

Great Journeys of New Zealand - Signature Inspirational Alps Tour (Southbound) 2025/2026

A meticulously crafted guided journey from Christchurch to Queenstown, designed for an effortless exploration of New Zealand's South Island. This signature tour highlights the majestic Southern Alps and the rugged West Coast, offering a seamless blend of iconic experiences and breathtaking scenery. Enjoy the legendary TranzAlpine train journey, delve into the cultural and natural wonders of the West Coast including sacred pounamu and ancient forests, and discover the stunning beauty of Haast Pass. Take a serene cruise through the awe-inspiring Milford Sound and a charming experience aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw steamship on Lake Wakatipu. This tour allows you to simply relax and soak in the beauty without any planning hassles.

Starts in: Christchurch
Finishes in: Queenstown
Length: 7 days / 6 nights
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: TranzAlpine Train from Christchurch to Greymouth
Included: Pounamu (Greenstone) Experience & Hokitika Gorge Walk
Included: VIP West Coast Wildlife Centre Guided Experience
Included: Haast River Safari
Included: Scenic journey through the Southern Lakes
Included: Milford Sound Day Excursion
Included: TSS Earnslaw Cruise & Farm Show
6 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners

Day 1



Welcome to Christchurch

Welcome to Christchurch - New Zealand's Garden City! The largest city in the South Island, Christchurch is known for its historical earthquake in 2011 and how it rebuilt itself into a charming, multicultural city that blends modern architecture and technology with the existing 19th-century Anglican influence. After checking into your hotel and reading your welcome letter from your Tour Director, head out and explore all that Christchurch has to offer. This is the perfect opportunity to wander through the enticing stalls at Riverside Market or explore the botanical gardens before heading to the art gallery, museums and other city attractions. Your journey will officially begin as you join your fellow travelers and Tour Director at this evening's welcome dinner.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Dinner

Day 2



The TranzAlpine Scenic Train

The moment has arrived to experience the world-famous TranzAlpine, indulging in the Scenic Plus service as you journey through the breathtaking Southern Alps and emerge onto the untamed West Coast. On this unforgettable escape, marvel at dramatic alpine vistas, glide along the ice-fed Waimakariri River, and cross the Great Divide. As the landscape transforms before your eyes, you'll also traverse the historic Otira Tunnel - an engineering triumph over a century old. Along the way, enjoy regionally inspired food and rich commentary that enhances your Scenic Plus experience. Arriving in Greymouth, you'll be met by a private coach and taken even further off the beaten track. Enjoy a custom Greenstone experience - a special insight into the cultural significance and artistry of pounamu (New Zealand jade). Then stretch your legs on a guided walk through the stunning Hokitika Gorge, where vivid turquoise waters wind through lush native bush.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 3



Explore the West Coast

This morning, your West Coast journey continues with a VIP experience at the West Coast Wildlife Centre - a special, guided walkthrough designed exclusively for Great Journeys New Zealand guests. Go behind the scenes to learn about the conservation efforts for the rare Rowi kiwi and discover the secrets of this fascinating native species in a truly immersive encounter. After your wildlife experience, enjoy free time in Franz Josef to explore at your own pace. Take a short scenic walk to the glacier viewpoint, browse the charming local shops, or choose from optional adventures such as a thrilling helicopter flight over the glacier or a serene wilderness tour through the rainforest. This evening, rejoin your group for a culinary highlight: a four-course dinner at Te Waonui Forest Retreat, where locally sourced ingredients and refined flavours are served in a tranquil rainforest setting.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 4



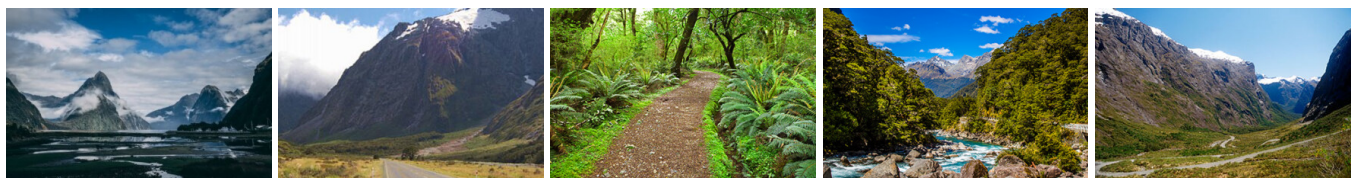
Explore the Southern Lakes

Today you will explore the Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey of about five hours to Queenstown, will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. While aboard an exciting river boat and private coach, marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and majestic glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems. Stop in unique locations that only locals know about. After an exciting plunge into the history of this gold rush village, you will arrive in the world-famous resort town of Queenstown!

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 5



Explore Milford Sound - The 8th Wonder of the World

Charge your camera and prepare for one of the most awe-inspiring adventures of your journey. Today, you'll travel to the majestic Milford Sound / Piopiotahi, often called the 8th Wonder of the World, aboard our exclusive Cruise Milford Coach service. Relax in comfort as we wind through native rainforests, alpine meadows, and mirror-like reflective pools - complete with custom stops tailored to your group's interests. On arrival, step aboard your boutique cruise and journey deep into the heart of the fjord. Feel the mist from Bowen and Stirling Falls, marvel at the vertical face of Mitre Peak, and take in the dramatic beauty carved by ancient glaciers. For those looking to elevate the experience, there's an optional scenic flight available for your return - soaring above the Southern Alps for a breathtaking aerial perspective of Fiordland. After this unforgettable day, return to Queenstown for a relaxing evening at your own pace.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 6



Explore Queenstown

Queenstown truly has something for everyone. Personalise your day to be as active or relaxed as you'd like. Whether it's exploring Walter Peak on a horse trekking adventure, hopping on the gondola for inspiring views, or sipping wine in Gibbston Valley, there is no shortage of activities to delight your senses. Enjoy a 'final hurrah' this evening as we board the TSS Earnslaw Steamship Cruise, dinner, and show. Reflect on your great adventure with your fellow travellers as you cruise to your dining experience at Walter peak overlooking the beautiful Table Bay. Sit back and watch a true Kiwi experience as you learn about sheep shearing and dog herding in this beautiful setting. This evening will truly encapsulate your great journey as a truly New Zealand highlight. Not ready to call it a night? Sip cocktails and indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife alongside the sparkling Lake Wakatipu.

Your accommodation: 4-4.5 Star Hotel

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7



Depart Queenstown

Your journey will end after enjoying a final breakfast with your fellow travellers. You will be transferred to Queenstown Airport for your departing flight.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Guided Coach & Train Tours
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Queenstown
Tour length:	7
Accommodation:	Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 2	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 3	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 4	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 5	4-4.5 Star Hotel
Day 6	4-4.5 Star Hotel