



South Island Beach Escape

Begin your adventure in Christchurch. Famous for its heritage, you can explore this city by Tram, Punt, or Gondola! In the morning, board the Coastal Pacific Train for a scenic coastal journey north to Kaikoura, a town renowned for its year-round presence of abundant marine life. Don't miss out, be sure to indulge in some fresh seafood while you're here! While in Kaikoura, get up close and personal with the coast and local wildlife on a magical swimming encounter with dusky dolphins. You'll be taken out on the catamaran, and swim in the ocean with these magnificent mammals in their natural habitat. The following morning, you'll again board the Coastal Pacific Train for a shorter leg to Picton, home to the stunning Queen Charlotte Sound. Spend your first afternoon here exploring this coastal city, or opt for a dolphin cruise in the Marlborough Sound. On day two in Picton, get ready for a full-day adventure with Wilderness Guides on a guided walk in Queen Charlotte Sound. Your informative local guide will talk about the European and Māori history of the area as well as provide detailed information on the flora and fauna you encounter along the way. Next up is a comfortable coach ride to Nelson, known for its endless sunshine hours and beautiful mountain and ocean vistas. Spend the first evening in Nelson exploring, and relishing in your journey thus far, as the next day brings a tour of the famous Abel Tasman National Park. During this tour, you will be strolling golden sand beaches, walking and exploring the natural wonderland of Abel Tasman National Park. You will enjoy stunning views and informative commentary on the Maori history of the area, as well as the rich variety of vegetation, birds, and aquatic life. The next day, your adventure draws to an end back to where you started in Christchurch. Spend your final evening here relaxing and soaking up all of the magical coastal experiences you've had, and even explore the Botanical Gardens. The following morning you are transported to the airport for departure. Haere rā!

Starts in: Christchurch

Finishes in: Christchurch

Length: 8days / 7nights

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 activity: Christchurch Triple Pass - Tram, Punting and Gondola

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

Included activity: Swimming with the Dolphins with Encounter Kaikoura

plus much more...

Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations

Included activity: Private transfer Christchurch Domestic Airport to your accommodation

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

Included activity: Coastal Pacific Train: Christchurch to Kaikoura

Included activity: Coastal Pacific Train: Kaikoura to Picton

Day 1



Private transfer Christchurch Domestic Airport to your accommodation

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

Christchurch

Christchurch known in Māori as Ōtautahi, is the largest metro area in the South Island. Commonly referred to as New Zealand's "Garden City", Christchurch is home to one of the biggest public parks in the country, and beautiful botanic gardens. The city was hit with devastating earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, now the city crosses the line between its English heritage and a new modern architecture. To take in some arts and culture, pay a visit to the Canterbury Museum or the Christchurch Art Gallery. Take a step back in time with a tram around the city or punt along the Avon River. If tasting your way around the city is your means of travel, try out a cultural eating tour. A short drive from the CBD will lead you to the outskirts of the Banks Peninsula beachside suburb of Sumner or through the tunnel to Lyttleton Harbour which hosts fantastic markets on Saturday mornings.

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: Sudima Christchurch City

Sudima Christchurch City is a brand new 5-star boutique hotel, ideally located on Victoria Street. Amidst an array of cafes, restaurants and bars, stay only a martini olive pips' throw from beautiful Hagley Park and Christchurch's CBD. Experience the garden city in comfort and style.



Day 2



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.

Coastal Pacific Train: Christchurch to Kaikoura

The Coastal Pacific train journey travels between Christchurch, the South Island's largest city and the delightful port of Picton. This journey is a scenic feast of New Zealand, with the Kaikoura mountain ranges on one side of your train and the rugged Pacific Ocean coastline on the other. The Coastal Pacific travels through 22 tunnels and crosses 175 bridges - one of them being New Zealand's only road-rail bridge. The Coastal Pacific includes an open-air viewing carriage where all your senses are awakened with the clean and fresh sea air. This leg of the journey crosses the wonderful North Canterbury countryside to the township of Kaikoura. Kaikoura offers dramatic landscape scenes of mountains meeting the sea. Kaikoura is world famous for its resident whale population and whale-watching tours. The more adventurous traveller might wish to get closer to marine life and swim with the dolphins.

Kaikōura

Kaikōura is a stunning coastal town known for its rich marine life and dramatic scenery. Visit the fur seal colony, take a whale-watching cruise, or swim with playful dusky dolphins. The town is rich with attractions, walking tracks, and activities for every visitor. A walk around the Kaikōura Peninsula is a must, where you can explore tide pools teeming with marine life, observe sea creatures basking on the rocks, and, for bird lovers, spot the impressive native albatross. Just be sure to keep a respectful distance from any sea lions you meet. Highlights like Ohau Point and historic Fyffe House offer insight into the region's wildlife and whaling past. Finish your visit by sampling the fresh local seafood, renowned for having some of the best fish and chips in the country, or by taking a relaxing wander through the tranquil Lavendyl Lavender Farm.

Swimming with the Dolphins with Encounter Kaikoura

Experience a magical swimming encounter with dusky dolphins off the coast of Kaikoura. You'll be taken out in the catamaran and have the chance to swim in the water with these wild mammals in a completely natural environment. The dusky dolphin inhabits the waters around Kaikoura for most of the year - making it one of the only places in the world where dolphins can be encountered every day. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see [here](#).

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 30 Minute Whale Watch Explorer with Wings over Whales Kaikoura

In a typical 30 minute flight you will see the majestic Sperm Whale preparing for his next dive and up to 500 Dusky Dolphins cavorting with each other. On occasion, sightings include Southern Right, Humpback, Fin, Sei, Brydes, Pilot, Southern Bottlenose and the mighty Blue Whales. You may also spot Hectors, Risso's, Southern Right Whale Dolphins, and Orca, although these are all less frequent visitors to the area. Gain an aerial perspective of this fantastic marine environment in a high-winged aircraft with optimal, unobstructed viewing.

Your accommodation: Sudima Hotel Kaikōura

This state-of-the-art waterfront hotel in Kaikōura has a 4.5 star rating with an outstanding in-house restaurant, a bar and conference facilities.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Coastal Pacific Train: Kaikoura to Picton

The Coastal Pacific train journey travels between the delightful port of Picton and Christchurch, the South Island's largest city. This journey is a scenic feast of New Zealand, with the Kaikoura mountain ranges on one side of your train and the rugged Pacific Ocean coastline on the other. One of the world's most scenic train journeys, the Coastal Pacific travels through 22 tunnels and crosses 175 bridges, one of them being New Zealand's only road-rail bridge. As on The TranzAlpine, The Coastal Pacific includes an open air viewing carriage where all your senses are awakened with the clean, fresh, sea air.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Motuara Island & Dolphin Cruise Marlborough Sounds with E-Ko Tours

Embark on a fully guided wildlife and dolphin cruise like no other. Travel from Picton through the Marlborough Sounds on a scenic journey to Motuara Island Bird Sanctuary. The comfortable vessels and expert team take you on a conservation-focused, wildlife adventure for your soul. Expert commentary and fantastic viewing areas allow you to enjoy playful Hector's, Common, Bottlenose, or Dusky Dolphins (90% encounter rate!). You will also see NZ fur seals and numerous seabirds before landing on Motuara Island for a 1-hour nature lover's walk to remember – great for adults and kids alike.

Your accommodation: Edit Picton

Located in the heart of Picton, only a short walk to the marina, shopping & dining precinct and the ferry terminal. Being in the Marlborough region, it is the gateway to the top of the picturesque South Island and Queen Charlotte Sound.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Full Day Guided Walk in Queen Charlotte Sound with Wilderness Guides - Lunch Included

If you are passing through Picton or Marlborough, this one day guided walk is an excellent outing into the Marlborough Sounds. For those that want the added value of having everything provided as well as the chance to learn about the history and wildlife of the Marlborough Sounds with one of the passionate and knowledgeable local guides, this is the perfect one day experience of the Queen Charlotte Track. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see [here](#).

Your accommodation: Edit Picton

Located in the heart of Picton, only a short walk to the marina, shopping & dining precinct and the ferry terminal. Being in the Marlborough region, it is the gateway to the top of the picturesque South Island and Queen Charlotte Sound.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 5



Picton to Nelson by Intercity Coach

Board your coach in Picton and first travel south to Blenheim, the centre of the Marlborough wine region. From Blenheim you'll pass the vast grape growing areas as you head west towards Renwick, then through the fertile valleys and onto the picturesque port town of Havelock. Continue through the Rai Valley and over the ranges before dropping to the coast and Tasman Bay. Follow the shore into the city of Nelson.

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 Hoglund Glassworks.

Private Transfer

Your accommodation: Rutherford Hotel Nelson

The Rutherford Hotel Nelson offers luxurious accommodation with a full complement of features designed to help you achieve the most from your stay. Situated at the doorstep of three national parks and an unmatched range of sandy beaches, blue seas and mountain wilderness.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Abel Tasman Water and Walk Tour with Wine, Art & Wilderness - Lunch Included

During this tour you will be strolling golden sand beaches, walking and exploring natural wonderland of Abel Tasman National Park. You will enjoy stunning views and experience unique interpretation of this National Park. Access is by water taxi to Medlands Beach and walking through an ever changing forest of silver fern, beech trees and Manuka & kanuka. This fully guided journey interprets the less obvious features as well as Maori history and the rich variety of vegetation, birds and aquatic life.

Your accommodation: Rutherford Hotel Nelson

The Rutherford Hotel Nelson offers luxurious accommodation with a full complement of features designed to help you achieve the most from your stay. Situated at the doorstep of three national parks and an unmatched range of sandy beaches, blue seas and mountain wilderness.

Meals included: Lunch



Day 7



Nelson to Christchurch with Intercity via Blenheim

Board your coach in Nelson and cross the hills to the harbour town of Havelock. Continue through the Rai Valley and onto Renwick and the heart of the Marlborough wine region, Blenheim. From Blenheim you cross the 'dry hills' of the Marlborough ranges and head towards one of the most spectacular coastlines of the South Island, the Kaikoura Coast. The road hugs the shore for around 50 kilometres and offers many chances to view the native wildlife such as seabirds and New Zealand fur seals. To the east is the turquoise waters of the South Pacific Ocean and to the west the towering Kaikoura Ranges. Kaikoura Township is a bustling little place with many cafes, restaurants and shops but the main reason for visiting here is the wildlife. Arriving into Christchurch City puts you right in the heart of the regenerating city.

Private transfer Lichfield Street Bus Station to your accommodation with Christchurch Touring

A private transfer will collect you from the coach stop and transfer you to your accommodation.

Christchurch Botanic Gardens tour

Established in 1863, Christchurch's 75-acre Botanic Gardens host the finest collection of exotic and indigenous plants to be found anywhere in New Zealand. Operating a continuous daily service, the Botanic Gardens Tour allows you to discover the natural beauty, history, and culture of this central city oasis while at the same time being taken around the gardens in all weather, comfort, and style. The professionally-guided tours allow you the flexibility of staying on the shuttles for the full circuit or alternatively, you can choose to "hop on or hop off" at any of the clearly-identified stops around the Gardens.

Your accommodation: Sudima Christchurch City

Sudima Christchurch City is a brand new 5-star boutique hotel, ideally located on Victoria Street. Amidst an array of cafes, restaurants and bars, stay only a martini olive pips' throw from beautiful Hagley Park and Christchurch's CBD. Experience the garden city in comfort and style.



Day 8



Private Transfer from Christchurch Accommodation to Christchurch International Airport with Christchurch Touring Company

A private transfer will collect you from your accommodation and transfer you to Christchurch International Airport in time for your departing flight.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Independant Bus & Coach
Starts: Christchurch
Finishes: Christchurch
Tour length: 8
Accomodation: Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Sudima Christchurch City
Day 2	Sudima Hotel Kaikōura
Day 3	Edit Picton
Day 4	Edit Picton
Day 5	Rutherford Hotel Nelson
Day 6	Rutherford Hotel Nelson
Day 7	Sudima Christchurch City