



Southern Highlights Tour

This short South Island highlights tour takes you through the countryside of Canterbury, Otago, Southland and the West Coast. Along the way you'll pass alpine lakes, enjoy views of the Southern Alps, explore the historic city of Dunedin and ride the world famous TranzAlpine Scenic Train.

Starts in: Queenstown
Finishes in: Queenstown
Length: 8days / 7nights
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: 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: Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation
Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch
Included activity: Shared Transfer from Christchurch Train Station to Christchurch CBD
Accommodation with Christchurch Touring Company
Meals included: 7 breakfasts

Day 1



Private Transfer Queenstown Airport to your Accommodation

On arrival you will be met by a private driver and delivered to your Queenstown accommodation.

Welcome to Queenstown

Renowned for its adrenaline inducing activities Queenstown is synonymous with adventure. Parked on the shores of Lake Wakatipu this small alpine town is nestled below soaring vistas of The Remarkables Mountain Range. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand's crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. Spend time on the Gibbston wine trail and end with a meal at Michelin star chef Josh Emett's restaurant, Rata. Take a trip down memory lane on a 100 year old steamship the TSS Earnslaw. Soak in the scenery on your walk around the lake, or venture further afield into Fiordland National Park. Head over the hill to resort town Wanaka, or re-live scenes from Lord Of The Rings by four wheel drive. But - if you really do want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon swing or Zip line the Gondola. Just be sure it's done on an empty stomach & don't say we didn't warn you!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Gondola and 3 Luge Rides with Skyline Queenstown

In the heart of Queenstown, located 450 metres above town in the Ben Lomond Scenic Reserve is the Skyline Complex. A gondola ride to the summit makes for awe-inspiring views of the city surround. Arrive at the complex and wander the outside viewing decks for a picture perfect outlook. Then onto the Luge! The 800 metre luge track offers an exhilarating journey through banked corners, tunnels and dippers.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Shotover Jet Canyon Jet Boat Ride

Shotover Jet is the only company permitted to operate in the Shotover River Canyons. It's a thrilling ride! Skim past rocky outcrops at close range in your Shotover Jet 'Big Red', as you twist and turn through the narrow canyons at breathtaking speeds. And a major highlight - hold tight for the world-famous Shotover Jet full 360-degree spins!

Your accommodation: Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview

Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview is located on Frankton Road, the main arterial route into Queenstown - With the centre of town only a short 10-minute stroll away.



Day 2



Collect Rental Car

Choose a car to best suit your needs from our fantastic rental car range. From compact economy, hatchbacks to prestige SUVs.

Queenstown to Fox Glacier

Crossing the Crown Range the highest sealed road in the country, you'll pass through the alpine town of Wanaka. Following the shores of both Lake Wanaka and Hawea, you'll enter the township of Makarora, the gateway to Mt. Aspiring National Park. Stretch your legs on a walk to Blue Pools, a ten-minute stroll through lush rainforest. Marvel at the native beech and countless waterfalls as you continue toward the West Coast.

Crossing the Haast River you are now truly in the Wild West, a 600-kilometre stretch of bush, rainforest and podocarp forest. Continue to arrive at Fox Glacier, your destination for the night. Home to the largest glacier on the west coast, Fox is 13 kilometres long and ends in rainforest only 250 metres above sea level.

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

Experience the breathtaking beauty of not one, but two spectacular glaciers—Fox Glacier and Franz Josef Glacier. Get up close to their stunning neve and intricate ice formations, with a snowfield landing that's sure to be a highlight of your journey. Capture incredible photos, make a snowball, and create unforgettable memories during this 30-minute scenic flight with a snow landing. If weather conditions prevent your flight, your booking can be easily transferred to a similar tour with The Helicopter Line in Queenstown or Mt Cook.

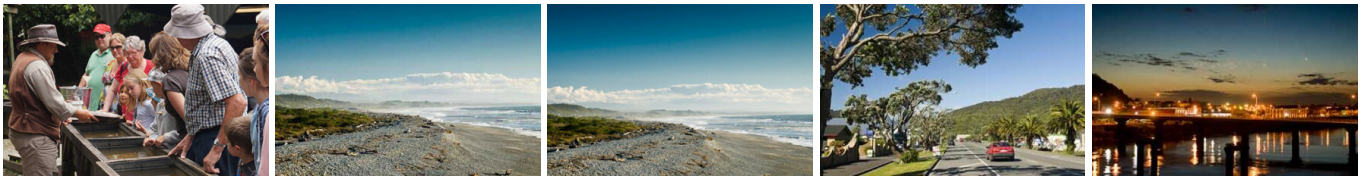
Your accommodation: Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier

The Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier is nestled at the base of the majestic Southern Alps, in the Westland World Heritage Park. Originally built in 1928 it has been refurbished to retain its charming atmosphere.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Fox Glacier to Greymouth Train Station (Return Rental Car)

The drive north from Fox and Franz Josef takes you through the historic gold mining region of Ross and the town of Hokitika, a great place to explore the craft stores, in particular the jade or greenstone. The largest town on the West Coast, Greymouth is also the starting point for the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Drop your rental car at the Greymouth Train Station depot located inside the train station building and board the TranzAlpine train.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Considered one of the world's great train journeys, the TranzAlpine Scenic Train takes you from Greymouth to Christchurch. Travel across the South Island from the west to the east coast through Arthur's Pass National Park. From the comfort of your carriage see lush beech forest, deep river valleys and the spectacular peaks of the Southern Alps. Descend to the windswept Canterbury Plains before arriving in the city of Christchurch.

Shared Transfer from Christchurch Train Station to Christchurch CBD Accommodation with Christchurch Touring Company

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.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Collect Rental Car

Choose a car to best suit your needs from our fantastic rental car range. From compact economy, hatchbacks to prestige SUVs.

Christchurch to Twizel (via 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, Geraldine offers an ideal stop before you head into Mackenzie country. Ascending Burkes Pass, you'll enter New Zealand's high country. The picturesque town of Lake Tekapo, is the first of the large Southern Lakes on your journey. Enjoy the magnificent views from the shore, boat or air by taking a scenic flight. On arriving at Lake Pukaki, you'll be rewarded with a spectacular views of Aoraki Mt Cook, towering over the lake. Driving along the lake, you'll find your destination, Mt Cook Village. Enjoy Aoraki Mt Cook National Park by having a glacier landing with ski plane or helicopter, kayaking on a glacial lake or by walking one of the many tracks. At The Hermitage Hotel the Sir Edmund Hillary Centre is a must see. Return along the shores of Lake Pukaki to Twizel, your base for the evening.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre Museum and Theatre Explorer Pass with Hermitage

A tribute to New Zealand's Sir Edmund Hillary, a humanitarian, ambassador, and one of the world's greatest explorers. The centre showcases the Aoraki Mount Cook region, the history of climbing, and early transport used throughout the region. This comprehensive museum details the life of Sir Edmund Hillary, the Hermitage, and provides access to the 126-seat custom-designed theatre. Check out the daily film schedule which includes 3D Movies, documentaries, and 360-degree digital dome features.

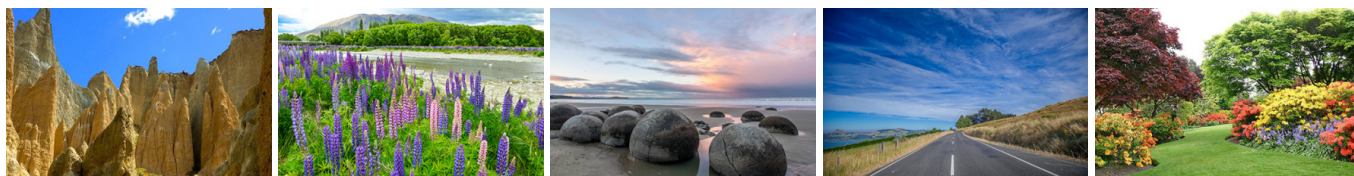
Your accommodation: Distinction MacKenzie Country Hotel, Twizel

Located in the heart of the Mackenzie region the hotel's natural stone architecture compliments the mountains and rivers of New Zealand's Southern Alps. With 108 well equipped rooms the hotel can offer every facility needed for a comfortable stay.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Twizel to Dunedin

The next town south is Oamaru and the Wrinkly Rams cafe makes an interesting coffee stop. Heading down the Waitaki valley, from Oamaru, you follow the hydro power generating system towards the east coast. The town of Oamaru is most famous for its white stone buildings, constructed with the local 'Oamaru Stone'. From the harbour, you can see blue penguins come ashore at dusk as they return from their day at sea. Further south the Moeraki Boulders are a unique geological feature and worth the short detour to the beach to view. Arriving into Dunedin, you can appreciate the city's Edwardian and Scottish heritage through its fine buildings particularly around the Octagon.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Monarch Wildlife Cruise from Wellers Rock

An unforgettable experience viewing rare and fascinating wildlife. Board the Monarch Boat and take in the fascinating sight of the Northern Royal Albatross as it comes into nest on the spectacular cliffs of Taiaroa, Otago Peninsula. You'll also see eight other species of birds including sooty shearwaters and petrels as well as sea lions and fur seals and if you're lucky dolphins and whales.

Your accommodation: Kingsgate Hotel Dunedin

Located right in the heart of the city, Kingsgate Hotel Dunedin has the CBD right at its doorstep. The Otago Museum is just a stroll away, while the beach is a mere 10-minute drive. This hotel boasts sunny north-facing guest rooms, brimming with amenities. All rooms feature balconies, an excellent vantage point to view the city.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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.

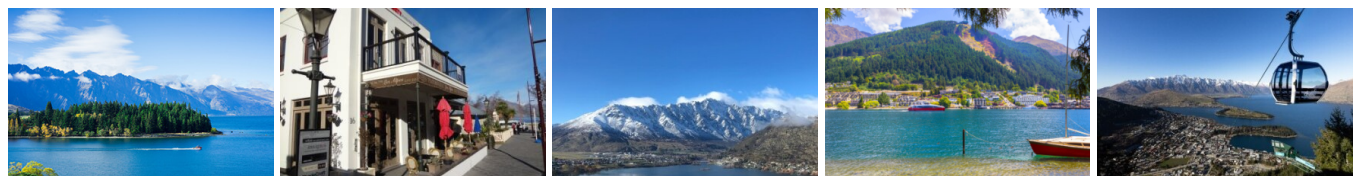
Your accommodation: Distinction Luxmore Hotel

The perfect base for all your Fiordland travel, Distinction Luxmore Hotel provides comfortable accommodation right in the heart of Te Anau.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Te Anau to Queenstown

Journey across expansive tussock lands en route to Queenstown. Pass through Mossburn, renowned as the deer capital of New Zealand, and continue through the picturesque Southland countryside. As the road begins to trace the edge of Lake Wakatipu, marvel at the breathtaking views from the Devil's Staircase. Finally, approach Queenstown, the adventure capital of New Zealand, with the Remarkables mountain range standing majestically in the backdrop.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TSS Earnslaw Cruise and Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Dinner

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 ambiance 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, or New Zealand cheeses. 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.

Your accommodation: Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview

Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview is located on Frankton Road, the main arterial route into Queenstown - With the centre of town only a short 10-minute stroll away.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Return your vehicle to Queenstown Airport

Explore more of Queenstown before dropping your rental car at the airport depot and continuing your onward journey.

Farewell from Aotearoa-New Zealand

Bid farewell to New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Maori, it is said mā te wā, which is not goodbye, it is see you soon!

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	South Island Self Drive
Starts:	Queenstown
Finishes:	Queenstown
Tour length:	8
Accommodation:	Hotel 3 star
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	7 breakfasts
Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	Private train station transfers
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Greymouth to Christchurch

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview
Day 2	Heartland Hotel Fox Glacier
Day 3	Scenic Hotel Cotswold
Day 4	Distinction MacKenzie Country Hotel, Twizel
Day 5	Kingsgate Hotel Dunedin
Day 6	Distinction Luxmore Hotel
Day 7	Copthorne Hotel & Apartments Queenstown Lakeview