



AAT Kings: New Zealand's Southern Sounds - Small Group Tour

Experience the best of New Zealand on this captivating tour. Take in views of Franz Josef Glacier, and cruise overnight on Milford Sound aboard the iconic Milford Mariner. Delight in gastronomic gems and savour delectable wines, all while relaxing, restoring and recharging in picturesque stays.

Starts in: Wellington

Finishes in: Christchurch

Length: 12days / 11nights

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: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included: Afternoon tea with 'Pavlova Queen', Angie Taylor

Included: Church of the Good Shepherd at Tekapo

Included: Cruise Lake Wakatipu on the TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm

Included: Franz Josef Glacier

Included: Free time in Wanaka and Arrowtown

Included: Highlands Motorsport Museum

Included: Milford Sound Overnight Boat Cruise

Included: Walking tour of Wellington

Included: Omaka Aviation Museum

11 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners

Day 1

New Zealand's cool little capital, Wellington is the kind of place you could easily lose yourself in for a day. Good thing you arrived early. Meet your Travel Director and fellow travel companions this afternoon for an orientation tour of Wellington where you will visit the peak of Mount Victoria, and short stroll will reward you with 360-degree views of the surrounding harbour and city. After the tour you may like to visit Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand, home to an extraordinary collection of artefacts, including an eye-opening exhibit dedicated to Māori history (entrance fee applies). Later, meet up with your fellow adventure-seekers for a drinks before your tour of the South Island of New Zealand.

Staying in:

- James Cook Grand Chancellor (1 night)

Day 2

This morning cruise the Cook Strait into tranquil Queen Charlotte Sound from the North Island to the South, through a maze of arms and inlets into Marlborough and the picturesque town of Blenheim. Often winning the title of sunniest town in New Zealand, Blenheim is known for its world class Sauvignon Blanc, sun-soaked vineyards and aviation heritage. This afternoon during your visit to Omaka Aviation Heritage Centre, immerse yourself in an extraordinary collection of World War I and II aircraft and memorabilia, each piece meticulously brought to life through the stunning craftsmanship of Weta Workshop.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Marlborough (1 night)

Day 3

Today, explore Marlborough at your own pace. Choose from a wine tour of the local vineyards or jump onboard the iconic Mail Boat cruise delivering mail and supplies to local residents in Queen Charlotte Sound, offering a unique tour experience with scenic views, wildlife encounters, and insightful commentary (both own expense).

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Marlborough (1 night)

Day 4

There aren't many beaches more dramatic than the sands of Kaikoura. Bonus points if you spot a sea lion or sperm whale frolicking offshore, Kaikoura is the marine wildlife centre of New Zealand. Talk to your Travel Director for tips on the essential restaurants to dine in tonight – Christchurch has reinvented itself in more ways than one.

Staying in:

- Wyndham Garden (1 night)

Day 5

Begin your day by exploring Christchurch's city sights before journeying to the brilliant bright blue waters of Lake Tekapo. You'll view the iconic Church of the Good Shepherd, which was built in 1935, and was the first church in the Mackenzie Basin. You are then welcomed to the stunning lakeside home of Angie and Stan Taylor for afternoon tea. Retired Farmers, baker Angie is the undisputed Pavlova Queen who will give a demonstration and explanation of the great trans-Tasman pavlova controversy, while Stan will regale you with tales of a lifetime spent farming. Conclude your day at the charming Lake Ohau Lodge, nestled in the Mackenzie High Country and surrounded by breathtaking wilderness. The Main Lodge boasts a cozy open fire and expansive windows with stunning views of the lake, providing the perfect setting to unwind before a family-style dinner.

Staying in:

- Lake Ohau Lodge (1 night)

Day 6

Travel through the Lindis Pass to Cromwell. Visit the Jones Family fruit stall for fresh produce, then explore Highlands Museum, a paradise for car enthusiasts and novices alike. Continue your journey to Arrowtown, a charming village with a rich gold rush heritage, before reaching scenic Queenstown. Enjoy lunch at your leisure at cult eatery Fergburger, famous for its mouthwatering gourmet burgers and vibrant atmosphere.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)

Day 7

Take today at your own pace. Like things fast and furious? Feel the wind in your hair on the high-octane jet boat ride, perhaps. There's a reason why Queenstown is known as the adventure capital of the country. Nature lover? Discover some of New Zealand's feathered friends at Kiwi Park (both own expense).

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)

Day 8

Start the day with a journey along the Devil's Staircase, with its dramatic landscapes leading you to the charming town of Te Anau. Continue your adventure through the World Heritage-listed Fiordland National Park sighting glaciers, and mountain ranges en route to the amazing Mirror Lake before driving through the hand-hewn Homer Tunnel. Spend the night aboard the iconic Milford Mariner and wake up in one of the most beautiful places on earth. The cruise style is relaxed, allowing plenty of time to view the fiord's spectacular waterfalls, rainforest, mountains, and diverse wildlife such as fur seals and various seabirds. Hear from the specialist nature guide on board and explore the shoreline by kayak or tender. The Milford Mariner offers spacious viewing decks, a dining saloon with fully licensed bar, as well as an observation lounge. Dining included in your cruise are hors d'oeuvres followed by a three-course buffet meal, as well as a delicious cooked breakfast.

Staying in:

- Milford Mariner (1 night)

Day 9

Depart the serene beauty of Fiordland National Park and journey to the picturesque country town of Wānaka, nestled amidst the majestic Southern Alps and gracing the shores of Lake Wānaka. This idyllic town offers a perfect blend of natural splendour and leisurely pursuits. Your hotel is in the heart of the village just a short walk from the lakefront and nestled among surrounding cafes and restaurants.

Staying in:

- Wanaka Hotel (1 night)

Day 10

Begin your journey with a scenic drive from Wānaka, passing the quiet waters of Lake Hawea and the picturesque settlement of Makarora – a hikers hub surrounded by vast alpine scenery and river valleys of lush temperate rainforest. Continue over the Haast Pass, the historic township of Fox Glacier awaits. Get some perspective on an optional scenic flight over Fox and Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere – if the weather behaves, you may even get a glacier landing (own expense).

Staying in:

- Heartland Fox Glacier (1 night)

Day 11

Today's drive north winds past lush rainforests and rugged coastlines to Hokitika, famous for its greenstone and arty, laid-back vibe. From there, the road heads inland through the Southern Alps. As you climb toward Arthur's Pass, the scenery shifts from rainforest to soaring peaks, rocky gorges, and sweeping tussock plains. Keep an eye out for cheeky kea (the world's only alpine parrot) along the way! Once over the pass, the landscape softens again, opening up to wide Canterbury plains as you roll toward the bright lights of Christchurch. Tonight, enjoy dinner, a fitting

end to your New Zealand adventure.

Staying in:

- Wyndham Garden (1 night)

Day 12

It's time to say farewell and head home, sorting through snapshots of an unforgettable journey. But the best souvenirs? The lasting memories of two weeks immersed in untamed nature and cultural experiences.

Tour details

Departures: Daily
Tour type: Small Group Escorted Tour
Starts: Wellington
Finishes: Christchurch
Tour length: 12
Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:

Accommodation summary