

Southern Heights Circuit including the TranzAlpine Train

Your journey begins in Christchurch, the largest city in the South Island, from which you will depart, travelling through the Canterbury Plains to Lake Tekapo, then continuing on into the Southern Alps and Aoraki Mt Cook National Park. You will have free time to explore the region, and can even book a scenic flight (at additional expense). After, you continue on via the Lindis Pass to Queenstown, the adventure capital of the world! On the following day, chase adventure or take it slow in this idyllic alpine town, as you'll have a free day to yourself to spend as you choose. On day three, discover the beauty of Milford Sound. The journey to Milford Sound is just as spectacular as the destination itself, and once arriving in Milford, board a modern and spacious vessel for a leisurely cruise in the fiord. Enjoy the abundant waterfalls, sky-high mountains, lush rainforest, and if you're lucky, the playful wildlife in the sound, before eventually returning to Queenstown and your accommodation for the night. The following morning, depart Queenstown, travel through Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, the Haast Pass, over the Southern Alps to the West Coast. You'll have the evening to explore the small village of Franz Josef and the famous Franz Josef Glacier, your home for the night. On the fifth and final morning of your journey, you'll depart Franz Josef and head north along the West Coast to Greymouth, where you will board the famous TranzAlpine Train. This journey, considered one of the world's greatest rail journeys, carries you across the South Island through Arthurs Pass National Park, before eventually descending through the windswept Canterbury Plains to Christchurch, your final destination.



Starts in: Christchurch
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 5days / 4nights
 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: All coach transport
 - Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations
 - Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring
 - Included activity: Christchurch to Queenstown via Mt Cook Day Tour with Gray Line / GreatSights
 - Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course
 - Included activity: Milford Sound Cruise and Coach Tour from Queenstown with RealNZ - Lunch Included
 - Included activity: Queenstown to Franz Josef with Gray Line / GreatSights
 - Included activity: Glacier Valley Shuttle
 - Included activity: Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station with Gray Line / GreatSights
- plus much more...

Day 1



Christchurch to Queenstown via Mt Cook Day Tour with Gray Line / GreatSights

Depart Christchurch in the morning and travel through the lush farmland of the Canterbury Plains to Lake Tekapo, where you can see the iconic Church of the Good Shepherd as it stands in solitude next to the vibrant blue waters. Leaving Tekapo, continue into the Southern Alps towards Aoraki / Mount Cook National Park, home to New Zealand's tallest mountain. You will have free time, and you can take a sightseeing flight, weather dependent, enabling you to experience some of the most dramatic alpine and glacier scenery. Speak to your Sales Consultant to book this, as it must be pre-booked. After then you will continue to Queenstown via Lindis Pass and the fruit growing area of Cromwell.

Your accommodation: Blue Peaks Lodge

Blue Peaks Lodge offers well equipped self contained rooms with a fantastic location overlooking Queenstown and is just an easy five minutes walk to the Queenstown lakefront.



Day 2



Explore Queenstown

Queenstown, known in Māori as Tāhuna is celebrated as New Zealand's 'adventure capital'. Though Queenstown offers far more than a fast-paced, action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of Lake Wakatipu beneath a soaring panorama of the Remarkables Mountain Range, this alpine town is surrounded by a plethora of historic, gastronomic, and scenic wonders. Whether you are looking for a scenic short walk or a longer one, you will find the perfect hike or bike trail in Queenstown. Explore Queenstown Gardens, or try out more challenging trails up to Ben Lomond Walkaway or Queenstown Hill Walking Track. Enjoy iconic views and take Queenstown Gondola up 450 metres to Bob's Peak, or ride on the 100-year-old Steamship - the TSS Earnslaw - to Walter Peak Station for dinner and a farm tour. Browse the waterfront cafes and al fresco restaurants, try out the famous Fergburger, or grab a dessert at Patagonia Chocolates.

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 - Queenstown Skyline Gondola Ride

Hop aboard the Skyline Gondola - the steepest cable car lift in the Southern Hemisphere! From which you can take in the awe-inspiring views of this spectacular landscape. Sit back and relax as you enjoy panoramic views of The Remarkables, Walter Peak, Cecil Peak, Coronet Peak and the magnificent Lake Wakatipu.

Your accommodation: Blue Peaks Lodge

Blue Peaks Lodge offers well equipped self contained rooms with a fantastic location overlooking Queenstown and is just an easy five minutes walk to the Queenstown lakefront.



Day 3



Milford Sound Cruise and Coach Tour from Queenstown with RealNZ - Lunch Included

Departing from Queenstown sit back and relax aboard a luxury glass-roofed coach to enjoy a relaxing trip along the shores of Lake Wakatipu and through the rolling countryside to Te Anau. The coach driver provides an informative commentary and plenty of photo opportunities. After a morning tea break in Te Anau, the coach continues along the spectacular Milford Road. On reaching Piopiotahi-Milford Sound, board your vessel for a leisurely cruise in the fiord. The cruise provides excellent viewing opportunities and plenty of time is available to enjoy waterfalls, rainforests, mountains and wildlife. Rain or shine, every day in Piopiotahi-Milford Sound will leave you in awe. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information, see [here](#).

Your accommodation: Blue Peaks Lodge

Blue Peaks Lodge offers well equipped self contained rooms with a fantastic location overlooking Queenstown and is just an easy five minutes walk to the Queenstown lakefront.

Meals included: Lunch



Day 4



Queenstown to Franz Josef with Gray Line / GreatSights

Leaving Queenstown early, travel by coach through the stunning scenery of the South Island. Your driver-guide will provide entertaining commentary and point out sites of interest as you pass by the crystal-clear waters of Lake Dunstan, Lake Wanaka and Lake Hawea. After a morning tea break (at own expense) in Makarora on the border of Mount Aspiring World Heritage Park, you'll travel through the Haast Pass, journeying through native beech forest and over the Southern Alps, before emerging on the West Coast. This remote area has a ruggedly beautiful landscape of vast rainforests, gushing waterfalls and snow-capped mountains. Skirt the coast and see waves crashing on rocky beaches where you will stop for a comfort stop at Bruce Bay. You will arrive in the afternoon at the small village of Franz Josef. From here you can explore the world famous Franz Josef Glacier.

Glacier Valley Shuttle

You'll be transferred up the Franz Josef Valley to the road end, where you'll have the opportunity to walk to a viewing platform with views of the glacier. Alternatively, you can enjoy one of the other scenic short walks in the area.

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 5



Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station with Gray Line / GreatSights

This morning travel north through the small townships of Whataroa and stop at Harihari for a morning tea stop (at own expense). Continue through the township of Ross, which in the late 1800s was the centre of one of New Zealand's richest alluvial goldfields. In 1903 the largest gold nugget ever found in New Zealand was discovered at Jones Creek, not far from the town centre. It weighed 2807 grams. The New Zealand Government later purchased the nugget and presented it as a coronation gift to King George V. On arrival in Hokitika there is time to purchase lunch (at own expense) and explore the town centre. Hokitika is the administrative and commercial centre for this part of Westland. The major primary industry is timber milling. Dairy and sheep farming, commercial fishing, white baiting and eel processing being the other major industries. Continue onto Greymouth Railway Station from where you catch the world famous TranzAlpine train across the Southern Alps 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.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Independant Bus & Coach
Starts: Christchurch
Finishes: Christchurch
Tour length: 5
Accommodation: Motels
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary

Day 1 Blue Peaks Lodge
Day 2 Blue Peaks Lodge
Day 3 Blue Peaks Lodge
Day 4 Punga Grove Motel & Suites