

Mountains and Lakes South Island Family Tour

Traverse the mountains and alpine lakes of the South Island on this family tour from Christchurch to the adventure capital of Queenstown. Get the whole family excited with highlights along the way including a close up encounter with the rare yellow eyed penguins in Dunedin. When you reach Queenstown you'll journey up the Skyline Gondola for a bird's eye view of the mountains and lake, while you're there, try out some fast-action fun on the Skyline Luge! The next day cruise across Lake Wakatipu to Walter Peak High Country Station for a kiwi style BBQ lunch and farm tour - meet the farm dogs and get up close with some highland cattle!



Starts in: Christchurch
 Finishes in: Queenstown
 Length: 7days / 6nights
 Accommodation: Motels
 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

Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees

Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)

Included activity: Private transfer Christchurch International Airport to your accommodation

Included activity: Tekapo Springs Hot Pools

Included activity: Gondola Ride with Skyline Queenstown

: Meals included: 1 lunch

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

Includes: GPS navigation

Includes: Additional drivers

Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

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

Included activity: Penguin Tour with The Opera

Included activity: TSS Earnslaw Cruise and Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Lunch

Day 1



Private transfer Christchurch International Airport to your accommodation

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

Welcome to Christchurch City

Christchurch 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!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Discover Christchurch Afternoon Tour

A half day sightseeing tour of Christchurch highlighting both the damage to the city inflicted by several large earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 and the rebuild which is currently in progress, together with the surviving beauty of the city and the historical landmarks. Experience the grand architecture, beautiful gardens and scenic viewpoints on a half-day city tour of Christchurch.

The tour commences in the central city of Christchurch and covers the area which was completely devastated by the Christchurch earthquakes in February 2011. The guide will explain both the history of the city and the effects of the earthquake. On leaving the inner city, the tour travels to Mona Vale a historic homestead and gardens. Then you will travel to the Sign of the Takahe, a historic building with a lookout providing spectacular views over the city, Canterbury Plains and to the Southern Alps. The tour then travels via the Port Hills and Lyttleton Harbour by way of the Sign of the Kiwi and Governors Bay to the Port of Lyttleton. The tour proceeds through the Lyttleton harbour tunnel to the seaside suburb of Sumner and cave rock before returning to the central city where the tour will conclude.

Your accommodation: Quality Suites Amore

Amore Motor Lodge is one of the newest motels in Riccarton, Christchurch. The modern, well-appointed studio suites and spacious 2-bedroom apartments provide the ultimate in comfort are fully self-contained. Stay just 100 metres from the Westfield Mall and a short walk to Hagley Park and Riccarton Bush Farmers Market.



Day 2



Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Christchurch to Lake Tekapo

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.

Tekapo Springs Hot Pools

Tekapo Springs offers three adjoining main Hot Pools for you to sit back, relax and enjoy yourself while looking out to the beautiful Two Thumb range and stunning Lake Tekapo. Pool temperatures range from forty degrees celsius to thirty-six degrees celsius and each pool offers something different - massage jets to assist in taking away any aches and pains and fountains to splash under.

Your accommodation: Mantra Lake Tekapo

Just a few metres walk from the lakefront and a few minutes from the small township of Tekapo, Mantra Lake Tekapo provides spacious fully equipped apartment style luxury accommodation.



Day 3



Lake Tekapo to Dunedin

Lake Pukaki is just another 30 minutes drive from Lake Tekapo and you are often rewarded with spectacular views the full length of the lake and into Aoraki Mount Cook National Park. At 3754 metres, Aoraki Mount Cook is New Zealand highest mountain and the peak can often be seen from the visitor centre at the southern end of Lake Pukaki. It is just a quick 30 minute drive from the main road into Mount Cook Village itself (allow a couple of hours though to drive both ways and spend a little while here). Aoraki Mount Cook National Park offers the visitor a huge range of activities. Mount Cook Ski Planes operate scenic flights that include a unique ski landing on a glacier. At around 15 kilometres long the Tasman Glacier is New Zealand's longest and a glacier explorers tour will show you these unique features. There are many short hikes in and around the park and these are well marked and there is something for almost every ability.

Twizel, just south of Aoraki Mount Cook was the location of many Lord of the Rings movie scenes and a little further on is Omarama, the gliding capital of New Zealand. Wrinkly Rams is a local cafe with great coffee and fresh homemade food. Heading down the Waitaki valley you follow the hydro power generating system towards the east coast.

The town of Oamaru is most famous for its buildings constructed with the unique locally quarried white stone. Explore the old quarter or if you don't mind a late arrival into Dunedin then stay around to see the blue penguins come ashore at dusk. 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 and city centre.

Dunedin's museums - suggested activity

Otago Museum

Discover rare objects, special exhibitions and a live butterfly rainforest experience at the Otago Museum. Through the galleries, you'll discover the unique culture, heritage and wildlife of the Otago region. Highlights include the Tangata Whenua gallery which tells the story of the Southern Maori life and mythology. The Discovery World Tropical Forest is fun for young and old, you'll enter a rainforest filled with hundreds of beautiful butterflies. The special exhibitions are always fascinating and when you're ready for a break there's a great cafe to relax at. The museum is open 10am to 5pm daily, except Christmas Day.

Toitū Otago Settlers Museum

Encounter history at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum. Learn about the people whose character, culture, technology, art, fashion, and transport shaped New Zealand's First Great City, Dunedin. In the galleries you can trace the fascinating journeys from the earliest settlers, Kai Tahu and their ancestors, to the most recent arrivals. The themed galleries weave the stories of past and present with future thinking, featuring interactive displays with stunning visuals and powerful narratives. Admission is free and the museum is open daily (except Christmas Day) from 10am to 4pm April to September, 10am to 5pm October to March and Thursdays until 8pm.

Your accommodation: Motel on York

Motel on York is located in the heart of Dunedin city. The property offers superior accommodation only 300 metres away from cafes and restaurants.



Day 4



Explore Dunedin and the Otago Peninsula

Known as the Edinburgh of the South, Dunedin City has a heavy Scottish influence. Surrounded by rugged coastal plains and windswept beaches it's home to an eclectic mix of historical and modern architecture as well as industrial technology. Renowned for its Flemish Baroque-inspired 'gingerbread house' Railway Station, this university town is bustling with life. Head to the Saturday farmers market held in the aforementioned railway grounds for a taste of organic produce, handmade crepes and local honey. Explore the many cafes and wine bars in The Octagon, then continue on a self-guided walking tour of the internationally acclaimed Street Art dotted around the city. Drive to the coast and watch the freighters passing in the distance while you sunbathe, or hire a mountain bike and test your legs on one of the many trails available in the area. For a more immersive historical experience, follow the coast to New Zealand's only castle, Larnach Castle. On your way back be sure to head to the Otago Peninsula to see the largest mainland Albatross colony in the world.

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.

Your accommodation: Motel on York

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Day 5



Dunedin to Queenstown

This drive takes you through the heart of the historical Otago Goldfields. The townships of Lawrence, Roxburgh and Alexandra, once booming mining towns in the late 1800's gold rush now sleepy sun-traps bearing little resemblance to their bustling past. However, some buildings do remain as do the original shafts and workings. In more recent times Alexandra has become the 'stone fruit capital' of New Zealand, with the ideal climate for the trees. It is also a great place to buy some of the local produce. The road follows the South Island's longest river, the Clutha River, and at Clyde, you will see one of the largest hydro power stations harnessing its energy before passing through Gibbston to arrive at your destination today, Queenstown.

Queenstown Skyline Gondola Ride

Hop aboard the Skyline Gondola - the steepest cable car lift in the Southern Hemisphere! From which you can take in the awe-inspiring views of this spectacular landscape. Sit back and relax as you enjoy panoramic views of The Remarkables, Walter Peak, Cecil Peak, Coronet Peak and the magnificent Lake Wakatipu.

Your accommodation: Scenic Suites Queenstown

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style, comfort and spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu and the Southern Alps. The hotel prides itself on its four star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.



Day 6



TSS Earnslaw cruise to Walter Peak including gourmet BBQ Lunch and a farm tour

Enjoy a quintessential Kiwi experience a delicious barbeque lunch and a farm tour in a stunning lakeside setting. First, take a scenic cruise from Queenstown to Walter Peak High Country Farm on board the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw, one of the last remaining fully functional coal-fired passenger ships in the southern hemisphere.

Disembark and take in the picturesque shores of the Station. Relax on the lakeside terrace at the Colonel's Homestead Restaurant and savour the aromas of the best local produce being cooked on the grill. The seasonal menu has plenty to choose from salads, vegetables and succulent meat. If you're vegetarian, you will be well catered for also. Finish your meal with a scrumptious dessert before joining an entertaining farm demonstration or exploring the beautiful lakeside gardens.

Your accommodation: Scenic Suites Queenstown

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style, comfort and spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu and the Southern Alps. The hotel prides itself on its four star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.

Meals included: Lunch



Day 7



Your final morning in Queenstown before driving to the airport and catching your next flight

Depending on when your flight departs you might have time for one last Queenstown adventure before dropping your car off at the airport and catching your flight.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	South Island Self Drive
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Queenstown
Tour length:	7
Accommodation:	Motels
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	Tekapo Springs Hot Pools
Includes	Penguin Place
Includes	Queenstown Skyline Gondola
Includes	TSS Earnslaw cruise and BBQ lunch at Walter Peak high country farm, Queenstown

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Quality Suites Amore
Day 2	Mantra Lake Tekapo
Day 3	Motel on York
Day 4	Motel on York
Day 5	Scenic Suites Queenstown
Day 6	Scenic Suites Queenstown