



Great Journeys of New Zealand - Classic New Zealand Highlights Tour (Northbound)

Embark on a captivating journey from the majestic South Island to the vibrant North, as you discover the true essence of New Zealand. This tour takes you off the beaten path, offering an immersive experience in the country's rich history, diverse culture, and awe-inspiring geology. Explore the dynamic city life of Queenstown and Christchurch, encounter the mesmerising blue lakes of the South and delve into the ancient forests on the rugged West Coast. Witness the impressive engineering feats of the Otira Tunnel and the Raurimu Spiral, spend a day by the ocean in Kaikōura and indulge in world-class wine amidst the picturesque vineyards of Marlborough. Experience the volcanic grandeur of Middle Earth in Ruapehu before concluding your journey in the vibrant city life of Auckland.



Starts in: Queenstown

Finishes in: Auckland

Length: 15days / 14nights

Accommodation: Hotel 3 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: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included: Introducing Te Papa Museum Tour

Included: Northern Explorer Scenic Train

Included: Northern Explorer Scenic Train from National Park to Auckland

Included: Waiheke Hop-on Hop-off Wine & Dine

Included: West Coast Treetop Walkway Experience

Included: TranzAlpine Train

Included: Punakaiki Pancake Rocks

Included: Christchurch Tram

Included: Coastal Pacific Train

Included: Interislander Ferry

: 14 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 5 dinners

Day 1



Welcome to Queenstown

Welcome to Queenstown, the Adventure Capital of New Zealand! Famed for its striking mountain ranges, enchanting vineyards, diverse dining options, and the picturesque Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown offers a unique experience. Upon settling in your hotel and acquainting yourself with the welcome letter from your Tour Director, take the opportunity to explore! The beachfront beckons, retail therapy awaits, and the beautiful rose gardens are a must-see. Head out on the TSS Earnslaw Steamship Cruise for a memorable meal and show of iconic Kiwi experiences such as sheep shearing and dog herding. Take in the views against the stunning backdrop of the lake. The journey begins at this evening's welcome reception with your fellow travelers and Tour Director.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Day 2



Explore Queenstown

Enjoy a free day to explore everything Queenstown has to offer. Today we highly recommend that you join an excursion to the 8th Wonder of the World: Milford Sound/Piopiotahi. It truly is a remarkable experience! Milford Sound/Piopiotahi is a scenic escape approximately three hours from Queenstown. The natural landscape will engulf you as you waltz through plunging valleys and under towering peaks. This could possibly be one of the most scenic drives you'll experience in your lifetime! Take this encounter to the next level by soaring like the Piopio (ancient bird) by plane or helicopter. Whether you've decided to hop aboard the steamship lake cruise on the iconic TSS Earnslaw or marvel at the power of ancient roaring rivers - tonight you have the night to indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife. Sip cocktails and indulge in the sparkling views of Lake Wakatipu.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 3



The Southern Lakes to Franz Josef

Today you'll be exploring the mountainous Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey of about five hours to Franz Josef will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. Marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems. Stop in unique locations only the locals tend to stop at. Tonight, is a free evening to experience Franz Josef. Schedule an amazing helicopter flight to the spectacular Franz Josef Glacier, go on nature walk or tap into some natural tranquility at the local hot pools.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4



Explore the West Coast

Franz Josef Glacier is quite special in that it survives in coastal rainforest temperatures. Before you head off up the coast, why not set off on a nature walk? No matter which one you choose, you'll get a fantastic view of the vast valley and maybe even a sneak peak of Franz Josef Glacier itself. Aboard the private coach, you'll journey further along the coastline, reaching the TreeTop Walk. This elevated adventure will get you acquainted with the locals - the ancient Rimu and Kamahi trees of course. This evening, you'll have free time to explore the beach at your leisure.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 5



The TranzAlpine Scenic Train

Before you escape into the Southern Alps aboard the world-famous TranzAlpine scenic train, a special excursion is beckoning - the Punakaiki Pancake Rocks. Here you will explore curious limestone formations and blowholes before joining the scenic journey to Christchurch at the Greymouth Railway Station. Comfortably resting in plush, reclined seats, you will be surrounded by panoramic views. Start the journey by passing through the engineering marvel of the Otira Tunnel before emerging into a new landscape. Enjoy traversing through the Great Divide before a brief photo opportunity at Arthur's Pass. As you soar on the edges of the ice fed Waimakariri River, you'll see epic vistas in all directions while breathing fresh mountain air in the open carriage. Just a few hours later, you'll arrive into 'The Garden City'.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 6



Explore Christchurch

Christchurch, the hub for South Island exploration is also a wonderful city that blends modern architecture and technology with the existing 19th-century Anglican & gothic revival’ architectural influence. Often remembered for its earthquake in 2011, the city is rebuilding itself as a multicultural haven. So, without further delay, jump on the historic tram to learn the history, tales, and culture of Ōtautahi Christchurch. Enjoy your free time as you explore the Arts Centre, Quake City Museum, Christchurch Art Gallery, Riverside Markets and Botanical Gardens. Ride on the city tram to uncover Christchurch's great history, or relax as you punt on the Avon River. There is also a multitude of delicious cafés tucked into quaint side streets we're sure you will love. If you are in the mood for something different, set off for Akaroa, an ‘incroyable’ French coastal settlement just an hour and half from the city centre. A farewell dinner awaits as you join your fellow travellers once again to tell them about the exciting places you have discovered.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7



Christchurch to Kaikoura on the Coastal Pacific Train

Your train journey departs Christchurch on route to Kaikōura. Enjoy breakfast on board as the smell of aromatic coffee dances through the carriages. In a few short hours, you will step foot into marine wildlife paradise. Kaikōura has a range of exciting activities to choose from. Will you seek the whale watching, albatross, or dolphin encounter, or simply peruse the local artisan and gift shops? The rest of the day is yours to explore.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 8



Kaikoura to Blenheim on the Coastal Pacific Train

After breakfast, your Tour Director will guide you back to the Kaikōura Railway Station to board the Coastal Pacific train for the next leg of your journey. Relax and let the train glide you 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! This afternoon you'll arrive into your final South Island destination. Soak up the views and maybe even join a wine tour to enjoy delicious wine amongst the vines. Listen to passionate wine makers describe the history and processes of these flavorful grapes. The evening is free for you to explore.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 9



Adventure to the North - Crossing Cook Strait

This morning you'll say good-bye to the South Island as you sail towards the capital. Crossing Cook Strait on the Interislander Ferry, the South Island shores will slowly disappear as you enjoy a hearty seafaring lunch onboard. Spoiled with harbour views, admire the coastal paradise as you glide through the scenic Queen Charlotte Sound and arrive into Wellington. Step off the Interislander Ferry and start your North Island adventure by exploring Wellington city.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 10



Explore Wellington

The perfect day does exist - and it includes exploring Wellington! Today is free for you to experience vibrant Wellington as you please. Start by joining a Te Papa Introduction Tour and then head off to explore Cuba Street's cafes, bookstores, and eccentric shops. Zealandia Eco-Sanctuary is just around the corner where you can surround yourself by native birdlife and regenerating forest. You won't get bored with the plethora of activities on offer. From coffee, culture, historic buildings, botanic gardens and more, the list goes on! If you need any suggestions or recommendations, just reach out to your helpful Tour Director or our Travel Centre to pre-book an experience. Dinner awaits as you join your fellow travelers once again to tell them about the exciting places you have discovered.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 11



Wellington to Ohakune on the Northern Explorer Train

Today you'll be heading north aboard the Northern Explorer Train to explore Tongariro National Park. Sit back and relax while the smooth train travels along the Kāpiti Coast. You won't want to get too comfortable though; dramatic rivers, gorges and ravines are just around the bend! Stretch your legs and explore the open-air carriage to get the best view of the fantastic scenery. Upon arrival into the national park, the afternoon is free for you to experience all the outdoor activities Ohakune has to offer.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 12



Discover Ohakune, Ruapheu or Tongariro National Park

Today is free for you to discover one of the region's many exciting excursions. Choose from the optional activities on offer and personalise your perfect holiday. Perhaps you will enjoy a hot tub soak, or a meander along the lazy river. If you're after an active day, why not explore Ohakune's historical cycle trail? Rent e-bikes and discover old viaducts, tunnels, old settlers' camps and reclaimed native forests along the Old Coach Road!

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 13



A Scenic Journey to Auckland onboard the Northern Explorer

After a charming morning exploring the local shops and cafés of Ohakune, you will once again board the Northern Explorer train heading north to Auckland. Along the way you'll wind down the historic Raurimu Spiral and traverse the Central Plateau with its three iconic volcanic mountains dominating the desert plains of Tongariro National Park. Soar over the icy mountain streams of Ruapehu and traverse into the Waikato, famous for its dairy farming and green pastures.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 14



Explore Auckland and Waiheke Island

Begin your day with a delightful breakfast at the hotel before embarking on an indulgent day out on Waiheke Island. Enjoy the freedom of hopping on and off as you please with your included ferry and bus tickets, departing hourly from the Downtown Ferry Terminal. Explore the picturesque Waiheke Island at your leisure, with buses ready to whisk you away to the next scenic spot half-hourly from the island's ferry terminal. After a day of sipping and sightseeing, choose any return ferry back to Auckland, ensuring you're on time for a memorable farewell dinner with your guide at one of Auckland's renowned restaurants.

Your accommodation: 3-3.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 15



Depart Auckland

Your journey will finish after breakfast. You will be transferred to Auckland Airport for your departing flight.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Guided Coach & Train Tours
Starts: Queenstown
Finishes: Auckland
Tour length: 15
Accommodation: Hotel 3 star
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary

Day 1	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 2	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 3	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 4	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 5	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 6	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 7	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 8	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 9	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 10	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 11	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 12	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 13	3-3.5 Star Hotel
Day 14	3-3.5 Star Hotel