



Great Journeys of New Zealand - Signature Spectacular South Tour 2025/2026

Treat yourself to a tour that will take you on a journey across the Cook Strait on the Interislander Ferry, cruising through Wellington Harbour and the magnificent Marlborough Sounds. Voyage through vineyards and along the Pacific Coast to Kaikoura and then Christchurch aboard the Coastal Pacific train. Traverse past the mighty Southern Alps on the TranzAlpine train, and journey along the wild West Coast to beautiful Queenstown. Take in New Zealand's city culture and history in Wellington, Christchurch, and Queenstown.



Starts in: Wellington
 Finishes in: Queenstown
 Length: 11days / 10nights
 Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
 Can be customised: Yes

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



Inclusions:

Includes: All coach transport
 Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring
 Included: Cruise on the Interislander Ferry
 Included: Paua Pearl Farm Tour
 Included: Dolphin Encounter Experience
 Included: Christchurch City Walking Tour

Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations
 Included: TSS Earnslaw Cruise & Farm Show



Included: Pounamu (Greenstone) Experience & Hokitika Gorge Walk
 Included: Haast River Safari
 Included: Milford Sound Day Excursion

Included: Marlborough Wine Tour
 Included: Coastal Pacific Train
 Included: Hop-on Hop-off Tram
 Included: TranzAlpine Train from Christchurch to Greymouth
 Included: VIP West Coast Wildlife Centre Guided Experience
 Included: Scenic journey through the Southern Lakes
 : 10 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 4 dinners, 1 special dinner



Day 1



Explore Wellington

Welcome to Wellington - New Zealand's capital city! Wellington is known for its world-class dining, great coffee and eccentric shops. After checking into your hotel and reading your welcome letter from your Tour Director, head out and explore all that Wellington has to offer. This is the perfect opportunity to get cultured at Te Papa Museum or grab a drink at one of the many quirky bars on Cuba Street. You may even fancy a ride on the cable car. After an exciting day on the town, your tour will officially begin as you join your fellow travellers and Tour Director at this evening's welcome reception.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Dinner

Day 2



Cook Strait Ferry Crossing to Marlborough

This morning you will say poroporoaki ki te motu raki (good-bye to the North Island) as you sail to the South Island, crossing the Cook Strait on the Interislander ferry. As the shores of the North Island slowly disappear, settle down in the comfy seats in the Premium Lounge. Treat yourself to a mimosa and enjoy a hearty seafaring breakfast, but save some room for morning tea! On your journey across Cook Strait you may spot pods of dolphins playing in the wake or, if you are very lucky, whales. Don't spend all your time inside - as you enter the stunning Queen Charlotte Sound, enjoy the views as you cruise past the remnants of whaling stations, remote working sheep farms, pristine native bush and mussel farms. Admire the beauty of this coastal paradise as you arrive into the gateway of the South Island, Picton. Once in Marlborough, indulge in a gourmet experience as you journey through the renowned Marlborough region, savoring a three-course lunch menu at Allan Scott Wines Bistro, accompanied by a glass of wine with your main meal.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 3



Marlborough to Kaikoura on the Coastal Pacific Train

Immerse yourself in the captivating world of the Pāua Pearl Farm Tour, where innovation meets tradition along New Zealand's scenic coastline. After a 45 minute cruise to the outer Marlborough Sounds, begin your journey with a warm welcome and morning tea, followed by a guided tour through the hatchery and growing tanks where these iridescent treasures are nurtured. Learn about the fascinating process of cultivating pāua pearls, then indulge in a tasting of fresh, locally harvested pāua - an ocean delicacy. Board the Coastal Pacific Scenic Train and relax as the train glides across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless journey of breath-taking beauty. Keep an eye out for the fur seals lazing on the rocks! Once in Kaikōura, the evening will be yours to enjoy some iconic kai moana (seafood) at one of the quaint restaurants before enjoying your luxurious ocean-front hotel.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4



Kaikoura to Christchurch on the Coastal Pacific Train

Set out on an unforgettable Dolphin Encounter in Kaikōura, where the ocean comes alive with the playful energy of wild dusky dolphins. Cruise along the stunning coastline as knowledgeable guides share insights into these intelligent marine mammals. Watch as pods leap, spin, and interact in their natural habitat - or elevate your adventure with the option to upgrade and swim alongside them for a truly immersive and exhilarating experience. After this outstanding experience, we're sure you will be feeling peckish. Head to the beach to sample some iconic New Zealand food - you can't go wrong with the humble Kiwiana fish and chips. Work off the deep-fried delights by wandering through the wonderful array of local artisan stores and souvenir shops.

Gather again for the next leg of your journey. Late afternoon, board the Coastal Pacific for the Scenic Plus experience, treating yourself to unparalleled vistas as you glide along the coastline. Revel in dinner and drinks, included with your Scenic Plus package, as you unwind and soak in the breathtaking scenery.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 5



Explore Christchurch

Christchurch, the gateway to South Island exploration, beautifully blends cutting-edge innovation with 19th-century Anglican Gothic Revival architecture. While the city is often remembered for the 2011 earthquake, today it stands as a vibrant, multicultural hub with a strong sense of renewal and creativity. Your day begins with the convenience of the Hop-On Hop-Off Tram, a charming way to navigate the central city and discover its highlights at your own pace. Enjoy a custom walking tour with your Great Journeys New Zealand guide, who will bring the city's stories, landmarks, and hidden gems to life. Explore must-see attractions like the Riverside Markets, Punting on the Avon, the Gondola, and the tranquil Botanical Gardens. Along the way, uncover a variety of boutique cafés tucked into laneways and side streets. This evening, unwind and reflect on your discoveries over a beautifully curated dinner at Earl, one of Christchurch's most acclaimed dining spots, known for its relaxed elegance and refined seasonal cuisine.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 6



The TranzAlpine Scenic Train

The moment has arrived to experience the world-famous TranzAlpine, indulging in the Scenic Plus service as you journey through the breathtaking Southern Alps and emerge onto the untamed West Coast. On this unforgettable escape, marvel at dramatic alpine vistas, glide along the ice-fed Waimakariri River, and cross the Great Divide. As the landscape transforms before your eyes, you'll also traverse the historic Otira Tunnel - an engineering triumph over a century old. Along the way, enjoy regionally inspired food and rich commentary that enhances your Scenic Plus experience. Arriving in Greymouth, you'll be met by a private coach and taken even further off the beaten track. Enjoy a custom Greenstone experience - a special insight into the cultural significance and artistry of pounamu (New Zealand jade). Then stretch your legs on a guided walk through the stunning Hokitika Gorge, where vivid turquoise waters wind through lush native bush.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 7



Explore the West Coast

This morning, your West Coast journey continues with a VIP experience at the West Coast Wildlife Centre - a special, guided walkthrough designed exclusively for Great Journeys New Zealand guests. Go behind the scenes to learn about the conservation efforts for the rare Rowi kiwi and discover the secrets of this fascinating native species in a truly immersive encounter. After your wildlife experience, enjoy free time in Franz Josef to explore at your own pace. Take a short scenic walk to the glacier viewpoint, browse the charming local shops, or choose from optional adventures such as a thrilling helicopter flight over the glacier or a serene wilderness tour through the rainforest. This evening, rejoin your group for a culinary highlight: a four-course dinner at Te Waonui Forest Retreat, where locally sourced ingredients and refined flavours are served in a tranquil rainforest setting.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 8



Explore the Southern Lakes

Today you will explore the Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey of about five hours to Queenstown, will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. While aboard an exciting river boat and private coach, marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and majestic glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems. Stop in unique locations that only locals know about. After an exciting plunge into the history of this gold rush village, you will arrive in the world-famous resort town of Queenstown!

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 9



Explore Milford Sound - The 8th Wonder of the World

Charge your camera and prepare for one of the most awe-inspiring adventures of your journey. Today, you'll travel to the majestic Milford Sound / Piopiotahi, often called the 8th Wonder of the World, aboard our exclusive Cruise Milford Coach service. Relax in comfort as we wind through native rainforests, alpine meadows, and mirror-like reflective pools - complete with custom stops tailored to your group's interests. On arrival, step aboard your boutique cruise and journey deep into the heart of the fjord. Feel the mist from Bowen and Stirling Falls, marvel at the vertical face of Mitre Peak, and take in the dramatic beauty carved by ancient glaciers. For those looking to elevate the experience, there's an optional scenic flight available for your return - soaring above the Southern Alps for a breathtaking aerial perspective of Fiordland. After this unforgettable day, return to Queenstown for a relaxing evening at your own pace.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 10



Explore Queenstown

Queenstown truly has something for everyone. Personalise your day to be as active or relaxed as you'd like. Whether it's exploring Walter Peak on a horse trekking adventure, hopping on the gondola for inspiring views, or sipping wine in Gibbston Valley, there is no shortage of activities to delight your senses. Enjoy a final hurrah this evening as we board the TSS Earnslaw Steamship Cruise, dinner, and show. Reflect on your great adventure with your fellow travellers as you cruise to your dining experience at Walter peak overlooking the beautiful Table Bay. Sit back and watch a true Kiwi experience as you learn about sheep shearing and dog herding in this beautiful setting. This evening will truly encapsulate your great journey as a truly New Zealand highlight. Not ready to call it a night? Sip cocktails and indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife alongside the sparkling Lake Wakatipu.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner

Day 11



Depart Queenstown

Your journey will end after enjoying a final breakfast with your fellow travellers. You will be transferred to Queenstown Airport for your departing flight.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Guided Coach & Train Tours
Starts: Wellington
Finishes: Queenstown
Tour length: 11
Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary

Day 1	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 2	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 3	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 4	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 5	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 6	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 7	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 8	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 9	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 10	4-4.5 Star Hotel