



Luxury New Zealand Escape

Enjoy an exclusive luxury journey from South to North, unveiling New Zealand's most breathtaking landscapes. Wake up to the grandeur of Aoraki - Mount Cook National Park, sail among ancient icebergs at Tasman Glacier, and indulge in a gourmet dining experience at Larnach Castle. Explore Fiordland on an overnight cruise through Piopiotahi - Milford Sound, then enjoy Queenstown's alpine charm. Discover Franz Josef's glaciers and Kaikoura's marine life. On the North Island, experience Māori culture, Hobbiton, and a private wine tour in Hawke's Bay before concluding in Auckland. A truly bespoke experience, tailored just for you.

Starts in: Christchurch
Finishes in: Auckland
Length: 23days / 22nights
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: Unlimited kms

Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

Included activity: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

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

Included activity: Interislander Ferry Picton to Wellington with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

Included activity: Private Luxury Wine Tour including lunch

Included activity: Behind The Scenes Exclusive Tour with National Kiwi Hatchery

Included activity: Behind the Scenes Tour at Hobbiton

Included activity: Private transfer accommodation to airport to collect rental car

plus much more...

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

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

Included activity: Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

Included activity: Private Transfer Wellington Ferry Terminal to Hotel with In Style Executive

Included activity: Private transfer from Wellington Hotel to Interislander Ferry with In Style Executive

Included activity: Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

Included activity: Polynesian Spa Lake View Private Pool

Included activity: The Alpine Restaurant Buffet Dinner

Included activity: Land on the Hole in the Rock - Heli Scenic Flight & Landing Time Away: 35 minutes

Day 1



Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

On arrival, you will be met by a private driver and transferred to your Christchurch accommodation.

Welcome to Christchurch City

New Zealand's garden city is steadily being transformed into a vibrant urban destination. Encompassing a large green belt, it is known for its wide tree lined avenues and lush gardens. A great way to explore the city or easy way to see the sights or ride the historic trams across town to the renowned botanic gardens and the unique cardboard Transitional Cathedral, that's right it is built of cardboard!

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.



Day 2



Private transfer accommodation to airport to collect rental car

A private transfer will meet you at your accommodation and transfer you to Christchurch Airport to collect your rental car.

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

Christchurch to Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park

Drive through the heart of the South Island, crossing the vast Canterbury plains. Catch your breath in Geraldine before continuing through Fairlie. Ascending Burkes pass you'll come to the picturesque town of Lake Tekapo. Follow the road and take in the view of Aoraki-Mt Cook (New Zealand's tallest mountain) from the shores of Lake Pukaki, known for its glacier fed turquoise blue colour. Continue along the lake to your final destination Aoraki-Mt Cook Village.

The Alpine Restaurant Buffet Dinner

The Alpine Restaurant located at The Hermitage Hotel offers sumptuous buffets for breakfast, lunch and dinner, accompanied by spectacular views of Aoraki Mount Cook from every seat. Enjoy a vast buffet including a wide range of foods such as soup, salads, seafood, hot and cold meats and desserts with tea and coffee to follow.

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 3



Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park

At 3754m Aoraki-Mt Cook is Aotearoa-New Zealand's highest mountain, located deep in the heart of the Southern Alps. As well as its impressive beauty, Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park is also home to a huge range of awe-inspiring sights and activities. Take to the air with Mt Cook Ski Planes for a scenic flight that includes a glacier landing. At around 27 kilometres long the Tasman Glacier is New Zealand's longest and a Glacier Explorers tour allows you to see its unique features up close.

There are many short hikes in and around the park and these are well signposted around the village. Those with an interest in the night sky should take a Big Sky Stargazing tour with the Hermitage Hotel. The region is considered to have one of the clearest night skies in the world and is one of the few gold-rated dark sky reserves worldwide.

Visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre for insight into this region's mountain climbing history. You'll also learn of Sir Ed's incredible achievements and his dedication to helping others around the world.

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 4



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 5



Taieri Gorge Railway Scenic Train

Experience the breathtaking Taieri Gorge on Dunedin's iconic scenic train journey! Travel through stunning Otago landscapes, marvel at the engineering feats of the historic Taieri Gorge Railway, and hear captivating stories of the region's past from our onboard commentary. See the majestic Wingatui Viaduct, the tallest wrought iron structure in Australasia, and explore hand-carved tunnels. Enjoy comfortable, all-weather travel with onboard refreshments and photo stops. Choose a return trip from Dunedin's historic Railway Station or opt for a one-way journey to Pukerangi. Escape the digital world and reconnect with nature on this unforgettable New Zealand rail experience.

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Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



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.

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.

Ata Whenua - Shadowland Film at Fiordland Cinema

Ata Whenua refers to the southwestern coast of New Zealand and translates to English as "Shadow Land". This breathtaking short film will take you on an unforgettable journey through one of the most awe-inspiring landscapes on earth, Fiordland National Park. Shot by award-winning cinematographers with outstanding musical composition, this is the next best thing to a scenic flight over this spectacular wilderness.

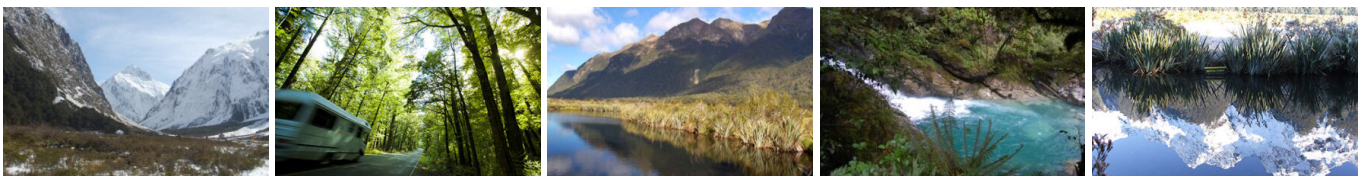
Your accommodation: Fiordland Lodge

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 7



Te Anau to Milford Sound

The road to Milford Sound has countless photo opportunities and short walks. The Mirror Lakes create perfectly clear reflections of the surrounding mountains and glacier-formed meadows. Further along, you'll pass through the Homer Tunnel, an incredible feat of engineering at 1219 metres long. Milford Sound is the only sound accessible by road, making it very popular to visit. Coming into the village, you'll be greeted with an amazing view of Mitre Peak, which rises spectacularly from the waters up to the sky. Real Journey cruises can take you out into the sound where you'll receive a wealth of information on how this magnificent area has been formed and experience first-hand the multitude of waterfalls that line the fjord.

Note: Please make sure to allow 2.5hrs to Milford Sound, this takes into account the current road works on the Milford Road."

Milford Mariner Overnight Cruise

The Milford Mariner offers you a very special dinner, bed and breakfast experience on Milford Sound. Onboard the Milford Mariner you will cruise the full length of this spectacular fiord to the Tasman Sea before anchoring for the night in sheltered Harrison Cove. Accompanied by a nature guide you can go exploring in the tender craft and kayaks or simply relax on deck. After the day's activities, you enjoy a delicious evening buffet in the spacious saloon before retiring to your private cabin.

The vessel itself was designed along the lines of a traditional New Zealand coastal trading scow to reflect Fiordland's heritage. Departing from the Milford Wharf, the Milford Mariner cruises the length of Milford Sound to the Tasman Sea leisurely exploring on the way many points of interest, there is plenty of time to view the waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife and the experienced nature guide on board will be able to answer any questions you may have. After reaching the open sea, subject to weather and favourable conditions the sails are hoisted for a period. The vessel returns to the calm and shelter of Harrison Cove for your overnight stay. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information, see [here](#).

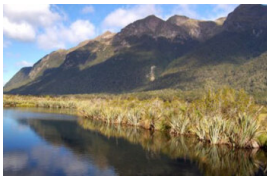
Your accommodation: Overnight Boat in Milford Sound

Onboard the Milford Mariner you will cruise the full length of this spectacular fiord to the Tasman Sea before anchoring for the night in sheltered Harrison Cove. After the day's activities, you'll enjoy a delicious evening buffet in the spacious saloon before retiring to your private cabin.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 8



Milford Sound Overnight Cruise returns then onto Queenstown

Your Milford Sound overnight cruise will return to Milford this morning between 9-10am.

On your journey to Queenstown, you'll cross rolling tussock lands and pass through Mossburn, the deer capital of New Zealand. Continue north through Southland countryside towards Lake Wakatipu. The road now hugs the edge of the lake and the Remarkable mountain range towers over you as you approach Queenstown, the adventure capital of New Zealand.

Note: Please make sure to allow 5.5hrs from Queenstown and 2.5hrs from Te Anau, this takes into account the current road works on the Milford Road."

Queenstown

Queenstown known in Māori as Tāhuna, is home to many adrenaline-inducing activities. Nestled on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, this alpine town has very distinct seasons, and most adrenaline-filled activities can be accessed year-round. Queenstown is home to jet boating, bungy jumping, rafting, skydiving, paragliding, and even indoor thrills. If you want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon Swing, or Zip line the Gondola. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand's crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. If you're looking for a slightly slower pace, there are plenty of recreational activities, including hiking and biking trails to explore, guided tours, boat cruises, scenic flights, or spa and wellness options to help you get away. Head to the lakefront, eat at one of the al fresco eateries, and soak up the local vibes; catch a ride on the iconic 100-year-old steamship the TSS Earnslaw; or take the Skyline Gondola and enjoy bird's-eye views of the Remarkables mountain ranges and Lake Wakatipu. Pack a picnic and go for a hike, only 20 minutes from Central Queenstown, Coronet Peak opens for summer sightseeing. You can ride the Peak Gondola to the top for panoramic views and hike the trails, or go for a bike ride on many excellent biking trails. In winter, Queenstown becomes a world-class winter resort, with four ski areas and a range of activities, bars, restaurants, and ways to relax and unwind.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - The Original Onsen Evening Session

Enjoy the most memorable experience in Queenstown and surround yourself with a sky of stars and 14 Japanese lanterns as you soak up the warm waters of the Onsen Hot Pools. Nestled high into a cliff-side overlooking the magnificent Shotover River canyon, the experience is all about unwinding and soaking-up Queenstown's spectacular scenery, enjoying the pure waters and the fresh mountain air as your mind and body surrenders to the deep penetrating warmth and gentle massage of the private pools. Water temperature is set according to the day - generally between 37.8C on a hot day, to 39.8C during a snow-storm and in the summer one of the pools is kept cold for those who relish the thought of a cold plunge!

Your accommodation: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown's original 'dairy' (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



Explore Queenstown

Well-known as New Zealand's 'adventure capital', Queenstown is home to a range of adventures, from the world's first and most famous bungy jumps to jet boat thrills, white-water rafting, and skydiving. However, Queenstown offers far more than a fast-paced, action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of beautiful Lake Wakatipu beneath a soaring panorama of the Remarkables Mountain Range, this alpine town is surrounded by many historic, gastronomic, and scenic wonders. Take a stroll through the beautiful lakefront parks and gardens, browse through market stalls on weekends, dine in wonderful al-fresco restaurants, or ride on the 100-year-old historic Steamship - TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station. Take the Queenstown Gondola up to Bob's Peak and soak up the panoramic views of the magnificent lake and mountain ranges. And after all of that, if you do want the adrenaline rush, Queenstown is known for taking your pick from the Shotover Jet, Canyon Swing, Zipline, Luge, or Heli-hike.

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: The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter

The Dairy Private Hotel – a unique blend of exquisite design, rich history and warm hospitality in the city centre. Beginning as Queenstown's original 'dairy' (corner store) in 1920, it has now transformed into an interiors masterpiece after an exquisite refurbishment that features wallpapers from British luxury interiors brand House of Hackney.

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner



Day 10



Queenstown to Franz Josef Glacier via Wānaka

From Queenstown you'll cross the Crown Range, the highest sealed road in New Zealand to arrive in the Alpine town of Wānaka, gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park. Skirting the shores of both Lake Wanaka and Hawea, you will enter the small town of Makarora. Stop at Blue Pools for a 1-hour return walk through the native beech forest to a glacier-fed swimming hole. Continue on through the remote seaside settlement of Haast before heading up the wild West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beaches occasionally. Keep heading North and be sure to enjoy the view of the ever-changing towering snowcapped Southern Alps Mountain Range. Fox Glacier welcomes you first, then comes your destination for the night 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 11



Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

A spectacular scenic flight soaring over two of New Zealand's most famous glaciers, Fox and Franz Josef. Landing at the head of one and view the incredible sight of this frozen river as it winds its way through ancient carved valleys. It is important to read and understand the risks associated with this activity. A full risk disclosure can be found [here](#).

Explore Franz Josef

Franz Josef is a small yet lively town in the heart of New Zealand's West Coast, best known for its spectacular 12 km-long glacier. The township is surrounded by lush, rainforest-clad mountains and has a vibrant atmosphere with plenty to explore. A variety of scenic walking trails offer incredible views of the glacier, but for a truly up-close experience, a licensed helicopter tour is the only way to set foot on the ice. Beyond the glacier, unwind in the rejuvenating Hot Pools or visit the West Coast Wildlife Centre to spot rare kiwi birds. If you're in the mood for a more relaxed day, the township is home to charming souvenir and gift shops, as well as great dining spots like SnakeBite Brewery and King Tiger. Whether you're chasing adventure or relaxation, Franz Josef is a stunning blend of wild beauty and welcoming hospitality.

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 12



Franz Josef to Christchurch via Arthur's Pass National Park

Today make your way up the West Coast through several small towns. Pass Harihari, and Ross, before arriving in the heart of Hokitika. You can explore the region further and check out the Hokitika Gorge, well worth the 50 minute detour. Continue on State Highway 73 through spectacular West Coast scenery. Your drive then takes you through the mountainous Arthur's Pass National Park, the highest pass in the Southern Alps and home to a bustling township. Descending into the Waimakariri, you'll see braided river valleys and remarkable rocky outcrops before crossing the vast Canterbury Plains to arrive in Christchurch, your destination for the night.

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Dinner onboard the Christchurch Restaurant Tram

A truly unique dining experience in the heart of Christchurch. You'll board New Zealand's only dining tram for an unforgettable moving four-course restaurant experience. Enjoy a curated fine dining-style menu while taking in the city sights on your journey through the streets of central Christchurch. This experience includes a meal with multiple courses as the tramway route passes New Regent Street, the Avon River, High Street, and Victoria Square.

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 13



Christchurch to Kaikoura

The drive north from Christchurch to Kaikoura takes you through the rolling hills of North Canterbury's major wine region, the Waipara Valley. Allow time for a detour and visit Hanmer Springs for a dip in the mineral hot pools. Continue on and cross the Hawkswood Range before descending to the spectacular Kaikoura coastline - where the road hugs the ocean for the last leg of the drive.

Kaikōura

Kaikōura is a stunning coastal town known for its rich marine life and dramatic scenery. Visit the fur seal colony, take a whale-watching cruise, or swim with playful dusky dolphins. The town is rich with attractions, walking tracks, and activities for every visitor. A walk around the Kaikōura Peninsula is a must, where you can explore tide pools teeming with marine life, observe sea creatures basking on the rocks, and, for bird lovers, spot the impressive native albatross. Just be sure to keep a respectful distance from any sea lions you meet. Highlights like Ohau Point and historic Fyffe House offer insight into the region's wildlife and whaling past. Finish your visit by sampling the fresh local seafood, renowned for having some of the best fish and chips in the country, or by taking a relaxing wander through the tranquil Lavendyl Lavender Farm.

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 Hector's, 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.

Your accommodation: Hapuku Lodge & Tree Houses

Hapuku Lodge was built to give guests a great night's sleep in one of the most beautiful places in the world. The Lodge sits tight between the mountains and the ocean, on a deer stud and olive farm.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 14



Kaikoura to Picton

Today follow the coast to Picton, located at the top of the South Island. As you leave Kaikoura you'll take in the spectacular shoreline and keep a lookout for native wildlife as you go. Stop to view adult fur seals at Ohau Point, and take a short stroll along the oceanside walkway. Continuing on, you'll have the ocean on one side and the Kaikoura ranges on the other before traversing the dry hills of Marlborough, New Zealand's largest wine-producing region. Visit one of the vineyards surrounding Blenheim for a wine tasting or a gourmet lunch before beginning the final leg of your journey to Picton.

Interislander Ferry Picton to Wellington with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

The 92 km journey between Picton and Wellington takes around 3 hours and has been described as 'one of the most beautiful ferry rides in the world'. Around one hour of the cruise takes you through the Marlborough Sounds. This region of bush covered mountains, small islands, crystal clear waters and secluded bays is a true photographic opportunity. From the Cook Strait spectacular views of the Kaikoura Ranges on the South Island can be enjoyed and dolphins and many sea birds are often seen. After crossing the strait you approach Wellington Harbour and pass many interesting points such as Pencarrow Head on top of which is New Zealand's oldest lighthouse (1859). Red Rocks is home to a seal colony and Oterangi Bay is the site which recorded the countries highest ever wind speed of 268 kph (167 mph).

When you're not out on the deck enjoying the amazing views, you can retreat to the exclusive premium plus lounge which is the most comfortable and relaxing way to travel across the Cook Strait. You'll enjoy complimentary beverages, light snacks, lunch or breakfast, internet access, magazines and newspapers and the most comfortable seating, so you can sit back and enjoy the journey.

Private Transfer Wellington Ferry Terminal to Hotel with In Style Executive

You will be met on arrival into Wellington and transferred to your hotel.

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: Ohtel Wellington

Ohtel is adjacent to Wellington's principal entertainment precinct. Major attractions such as Te Papa, Oriental Bay beach, theatres, restaurants & clubs, are a stone's throw away. Beyond, the city hub creates a picturesque night-time back-drop.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 15



Private transfer from Wellington Hotel to Interislander Ferry with In Style Executive

You will be collected from your hotel and transferred to the Interislander ferry terminal in time for your ferry check in.

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.

Wellington to Napier

Leaving Wellington today you will first pass the Wairarapa on the eastern side of the Remutaka Ranges. A significant contrast to the hills of Wellington, its rich pastures and boutique vineyards of Martinborough give way to grassy plains and rugged coastal shores. Go through Greytown, home to the largest number of wooden buildings in the country then stop in Masterton, a small farming town known for its Golden Shears competition - where shearers compete for the title of fastest shearer. Continue on to Hawkes Bay and Havelock North before arriving in Napier, the art deco capital of New Zealand.

Napier City

Napier, a coastal gem, is famed for its 1930s Art Deco architecture, the annual Art Deco Weekend, stately Norfolk pines, nearby wineries, and fresh local produce. With a Mediterranean climate and over 2,200 hours of sunshine annually, it boasts a thriving café culture set against stunning heritage buildings. The city center has around 30 cafés within walking distance, while Ahuriri, just beyond Bluff Hill, offers more upscale dining. Marine Parade overlooks the Pacific Ocean and Cape Kidnappers, home to the world's largest mainland gannet colony. Visitors can explore Ocean Spa, the Hawke's Bay Museum, and the National Aquarium of New Zealand. Bluff Hill, a key landmark, provides sweeping views of Napier, Perfume Point, Westshore Beach, and the busy Port of Napier, which exports timber, fruit, and meat worldwide.

In 1931, Napier was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake, New Zealand's worst natural disaster. Fires ravaged the city. Rebuilding efforts transformed Napier and Hastings into modern cities, while the uplifted Ahuriri Lagoon created much-needed land for expansion.

Your accommodation: Art Deco Masonic Hotel

The Art Deco Masonic Hotel occupies a significant historic building on Napier's waterfront and has been richly refurbished in keeping with the Art Deco architecture. With its central location and decadent décor, this is the best place to experience what Napier is famous for.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 16



Private Luxury Wine Tour including lunch

A tour designed for those who are looking for a more intimate experience of renowned Hawke's Bay wineries. Learn about the local yield and the region's long viticultural history, and indulge in a two course gourmet lunch. Taste classic varieties such as Shiraz, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Gris Viognier, Semillon and Riesling. There will also be an opportunity to taste sherry, port and dessert reds.

Your accommodation: Art Deco Masonic Hotel

The Art Deco Masonic Hotel occupies a significant historic building on Napier's waterfront and has been richly refurbished in keeping with the Art Deco architecture. With its central location and decadent décor, this is the best place to experience what Napier is famous for.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 17



Napier to Rotorua

Cross the Ahimnawa Ranges to arrive into the town of Taupo which is situated on New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo a gigantic volcanic caldera formed during one of the world's largest eruptions. Just north of Taupo are the Huka Falls, an impressive body of water draining from the Waikato river. See it from the wooden viewing platform or get up close to the spray with a ride on the Huka Jet. Visit nearby volcanic reserve Craters of the Moon to see boiling pools and steaming vents. Continue on through the Waimangu Valley before arriving into geothermal Rotorua, the heart of New Zealand's Maori culture.

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.

Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

New Zealand's Most Awarded Cultural Attraction, presenting Te Pā Tū. Feast on song, drama, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) blanketed by towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and a forest-formed amphitheatre. Te Pā Tū shares Māori history, traditions, and cultural aspirations across 4-hours of celebration and feasting. These events change with each season of the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar.

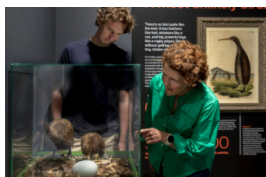
Your accommodation: On the Point

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 18



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 rear 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.

Polynesian Spa Lake View Private Pool

The geothermal mineral waters of the Polynesian Spa in Rotorua are sought after the world over as one of the top 10 spas in the world. Indulge your need for a little luxury and enjoy some time in a Private Deluxe Pool, with stunning 360 degree views over Lake Rotorua, you will be left in peace to soak your cares away. Alkaline geothermal spring water pools are 38.5 °C and 0.7m deep. Available for blocks of 30 minute hire with a minimum of two adults, this is the perfect activity to enjoy a relaxing afternoon with your partner.

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, Dinner



Day 19



Rotorua to Matamata

Leave the steaming vents and boiling pools of the geothermal region behind as you make your way through the lush dairy pastures of the Waikato. Take in the emerald green landscapes most famous for their role in the Lord of the Rings and Hobbit films. Arrive into the small town of Matamata, for a visit to the fully intact set of Hobbiton.

Behind the Scenes Tour at Hobbiton

Immerse yourself in the magic of Middle-earth on this exclusive walking tour of the Hobbiton Movie Set. In a small group of up to 30, explore the iconic 12-acre set, wander past famous Hobbit Holes and Bagshot Row, and step inside a Hobbit's home. Relax at The Green Dragon Inn with a drink from the Southfarthing range, then savour a hearty banquet lunch at The Millhouse, with second helpings encouraged. Go behind the scenes in the Art Department's workshop to uncover the craftsmanship behind Hobbiton's enchanting details. Conclude your adventure with a Hobbit-style platter of cheese, chutneys, and fruit at a hidden spot with stunning views.

Matamata to Auckland

Your drive continues north west crossing the dairy country of the Hauraki Plains before arriving at State Highway 1. The Bombay Hills guide you to Auckland City.

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 20



Auckland to Russell

The drive from Auckland to the Bay of Islands normally takes around three and a half hours, but plan to take a little longer for there are many things to see along the way. Stretch your legs in Puhoi, New Zealand's only Bohemian settlement. Go through Warkworth, and Whangarei and see the world famous hundertwasser toilets in Kawakawa. Arriving into Russell via the Opua Ferry, you'll be greeted by lush bush-clad hillsides dropping to golden sandy beaches.

Russell, Bay of Islands

Experience the timeless charm of Russell, a historic village accessible by a quick ferry ride from Paihia or a scenic coastal drive. Once a notorious whaling hub, New Zealand's first European settlement, and briefly the country's first capital, Russell now offers a tranquil escape with a rich past. You'll love exploring historical sites like the bullet-scarred Christ Church, New Zealand's oldest church, or the historic Marlborough Hotel, which holds the country's oldest liquor license. For breathtaking views of the Bay and its islands, a short walk up Flagstaff Hill is a must. This historic site tells the story of Māori chief Hone Heke's famous protests. Russell is the perfect place to step back in time while enjoying the stunning beauty of the Bay of Islands

Your accommodation: Arcadia Lodge, Russell

Arcadia Lodge is a Russell landmark, a turn of the century home and luxury bed and breakfast overlooking Russell's tranquil Matauwhi Bay.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 21



Explore Bay of Islands

Commonly known as the 'winterless north', New Zealand's Bay of Islands is made up of over 140 subtropical atolls. Renowned for its untouched beaches, abundant marine life, and idyllic climate, this tropical paradise ticks all the boxes. Spend some time on a remote stretch of beach, or see the dolphins on an ocean safari. If diving is your thing, take the morning to descend the Rainbow Warrior - The Greenpeace flagship sunk by French saboteurs in 1985. Wander around Russell, a whaling port founded in 1843. Learn about our culture in historic Waitangi, the site where The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and Europeans. Alternatively, you may like to take a day tour to Cape Reinga, the very top of the North Island.

Land on the Hole in the Rock - Heli Scenic Flight & Landing Time Away: 35 minutes

For many years visitors have come to the Bay of Islands to venture through this top New Zealand icon the Hole in the Rock on boats, we have flown them over it thousands of times, and it has been admired by many for its unique appearance and history. Now you can experience it up close and on foot, landing by helicopter on our newly built helipad on top of the island. You will have a brief stop on the island helipad and viewing platform for those unique photos to be taken! Very few people in history, including Maori, have ever ventured on the island in this way before. Being surrounded by steep cliffs (over 150 metres high) and stunning scenery looking towards Cape Brett and its surrounds, this unique landing location will no doubt appeal to the adventurous.

Your accommodation: Arcadia Lodge, Russell

Arcadia Lodge is a Russell landmark, a turn of the century home and luxury bed and breakfast overlooking Russell's tranquil Matauwhi Bay.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 22



Paihia, Bay of Islands to Auckland

Today leave the Bay of Islands behind as you head south towards Auckland, City of Sails. You'll go through Kawakawa, famous for its unique Hundertwasser toilets, before passing the port-side town of Whangarei. Continue on through Warkworth and take a side trip to Matakana, renowned for its beaches and boutique vineyards. As you near the outskirts of Auckland, stop for a breather in Puhoi, New Zealand's only Bohemian settlement, before passing through the North Shore and into the heart of Auckland City.

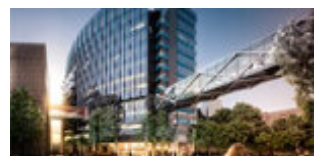
Explore Auckland

Perched on the edge of a large natural harbour, New Zealand's 'City of Sails' offers the best of both worlds. Sandy beaches, native bush and lush rainforests give way to a vibrant urban culture. Spend time in the Viaduct Harbour, try your hand at sailing an America's Cup Yacht or take the ferry to nearby Waiheke Island for a gourmet food and wine experience. Venture to the top of Auckland's highest volcano, Mt Eden, for soaring views of the Hauraki Gulf or hop on the short ferry to Rangitoto Island and hike to the top of the volcanic island. Immerse yourself in nature at the expansive Auckland Botanic Gardens, sprawled across 156 acres of native forest, pack a picnic, soak up the sunshine, and enjoy the birdsong. Head up to the Sky Tower, standing over 300m tall, and have a meal in the 360-degree revolving restaurant. Scale the outermost perimeter of the Harbour Bridge or test your stomach with a bungy jump, then end your day on Ponsonby Road sampling upmarket culinary delights.

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



Day 23



Depart Auckland today

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

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:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	23
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	The George Hotel
Day 2	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 3	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 4	Camp Estate at Larnach Castle
Day 5	Camp Estate at Larnach Castle
Day 6	Fiordland Lodge
Day 7	Overnight Boat in Milford Sound
Day 8	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 9	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 10	Westwood Lodge
Day 11	Westwood Lodge
Day 12	The George Hotel
Day 13	Hapuku Lodge & Tree Houses
Day 14	Ohtel Wellington
Day 15	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 16	Art Deco Masonic Hotel
Day 17	On the Point
Day 18	On the Point
Day 19	Horizon by SkyCity
Day 20	Arcadia Lodge, Russell
Day 21	Arcadia Lodge, Russell
Day 22	Horizon by SkyCity