



Natural New Zealand

Indulge in a tailor-made New Zealand adventure, starting in Auckland with a private coastline tour featuring Māori carvings. Discover the magic of Waitomo's glowworms, then immerse in Rotorua's culture with a scenic flight over Mount Tarawera, followed by a traditional Hangi feast. Cross to the South Island and enjoy scenic delights, from Kaikoura's marine life to a gourmet meal at Larnach Castle. Experience the serenity of Patea - Doubtful Sound, a heli-hike on Franz Josef Glacier, and unwind in a private hot tub. This exclusive journey is a celebration of New Zealand's breathtaking landscapes.



Starts in: Auckland
 Finishes in: Christchurch
 Length: 26 days / 25 nights
 Accommodation: Boutique Lodges & Hotels
 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: Afterhours emergency support while touring

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

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

Included activity: Albatross Tour with Encounter Kaikōura

Included activity: 30 Minute Whale Watch Explorer with Wings over Whales Kaikoura

Included activity: Antarctic Guided Tour

Included activity: Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise with Black Cat

Included activity: The Panorama Room 3-course Dinner with The Hermitage Hotel

Included activity: Glacier Explorers

Included activity: Dinner at Camp Estate, Larnach Castle

Included activity: Penguin Tour with The Opera

Included activity: Dinner at Camp Estate, Larnach Castle

Included activity: Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

Included activity: Doubtful Sound Fiordland Navigator Overnight Cruise

Included activity: Guided Scenic Walk with Aspiring Guides - Lunch Included

Included activity: Best of Both Worlds Tour with Bush and Beach

Included activity: Lake Cruise and Island Nature Walk with Eco Wanaka

Included activity: One Hour Private Tub with Waiho Hot Tubs

plus much more...



Day 1



Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

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

Welcome to Auckland

Welcome to Auckland, known in Māori as Tāmaki Makaurau. Auckland is New Zealand's vibrant "City of Sails," and the country's largest metropolitan area. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea. Surrounded by native bush, lush rainforests, and pristine beaches, Auckland is a haven for both adventurers and urban explorers. Wander through world-class museums and galleries in the city centre or enjoy a peaceful retreat at the Auckland Gardens, where stunning landscapes showcase New Zealand's diverse flora. Stroll along the lively waterfront to savour fresh seafood and international cuisine at Viaduct restaurants. For an unforgettable perspective, ascend the iconic SkyTower, New Zealand's tallest structure, and take in panoramic views of the city and its picturesque islands.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wētā Workshop Unleashed

A jaw-dropping, senses-shattering, awe-inspiring adventure into the heart of movie magic! Get hands-on and immerse yourself in an extraordinary world of practical effects, props and larger-than-life sets. On this award-winning tour, you can explore three movie projects imagined by the Weta crew and uncover how they bring big screen concepts to life. Discover a mind-blowing world of robots, monsters, dinosaurs and more - step right into the action to see, play and experience movie-making up close.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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 including 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, and tackle interactive zones where you can try out your kicking, catching, line-out, and accuracy skills against legendary All Blacks.

Your accommodation: Horizon by SkyCity

The latest addition to the SkyCity line of hotels is an effortless blend of cutting edge design and distinct kiwi touches. With air bridges connecting you to the International Convention Centre and the SkyCity entertainment zone you can choose to relax or explore. The iconic Sky Tower and the viaduct harbour is right on your doorstep in this centrally located luxury hotel.



Day 2



Best of Both Worlds Tour with Bush and Beach

Experience the best of Auckland sightseeing with an Auckland city tour in the morning combined with the afternoon eco tour - the Wilderness Experience - a day of contrasts.

Your morning city highlights tour is a journey of discovery designed to explore the history and sights as well as see how Aucklanders live and play. Auckland is set on over 50 dormant volcanic cones and between two harbours. Known as the City of Sails, it's New Zealand's largest and busiest city.

Your afternoon eco tour is spent in the Waitakere Ranges. In just 30 minutes you leave behind the bustle of the city and step into the tranquillity of the rainforest. Travel to the Arataki Centre perched high on the ridge of the Waitakere Ranges and enjoy breathtaking panoramic views from the Tasman Sea to the Pacific Ocean. Continue on to the lush rainforest where you walk the easy tracks among giant tree ferns and view New Zealand's famous kauri trees. Move on to experience the power of the wild and rugged west coast. Feel the black sand of Piha beneath your feet as you stroll along some of the most awe-inspiring beaches the world has to offer.

Your accommodation: Horizon by SkyCity

The latest addition to the SkyCity line of hotels is an effortless blend of cutting edge design and distinct kiwi touches. With air bridges connecting you to the International Convention Centre and the SkyCity entertainment zone you can choose to relax or explore. The iconic Sky Tower and the viaduct harbour is right on your doorstep in this centrally located luxury hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 3



Collect Rental Car

This tour's from price includes an intermediate-sized vehicle, setting you up for comfortable travels. Yet, we understand every adventure is unique! Feel free to select the perfect wheels from our incredible collection of rental cars, spanning from economy hatchbacks to premium SUVs.

Car Instructions

On collection of your rental car, you will be required to sign a rental agreement and provide a credit card for a security bond authorisation. Remember, the bond is only authorised, not charged, at this stage. While your rental rate may include coverage for mechanical breakdowns (please verify your specific car inclusions), you may also have the option to purchase roadside assistance for non-mechanical issues. All drivers must present a physical credit card, valid driving license and passport to be added to the agreement, with potential additional charges for extra drivers. Debit cards may be used on select vehicles. If you are presenting an international drivers license, this must be accompanied by the original domestic license. Drivers under 21 are not permitted, and those aged 21-24 may face a surcharge, both payable directly to the rental company. For detailed information, please refer to your rental car inclusions. See this important information if you are traveling between the North and South Islands on the ferry

Auckland to Waitomo

The drive south from Auckland takes you into the rolling farmland and rich dairy pastures of the Waikato, before arriving in the limestone hills of the Waitomo countryside, which is home to a huge underground network of caves.

Waitomo

Waitomo is a small, picturesque village located in the Waikato region of New Zealand's North Island, renowned globally for its spectacular underground limestone caves and the mesmerising glowworms that illuminate them. This natural wonderland attracts visitors from around the world, offering a unique blend of adventure, natural beauty, and Maori culture. The Waitomo Caves are the centerpiece of the area, with three main caves that are open to the public: the Waitomo Glowworm Caves, Ruakuri Cave, and Aranui Cave. The Glowworm Caves are perhaps the most famous, offering a magical boat ride through a subterranean grotto lit by thousands of tiny glowworms, creating a starry night effect underground. Ruakuri Cave offers a more adventurous experience, with its spiral entrance, underground rivers, and fascinating rock formations, while Aranui Cave is known for its stunning stalactites and stalagmites. For thrill-seekers, Waitomo offers a variety of exhilarating activities, including black-water rafting, where you can float through the caves on an inner tube, and abseiling or zip-lining into the depths of the caves. The surrounding karst landscape also provides opportunities for above-ground exploration, with scenic walking trails that reveal the region's lush forests, limestone cliffs, and hidden waterfalls. Waitomo's connection to Maori culture adds another layer of depth to the visitor experience. Many of the cave tours include insights into the Maori legends and stories associated with the area, offering a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of the caves. The village of Waitomo itself is small but welcoming, with a selection of cafes, restaurants, and accommodations ranging from backpacker hostels to luxury lodges. The nearby Otorohanga Kiwi House & Native Bird Park offers a chance to see New Zealand's native wildlife, including the iconic kiwi bird, further enriching your visit to the region.

Your accommodation: Waitomo Boutique Lodge

Waitomo Boutique Lodge is Waitomo's hidden gem, offering a five star boutique lodge and luxury farm stay in a stunning setting, close to all the central North Island's major attractions.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 4



Private Footwhistle Glowworm Cave Tour with CaveWorld

Your tour begins as you are picked at the Waitomo iSite and enjoy a scenic shuttle to Caveworld's family owned cave, while your guide provides commentary bringing the rich history of Waitomo to life. Here you will take a short walk through the breathtaking New Zealand bush, keeping an eye out for the native birdlife. Heading down to the entrance of the cave you will discover the beauty of the glowworms, learn about the formation of Footwhistle Cave - known to local Maori as Te Anaroa Cave. You are encouraged to bring along your cameras a tripods to freeze the beautiful twinkling lights in time, with dim solar-powered lights through the cave that allow you to appreciate the magnificent displays and get the perfect shot. Complete your intimate tour with a Kawakawa tea as you relax in a ponga hut nestled into the native surrounds.

Your accommodation: Waitomo Boutique Lodge

Waitomo Boutique Lodge is Waitomo's hidden gem, offering a five star boutique lodge and luxury farm stay in a stunning setting, close to all the central North Island's major attractions.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Waitomo to Rotorua

Today cross the lush farmland of the Waikato as you make your way inland to Rotorua. Pass through several small farming towns such as Otorohanga and Putaruru, before the region's geothermal activity signals your arrival into the city of Rotorua.

Rotorua

Discover the geothermal, adventure, and cultural wonderland of Rotorua. 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 the unmistakable smell of Sulfur. Rotorua is rich in Māori culture and history, with many Māori inhabitants recognising the great potential of the volcanic land. For an outdoor adventure, head to The Redwoods and experience the rainforest treetops from high up. There are a few accessible trails for disabled hikers and great biking trails as well. If you're lucky, you might spot some of New Zealand's native birds, such as the Pīwakawaka (Fantail) and the Tūī. 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 Te Puia and Wai-O-Tapu, where you can walk among bubbling mud pools, spouting geysers, and Sulfur ponds. Just a few minutes from the town centre, the Agrodome and National Kiwi Hatchery offer an insight into nature. Rotorua's rich Māori culture is a must-see. Spend an evening with Te Pā Tū, complete with a traditional-style dinner 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. This town boasts an array of wellness experiences to unwind in. Whether you are seeking adventure, culture, or relaxation, Rotorua offers an unforgettable experience.

Mount Tarawera & Orakei Korako Thermal Explorer by Floatplane with Volcanic Air

From above Mount Tarawera's impressive views include vast volcanic rifts, distant national parks, and our treasured lakes. Flying south on a floatplane, you will gain an appreciation of what local Maori refer to as the 'Sisters of Fire'. Here, volcanic activity has pierced the earth's surface across the fault line forming the reserves of Waimangu and Wai-O-Tapu which, when viewed from above, display a spectacular palette of nature's most vibrant colors. Landing at Orakei Korako, 'the Hidden Valley', is an amazing opportunity to experience hot springs, gushing geysers, and the natural beauty of this geothermal wonderland.

Your accommodation: On the Point

On the Point is a beautiful lodge accommodation in a stunning location and offering panoramic views. It also offers gourmet New Zealand food and wine, as well as a range of on site activities from pampering massage, fly fishing from the private beach, water sports, tennis, gym and boating and is only 10 minutes from the heart of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Explore Rotorua

Peppered with natural hot springs, boiling mud pools and steaming geysers, Rotorua sits within one of the world's most active volcanic regions. Geothermal landmarks aside, this city of sulphur has a rich indigenous history. Home to several prominent Māori tribes, a visit to one of the Māori experiences should be high on your agenda, learn about the special meaning of pounamu-Greenstone with Mountain Jade, explore the geysers and arts of Te Puia or immerse in an evening with Te Pā Tū. An excursion to one of the area's wellness spas is also a must! Try the Polynesian Spa for an invigorating soak in its natural mineral hot springs, Wai Ariki offers an indulging and unwinding restorative journey or pay a quick visit to Secret Spot for a soak and a delicious smash burger! If it is a thrill you are looking for, spike your adrenaline at Rotorua Canopy Tours, soaring above the ancient native forest below. Alternatively, head up the Skyline Rotorua Gondola for soaring lake views, and ride the luge at night for an extra thrill. Make the most of your time in Rotorua with an excursion through the Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, one of the area's most colourful volcanic attractions. Whatever you are after, Rotorua is almost certain to have it!

Behind The Scenes Exclusive Tour with National Kiwi Hatchery

This exclusive guided experience is a truly unique opportunity to learn about the world-renowned kiwi hatchery conservation program. You are invited to step 'behind the glass' for an immersive experience to join the hatchery team in a staff-only area to learn about the incubation and chick rearing techniques from global experts. 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! Afterwards, take more time to learn in the interactive kiwi burrow and see adult kiwi roam and forage in our purpose-built Nocturnal house.

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 & Cafè. The menu, crafted with the freshest ingredients, offers a delightful array of traditional Māori cuisine. This banquet combines contemporary cuisine with a traditional hāngī (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: On the Point

On the Point is a beautiful lodge accommodation in a stunning location and offering panoramic views. It also offers gourmet New Zealand food and wine, as well as a range of on site activities from pampering massage, fly fishing from the private beach, water sports, tennis, gym and boating and is only 10 minutes from the heart of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner



Day 7



Rotorua to Wellington

The drive from Rotorua to Wellington takes you via the township of Taupō 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

Wellington known in Māori as Te Whanganui-a-Tara is home to New Zealand's centre of government. Often referred to as 'mini Melbourne', this 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 - 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. 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.

Your accommodation: Bolton Hotel Wellington

The Bolton Hotel offers contemporary apartment-style accommodation in the heart of Wellington. Just steps from the Parliament buildings and central business district, Bolton Hotel is conveniently close to the best of the city's shops, cafes and restaurants and is within walking distance of Wellington's vibrant waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Taste of Wellington Foodie Delights Private Tour with Kaewa Tours

Enjoy a 7 hour private guided tour where you savour the best tastes Wellington has to offer. From Coffee, Chocolate, Peanut butter, a Craft beer brewery, Gin Distillery, lunch, and a scenic drive to Mt Victoria, Eastern and Southern Bays.

Your accommodation: Bolton Hotel Wellington

The Bolton Hotel offers contemporary apartment-style accommodation in the heart of Wellington. Just steps from the Parliament buildings and central business district, Bolton Hotel is conveniently close to the best of the city's shops, cafes and restaurants and is within walking distance of Wellington's vibrant waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 9



Return Rental Car to Wellington Ferry Terminal

Return your rental vehicle at the Wellington Ferry Terminal rental car depot and continue on the journey.

Interislander Ferry Wellington to Picton with Premium Plus Lounge

The 92 km ferry journey between Wellington and Picton, taking around 3 hours, is hailed as one of the world's most beautiful ferry rides. Departing Wellington Harbour, you'll pass landmarks like Pencarrow Head with New Zealand's oldest lighthouse, Red Rocks; seal colony, and Oterangi Bay, famous for its record wind speed. From the Cook Strait, marvel at views of the Kaikōura Ranges and spot dolphins and seabirds. An hour of the trip winds through the stunning Marlborough Sounds, featuring bush-clad mountains, tranquil bays, and crystal-clear waters—a photographer's dream. The journey concludes in the charming town of Picton at the end of Queen Charlotte Sound. When not soaking up the views from the deck, relax in the Premium Plus lounge, offering complimentary drinks, snacks, internet, and luxurious seating for the most comfortable way to cross the Cook Strait.

Collect Rental Car

This tour's from price includes an intermediate-sized vehicle, setting you up for comfortable travels. Yet, we understand every adventure is unique! Feel free to select the perfect wheels from our incredible collection of rental cars, spanning from economy hatchbacks to premium SUVs.

Picton to Blenheim

It is a short 30 minute drive, as you'll follow the valley south to arrive in Blenheim, located in the heart of Marlborough - New Zealand's largest wine producing region. Go through acres of leafy green vines and marvel at the magnificent 'dry hills' of Marlborough in the distance.

Your accommodation: 14th Lane Urban Hotel

In the heart of Blenheim CBD, and central to the laid-back community of bars, cafes, retailers, and town amenities. Just step outside the door to discover Blenheim and the Marlborough Region, the perfect place for work or play.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10



Blenheim to Kaikōura

Cross Marlborough and head towards one of the most spectacular coastlines of the South Island, the Kaikōura Coast. The road hugs the shore for around 50 kms and offers many chances to view native wildlife. To the east is the South Pacific Ocean and to the west the towering Kaikōura Ranges. Kaikōura Township is a bustling little place with many cafes, restaurants and shops, but the main reason for visiting here is the wildlife and it's one of the only places in New Zealand you can see whales year round.

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.

Albatross Tour with Encounter Kaikōura

A world renowned marine reserve, Kaikōura is brimming with marine life and ocean-going birds. It is the Albatross capital of the world and has up to 14 different species visiting the area throughout the year. You'll be taken by boat, 15 minutes off the coast where a huge range of elusive and usually inaccessible albatross can be sighted. You'll also see penguins, gannets, skuas, shearwaters, petrels and terns. Travel in a dedicated albatross encounter vessel, adapted specifically for maximum wildlife viewing opportunities.

Your accommodation: Kaikoura Boutique Hotel

Kaikoura Boutique Hotel sits on the Esplanade overlooking Kaikoura's waterfront, just a short walk from tourist attractions, shops and cafes. The hotel has been lovingly refurbished with modern décor and a uniquely New Zealand design.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 11



Kaikōura to Christchurch

Travel down the coast before heading inland through the North Canterbury wine region - the Waipara Valley. 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 and 2010 earthquakes.

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 Lyttelton Harbour which hosts fantastic markets on Saturday mornings.

Antarctic Guided Tour

The International Antarctic Centre aims to re-create the atmosphere and environment of Antarctica, providing visitors with an interactive, fun and exciting experience of the "Great White South".

Embark on a two-hour fully guided experience at the International Antarctic Centre, led by an expert Antarctic Guide who will share fascinating stories of life on the ice. Gain exclusive insight into Antarctic Research Stations, vital survival techniques, and thrilling expeditions. Highlights include a thrilling ride on a powerful H¨gglunds Antarctic vehicle and the chance to brave the Antarctic Storm Room, where you'll face a chilling -8 degree windstorm. Your visit also features exclusive talks about the adorable Little Blue Penguins and an immersive journey through icy landscapes in the 4D Movie Theatre, all with full General Admission access.

Your accommodation: The George Hotel

The George is the essence of supreme comfort. The award-winning 5 star hotel is opposite Hagley Park and just a few minutes stroll from the Botanic Gardens. It also has an award-winning restaurant, 50 Bistro onsite.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12



Christchurch to Akaroa

The Banks Peninsula offers a great contrast to the South Island's largest city. Just around a 1 1/2 hours drive from the city centre are rolling green hills, streams, golden sand beaches and small settlements that offer a unique insight into New Zealand's history and development. Just on the other side of the Port Hills is Lyttelton, a busy port town that was crucial to the development of Christchurch and the Canterbury Plains. Following the road around the beautiful natural harbour the names, such as Magazine Bay, Battery Point, Corsair Point and Governors Bay, remind of the importance the navy placed on this harbour.

The Banks Peninsula itself is actually the remains of a long extinct volcano, the rim of which collapsed some time ago allowing the sea to flood into and create what is now the Akaroa Harbour. In 1840 French colonists settled in Akaroa in a bid to stake a claim for the South Island. Unbeknown the British had already declared sovereignty and a long drawn out dispute ensued with the British eventually being given government. However the French stayed and made this stunning part of the South Pacific their home and still to this day the town boasts French street names and every year a French Festival is held.

The Harbour itself is teeming with wildlife and a nature cruise is a must do activity. One of the world's smallest and rarest dolphins, hectors dolphin, are often seen and cruises also offer excursions with the chance to swim amongst them.

Akaroa & the Banks Peninsula

The Banks Peninsula lies just around 1 hour from Christchurch city centre. Formed by ancient volcanic eruptions, the region's first settlers were Maori who recognised its potential for shelter and food. The sealers and whalers followed them, and European colonists founded and settled Akaroa, Little River and Lyttelton and many of the Peninsula's other bays. Abounding with wildlife and history, it's a great place to spend the day exploring.

The jewel is Akaroa, which lies just over 70 kilometres from central Christchurch, and the drive to this picturesque harbour town is a wonderful experience in itself, as it can either take you via the port of Lyttelton and along the bays or over the Summit Road of the Port Hills.

The well-signposted tourist routes will guide you on a loop around the peninsula and through some spectacular and rugged farmland scenery. As you approach the small settlement of Duvauchelle, you are greeted by New Zealand's oldest hotel.

The town of Akaroa has rather a French feel with many flags flying and cottages and streets with distinctly non-kiwi names. The reason being that 63 Frenchmen arrived here to settle the Banks Peninsula under the French Flag, only to find the British had beaten them by 5 days. Their influence on architecture, combined with a Victorian seaside feel, makes the town a delightful place to spend an afternoon. There are many activities, such as nature cruises and swimming with dolphins. Be sure to visit the quirky The Giant's House, a unique and whimsical garden and mosaic sculpture gallery.

Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise with Black Cat

Experience majestic scenery and stunning wildlife daily on a Black Cat Akaroa Harbour Nature Cruise. You'll see the rare, native dolphin & the Hector's or New Zealand Dolphin. There's also the chance to spot the world's smallest penguin, the White Flipped Little Blue Penguin, Fur Seals and other sea birds. Other cruise highlights are some majestic volcanic cliffs (including the impressive Cathedral Cave) and signs of Akaroa's fascinating past including early Maori, French and British settlements.

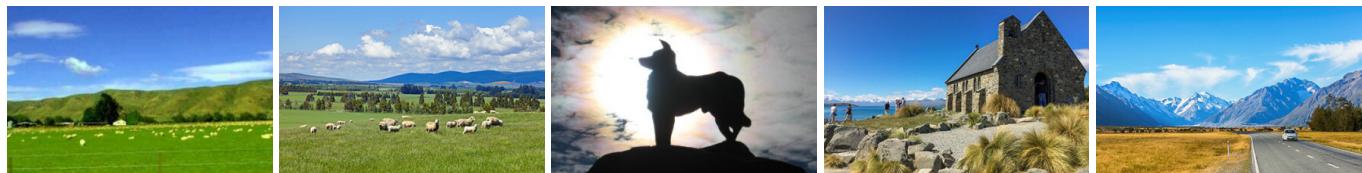
Your accommodation: Beaufort House Akaroa

This beautiful historic home and garden has been lovingly restored with old world charm and modern conveniences offering quality accommodation. Relax on the verandahs or wander around the gracious traditional garden containing protected trees, rare camellias, roses and a small private vineyard. Secluded and private it is just a short stroll to the village and harbour.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 13



Akaroa to Aoraki Mt Cook National Park

Today you head into the heart of the South Island. Crossing the vast Canterbury Plains along the inland scenic route the first township of Geraldine offers an ideal refreshment stop before you head 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, the first of the large Southern Lakes. It's a great place to take a scenic flight, enjoy a guided horse trek, a boat trip on the pristine lake, or just enjoy the magnificent views.

Lake Pukaki is just another 30 minutes from Lake Tekapo and from here you can be rewarded with spectacular views of the full length of the lake and into Aoraki Mt Cook National Park. In Mt Cook Village a myriad of activities are available from glacier landings by ski plane or helicopter, kayaking on a glacial lake and a host of walks to suit all abilities and time frames. At The Hermitage Hotel, the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre is a must-see.

Glacier Explorers

Experience 500-year-old icebergs up close on the Aoraki-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.

The Panorama Room 3-course Dinner with The Hermitage Hotel

Since first opening its doors in 1969, The Panorama Room has gained a reputation as being one of the best restaurants in New Zealand. This reputation is reflected in the numerous awards the restaurant has received over the years. A simple philosophy of using just the freshest, local ingredients, in particular from New Zealand's South Island, is still the secret to its success today. The menu has a strong international influence and reflects both the establishment's taste and the fact that most of the chefs have travelled and worked widely throughout the world.

Your accommodation: Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium

The Hermitage Hotel ringed by magnificent snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps, is a world-renowned tourist destination and has been an icon of superior accommodation and dining since 1884.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 14



Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Dunedin

Leave Aoraki Mt Cook National Park and travel past Twizel, one of the locations for the Lord of the Rings films. Go through Omarama, the gliding capital of New Zealand. Continue down the Waitaki Valley follow the hydro power generating system to the rural town of Kurow, home to the divine Valli Wines. Stop for a sip or continue on to the east coast. Stretch your legs in Oamaru, known for its white stone buildings constructed with the local Oamaru Stone and Steampunk influence. If you were a little late off the mark this morning you may get the chance to see the blue penguins come ashore at dusk. Continue south down the coast to Moeraki, and take a detour towards the beach to see the Moeraki Boulders, a unique geological feature well worth a look. As you arrive in Dunedin, take in the city's Edwardian and Scottish heritage reflected in the buildings around the city centre The Octagon.

Dunedin

Dunedin, known in Māori as Ōtepoti, is referred to as the "Edinburgh of the Southern Hemisphere". The city has a rightly deserved reputation as one of the best-preserved Victorian and Edwardian cities in the Southern Hemisphere. Of particular note is Dunedin Railway Station, built 1904 - 1906, and St Paul's Cathedral in the Octagon. The Otago Museum is renowned for its Māori and Pacific Island collections and natural history displays. A visit to the Speights, New Zealand's oldest brewery, is also considered a must while in Dunedin. The Botanic Gardens is a great spot and at the right time of year, you can witness the Rhododendron Dell in bloom. The Otago Peninsula is the only home in the world to the Northern Royal Albatross. The Peninsula can be visited for the day from Dunedin and the stunning harbor landscape and wildlife are worth exploring. High among the rolling hills of the Peninsula is Larnach Castle, the grand home of an early politician. Construction of the castle began in 1871 and was completed 12 years later. From here, views out to sea and back towards the city emphasize the singular beauty of Dunedin and its jewel-like harbor.

Dinner at Camp Estate, Larnach Castle

Keeping with the historical setting of Larnach Castle, a four-course dinner is offered in a grand Castle Dining Room. This is a trust-the-chef experience where you may indulge in incredible meals and meet other guests. The menu reflects local meats and vegetables, served in a traditional New Zealand-style cuisine with the opportunity to pair with regional wines.

Your accommodation: Camp Estate at Larnach Castle

A luxurious country house built from blue stone and features a spectacular marble staircase. The modern rooms are all double glazed and the reception rooms are all heated by open fires and underfloor heating. Staying at Camp Estate includes entry to Larnach Castle and the grounds.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 15



Explore Otago Peninsula

The Otago Peninsula extends from the southern side of Otago Harbour, just minutes from the city center. A short drive takes you past scenic bays and picturesque farmland. Renowned as one of New Zealand's premier eco-tourism destinations, the peninsula is home to the iconic Royal Albatross, with Taiaroa Head at its tip hosting the world's only mainland breeding colony of these majestic birds. In addition to the albatross, the area is rich in wildlife, including New Zealand fur seals, sea lions, and rare yellow-eyed penguins.. You can explore a variety of walking tracks, enjoy breathtaking views, and stunning beaches, and visit the magnificent Larnach Castle, a cultural highlight of the region.

Penguin Tour with The Opera

Learn about the endangered Yellow Eyed Penguin when you visit The Opera - Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance, a private conservation reserve dedicated to ensuring the survival of this unique species. The project is entirely funded by guided tours which allow the conservation team to engage in habitat restoration, predator control, a research program, and an on-site rehabilitation facility.

On your tour, you will learn about the issues the Yellow Eyed Penguin faces, their life cycle, and how the project is carried out. Your experience will begin in a theatre before moving to the rehabilitation center where penguins may be seen up close. You'll take a short bus trip over to the reserve and be led on foot approx 2km by your guide through a system of covered trenches to view hides that allow access to the living and breeding habitat of this very shy bird without disturbing them. There is also an opportunity to meet other animals that reside in the reserve including fur seals, sea lions, and several species of shore and land birds.

Dinner at Camp Estate, Larnach Castle

Keeping with the historical setting of Larnach Castle, a four-course dinner is offered in a grand Castle Dining Room. This is a trust-the-chef experience where you may indulge in incredible meals and meet other guests. The menu reflects local meats and vegetables, served in a traditional New Zealand-style cuisine with the opportunity to pair with regional wines.

Your accommodation: Camp Estate at Larnach Castle

A luxurious country house built from blue stone and features a spectacular marble staircase. The modern rooms are all double glazed and the reception rooms are all heated by open fires and underfloor heating. Staying at Camp Estate includes entry to Larnach Castle and the grounds.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 16



Dunedin to Te Anau (via Invercargill)

The drive to Te Anau takes you through classic Southland farming scenery. Head off-the-beaten-track today and follow the coastline instead of the inland route. Go through The Catlins area and be sure to take a detour to Kaka Point to view its majestic cliffs and pounding surf. If time permits, keep driving towards Nugget Point, iconic for its steep headland with a lighthouse perched atop. Continue through Invercargill to Riverton and Colac Bay, and then head north to Manapouri. From here you can embark on a day or overnight cruise to the remote Doubtful Sound, renowned for its natural beauty. Just a short way further will bring you to your lakeside destination of Te Anau, gateway to Fiordland National Park and Milford Sound.

Te Anau

It is the gateway to Fiordland National Park and a perfect base to visit Piopiotahi-Milford Sound. The Milford Road originates here, and this is arguably one of the most scenic stretches of highway in the country. Te Anau sits on the shores of spectacular Lake Te Anau, which reaches depths of 417 meters. Te Anau Township is the starting point for many walking tracks, including two of New Zealand's Great Walks, the Milford track and the Kepler track. Apart from hiking, you could go kayaking, lake cruising, fishing, or exploring Te Anau Glowworm Caves. You could go for a bike ride alongside the lake towards Lake Manapouri, on a popular Lake to Lake biking route. Along the way, you will pass a bird sanctuary specialising in Takahe, and other native birds.

Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

Begin your Te Anau Glowworm experience with a scenic cruise across Lake Te Anau on board the luxury catamaran, Luminosa, to the western side of the lake. On arrival, you'll enter the caves through Cavern House, where informative displays detail the history of this 12,000 year old underground network. You'll then explore by limestone pathway while your guide points out hidden whirlpools, sculpted rock formations, and a rushing underground waterfall. See a magical display of thousands of glowworms as you glide through the darkness in a small boat.

Your accommodation: Fiordland Lodge

Set in a World Heritage area Fiordland Lodge offers the discerning traveller comfort and privacy. The elegance and splendour of the Lodge is mirrored in the breathtaking views of Lake Te Anau and Fiordland. Private and serene, the Lodge is perfect for relaxation, or as a base for your Fiordland experience.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 17



Te Anau to Manapouri

This short drive takes you along the lake edge of Te Anau and across lush southern farmlands to the small township of Lake Manapouri, gateway to Doubtful Sound.

Doubtful Sound Fiordland Navigator Overnight Cruise

Take in the tranquillity of remote Doubtful Sound on this unique overnight wilderness cruise. Beginning in Manapouri with a short boat ride across the lake, you'll be taken by coach over the Wilmot Pass to Deep Cove, Doubtful Sound. Board the Fiordland Navigator, a purpose-built vessel designed like a traditional coastal trading scow. Be accommodated in a private cabin with an ensuite bathroom or a quad-share bunk room with shared bathroom facilities. The Navigator has a large spacious deck for viewing the scenery and wildlife as well as a dining saloon, bar and observation lounge. As you take in the stunning scenery of the Fiord, you'll be provided with a running commentary of the area and its history, points of interest and wildlife. You'll have the opportunity to see dolphins, fur seals and, if you're lucky rare Fiordland penguins. After anchoring in a sheltered cove, choose to explore the shoreline by kayak or stabicraft, or if you're really brave take a dip in the water. In the evening enjoy a buffet dinner prepared on board and served in the dining saloon. Enjoy beer and fine wines from the licensed bar, and spend time star gazing on the upper deck. Following hearty cooked breakfast the next morning you will spend your remaining time exploring other parts of the fiord before returning to Deep Cove for the trip back to Manapouri.

Your accommodation: Fiordland Navigator Overnight Boat in Doubtful Sound

The Fiordland Navigator is purpose built for cruising in the fiords. The vessel offers spacious viewing decks, a comfortable dining saloon and observation lounge.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 18



Doubtful Overnight Cruise return and drive from Manapouri to Wanaka

Your Doubtful Sound Overnight Cruise concludes as you return to Manapouri around midday. Once back, take a moment to enjoy the serene charm of this seaside village before setting off on your journey to Wanaka. Drive through the rolling tussock-covered landscapes, passing Mossburn, known as the deer capital of New Zealand. Heading north, you'll traverse the picturesque Southland countryside toward Lake Wakatipu. As the road winds along the lake's edge, you'll be dwarfed by the towering Remarkables mountain range, signalling your approach to Queenstown, the adventure capital of New Zealand. Consider a detour to the historic gold-mining town of Arrowtown is worth a detour (well signposted) before you head over the Crown Range Road. At 1076 metres (3530 feet); it is the highest sealed road in the country and offers spectacular views over the Wakatipu basin from one of the many vantage points. Approaching Wanaka the wonderful alpine lake welcomes you to the town. Despite its size, Wanaka has a wide variety of activities available. In winter it is without a doubt New Zealand's premier ski destination with its very close location to Treble Cone and Cardrona. Mt Aspiring National Park sits on the western edge of the lake and offers some wonderful walking tracks for all abilities. Fishing, sailing and kitesurfing are popular pastimes on the lake and the many beach access points provide some great picnic and relaxing spots.

Wānaka

Nestled on the shores of one of New Zealand's largest lakes and framed by the stunning Southern Alps. Wānaka is an alpine village that perfectly blends adventure, breathtaking scenery, and a laid-back vibe. In winter, Wānaka transforms into a bustling hub as snow sports enthusiasts flock to its renowned ski fields, Treble Cone and Cardrona, as well as cross-country at Snow Farm. As the gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park, it offers endless opportunities for hikers, with trails winding through remote wilderness, majestic peaks, and serene river valleys. Closer to town, you'll find a network of scenic walking tracks, such as the popular Mount Iron Track, and from the lakefront, it is a short walk to "That Wanaka Tree". For thrill-seekers, Wānaka is an adrenaline playground, offering skydiving, paragliding, downhill biking, rock climbing, and jet boating.

Your accommodation: Lime Tree Lodge

Set on a ten acre estate just outside Lake Wanaka, Lime Tree Lodge offers luxury boutique accommodation with stunning 360-degree uninterrupted mountain views.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 19



Guided Scenic Walk with Aspiring Guides - Lunch Included

Wander through Wanaka's breathtaking rugged landscapes and enjoy being surrounded by stunning scenery, mountain tops, and glaciers in Mount Aspiring National Park with an expert guide beside you. This day hike will be tailored to your abilities and will include a packed lunch to be consumed somewhere off the beaten track. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see [here](#).

Your accommodation: Lime Tree Lodge

Set on a ten acre estate just outside Lake Wanaka, Lime Tree Lodge offers luxury boutique accommodation with stunning 360-degree uninterrupted mountain views.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 20



Lake Cruise and Island Nature Walk with Eco Wanaka

Lying close to the centre of Lake Wanaka is Mou Waho Island Nature Reserve. A unique glacial remnant of the last ice age, the island is also the historic site of early shipbuilding and used to be a stopping place for the steamers and log rafts that once plied the lake. Accessible from Wanaka by a 35-minute boat cruise, the landing is on the eastern side of the island where the remnants of the early settlement remain; a stone wharf and a hut. A well-formed track leads from the landing and climbs steadily through native bush to near the top of Tyrwhitt Peak. Just before the top, we see Arethusa Pool, a small lake on the island with small islands in it - very intriguing! From the top, we have a sweeping 360-degree view of Lake Wanaka, its surrounding mountains and valleys, and below Arethusa Pool. The perfect spot to stop for tea or coffee. Going back down the track gives us more time to take in our surroundings, listening to and watching the lively bird-life, and just enjoying this unique wildlife reserve. You will feel well rewarded as you re-join the boat for the cruise back to Wanaka. Total cruise time is 1.5 hours. The trip runs subject to weather and lake conditions. Depending on the planting season, you can help The Reforestation of Mou Waho by planting a tree.

Wanaka to Lake Moeraki

The route follows the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea before you enter the township of Makarora, the gateway to Mt. Aspiring National Park and the Blue Pools here are a wonderful 30 minute walk through pristine native beech forest. Descending into Mt. Aspiring National Park and towards the Haast Pass, crashing rivers and waterfalls are around every corner. Crossing the Haast River you are now truly on the wild West Coast, a 600 kilometre stretch of bush, rainforest and podocarp forest. The tranquil bush surroundings of Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki are just a further few extra kilometres.

Your accommodation: Wilderness Lodge, Lake Moeraki

Few places on earth can match the unique natural setting of the Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki, in the heart of the 2.7 million hectares South West New Zealand World Heritage Area. Spectacular beaches that are home to fur seals and crested penguins, untouched lowland rainforests spread between pristine lakes and rivers which drain the snow-capped Southern Alps.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 21



Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki

Twice daily complimentary activities are led by expert naturalists and introduce guests to the area's remarkable natural history (approx. 1-hour duration each). If you'd prefer to a guide to explore further afield, there are other, charged experiences available. These trips are generally 3 to 4 hours in length and are a great way to learn about wild New Zealand. There are also great self-guided options available, including a 10km network of walking trails, kayaking on the calm waters of Lake Moeraki, and of course, relaxing and soaking up the views.

Your accommodation: Wilderness Lodge, Lake Moeraki

Few places on earth can match the unique natural setting of the Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki, in the heart of the 2.7 million hectares South West New Zealand World Heritage Area. Spectacular beaches that are home to fur seals and crested penguins, untouched lowland rainforests spread between pristine lakes and rivers which drain the snow-capped Southern Alps.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 22



Lake Moeraki to Franz Josef Glacier

Heading North along the mighty West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beach occasionally. Keep heading North and be sure to enjoy the view of the everchanging towering snowcapped Southern Alps Mountain Range. If you are wanting to view Fox Glacier on foot, the start of the track is 2kms before Fox Glacier Township the walk is an easy grade and will take two hours to return. Fox Glacier welcomes you to the glacier region, take a short 5-minute drive west to see the impressive Lake Matheson famous for its reflections of snow-capped mountains. From Fox, you have a 45-minute drive over the Fox Hills to Franz Josef Township.

Franz Josef

Franz Josef, named after both the local village and the nearby glacier, holds special significance in Māori culture as "Ko Roimata o Hine Hukatere" – The Tears of the Ice Maiden. This rare glacier is one of only three in the world that descends from alpine heights into a temperate rainforest, almost reaching sea level. New Zealand is home to two of these unique glaciers, Franz Josef and Fox Glacier, both highly accessible and popular with visitors. The best ways to experience the glacier are through scenic flights or, for the adventurous, a heli-hike. You can also enjoy glacier views with a short drive from the village and walking tracks. Beyond the glacier, Franz Josef offers a wealth of adventure activities and beautiful forest and alpine walks, making it a must-visit destination.

Your accommodation: Westwood Lodge

Westwood is a purpose built lodge, crafted entirely from wood and exquisitely decorated throughout. The lounge is the place to meet to watch the Southern Alps turn a soft pink in the setting sun.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 23



Franz Josef Glacier Helihike with Franz Josef Glacier Guides

After a thrilling scenic flight, high above the rugged terrain, you will land on the glacier, ready to undertake a guided glacier hike. Your friendly guide will lead you through some of the most pristine and awe-inspiring glacial scenery in the world. Your guide will choose your route carefully as you go and, with an eye for the most spectacular ice formations, you'll soon be making your way through an extraordinary landscape of towering peaks and glistening blue ice. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity prior to travel. For more information please see [here](#).

One Hour Private Tub with Waiho Hot Tubs

Relax and unwind in the soothing comfort of fresh, warm water and aromatic wood smoke. Enjoy your own private tubs, nestled in a lush rainforest setting on New Zealand's West Coast. These wood-fired hot tubs combine the soothing comfort of warm water with the unique atmosphere of wood smoke to give you an unforgettable experience.

Your accommodation: Westwood Lodge

Westwood is a purpose built lodge, crafted entirely from wood and exquisitely decorated throughout. The lounge is the place to meet to watch the Southern Alps turn a soft pink in the setting sun.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 24



Franz Josef to Arthur's Pass National Park

Driving north on State Highway 6 you pass through many small West Coast towns. Hari Hari is the township that Guy Menzies decided to land in (or rather crash land) as he became the first person to fly solo across the Tasman. Ross is the site of an old gold mining town and some of the old buildings remain. You can even pan for gold. The craft and gift stores in Hokitika are excellent with a great range of locally made items and if you want to explore further here then the Hokitika Gorge is worthy of a 50 minute detour.

State Highway 73 is the main road between the West Coast and Christchurch and the scenery is spectacular, even in the rain and there is a pretty good chance of rain in the high alpine mountains. With hundreds of waterfalls cascading down the bush-clad hillsides, it's not a road to be rushed. Originally the road was a pass used by Maori as they made their seasonal passage to look for the greenstone abundant in the West Coast mountains. When the gold rush hit the West Coast in the late 1800's then a road was quickly developed and not soon after the train. Today the main use for the track is transporting coal to Lyttelton Harbour but once a day the now world famous TranzAlpine Scenic Train takes a few hundred tourists and visitors between the two oceans.

The Otira Gorge on the Western side of Arthur's Pass features a remarkable piece of engineering with the road passing high on a viaduct through this large valley. This is a recent addition to the route as the old road was washed away in a rock fall a few years ago. There are numerous lookout points giving great views of the valley and its engineering feat but watch out for the local residents, the kea. this bird is the world's only alpine parrot and can be extremely cheeky.

Arthur's Pass Township is a bustling place in the peak season with many walkers and adventurers using it as a base for the forays into the mountains of Arthur's pass National Park. The Department of Conservation centre here has an excellent display of the local history and is a great source of information for the many short walks in the area.

Arthur's Pass National Park

Arthur's Pass National Park straddles the Southern Alps and because of this, offers a landscape of contrast. The Western regions of the park benefit from the high rainfall that drops from the prevailing winds as it ascends the main divide, creating lush rainforests. The east is much drier and dominated by beech forest. Between the two lies the mountainous areas of the Southern Alps, home to kea and snow tussock. As well as the natural wonders of the park there is a long history of human presence, beginning with early Māori who used the passes to travel between the east and west coasts to trade pounamu-Greenstone. In 1864 Arthur Dobson surveyed the area to create a reliable route and despite his advice that it was 'almost impossible' a large number of men carved a rudimentary road through the Southern Alps - completing it in 1866. The recent Otira Viaduct was a major engineering achievement and greatly minimises the hazards of travelling this way. The West Coast goldfields were the driver for the creation of the road and also led to Arthur's Pass village being developed.

The village still exists and provides amenities including a store, cafes, restaurants and the Department of Conservation visitor centre. There are several ways to explore the National Park, including hiking, caving and bird-watching. Visit the DOC visitor centre, to be advised on the most suitable walks for your ability and the weather conditions;

Your accommodation: Wilderness Lodge, Arthurs Pass

Wilderness Lodge sits on its own 3,000-hectare nature reserve and merino sheep farm and is surrounded by the mountains of Arthur's Pass National Park. Join nature guides to walk, canoe and discover kea parrots, giant buttercups, pygmy forests, alpine flower gardens and waterfalls.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 25



Explore Wilderness Lodge, Arthur's Pass

Nestled in mountain beech forest, midway between Christchurch and the West Coast, Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass offers stylish accommodation, great food, and warm hospitality in a spectacular mountain setting.

Set on a 4000 acre working sheep farm and nature reserve in the heart of the Southern Alps, a daily program of guided activities will be the highlight of your visit. Join naturalist and farmer guides to hike alpine trails, kayak wildlife refuge lakes, and experience life on a working farm.

Your accommodation: Wilderness Lodge, Arthurs Pass

Wilderness Lodge sits on its own 3,000-hectare nature reserve and merino sheep farm and is surrounded by the mountains of Arthur's Pass National Park. Join nature guides to walk, canoe and discover kea parrots, giant buttercups, pygmy forests, alpine flower gardens and waterfalls.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 26



Arthur's Pass to Christchurch

Descending into the valleys of the Waimakariri this drive offers some spectacular views of the braided river valleys. Castle Hill Scenic Reserve sits in limestone country and the area is dotted with remarkable rock outcrops. A popular place with climbers it was also an important place for Maori in past years as they provided shelter on their seasonal journeys between the coasts. There is a network of walking paths allowing you to explore.

Descending onto the Canterbury Plains the rich farmland that attracted and helped settlers prosper becomes apparent as you head into the city of Christchurch.

Return Your Vehicle to Christchurch Airport

It's time to return your rental car and let the South Island journey come to an end. If time allows spend the day exploring more of Christchurch, we'd suggest a leisurely drive up the Port Hills for some great sites and then over to the harbour of Lyttleton, before circling through the tunnel and back to the airport to continue your journey home.

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:	Self Drive Tour (FTNZ ONLY)
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	26
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Horizon by SkyCity
Day 2	Horizon by SkyCity
Day 3	Waitomo Boutique Lodge
Day 4	Waitomo Boutique Lodge
Day 5	On the Point
Day 6	On the Point
Day 7	Bolton Hotel Wellington
Day 8	Bolton Hotel Wellington
Day 9	14th Lane Urban Hotel
Day 10	Kaikoura Boutique Hotel
Day 11	The George Hotel
Day 12	Beaufort House Akaroa
Day 13	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 14	Camp Estate at Larnach Castle
Day 15	Camp Estate at Larnach Castle
Day 16	Fiordland Lodge
Day 17	Fiordland Navigator Overnight Boat in Doubtful Sound
Day 18	Lime Tree Lodge
Day 19	Lime Tree Lodge
Day 20	Wilderness Lodge, Lake Moeraki
Day 21	Wilderness Lodge, Lake Moeraki
Day 22	Westwood Lodge
Day 23	Westwood Lodge
Day 24	Wilderness Lodge, Arthurs Pass
Day 25	Wilderness Lodge, Arthurs Pass