Tekapo, the northern most of the large Southern Lakes also the reflective quality that Pukaki has making the waters a bright turquoise on certain days. This busy little township is home to some of the most photographed subjects in the country, the Church of the Good Shepherd and the Collie Dog statue. It's a great place to take a scenic flight, enjoy a guided horse trek, a boat trip on the pristine lake or just enjoy the magnificent views.

From here you descend from the high country through Burkes Pass and into rich farmland. Beautiful Valley guides you to the town of Geraldine before you cross the vast Canterbury Plains towards Akaroa and the Banks Peninsula.

The Banks Peninsula offers a great contrast to the South Island's largest city. Just around a 1 1/2 hours drive from the city centre are rolling green hills, streams, golden sand beaches and small settlements that offer a unique insight into New Zealand's history and development.

Just on the other side of the Port Hills is Lyttelton, a busy port town that was crucial to the development of Christchurch and the Canterbury Plains. Following the road around the beautiful natural harbour the names, such as Magazine Bay, Battery Point, Corsair Point and Governors Bay, remind of the importance the navy placed on this harbour.

The Banks Peninsula itself is actually the remains of a long extinct volcano, the rim of which collapsed some time ago allowing the sea to flood into and create what is now the Akaroa Harbour. In 1840 French colonists settled in Akaroa in a bid to stake a claim for the South Island.

Unbeknown the British had already declared sovereignty and a long drawn out dispute ensued with the British eventually being given government. However the French stayed and made this stunning part of the South Pacific their home and still to this day the town boasts French street names and every year a French Festival is held.

The Harbour itself is teeming with wildlife and a nature cruise is a must do activity. One of the world's smallest and rarest dolphins, hectors dolphin, are often seen and cruises also offer excursions with the chance to swim amongst them.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise

Experience majestic scenery and stunning wildlife daily on a Black Cat Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise. You'll see the rare, native dolphin – the Hector's or New Zealand Dolphin. There's also the chance to spot the world's smallest penguin, the White Flipped Little Blue Penguin, Fur Seals and other sea birds.

Other cruise highlights are some majestic volcanic cliffs (including the impressive Cathedral Cave) and signs of Akaroa's fascinating past including early Maori, French and British settlements.

Your accommodation: Criterion Motel

The Criterion Motel offers studio apartments with spectacular views over Akaroa Harbour. You're also just a short walk from the fantastic cafes and restaurants that Akaroa offers.



Day 7



Akaroa to Christchurch (via Lyttelton)

Head to Christchurch today crossing the hills with spectacular views of the harbour. We recommend taking the slightly longer but much more scenic route around Lyttelton Harbour. Just turn at Gebbies Pass Road and follow the road as it passes by the bays named after the areas naval past such as Corsair and Governors Bay. Take the tunnel into the city.

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Christchurch Gondola

In the Heathcote Valley, just 15 minutes from the heart of Christchurch City, ride the Christchurch Gondola for nearly a kilometre 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 - General Admission to International Antarctic Centre

The International Antarctic Centre aims to recreate the atmosphere and environment of Antarctica, providing visitors with an interactive, fun and educational experience. Feel the full Four Seasons of Antarctica, where you'll experience a custom-built snow and ice experience, then warm up in the Scott Base interior exhibit, a replica Antarctic field camp or other informative displays in the gallery. You'll also learn about life in modern day Antarctica, view real little blue penguins and experience a thrilling ride in a Hagglund all terrain vehicle.

Your accommodation: Bella Vista Christchurch

Bella Vista Motel Christchurch offers a great range of comfortable modern units with excellent facilities. Enjoy the convenience of being located in close proximity to the Christchurch CBD, shops, entertainment and other activities.



Day 8



Christchurch to Kaikoura

The drive north from Christchurch to Kaikoura takes you through the rolling hills of North Canterbury's major wine region, the Waipara Valley. Allow time for a detour and visit Hanmer Springs for a dip in the mineral hot pools. Continue on and cross the Hawkswood Range before descending to the spectacular Kaikoura coastline - where the road hugs the ocean for the last leg of the drive.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Ocean's Cabin with Whale Watch Kaikōura

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

Your accommodation: The White Morph, Kaikōura

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 9



Kaikoura to Blenheim

Heading north from Kaikoura, the road hugs the shore for approximately 50 kilometres and offers many opportunities to view the native wildlife such as seabirds and New Zealand fur seals. One of the best seal watching locations is Ohau Point (25km north of Kaikoura), where you can observe the adults on the shoreline and the pups frolicking in the waterfall, just a short walk from the road (signposted). As you drive you will have turquoise waters of the South Pacific Ocean to your east and to the west the towering Kaikoura Ranges. Crossing the dry hills of the Marlborough ranges you head towards Marlborough, New Zealand's largest wine producing region. Blenheim sits right at the heart of Marlborough and is ideally located to enjoy an afternoon sampling the local produce. A great way to do this is to take a guided wine tour with Sounds Connection Wine Tours.

Blenheim to Nelson

A short drive north from Blenheim to you reach Havelock. The small port town of Havelock has a great variety of cafes and restaurants to choose from so plan your journey to arrive in time for lunch. Crossing the Bryant Range you arrive onto Tasman Bay and the city of Nelson.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Half Day Guided Kayaking in the Marlborough Sounds

The half day guided sea kayak trip is an ideal opportunity to fit a little kayaking adventure into a busy holiday itinerary. After a short safety briefing you'll be in the water, allowing you maximum time to enjoy the tranquil waters of the Queen Charlotte Sound. Starting at Ngakuta Bay you then paddle out of the bay and into Grove Arm. The sound is surrounded by bush-clad shorelines and sandy beaches. There will be a short stop to enjoy a light refreshment break along the way before returning to Picton. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information click here.

Your accommodation: The Hotel Nelson

The Hotel Nelson offers great facilities just 10 minutes walking distance from Nelson City Centre. Well equipped modern units with off street parking.



Day 10



Explore Nelson City

The vibrant Nelson city centre offers an abundance of cafes, restaurants, bars and shops and along the waterfront, you will find many fine restaurants specialising in seafood to enjoy. Founded in 1841 by the New Zealand Company the region today still boasts many remarkable buildings from these early days, however it is its close proximity to Abel Tasman National Park that is one of Nelson's greatest advantages to visitors with its pristine waters, beautiful native bush and golden beaches making this an adventure seeker's paradise. Nelson is also famous for its art and crafts and you will find many local offerings - including the world-famous Høglund Glassworks.

Explore the Nelson and Abel Tasman region

Nelson is a great city to explore on foot. Visit the historic areas, and the famous Cathedral, or relax and enjoy the atmosphere at one of the many cafes on Trafalgar Street. Nelson is also noted for its many artists, and galleries displaying their work can be enjoyed by following one of the Art trails listed locally. Around 45 minutes drive away is Abel Tasman National Park. The region offers countless opportunities to explore for visitors of every age and capability, from enjoying the golden sand beaches and clear warm waters to guided kayaking trips viewing seals and dolphins, to exploring some of New Zealand's finest walking tracks.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Seals, Beach Cruise and Walk

Experience the best of Abel Tasman on this combined beach cruise and walk tour. Cruise into the Tonga Island Marine Reserve and pause to watch the antics of the Resident Fur Seal Colony. After landing at the historic Tonga Quarry Beach, take a two hour, fifteen minute walk over forested land and around the spectacular Bark Bay Estuary, renowned for its cascading waterfalls. Rejoin the cruise at the sheltered golden cove on Medlands Beach.

Your accommodation: The Hotel Nelson

The Hotel Nelson offers great facilities just 10 minutes walking distance from Nelson City Centre. Well equipped modern units with off street parking.



Day 11



Nelson to Hanmer via Nelson Lakes National Park

The drive today takes through the enchanting Nelson Lakes National Park of rugged peaks, forests and glacial lakes. Your journey will take you along the Buller Gorge which offers some wonderful scenery as you follow this magnificent river. The town of Murchison is a quiet place and a great lunch stop. Underneath its sleepy farming facade is an adventurers paradise with white water rafting, kayaking, 4WD trips and some great trout fishing. Continuing on the drive today takes you along the Lewis Pass, the least travelled of the 3 main routes over the Southern Alps. A scenic journey passing through forests and the famous Maruia Hot Springs. Springs Junction is the starting point of the pass and just after is Lake Daniells Track. If you have time to take this 4 hour return walks you are rewarded with some beautiful native beech forest views and eventually the tranquil Lake Daniells.

Maruia Springs has been attracting travellers for years and the natural hot springs are now located within an authentic Japanese themed resort. Outdoor hot pools are a great way to relax.

The alpine village of Hanmer Springs has been a favourite holiday destination for New Zealanders for many years. Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa is a major attraction, but the alpine environment with its rivers and mountains make it appealing year round. Gentle pursuits include forest walks, thermal pools, massage therapy, health treatments and golf as well as pure relaxation in the alpine atmosphere.

For more excitement try jet boating on the Waiau River, horse trekking, mountain biking, or bungy from the historic bridge. Hanmer Springs is also surrounded by forests offering over 50km of walking and mountain bike tracks. The seasons bring amazing colours, particularly in autumn and spring, while in winter Hanmer Springs takes advantage of its proximity to Hanmer Springs Ski Area and Mt. Lyford Ski Area.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Jet Boating Hanmer Springs with Hanmer Springs Attractions

Power through the spectacular Waiau River canyon with spins and thrills galore on this action-packed Hanmer Springs Jet Boat ride. Experience travelling across just centimetres of water and rotating through exhilarating spins as your qualified and professional driver navigates you through narrow gorges and braided shallows. A must-do activity suited to both adventure-seekers and families alike. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

Your accommodation: Asure Hanmer Inn Motel

The Hanmer Inn Motel has 13 modern fully self contained motel units. It is situated only 5 minutes walk to the Hanmer Springs hot pools and also very close to restaurants and all the main attractions in the area.



Day 12



Hanmer Springs to Christchurch

Today you'll travel through the Waipara Valley, the fastest wine growing region in New Zealand and across the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch. You'll pass vast grassy plains and parched farming landscapes as you make your way over the Weka Pass and past small towns such as Amberley and Leithfield before arriving into the largest Port in the South Island, Christchurch.

Your accommodation: Bella Vista Christchurch

Bella Vista Motel Christchurch offers a great range of comfortable modern units with excellent facilities. Enjoy the convenience of being located in close proximity to the Christchurch CBD, shops, entertainment and other activities.



Day 13



Private transfer accommodation to Christchurch Train Station with Christchurch Touring

A private driver will collect you from your accommodation and transfer you to the Christchurch train station in time for your train journey.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Christchurch to Greymouth

The early morning departure is rewarded with incredible scenery today onboard the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Considered one of the world's great train journeys, it travels between the East Coast, Christchurch and the West Coast, Greymouth. From your carriage, you'll see the fields of the Canterbury Plains and farmland, followed by the spectacular gorges and river valleys of the Waimakariri River. The train then climbs into the Southern Alps passing through small settlements and Arthur's Pass National Park before descending through the lush beech rain forest to the West Coast town of Greymouth, a great base for visits to Punakaiki and the West Coast glaciers.

Collect Rental Car

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

Greymouth to Franz Josef

Leaving Greymouth you will head south into Glacier Country. Pass through Hokitika and be sure to take a detour to the spectacular Hokitika Gorge, the famous turquoise-coloured river surrounded by native bush-clad cliffs. Continue on through Ross, a historic gold mining town where several buildings still remain intact and still to this day one of New Zealand's working gold mines. As you travel further down the coast you'll also go through Hari Hari, the town where Guy Menzies, the first person to fly solo over the Tasman crash landed. Heading south along the mighty West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild west coast beach occasionally. Whataroa is the next town where you can see one of the world's rarest birds, the New Zealand white heron or Kotuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve, and guided tours from October to March will take you there. Arriving in Franz Josef township is a lively place with a great atmosphere, restaurants including Blue Ice and Snakebite are worth a meal. This small town is packed with walks, adventure, and scenic activities, something for everyone.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TranzAlpine Scenic Plus Addon - KiwiRail

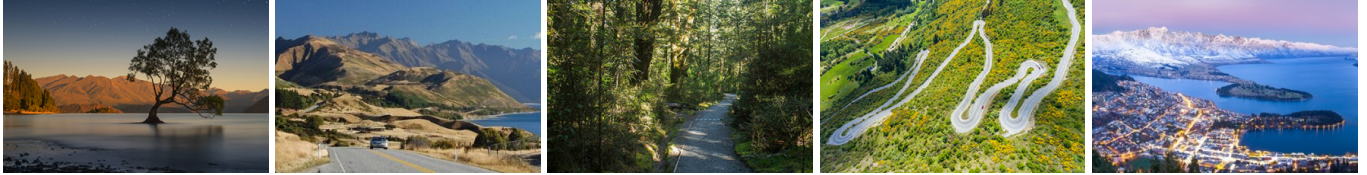
Feel like luxurious service, exclusive meals, inclusive drinks and priority check in and boarding? The Scenic Plus add-on option is for you. Enjoy personal service with panoramic windows, spacious carriages and comfortable seating. The exclusive open-air viewing carriage is available if you feel like 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: Punga Grove Motel & Suites

Punga Grove is right in the heart of Franz Josef Glacier village stylish accommodation in a beautiful rainforest setting.



Day 14



Franz Josef to Queenstown (via Wānaka)

Heading south you pass through the second glacier town of Fox Glacier before heading along the coast and into more classic West Coast bush scenery. We can recommend a stop at the Paringa Salmon Farm for lunch or refreshments, if you have time make sure you feed the fish, it's very impressive! At Knights Point Lookout elephant seals can often be seen basking on the sandy beaches at the far end of the point. Crossing the massive Haast River you turn inland and head into the valley climbing through mountains littered with waterfalls. The Haast Valley offers a spectacular view of the river and its enormous power. The Blue Pools near Makarora are a great 30-minute walk. The road from Makarora leads to Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea which will guide you into the stunning lakeside township of Wānaka before heading over New Zealand's highest sealed road, Crown Range Road and dropping into the Wakatipu basin, home to Queenstown. .

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 4-star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



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. Steamer Wharf is full of delicious eateries and the O'Connells Pavillion is great for a spot of shopping. 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 - Wilderness Jet Experience with Dart River Safaris

Journey deep into the heart of the world-renowned Mt Aspiring National Park, where myth, heritage, and fantasy come to life. As one of Queenstown's most exhilarating activities, the Wilderness Jet adventures on a spectacular journey deep into the heart of the world-renowned Mount Aspiring National Park.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Nevis Bungy & Swing Combo with AJ Hackett

The Nevis Swing is not simply the most famous Queenstown Swing. It is not merely the most famous New Zealand Swing. This is the most famous swing in the whole world! After being lifted out above the launch deck, suspended 160 metres above the canyon floor, you are suddenly released and find yourself rushing towards the other side of the valley at 120kph, eyes wide open in disbelief or shut tight in fear. Nevis Bungy - Welcome to the best thing you have ever done. Go full throttle with 134m Bungy (the highest in New Zealand). Free fall for 8.5 seconds in a blitz of pure fear and adrenaline. Don't say you weren't warned, because this is definitely going to put the cement in your coffee. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see here.

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 4-star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



Day 16



Depart Queenstown today

Drop your rental car at the Queenstown airport today.

Farewell from Aotearoa-New Zealand

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

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	South Island Self Drive
Starts:	Queenstown
Finishes:	Queenstown
Tour length:	16
Accommodation:	Motels
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

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

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Scenic Suites Queenstown
Day 2	Scenic Suites Queenstown
Day 3	Lakefront Lodge
Day 4	Lakefront Lodge
Day 5	Mt Cook Motel
Day 6	Criterion Motel
Day 7	Bella Vista Christchurch
Day 8	The White Morph, Kaikōura
Day 9	The Hotel Nelson
Day 10	The Hotel Nelson
Day 11	Asure Hanmer Inn Motel
Day 12	Bella Vista Christchurch
Day 13	Punga Grove Motel & Suites
Day 14	Scenic Suites Queenstown
Day 15	Scenic Suites Queenstown