

A Taste of the South Family Adventure

This 8 day scenic route will give you a wonderful 'taste' of the South Island's beauty and iconic attractions. Along the way you'll experience exciting adventure while getting up close to icebergs in Mt Cook National Park and landing on a glacier on the West Coast. With many included activities and fantastic family accommodation, this is the ultimate taste of the south.

Starts in: Christchurch
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 8days / 7nights
 Accommodation: Motels
 Can be customised: Yes

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



Inclusions:

Includes: Late model rental cars

Includes: Unlimited kms

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

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

Included activity: Penguin Tour with The Opera

Included activity: Lord of the Rings Queenstown Tour with Nomad Safaris

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

: 1 special dinner

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

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

Included activity: Glacier Explorers

Included activity: Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

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

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

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

Day 1



Welcome to Christchurch City

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!

Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

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

Your accommodation: Quest on Cambridge

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



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.

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.

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 3



Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Dunedin

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

Penguin Tour with The Opera

Learn about the endangered Yellow Eyed Penguin when you visit The Opera - Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance, a private conservation reserve dedicated to ensuring the survival of this unique species. The project is entirely funded by guided tours which allow the conservation team to engage in habitat restoration, predator control, a research program, and an on-site rehabilitation facility. On your tour, you will learn about the issues the Yellow Eyed Penguin faces, their life cycle, and how the project is carried out. Your experience will begin in a theatre before moving to the rehabilitation center where penguins may be seen up close. You'll take a short bus trip over to the reserve and be led on foot approx 2km by your guide through a system of covered trenches to view hides that allow access to the living and breeding habitat of this very shy bird without disturbing them. There is also an opportunity to meet other animals that reside in the reserve including fur seals, sea lions, and several species of shore and land birds.

Your accommodation: Motel on York

Motel on York is located in the heart of Dunedin city. The property offers superior accommodation only 300 metres away from cafes and restaurants.



Day 4



Dunedin to Te Anau (via Invercargill)

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

Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

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

Your accommodation: Radfords on the Lake

Architect designed and recently refurbished located right on the edge of Lake Te Anau to give magnificent views of the lake and mountains from all units. The complex is only 3 minutes walk to the town centre including shops, restaurants and cafes.



Day 5



Te Anau to Queenstown

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

Lord of the Rings Queenstown Tour with Nomad Safaris

A thrilling Lord of the Rings Queenstown Safari, combining breathtaking filming locations with exhilarating 4WD action. Discover the magic of Middle-earth as expert guides bring Tolkien’s world to life with fascinating facts and tales. Visit iconic sites like the Misty Mountains, the Pillars of the Kings (Argonath), and more. Travel along a historic gold mining road, try your hand at gold panning, and soak in spectacular panoramic views of Queenstown’s stunning landscapes. A must for any Lord of the Rings fan and adventure seeker!

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: Scenic Suites Queenstown

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style and comfort, with a selection of rooms having 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.

Meals included: Speciality Dinner



Day 6



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.

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: 58 on Cron Motel

58 on Cron is situated in the heart of Franz Josef. With snow-capped mountains as a backdrop and surrounded by some of New Zealand's most beautiful rainforests and glaciers, you can truly experience natural beauty, right from the front door of your cosy and comfortable room.



Day 7



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.

Return your rental car

Return your rental vehicle to your designated depot before your next adventure.

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.

Your accommodation: Quest on Cambridge

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



Day 8



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: South Island Self Drive
Starts: Christchurch
Finishes: Christchurch
Tour length: 8
Accommodation: Motels
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Quest on Cambridge
Day 2	Mt Cook Motel
Day 3	Motel on York
Day 4	Radfords on the Lake
Day 5	Scenic Suites Queenstown
Day 6	58 on Cron Motel
Day 7	Quest on Cambridge