

Auckland to Christchurch Must Do Tour



Embark on the spectacular self-drive adventure showcasing the best of both New Zealand islands. Starting in the north in Auckland and concluding in Christchurch, you'll experience glaciers, fiords, geothermal wonders, Hobbiton, and stunning beaches! Over two weeks, immerse yourself in the beauty and culture of New Zealand with a variety of fantastic activities. Contact us to customize your holiday and make it an unforgettable experience!



Starts in: Auckland
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 15days / 14nights
 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: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: Unlimited kms

Includes: GPS navigation

Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees

Includes: Additional drivers

Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)

Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

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

Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to Auckland accommodation with Tourcorp



Included activity: Auckland Sky Tower Admission

Included activity: Gondola Ride with Skyline Queenstown

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

Included activity: Milford Sound Coach, Cruise and Scenic Flight

Included activity: Franz Josef Nature Tour with Glacier Valley Eco Tours

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch Scenic Plus with Great Journeys NZ



Included activity: Shared Transfer from the Railway Station to a City Hotel with Christchurch Touring Company

Included activity: All Blacks Experience

Included activity: Wētā Workshop Unleashed

Included activity: Hobbiton Movie Set Tour

Included activity: Te Ra Daytime Experience at Te Puia

Included activity: Interislander Ferry Wellington to Picton

Included activity: International Antarctic Centre

: 1 special dinner

Day 1



Auckland City

As New Zealand's largest city, Auckland offers an abundance of activities and hidden gems suited for everyone. Keep the kids entertained at the lively Kiwi playground of Rainbows End or dive into the fascinating marine world at Kelly Tarlton's aquarium. For a serene escape, venture to the award-winning wineries scattered across Waiheke Island; simply hop on a ferry and enjoy a leisurely day in the coastal breeze. Immerse yourself in nature's beauty at the expansive Auckland Botanic Gardens, sprawled across 156 acres of lush land and native forest on Hil Road. Pack a picnic, soak up the sunshine, and delight in the melodious birdsong during a peaceful lunch. As evening falls, explore the vibrant Auckland night markets, offering an array of local produce, delectable treats, and artisanal creations at various locations throughout the week. Experience the great outdoors by visiting iconic landmarks such as One Tree Hill or the renowned ex-volcano, Mt Eden. Alternatively, hop on a quick ferry from the CBD to Devonport and discover this charming seaside suburb. Shopaholics will be delighted to explore Auckland's main shopping district, Newmarket, boasting an array of local boutiques and luxury labels nestled within the Newmarket Westfield Mall. Indulge in a unique shopping experience along Ponsonby Road, featuring New Zealand designers, quaint boutiques, and exceptional dining options. Explore the eclectic mix of bars, thrift shops, and culinary delights along Karangahape Road, affectionately known as "K Road" by locals. Once Auckland's red-light district in the 1960s, it's now recognized as the world's 6th coolest street. Auckland's diverse cultural landscape has inspired an array of tantalizing cuisines and dining experiences scattered across the city. From Chinese-inspired delicacies at The Nightcar to European-style cuisine at Gilt Brasserie, there's something to satisfy every palate. For a culinary adventure, head to Commercial Bay Harbour Eats, offering a rich tapestry of cuisines from beloved local vendors. Complete your evening with a visit to the bustling Long Room bar, a favorite haunt among Ponsonby residents. Immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere and savor the diverse array of beverages on offer.

Private Transfer Auckland Airport to Auckland Accommodation

You will be met at the Auckland airport by the driver and transferred to your Auckland accommodation.

Auckland Sky Tower Admission

Standing at 328 metres (just over 1000 feet) - the Sky Tower is the tallest man-made structure in New Zealand and offers panoramic views of the Auckland landscape. Travel in the glass-fronted lift to one of three spectacular viewing platforms, or for a little more excitement do a SkyWalk - an outside loop around the pergola 192 metres (just over 600 feet) above ground. If you're really bold, Take the quick way down and SkyJump off the tower - a controlled free fall to the base.

Inside, the Sky Lounge offers coffee and light meals while the iconic Orbit Restaurant is Auckland's only 360 degree revolving dining experience.

Your accommodation: Auckland City Hotel

The Auckland City Hotel is a peaceful sanctuary ideally located in the heart of Auckland's entertainment and business district. It is situated five-minute walk from the Sky Tower, Aotea Square, and the centre of town, Queen Street.



Day 2



Explore Auckland

There is so much to do in and around New Zealand's largest city. Getting around the city is quite easy and a great way to see the main sights is to take the hop on hop off Explorer Bus. Our suggestions include: sailing the Hauraki Gulf on board an Americas Cup yacht; see the underwater world at Kelly Tarlton's Aquarium; dine at one of the many restaurants at the Viaduct Basin and Wynyard Quarter; ferry to Devonport or Rangitoto Island for spectacular views of the city or enjoy the varied shopping on High Street or Ponsonby Road.

All Blacks Experience

See what it takes to make, shape and be an All Black. Experience first-hand the excitement and emotion of game day. Discover the stories behind some of world rugby's most famous players, moments and matches.

This guided experience introduces you to the game of rugby before being lead through state-of-the-art displays combining sound, images, interactive technology and hands-on activities. Discover New Zealand's deep passion for our national sport, experience the full force of the All Blacks haka, tackle interactive zones where you can try out your kicking, catching, line-out and accuracy skills against legendary All Blacks.

Wētā Workshop Unleashed

Explore worlds of horror, sci-fi and fantasy in the making. An exciting, realistic, and authentic experience, with three fully developed and original film concepts: A nail-biting horror Fauna, a fantasy epic Age of the Ever-Clan, and the mind-bending sci-fi Origins.

A 90-minute guided experience through fully themed environments, including immersive horror, fantasy, and sci-fi story worlds. Be immersed by a specially-created unique sweeping cinematic soundtrack, animatronic creatures, physical and digital interactives, hyper-realistic sculpted giants and characters, a horror house experience, and much more.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Walking tracks in and around Auckland City - Suggested Activity

Auckland city is surrounded by a number of regional parks and natural areas that are easily explored on foot. Information on the many walking tracks within the regional parks can be found on the Auckland Regional Council website. Two of the more popular walking destinations are the Waitakere Ranges and Rangitoto Island. The Waitakere Ranges Visitor Centre (Arataki Visitor Centre) is located a short 30 minute drive from Auckland CBD and is the best place to start your exploration of this large tract of native forest. Here you'll also find information on the many native birds you will see and hear. To reach Rangitoto Island you catch a ferry from the Auckland Ferry Terminal and information on the walks on the island can be found on the Department of Conservation website. A brief description of the more popular Auckland walks is outlined below. Rangitoto Island Summit Track Time: 1 hr one way from Rangitoto Wharf The shortest and most popular route to the summit begins at Rangitoto Wharf and climbs through lava fields and forest to the peak at 259 metres above sea level. The summit gives panoramic views of Auckland and the Hauraki Gulf. At the summit another track circles the rim of the crater. Arataki Nature Trail Distance 1.6km A beautiful introduction to the flora and fauna of the Waitakere Ranges and a great addition to any visit to the Arataki Visitor Centre. The track is really a network of three gravelled loop walks. The Identification Loop is short and level, while the upper and lower loops contain graded descents and ascents. Making your way to the kauri knoll at the end of the lower track is recommended as a great example of remnant Kauri forest. Muriwai Takapu Refuge Walk Distance 0.8km, Time 45 minutes From the carpark at Maukatia/Maori Bay, the Takapu Refuge walk skirts around headland then descends to the end of Muriwai Beach Access Road. Two short branch tracks lead to lookouts over the gannet colony. Auckland City Walk Distance 1.5km; Time 1 hour This walk is a favourite for Auckland families. It provides a good introduction to the area and is one of the most beautiful walking loops in the Waitakere Ranges. Marvel at the huge kauri, one with a girth of 6.5m, and the large totara which were once used to make magnificent waka (canoes). A short side track leads up to Cascade Falls, set amongst towering rocky bluffs. Information signs along the way explain interesting features of this forest.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Explore Auckland's Gardens - Suggested Activity

Perched on the edge of a large natural harbour, New Zealand's 'City of Sails' offers the best of both worlds. Sandy beaches, native bush and lush rainforests give way to a vibrant urban culture, humming with life. Pack a picnic lunch and start your day with a visit to the Auckland Botanical Gardens. With more than 10,000 plants from around the world, it covers 64 hectares including 10 hectares of rainforest. Widely recognised for its outstanding collections and South Pacific Flavour, this garden encompasses; perennials, rose, native plants, an orchard, salvias, spring blossoms, a rock garden and Podocarps. Take a break to eat among the flowers and marvel at the lush serenity of this inner-city paradise Head back to central Auckland and take the scenic route round the viaduct. Choose to visit the Parnell rose gardens, or grab a coffee and visit the Wintergardens in the Auckland Domain. Walk (if you're that way inclined) to the top of Auckland's highest volcano, Mt Eden, and take in soaring views of the gulf. Lose yourself in one of the 800 regional national parks on offer or grab a book and relax on a deserted beach. To end your day, catch a cab to Ponsonby Road and sample some upmarket culinary delights.

Your accommodation: Auckland City Hotel

The Auckland City Hotel is a peaceful sanctuary ideally located in the heart of Auckland's entertainment and business district. It is situated five-minute walk from the Sky Tower, Aotea Square, and the centre of town, Queen Street.



Day 3



Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Auckland to Matamata and Hobbiton

Head southbound on State Highway one through the lush farmland and dairy pastures of the Waikato region. The Bombay Hills mark the outer boundary of the greater Auckland area and its here you turn inland towards Matamata. This is the real Middle Earth, and you'll see many locations used in the filming of The Lord of The Rings and The Hobbit, as well as visiting the actual set of Hobbiton.

Hobbiton Movie Set tour from Shires Rest

Become immersed in the The Lord of the Rings and Hobbit films when you visit the actual Hobbiton movie set. Located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region, your tour will begin with a drive through a picturesque sheep farm. You'll then be taken through Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree while your guide shares behind-the-scenes tales and insight into the making of the films. Spend time wandering through Bagshot Row before being led inside a Hobbit Hole to view the detailed interiors, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Matamata to Rotorua

Just south of Matamata is the township of Tirau, home to the largest tin sheep and sheepdog, but it also offers a surprising number of bric a brac, art, craft and antique stores if you feel like browsing.

Arriving into the City of Rotorua the regions geothermal activity becomes evident as you see steam rising from the roadside and surrounding hills.

Considered the cultural centre for the Maori people, Rotorua is the ideal place to gain an insight into the history and culture. Dominating the display is the devastating volcanic eruption of Mt. Tarawera in 1886 but also of great interest is the Maori battalion display which portrays stories of this once feared military unit.

Nearby Ohinemutu Village is the original site of the first Maori settlers in the area and despite its now modern surroundings and buildings you can still gain a sense of what the original village was like. The magnificent meeting house and historic carvings along with the unique 'Tudor-style' St Faiths Church feature in many visitors photo albums.

One of the most popular introductions to the Maori Culture is through an evening at Mitai Maori Village where you can enjoy performances and demonstrations followed by a traditionally cooked hangi meal.

Of course Rotorua is also a great place to enjoy many other activities including, fishing, 4WD trips, relaxing spa treatments, mountain biking, walking and hiking plus helicopter and float plane trips.

Rotorua

Discover the geothermal, adventure, and cultural wonderland of Rotorua, a city perched atop one of the world's most active volcanoes. As you explore, you may see steam rising from cracks in the road, bubbling and hissing water in pools along the lake's edge, and, of course, the unmistakable smell of sulfur. Rotorua is rich in Māori culture and history, with many Māori inhabitants having recognised the great potential of the volcanic land. Your stay in Rotorua will be filled with activities. For an outdoor adventure, head to The Redwoods and experience the rainforest treetops from high up. If you're lucky, you might spot some of New Zealand's native birds, such as the Piwakawaka (Fantail) and the Tui. Alternatively, enjoy the Lake Tikitapu Blue Lake Walk or explore Kuirau Park, where you'll find bubbling mud pools and steaming lakes. Don't miss the private thermal reserves such as Whakarewarewa and Wai-O-Tapu, where you can walk among bubbling mud pools, spouting geysers, and sulfur ponds. Just a few minutes from the town center, Mt. Ngongotaha, and the Skyline Gondola and Luge offer breathtaking views of the lake, while the Agrodome Center promises adventure and adrenaline. Here, you can ride the Zorb, speed up to 100kph on a jet boat, simulate skydiving, or take the plunge on a giant swing. Rotorua's rich Māori culture is a must-see. Take a magical tour around Te Puia, or stroll along the lake edge to reach one of the country's oldest Māori villages at Ohinemutu. When hunger strikes, visit Eat Street in Rotorua CBD, a vibrant street lined with delicious eateries and restaurants to satisfy any craving. No visit to Rotorua would be complete without experiencing Rotorua's original tourist attraction - a relaxing spa treatment. Whether you are seeking adventure, culture, or relaxation, Rotorua offers an unforgettable experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Te Pō - Indigenous Evening Experience

Indulge in Te Puia's world-famous hāngī buffet dinner, served in the inviting atmosphere of Pātaka Kai Restaurant, Bar & Café. The menu, crafted with the freshest ingredients, offers a delightful array of traditional Māori cuisine. This banquet combines contemporary cuisine with a traditional hangi (earth-cooked oven meal). The evening's cultural performance will take place in an exquisitely carved meeting house, Te Aronui a Rua. Here, you'll experience a rich showcase of Māori traditions, beginning with a pōhiri (traditional welcome), followed by the melodious harmonies of waiata (song), the powerful rhythms of mōteatea (traditional chant), the graceful artistry of poi, and the intense energy of the haka. As the night draws to a close, savor hot chocolate heated in geothermal water and steamed pudding while basking in the enchanting ambiance of the geyser terrace. Bathed in colored light and surrounded by the mystical steam rising from the earth, this unforgettable evening at Te Puia is a feast for the senses and a celebration of Māori culture.

Your accommodation: Sudima Lake Rotorua

Sudima Hotel Lake Rotorua boasts a location that is second-to-none, right on the shores of beautiful Lake Rotorua. Adjacent to the world-famous Polynesian Spa complex and just a short stroll to all the attractions in Rotorua.



Day 4



Te Puia: Te Rā Daytime Experience

Te Puia welcomes you to explore the magic hidden within Te Whakarewarewa Thermal Valley. Become face-to-face with the majestic Pōhutu Geyser, the largest naturally active geyser in the Southern Hemisphere. Feel the thrill as it erupts, sending plumes of steam into the sky. Then, step into the Kiwi Conservation Centre, for a close-up encounter with this rare native species, a symbol of our nation's unique wildlife. Part of your ticket is donated to support the conservation of the Kiwi in this sanctuary. As you continue through the Te Puia Valley, look upon the dynamic landscape of bubbling mud pools, and steaming vents and feel the power that the land holds. Throughout this, everywhere you look you will see beautifully crafted Māori-made artwork and sculptures, each piece a story carved in wood and stone, adding a layer of cultural depth to the natural beauty. Step into the New Zealand Māori-made artwork and sculptures, each piece a story carved in wood and stone, adding a layer of cultural depth to the natural beauty. The guides are direct descendants of the original tour guides, and you can feel their excitement to show their culture and land.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Original Ziplining Experience with Rotorua Canopy Tours

Embark on a three hour adventure through native New Zealand forest. Journey through the beautiful forest canopy via an incredible network of trails, tree platforms, Ziplines and swing bridges. See breathtaking views of the woodland valleys and hills as you fly through tight openings in the trees. In between the thrill of the ziplines and suspended tree bridges, your guides will share their passion and knowledge for the forest and the conservation challenges to preserve it. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see [here](#).

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland

Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland is a spectacular showcase of New Zealand's most colourful and unique geothermal elements sculpted by thousands of years of volcanic activity. You are introduced to a uniquely different natural landscape – the key to what you see lies below the surface – one of the most extensive geothermal systems in New Zealand, extending over 18-sq. km. Enjoy viewing unique volcanic features as you walk at your own pace along well-defined tracks. Relax in the first-class Visitor Centre, home to the Gift Shop and Café facilities. Visit the Mud Pool, the largest in New Zealand, it was originally the site of a large mud volcano which was destroyed through erosion in the 1920s. See the history and beauty of the Lady Knox Geyser at 10:15 am every day. Lady Knox Geyser provides a unique opportunity to see an eruption to heights of 10 to 20 metres.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Whakarewarewa Maori Cultural Experience & Show

Join a tour through a real Living Maori Village, take a walk through the magnificent geothermal fields and watch a cultural performance. Experience how Maori have traditionally used the natural geothermal energy in daily activities, from cooking in the bubbling waters and steam, to heating their homes and bathing in the therapeutic and refreshing waters. This package is entertaining and informative with a focus on giving everyone an understanding of the Maori history, culture and the and how the villagers live in the challenging Whakarewarewa Geothermal field and the significance of protecting it for future generations.

Your accommodation: Sudima Lake Rotorua

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Day 5



Rotorua to Wellington

The drive from Rotorua to Wellington takes you via the township of Taupo home to New Zealand's largest lake. Following the lakeshore South you'll pass Turangi and then ascend the central plateau onto the high country Rangipo Desert. Skirting the edge of Tongariro National Park, you'll reach the military town of Waiouru before descending through rich farmland and the rural towns of Taihape And Mangaweka. Follow the coast through Paraparaumu, Paekakariki and Plimmerton to arrive at your destination, Wellington.

Wellington City

Wellington home to New Zealand's centre of government has a largely cosmopolitan feel. Often referred to as 'mini Melbourne', this (self-described) windy city is a melting pot of art, culture, food, and fashion. Quirky laneway bars, underground art shows, and hipster eateries make up its inner-city vibe, while a host of sandy beaches outside the urban bustle bring a cheerful holiday feel.

Head to Te Papa Museum for a history lesson and a ticket to one of its many international exhibitions or jump aboard the Wellington Cable Car at Lambton Quay - the only running funicular railway in the country. For those with an eye for boutique, fashion wander through Cuba St to sample some of the city's best vintage stores. Break for coffee at a hipster cafe and be sure to snap a pic outside the 'Beehive', New Zealand's parliamentary debate chamber.

Go behind the scenes at Weta Workshop Experience, the Oscar Award Winning design studio behind Lord Of The Rings, The Hobbit, and Avatar. If you're a foodie at heart, a two-hour round trip to Martinborough is a must-do. Take your time as you wind through spectacular wine country, and be sure to stop in at Martinborough Wines or Ata Rangi Martinborough. For an educational day out, learn about New Zealand's native species at Zealandia, the world's first fully-fenced eco-sanctuary and home to over 40 types of endangered and native birds.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - National Kiwi Hatchery Tour

The National Kiwi Hatchery Tour is a special opportunity to gain insight into and view this highly regarded conservation centre. Developed with the visitor experience in mind, the hatchery boasts special viewing opportunities and is hosted by kiwi expert guides who ensure guests leave fully informed and all questions answered. Learn all about New Zealand's intriguing national icon and the efforts of the kiwi husbandry team, see and discover what it takes to hatch and rare chicks, and if you're lucky see baby chicks in person!

Your accommodation: CityLife Wellington

City Life Wellington is a suite style hotel with every amenity required for a comfortable stay, as well as being in a superb location to explore the compact city centre. Situated on Lambton Quay, you'll find the best shopping, tourist attractions and cultural landmarks all within easy walking distance.



Day 6



Return vehicle to Wellington Ferry Terminal

Drop your vehicle at the Wellington Ferry Terminal rental car depot today before continuing your onward journey.

Interislander Ferry Wellington to Picton

The 92 km journey between Wellington and Picton takes around 3 hours and has been described as 'one of the most beautiful ferry rides in the world'. Leaving Wellington Harbour you pass many interesting points such as Pencarrow Head on top of which is New Zealand's oldest lighthouse (1859). Red Rocks is home to a seal colony and Oterangi Bay is the site which recorded the country's highest ever wind speed of 268 kph (167 mph).

From the Cook Strait spectacular views of the Kaikoura Ranges on the South Island can be enjoyed and dolphins and many sea birds are often seen. Around one hour of the cruise takes you through the Marlborough Sounds and this region of bush covered mountains, small islands, crystal clear waters and secluded bays offer remarkable photographic opportunities. The final leg of your cruise travels through Queen Charlotte Sound before coming to an end in the picturesque town of Picton.

Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Picton to Kaikoura

From Picton head south on State Highway One towards Blenheim, and the wine producing region of Marlborough. Ideally located to enjoy an afternoon sampling the local produce, stop for a guided wine tour with Full Day Marlborough Wine Tour.

Crossing the dry hills of the Marlborough ranges you 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 Pacific Ocean and to the west you'll follow alongside the Kaikoura Ranges before arriving into the bustling Kaikoura Township.

Your accommodation: Bella Vista Kaikoura

Bella Vista Kaikoura is located within walking distance to Kaikoura Whale Watch and just 5 minutes from the bustling town centre. Well equipped units offer every convenience you will need for your stay.



Day 7



Kaikoura to Christchurch

Today you travel down the coast before heading inland through the North Canterbury wine region - the Waipara Valley. As you drive through this area you'll be greeted by one of New Zealand's most notorious animals, the sheep. If you've time on your hands we recommend taking a detour to Hanmer Springs for relaxing dip in its thermal pools. Arriving into Christchurch you'll see a new and improved city, steadily rising from the ruins of the 2011 earthquake.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Ocean's Cabin with Whale Watch Kaikoura

Experience New Zealand's only marine based whale watching company. Whale Watch Kaikoura offer a once-in-a-lifetime, up close encounter with the giant Sperm Whale. You are also likely to encounter New Zealand fur seals, dusky dolphins and albatross. Depending on the season you may also see pilot, blue and southern right whales as well as migrating humpbacks. Often orcas can be spotted here and the world's smallest dolphin, the Hector's, occasionally make an appearance.

Cruise in style on modern catamarans, specifically designed for whale watching, featuring large passenger cabins and outside viewing decks. Passenger numbers for each tour are kept below the vessel carrying capacity to ensure your tour experience remains a personal one.

Christchurch

The largest metro area in the South Island, Christchurch is referred to as New Zealand's Garden City. Home to one of the biggest public parks in the country, Christchurch is also known as the gateway to the South Island. Boasting a plethora of activities both inside and outside the town centre, there is something here to suit every visitor.

One such attraction is the International Antarctic Centre, located at the International Airport. From here the bases in Antarctica are replenished and there are unique displays of what life is like in this chilly environment - including native little blue penguins.

You could also wish to visit Quake City for insight into the devastating Christchurch earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, then take in the sights on a city tour. Drive an hour in any direction to ski, mountain bike, wine taste, whale-watch, bungee jump or play golf. Explore the French settlement of Akaroa, tucked inside Banks Peninsula. An eclectic mix of British and French architecture, this seaside town has a whimsical charm and is the perfect place to escape.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Art in Christchurch

Christchurch is a city that's alive with everything art, from exhibitions and galleries, to street art all around the city. Take some time while you're here to explore what's on offer, starting with the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū. This has something for everyone, where the art on display ranges from old masters to modern art. They also run regular events including talks, museum tours and film evenings. Make sure you also visit The Arts Centre Te Matatiki Toi Ora, which is a hub for arts, culture, education, creativity and entrepreneurship in Christchurch. This collection of heritage buildings are home to museums, as well as boutique art galleries, eateries, retailers and offices. Away from the more conventional galleries and exhibitions, there is all the street art to be seen around the city. With a vibrant and growing arts scene, Christchurch has earned a strong reputation as the home of street art. Exploration of the inner city reveals colourful artworks from a range of inspiring artists. Be sure to keep an eye out for the ever-evolving murals in the city too! Notable street art to check out includes the Riverside Mural, Rauora Park and it's Spray Cans, and the urban aesthetics of the YMCA building.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Christchurch Botanic Gardens

Located just 15 minutes from the city centre, Christchurch's 75 acre Botanic Gardens host the finest collection of exotic and indigenous plants to be found anywhere in New Zealand. The impressive collection of plants provide a tranquil oasis, from the spring drifts of daffodils, spectacular summer roses and herbaceous border, stunning autumn leaf display and cosy conservatories to warm up in over winter, there's something to delight in every season. The New Zealand Garden also offers an accessible glimpse into the country's unique wilderness to lose yourself in throughout the year.

International Antarctic Centre General Admission

The International Antarctic Centre aims to recreate the atmosphere and environment of Antarctica, providing visitors with an interactive, fun and educational experience. Feel the full Four Seasons of Antarctica, where you'll experience a custom-built snow and ice experience, then warm up in the Scott Base interior exhibit, a replica Antarctic field camp or other informative displays in the gallery. You'll also learn about life in modern day Antarctica, view real little blue penguins and experience a thrilling ride in a Hagglund all terrain vehicle.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Cotswold

The Scenic Hotel Cotswold is just a few minutes walk to boutique shopping at Merivale and Hagley Park. The distinctive architecture of the Scenic Hotel Cotswold reflects Christchurch's image as the most English of cities outside of England.



Day 8



Christchurch to Aoraki Mt Cook National Park

Today you'll 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 lakeside town of 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 Mt Cook Village. Please note: There are no food shops at Mt Cook, and dinner options are limited to one restaurant. If you wish to self-cater, you must stock up before arriving in Mt Cook, or make dinner reservations in advance.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Big Sky Stargazing

Mt Cook is far from the city lights and therefore has some of the darkest skies in New Zealand, perfect for viewing the night sky! Their fully trained guides are delighted to show you the beautiful southern night sky using the naked eye, state of the art astronomy telescopes and binoculars at the outdoor viewing platform. If the weather is not favourable then there will be an indoor alternative featuring New Zealand's first full dome digital Planetarium, a high-definition video images on a suspended 9m wide x 4.5m high full dome. Unleash your imagination as you discover the night sky including the Southern Cross, seasonal ecliptic objects, planets, star clusters, moons, distant galaxies and even our very own galaxy, the spectacular Milky Way!

Walking tracks in and around Aoraki / Mt. Cook National Park

There are many short scenic walks beginning in and around the Mt Cook Village, suitable for all ages and abilities. Located within the Mount Cook Village is the Department of Conservation information centre, where updates on the track conditions and suitability is available as well as information on the history of the area and its wildlife.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Alpine Explorer Heli Flight and Snow Landing with The Helicopter Line

Experience this magnificent alpine environment with a 35 minute flight over the Ben Ohau Mountains. Fly close to the steep ridges and rise over a mountain pass which reveals superb views out to Aoraki/Mount Cook and its surrounding peaks. Prepare yourself for an amazing alpine landing where you will be able to step out of the helicopter and play in the snow. Should weather not be suitable to take this flight you are able to transfer your booking onto a similar tour on any of the Helicopter Line's operations in Queenstown or Mt Cook.

Your accommodation: Mt Cook Motel

Mt Cook Motel is located in the centre of Mt. Cook village. The self-contained units are spacious and all are surrounded by alpine mountain views.



Day 9



SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Glacier Explorers Mt. Cook

Experience 500 year old icebergs up-close on the 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.

Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Queenstown

Leaving the alpine region of Aoraki Mt Cook, you'll travel through the lakeside town of Twizel, then a little further to Omarama the gliding capital of New Zealand. Continue on over the Lindis Pass, one of New Zealand's highest roads with a summit of 971 metres. Arrive in the quaint village of Tarras, then continue on a short way to the historic Bendigo Reserve, one of Otago's original gold mining settlements.

Follow the road to Cromwell, and keep going through the sheer cliffs of the Kawarau Gorge towards Gibbston, one of New Zealand's premier wine growing regions. See the historic Kawarau Bridge where you can bungy jump or relax and watch others take the plunge. Approaching Queenstown, the Remarkables mountain range comes into view as you arrive into the adventure capital of New Zealand.

Queenstown

Known as the adventure capital of the world, Queenstown is home to many adrenaline-inducing activities. Nestled on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, this alpine town is surrounded by towering mountains. Each of the seasons has its own special vibe, and most adrenaline-filled activities can be accessed year-round. Queenstown is home to jet boating, bungy jumping, rafting, skydiving, paragliding, and even indoor thrills. If you want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon Swing, or Zip line the Gondola. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand's crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. If you're looking for a slightly slower pace, there are plenty of recreational activities, including hiking and biking trails to explore, guided tours, boat cruises, scenic flights, or spa and wellness options to help you get away. Head to the lakefront, eat at one of the al fresco eateries, and soak up the local vibes; catch a ride on the iconic 100-year-old steamship the TSS Earnslaw; or take the Skyline Gondola and enjoy bird's-eye views of the Remarkables mountain ranges and Lake Wakatipu. Pack a picnic and go for a hike, only 20 minutes from Central Queenstown, Coronet Peak opens for summer sightseeing. You can ride the Peak Gondola to the top for panoramic views and hike the trails, or go for a bike ride on many excellent biking trails. In winter, Queenstown becomes a world-class winter resort, with four ski areas and a range of activities, bars, restaurants, and ways to relax and unwind. A must-visit spot in Queenstown, Fergburger is famous for its mouthwatering gourmet burgers. Expect long queues, but the wait is definitely worth it for their delicious and generously sized burgers. Located on the waterfront, Botswana Butchery offers a sophisticated dining experience with a focus on premium meats and seafood. Enjoy stunning views of Lake Wakatipu while indulging in their expertly crafted dishes. If you're looking for something quick and tasty, stop by Fergbaker, an extension of Fergburger. Indulge in their delectable selection of pies, pastries, and sweet treats, perfect for a snack on the go. Mrs Ferg Gelateria is a great spot to sample some delicious homemade gelato.

Your accommodation: Heartland Hotel Queenstown

The Heartland Hotel Queenstown is the ideal place to stay if you want to be close to all the action of Queenstown's main centre, yet be elevated enough to take advantage of the spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu to the mountains.



Day 10



Explore Queenstown

Well-known as New Zealand's 'adventure capital', Queenstown is home to a range of adventures, from the world's first and most famous bungy jumps to jet boat thrills, white-water rafting, and skydiving. However, Queenstown offers far more than a fast-paced, action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of beautiful 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. Take a stroll through the beautiful lakefront parks and gardens, browse through market stalls on weekends, dine in wonderful al-fresco restaurants, or ride on the 100-year-old historic Steamship - TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station. Take the Queenstown Gondola up to Bob's Peak and soak up the panoramic views of the magnificent lake and mountain ranges. And after all of that, if you do want the adrenaline rush, Queenstown is known for taking your pick from the Shotover Jet, Canyon Swing, Zipline, Luge, or Heli-ski.

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.

TSS Earnslaw cruise to Walter Peak including gourmet BBQ dinner and a farm tour

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 ambience 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, New Zealand cheeses, tea and coffee.

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Shotover Canyon River Jet Boat Adventure

Riding the iconic 'Big Red' Jet Boat through the narrow Shotover Canyon is an exhilarating experience not to be missed. Your skilled jet boat driver pushes the boat to 85 kph, skimming across shallow water and past towering canyon walls. This 25 minute white water ride includes 360 degree spins and maximum thrills.

Your accommodation: Heartland Hotel Queenstown

The Heartland Hotel Queenstown is the ideal place to stay if you want to be close to all the action of Queenstown's main centre, yet be elevated enough to take advantage of the spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu to the mountains.

Meals included: Speciality Dinner



Day 11



Milford Sound Coach, Cruise and Scenic Flight

Travel along the shores of Lake Wakatipu and through the rolling countryside to Te Anau. After a short break, the coach continues along the spectacular alpine route of the Milford Road through impressive, awe-inspiring scenery. There is time for photo stops and short walks along the way. Considered one of the most beautiful drives in the world your coach driver provides detailed commentaries throughout the trip.

On reaching Milford Sound, join a spectacular one hour 40 minute cruise to the mouth of the fiord with excellent viewing opportunities. Keep a look out for seals basking on the rocks, dolphins and penguins. There are scenic highlights such as Mitre Peak and Pembroke Glacier. Informative commentary from the captain explains the history and highlights points of interest during the cruise.

Following the cruise, you will be transferred to Milford Airport for the return flight to Queenstown (weather permitting). During the scenic flight, take in expansive views of the snow-capped Southern Alps, golden tussocked high country and the upper reaches of Lake Wakatipu. A taxi transfer is provided to your accommodation on arrival at Queenstown airport.

Your accommodation: Heartland Hotel Queenstown

The Heartland Hotel Queenstown is the ideal place to stay if you want to be close to all the action of Queenstown's main centre, yet be elevated enough to take advantage of the spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu to the mountains.



Day 12



Queenstown to Franz Josef Glacier via Wanaka

From Queenstown you'll cross the Crown Range, the highest sealed road in New Zealand to arrive in the Alpine town of Wanaka, 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. Paringa Salmon Farm is worth a stop to stretch your legs, feed the fish, and stop for lunch and refreshments. 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.

Wanaka

The alpine village of Wanaka sits on the shores of the third largest lake in the Queenstown Lakes District and is surrounded by the southern alps. Wanaka draws those seeking adventure, spectacular scenery and a relaxed atmosphere. During winter the town's population more than triples as snow sports enthusiasts flock to the local ski fields of Treble Cone and Cardrona. Known as the gateway to the Mt Aspiring National Park, Wanaka is a walker's paradise of remote wilderness, high mountains and beautiful river valleys. For those seeking an adrenaline rush try skydiving, rock-climbing, jet boating or choose a scenic flight over Wanaka in a historic Tiger Moth aeroplane.

Franz Josef

Franz Josef is the name of the local village and the nearby glacier, the Maori name being Ko Roimata o Hine Hukatere which translates to The Tears of the Ice Maiden,

The main attraction is the rare glacier which is one of three in the world that transcends from alpine into temperate rainforest and almost sea level, New Zealand is home to two, the Franz Josef and Fox Glacier, these are also some of the most accessible in the world which is why they are so popular. The best way to see the glacier is either a scenic flight or for the more adventurous a Heli Hike, you are able to view the glacier by a short 5-minute drive south out of the village and a short easy walk to a viewing platform

As amazing as the glacier is, Franz Josef has plenty more to offer visitors, including adventure activities, an abundance of forest and alpine walking tracks.

Walking tracks in and around Franz Josef - Suggestion

There are many walks and hikes in and around Franz Josef. The information below is provided by the Department of Conservation. Located in Franz Josef village is a Department of Conservation information centre and you can get updates on track conditions and suitability plus you can learn about the area, its natural history and its people. Listed below are a selection of short walks but check with the Department of Conservation information centre for weather conditions, track suitability and conditions first. Douglas Walk

The Douglas Walk is an easy one-hour forest walk that passes by the Peters Pool viewpoint and crosses several moraines before descending to the bridge across Dolly Creek on the way back to the road.

Category: Walking track. Completion Time: 1 hr return Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere Walk

The 40-minute walk to the terminal face of the Franz Josef Glacier follows a rocky path over riverbed. Only experienced and prepared visitors should attempt climbing on the glacier.

Category: Walking track. Completion Time: 1 hr 30 min return Lake Wombat Track

The Lake Wombat Track leads you through a lush rimu forest to the idyllic Lake Wombat.

Category: Walking track. Completion Time: 1 hr 30 min Okarito walking tracks

North of the Franz Josef Township sits the coastal settlement of Okarito and the Okarito Lagoon. The lagoon is home to more than 76 species of native birds including the kōtuku/white heron and royal spoonbills.

Category: Walking track. Peters Pool Walk

The spectacular view at Peters Pool includes Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere, and the Fritz Range, including Mt Moltke and Mt Roon.

Category: Easy access walk. Completion Time: 25 min Sentinel Rock Walk

Just a short distance south of the Franz Josef Township you will come to the Glacier and Sentinel Rock walks. The Sentinel Rock Lookout offers impressive views of the glacier, the valley and Waiho River.

Category: Short walk. Completion Time: 20 min Tatara Tunnels Walk

The 80-minute return Tatara Tunnels Walk follows an old 4WD road to a junction with the Callery/Waiho Walk. From there follow the track to the old water tunnels.

Category: Walking track. Completion Time: 1 hr 20 min return Terrace Walk

Follow the Terrace Walk as it winds through forest and goes by remnants of past gold mining operations.

Category: Short walk. Completion Time: 30 min

Your accommodation: Punga Grove Motel & Suites

Punga Grove is right in the heart of Franz Josef Glacier village and offers affordable and stylish accommodation in a beautiful rainforest setting.



Day 13



Franz Josef Nature Tour with Glacier Valley Eco Tours

Nestled in thick historic West Coast forest and a stone's throw from wild black sand beaches, this is one of the world's most unusual glaciers. Beautiful blue skies or magical misty rain, whatever the weather - you will feel like you are in Narnia or LOTR.

With easy walking at your pace, information on glaciology, geology, geomorphology, flora and fauna, local legends, history, and small guided groups with fantastic guides, you will experience this glacier in style and in the best hands with the only local company. Wander past glacier rivers and streams and through beautiful podocarp forest; discover hidden natural treasures such as native snails, wild native mushrooms, and dozens of species of native orchids; listen to native bird song and waterfalls; see if you can spot a Chamois or a Tahr on the huge snow-capped mountains above while drinking a cup of tea and talking one-on-one with your guide. This tour will be a highlight of your travels in New Zealand.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

Take a spectacular scenic flight over two of New Zealand's most famous glaciers. Land at the head of one and view the incredible sight of this frozen river as it winds its way through ancient carved valleys. Should weather not be suitable to take this flight you are able to transfer your booking onto a similar tour on any of the Helicopter Line's operations in Queenstown or Mt Cook.

Your accommodation: Punga Grove Motel & Suites

Punga Grove is right in the heart of Franz Josef Glacier village and offers affordable and stylish accommodation in a beautiful rainforest setting.



Day 14



Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station

Today 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 New Zealand white heron or Kotuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve, and guided tours from October to March will take you there;

Ross is the site of an old gold mining town and some of the old buildings and workings remain. In fact, Ross is still home to one of the few working gold mines left in New Zealand and the local information center 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 Jade or Greenstone on offer in Hokitika is probably some of the best you will see in the country. The Hokitika Gorge is located 45 minutes inland and offers turquoise waters flowing through a narrow gorge. A great short walk will deliver you to this piece of paradise.

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 Car to City Depot

Spend some time exploring before returning your rental car to the city depot.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch Scenic Plus with Great Journeys NZ

Great Journeys New Zealand's Scenic Plus carriage provides comfort and vast panoramic views, making our TranzAlpine scenic train journey the perfect way to explore coast-to-coast through the 'Great Divide' and the indomitable spine of mountains that partitions New Zealand's South Island. Scenic Plus offers an all-inclusive experience on the unique TranzAlpine scenic rail journey to invigorate all the senses! Feast your eyes on epic scenery while you savour regionally inspired cuisine paired with sumptuous wine and beer all from the comfort of your luxurious seat – a hosted dining experience like no other. Quite simply, we have done everything we can to ensure you feel at peace as you sink back in your seat and soak up the scenery.

Shared Transfer from the Railway Station to a City Hotel with Christchurch Touring

On arrival at the Christchurch railway station, you will be met by a driver and transferred to your Christchurch accommodation.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Cotswold

The Scenic Hotel Cotswold is just a few minutes walk to boutique shopping at Merivale and Hagley Park. The distinctive architecture of the Scenic Hotel Cotswold reflects Christchurch's image as the most English of cities outside of England.



Day 15

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Nationwide Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	15
Accommodation:	Motels
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	Private train station transfers
Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Christchurch to Greymouth
Includes	Interislander ferry crossing
Includes	Hobbiton Movie Set Tour, Matamata
Includes	Rotorua Forest Canopy Tours
Includes	Te Puia Maori Arts & Crafts
Includes	Glacier Explorers Tour, Mt Cook National Park
Includes	Milford Sound Fly-Cruise-Fly and Dart River combo
Includes	Half Day Franz Josef Eco Tour

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Auckland City Hotel
Day 2	Auckland City Hotel
Day 3	Sudima Lake Rotorua
Day 4	Sudima Lake Rotorua
Day 5	CityLife Wellington
Day 6	Bella Vista Kaikoura
Day 7	Scenic Hotel Cotswold
Day 8	Mt Cook Motel
Day 9	Heartland Hotel Queenstown
Day 10	Heartland Hotel Queenstown
Day 11	Heartland Hotel Queenstown
Day 12	Punga Grove Motel & Suites
Day 13	Punga Grove Motel & Suites
Day 14	Scenic Hotel Cotswold