

Dark Sky Detour

Starting in Christchurch, you'll make your way to the brilliant blue waters of Lake Tekapo. Lounge in the lakefront hot pools and enjoy the stars at the Mt John Observatory. Finishing in Queenstown, where you'll catch views from the gondola and wrap things up with a twilight wine tour to sample some of the world's best Pinot Noir.

Starts in: Christchurch
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 6days / 5nights
 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: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course
- Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
- Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation
- Included activity: Christchurch to Lake Tekapo with Gray Line / GreatSights
- Included activity: Tekapo Springs Hot Pools
- Included activity: Dark Sky Project Summit Experience
- Included activity: Lake Tekapo to Queenstown by Intercity Coach
- Included activity: Gondola Ride with Skyline Queenstown
- Included activity: Twilight Wine & Craft Beer Tour with Altitude Tours
- Included activity: Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

Day 1



Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

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

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!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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: 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 2



Christchurch to Lake Tekapo with Gray Line / GreatSights

Today you head into the heart of the South Island, crossing the vast Canterbury Plains along the inland scenic route, before heading into Mackenzie country. Passing through places such as Beautiful Valley it's not hard to understand where the names originate. Ascending Burkes Pass and onto the high country plateau and the picturesque town of Lake Tekapo. Lake Tekapo is New Zealand's highest large lake and its incredible turquoise colour astounds many visitors. The amazing colour of the water is created by the fine rock particles that are suspended in the glacier fed waters and these reflect the light. One of the most popular landmarks in this region is the Church of the Good Shepherd.

Tekapo Springs Hot Pools

Tekapo Springs offers three adjoining main Hot Pools for you to sit back, relax and enjoy yourself while looking out to the beautiful Two Thumb range and stunning Lake Tekapo. Pool temperatures range from forty degrees celsius to thirty-six degrees celsius and each pool offers something different - massage jets to assist in taking away any aches and pains and fountains to splash under.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Dark Sky Project - Crater Experience

Navigating your way through the Southern Sky using various telescopes and the naked eye, you will see amazing sights such as our own Milky Way Galaxy, the Southern Cross, Alpha-Centauri - our closest neighbouring star at only 4.3 light-years away, and Sirius - the brightest star in our sky. Behold and learn about our closest neighbouring galaxies, the Magellanic Clouds, which grace our night sky along with constellations such as Orion the Hunter and Scorpius. You may also have the opportunity to see star clusters like the beautiful Jewel Box; awe-inspiring planets; nebulae, immense clouds of gas and dust; and distant galaxies which test the limits of human imagination.

Your accommodation: Lake Tekapo Village Motel

Lake Tekapo Village Motel is conveniently located in the Lake Tekapo Village Centre, with dining, shopping and services all within easy walking distance. The closeness to amenities and superb views will make your stay very special.



Day 3



SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - The Grand Traverse Scenic Flight with Air Safaris

The flight of a lifetime, the "Grand Traverse" is a spectacular scenic flight seeing experience allowing you to explore the Mount Cook and Westland National Parks. This magnificent flight encompasses two World Heritage National Parks and 200 km of New Zealand's most memorable and spectacular scenery. The contrast of colours is beautiful with the turquoise glacial lake against the tussock covered sheep stations. Your journey will bring you over Aoraki Mt Cook National park where you view New Zealand's longest glacier, The Tasman. From there you cross the main divide into the Westland National Park encompassing the Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers which spill down to the rainforests of the west coast. Their large and varied fleet especially selected for New Zealand air tour sightseeing ensures that every passenger has a window seat and all aircraft have wings-above to ensure optimum viewing below. Pilots provide a full and informative commentary with multi language commentary brochures supplied.

Dark Sky Project Summit Experience

Experience the cosmos like never before with the Summit Experience at Lake Takapō (Tekapo), one of the best places on Earth for stargazing. Located on the summit of Mount John within the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve, this is your exclusive opportunity to explore the night sky from New Zealand's only professional research observatory. Guided by passionate astronomy experts, you'll delve deep into the universe using powerful telescopes, including a 16" telescope within a private dome. Discover distant galaxies, constellations, planets, and star clusters while gaining a richer understanding of both Māori and Western knowledge systems. You'll leave with a new perspective on the stars, all while surrounded by the stunning landscape and the clearest, darkest skies in the Southern Hemisphere.

Your accommodation: Lake Tekapo Village Motel

Lake Tekapo Village Motel is conveniently located in the Lake Tekapo Village Centre, with dining, shopping and services all within easy walking distance. The closeness to amenities and superb views will make your stay very special.



Day 4



Lake Tekapo to Queenstown by Intercity Coach

Leaving Lake Tekapo and the Mackenzie high country you descend through Burkes Pass and into rich farmland. Twizel, just south of Mt. Cook National Park was the location of many Lord of the Rings movie scenes and a little further on is Omarama. Crossing the Lindis Pass this is one of New Zealand's highest roads with the summit reaching 971 metres, you pass from the Mackenzie Basin and into Central Otago. The next major town is Cromwell, a major fruit growing region, which sits at the head of the Kawarau Gorge. Follow the sheer cliffs of the Kawarau Gorge towards Queenstown and Gibbston, one of New Zealand's premier wine growing regions. Approaching Queenstown the impressive Remarkables mountain range come into view and then beautiful Lake Wakatipu as you head towards the adventure capital of New Zealand.

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 Emett'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!

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 5



Twilight Wine & Craft Beer Tour with Altitude Tours

For those who appreciate the finer things without the formality, this late-afternoon escape offers a sophisticated yet relaxed way to toast the end of a Queenstown day. As the golden hour settles over the Gibbston Valley, you'll be whisked away in a premium Mercedes vehicle to sample the very best of Central Otago's liquid gold.

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 6



Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

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

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: Independant Bus & Coach
Starts: Christchurch
Finishes: Christchurch
Tour length: 6
Accommodation: Motels
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary

Day 1 Bella Vista Christchurch
Day 2 Lake Tekapo Village Motel
Day 3 Lake Tekapo Village Motel
Day 4 Blue Peaks Lodge
Day 5 Blue Peaks Lodge