



## Stories of Aotearoa

Experience New Zealand from a fresh perspective on this immersive cross-country journey. Your path begins in the vibrant North, where geothermal wonders meet the world-class vineyards of Craggy Range in Hawkes Bay. Crossing the strait, the landscape shifts into the rugged charm of the West Coast and the alpine elegance of Queenstown. From the refined luxury of Business Class on Milford Sound to the starry skies of Mount Cook, this itinerary is anchored by exceptional boutique stays that turn every night into a highlight. It is more than a trip; it's a collection of New Zealand's most storied landscapes and stays.



Starts in: Auckland  
 Finishes in: Christchurch  
 Length: 20days / 19nights  
 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: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course

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



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

Included activity: Māwhera Pounamu Pathway Immersive Experience

Included activity: Franz Josef Glacier Helihike with Franz Josef Glacier Guides

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

Included activity: Ata Whenua - Shadowland Film at Fiordland Cinema

Included activity: Milford Sound Business Class with Real NZ and Altitude Tours - Includes Canapes

Included activity: Dinner at Camp Estate, Larnach Castle

Included activity: Larnach Castle: Guided Tour & High Tea Experience

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

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

Included activity: Hells Gate Experience (Geothermal Walk, Mud Bath, Sulphur Spas)

Included activity: A Wine & Gourmet Odyssey - Lunch Included

Included activity: Zealandia By Day Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

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



plus much more...

## Day 1



### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Harbour Sailing Dinner Cruise with Explore

This unique on-water sailing and dining experience is not to be missed while you're in Auckland. Enjoy smooth sailing on the Waitemata Harbour - then watch this photogenic city come alive with twinkling lights. Enjoy your meal as you sail around the beautiful Auckland Harbour taking in the view as the sun slowly sets. You'll be treated to canapes and a drink as you set off towards Westhaven Marina. To finish the evening off, savour your dessert course as you leisurely sail back to Auckland's vibrant Viaduct Harbour.

### Your accommodation: Park Hyatt Auckland

Park Hyatt Auckland is perfectly located on the water's edge and will offer expansive views across Wynyard Quarter's Lighter Basin and out to the Waitematā Harbour.



## Day 2



### 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.

### Auckland to Rotorua

Your drive south from Auckland begins by crossing the Bombay Hills, which mark the boundary of the greater Auckland area, before leading you into the rich, sprawling farmland of the Waikato region. The drive takes approximately 2.5 hours non-stop, but we recommend allowing 3 hours for a relaxed journey. For a fantastic leg-stretching stop, you may consider a slight detour into Hamilton to visit the renowned Hamilton Gardens (known for its amazing themed garden collection). Alternatively, the quirky small town of Tirau, famous for its buildings shaped like a giant sheep and sheepdog, is right on your main route and makes a quick and fun photo stop. As you continue south, the scenery transitions, and telltale signs of steam and other geothermal activity will signal your arrival into the fascinating thermal and cultural hub 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.

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### 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.

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### 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



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## Day 3



### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Crater Lakes Flight & Hot Pools by Floatplane with Volcanic Air

Soar beyond the crater's rim on a spectacular floatplane adventure. After taking in the breathtaking aerial views of Rotorua's hidden lakes district and distant volcanoes, you will experience the thrill of a water landing on the crystal-clear shores of Lake Rotoiti. Here, you'll discover a secluded paradise only accessible by water: natural geothermal hot pools tucked away in a quiet bay. Spend 90 minutes soaking in serenity or cooling off with a lakeside swim before your pilot whisks you back to reality.

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### Hells Gate Experience (Geothermal Walk, Mud Bath, Sulphur Spas)

Combine all three of Hell's Gate most popular experiences with this package. Take part in the guided or self-guided interactive geothermal walk before indulging in their geothermal mud and sulphur waters, experiencing the healing properties local Māori have been using for centuries. It's a Rotorua experience you'll never forget.

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Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 4



### Rotorua to Havelock North

This drive will take you south through the thermal region of Rotorua. Home to a plethora of unique geothermal attractions including boiling mud pits, natural hot springs and steaming geysers, this area is a must do before you move on to Havelock North. Notable attractions are Wai-O-Tapu, Waimangu and Craters of the Moon. Continue on to Taupo and marvel at the lake - A giant crater formed following a volcanic eruption in the year 180 CE. As you approach the city, be sure to stop at Huka Falls to view the spectacular sight of hundreds of cubic metres of water spilling every second down the narrow 11 metre drop. Leaving Taupo, follow the road as it climbs the rugged Ahimanawa Range before descending back down the Pacific Coast through the art deco town of Napier and finally onto Havelock North. The perfect base from which to explore the Tukituki River Valley and beyond to the coastal settlements of Ocean Beach and Waimarama.

### Hawkes Bay

Hawke's Bay Wine Country is New Zealand's leading food and wine region, and with over 2200 hours of sunshine, the region is a year-round holiday destination. Located on the east coast of the North Island, the landscapes of Hawke's Bay begin with the high, forested Ruahine and Kawkeka Ranges. From the mountains the land sweeps down towards the coast, flattening out to become the Heretaunga Plains. A number of wide rivers, excellent for fishing, run swiftly to meet the blue Pacific Ocean and glorious beaches which stretch from Mahia in the north to Porangahau in the south.

Hawke's Bay is the country's oldest winemaking region and is New Zealand's leading producer of award-winning red wines. Hawke's Bay is also home to a world-class concentration of Art Deco architecture, fresh local produce and artisan food producers complemented by a vibrant arts scene and a rich Maori culture.

The region offers a diverse range of things to see and do from families enjoying the sun on the golden sand beaches, crystal clear rivers to explore, swimming with dolphins and the largest most accessible mainland Gannet colony in the world to name just a few. There's also hunting and fishing, 20 local golf courses to challenge you and 17 heritage trails to explore.

Northern Hawke's Bay is a popular destination for outdoor adventure. The rivers and coastline offer well-recognised trout fishing and excellent seafood with whitebait spots, deep sea fishing, surfcasting and underwater fishing all available. Wairoa is the main town of Northern Hawke's Bay and is the gateway to Lake Waikaremoana, Mahia Peninsula and the wilderness of Te Urewera National Park. If you want to get close to nature without tramping visit Cape Kidnappers, home to one of the largest, most assessable mainland gannet colonies in the world.

### Your accommodation: Craggy Range

Craggy Range is nestled amongst the vines at Giants Winery, with views of Te Mata Peak and the Tukituki River valley. The accommodations offer two luxurious bedrooms, both with en-suite bathrooms and a well-appointed kitchen and living area.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 5



### A Wine & Gourmet Odyssey - Lunch Included

Indulge in a gourmet journey through Hawke's Bay's premier wineries, including historic Mission Estate. Enjoy in-depth tastings of award-winning varietals from the prestigious Gimblett Gravels, and savour a fine dining lunch paired with exquisite wines. Marvel at the panoramic views from Te Mata Peak and receive a souvenir engraved wine glass to commemorate your magnificent day.

### Your accommodation: Craggy Range

Craggy Range is nestled amongst the vines at Giants Winery, with views of Te Mata Peak and the Tukituki River valley. The accommodations offer two luxurious bedrooms, both with en-suite bathrooms and a well-appointed kitchen and living area.

Meals included: Lunch



## Day 6



### Havelock North to Wellington

Leave the rolling countryside of Hawke's Bay to traverse some of the country's richest dairy farmland in the Manawatu Gorge. Continue on through the Wairarapa Region and take a break in Masterton - home to the 'Golden Shears' sheep shearing competition. As you drive south, a visit to historic Greytown is a must do. Take in the restored Victorian buildings and make time for a cup of tea at one of its quaint cafes. Leaving state highway 2 you will cross over the Ruamahanga River into Martinborough wine country - then over the Remutaka Ranges to arrive in New Zealand's capital city, 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.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Guided Tour of Te Papa The Museum of New Zealand

Beginning over one hundred million years ago, join your guide on a journey through New Zealand's rich history and cultures. Hear stories of our adaptive wildlife, the resilience of the Māori people, and artistic interpretations of life in the South Pacific. Whether you have limited time or here for an extended visit, this tour will give you a great opportunity to understand the vibrant landscapes and cultures you will encounter throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Your accommodation: QT Wellington

The QT Wellington is superbly situated opposite Te Papa, Museum of New Zealand and Wellington's waterfront. The luxury rooms are just a few minutes walk from the cafes restaurants, theatres, galleries and shopping of the vibrant Courtenay Quarter.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 7



### Explore Wellington

Wellington, known in Māori as Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui ("The Head of the Fish of Maui") or Te Whanganui a Tara ("The Great Harbour of Tara"), is New Zealand's vibrant capital. Often called a 'mini-Melbourne', this cosmopolitan city blends art, culture, food, and fashion with quirky laneway bars, hip eateries, and underground art shows. Stroll the waterfront to Te Papa, New Zealand's national museum, or ride the historic cable car from Lambton Quay for stunning city views. Explore Cuba Street's unique boutiques and visit the iconic 'Beehive' at Parliament. Fans of The Lord of the Rings can tour Weta Workshop, the Oscar-winning design studio behind Middle-earth. Just an hour away, Martinborough offers a culinary escape with top-notch food and wine. Nature lovers can't miss Zealandia, the world's first fully fenced eco-sanctuary. End your day sampling Wellington's renowned dining scene—search 'Metro Eats' for the city's best spots.

## Zealandia By Day Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

Taking a day tour of Zealandia wildlife eco-sanctuary is an unforgettable experience and one that comes highly recommended. A conservation success and safe haven for some of New Zealand's rarest native animals, Zealandia is home to many remarkable species of birds, reptiles and insects living wild within a beautiful 225 hectare (one square mile) valley - just 10 minutes from the central city.

Walk through the gates of the Zealandia predator-exclusion fence into the sanctuary. Your guide will then lead you on a walk through the native New Zealand bush. Possible sights include Kaka, Kakariki, Takahe, Tuatara, Saddleback, Whitehead, Weta, Kereru, Hiihi and the Bellbird. New Zealand has some of the most unique biodiversity and advanced conservation techniques in the world. Soak up the beautiful scenery while learning more about our unique ecological history.

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## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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.

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Meals included: Breakfast



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## Day 8



## 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.

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## Collect Rental Car

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## Picton to Nelson via Queen Charlotte Drive

The Queen Charlotte Drive follows the Marlborough Sounds coastline between Picton and Havelock. Magnificent views of the Sounds can be had from many vantage points so allow plenty of time to enjoy the scenery. If you can spare the time take the narrow windy road to Portage along Mahau Sound and Kenepuru Sound with their bush clad hillsides and secluded sandy coves.

The small port town of Havelock has a great variety of cafes and restaurants to choose from so plan your journey to arrive in time for lunch. The drive also crosses the Pelorus River and just at this junction is the famous and historic Pelorus Bridge. From here there are a number of forest walks with the most popular being the Pelorus Bridge 30 minute Loop through Beech, Rimu and Totara forest to the swing-bridge.

Departing Pelorus Bridge following the windy roads with view looking over Cable Bay and the Bryant Range until you arrive onto Tasman Bay and the city of Nelson.

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## Explore Nelson City

The vibrant Nelson city centre offers an abundance of cafes, restaurants, bars and shops and along the waterfront, you will find many fine restaurants specialising in seafood to enjoy. Founded in 1841 by the New Zealand Company the region today still boasts many remarkable buildings from these early days, however it is its close proximity to Abel Tasman National Park that is one of Nelson's greatest advantages to visitors with its pristine waters, beautiful native bush and golden beaches making this an adventure seeker's paradise. Nelson is also famous for its art and crafts and you will find many local offerings - including the world-famous Høglund Glassworks.

## Your accommodation: Pihopa Retreat

Relax in style at this historical boutique retreat. Pihopa Retreat encompasses park-like gardens with six premium suites, creating a comfortable home away from home feel for your stay. The Pihopa property has 5.5 acres of peaceful gardens, a heated swimming pool and large spacious areas to create a truly relaxing visit.

Meals included: Breakfast



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## Day 9



### Abel Tasman Water and Walk Tour with Wine, Art & Wilderness - Lunch Included

During this tour you will be strolling golden sand beaches, walking and exploring natural wonderland of Abel Tasman National Park. You will enjoy stunning views and experience unique interpretation of this National Park. Access is by water taxi to Medlands Beach and walking through an ever changing forest of silver fern, beech trees and Manuka & kanuka. This fully guided journey interprets the less obvious features as well as Maori history and the rich variety of vegetation, birds and aquatic life.

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Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



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## Day 10



### Nelson to Hokitika

Leaving Nelson pass through the Nelson Lakes and Kahurangi National Park region. Trees, rivers and valleys accompany you now as you head towards the town of Murchison. Murchison is a quiet place and a great lunch stop, we can recommend a stop at Beechwoods Cafe. Heading South towards Westport you will drive along the Buller Gorge, enjoy some wonderful scenery as you follow this magnificent river. Crossing the river you get magnificent views of the gorge and once on the other side there are short bush walks, jet boat rides and some of the historic gold mining remnants. Heading south a worthwhile divert is to Cape Foulwind just south of Westport. Home to a seal colony and the short walk provides some spectacular scenery. Follow the coastal road to Punakaiki where you may want to visit Pancake rocks. These are awesome natural blow holes and rock formations, the name says it all.

The next township you'll pass is Greymouth, home to a great attraction here is Shantytown, a replica gold mining village and the TranzAlpine Scenic Train.

The township of Hokitika was built on the pioneering spirit of the West Coast settlers. A busy port in its heyday it then became a centre for the West Coast gold rush and more recently has become known for its Pounamu-Greenstone carving. Here you will find many shops selling intricately carved pieces as well as other fine arts and souvenirs.

The windswept beach is often covered with driftwood making for an interesting stroll and the scenery to the mountains is quite spectacular.

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### Māwhera Pounamu Pathway Immersive Experience

Māwhera Pā in Greymouth is the first location along the Pounamu Pathway touring route to open. This self-guided experience is a historical and creative exploration of the Poutini Ngāi Tahu and the Māwhera Pā settlement people, retold by their ancestors. The exhibition will lead you through six different narratives, each tale including a large-scale masterpiece, artistically crafted by Weta Workshop to cultivate an immersive journey of visuals and sound.

## Hokitika

The township of Hokitika was built on the pioneering spirit of the West Coast settlers. A busy port in its heyday it then became a centre for the West Coast gold rush and more recently has become known for its Jade or Greenstone crafts. Here you will find many shops selling intricately carved pieces as well as other fine arts and souvenirs. The town itself has several historic buildings as well as many fine dining restaurants and cafes.

The windswept beach is often covered with driftwood and the mountain scenery is quite spectacular with Mt Cook in view. Around 15 kilometres inland you will find Lake Kaniere, an idyllic spot to take bush walks or simply relax and take in the view. Just south of the town on State Highway 6 is Lake Mahinapua Scenic Reserve where you can enjoy some short walks. The Hokitika Gorge, around 45 minutes from the centre of is a magnificent granite gorge lined with beautiful native bush. A swing bridge just 2 minutes from the car park takes you over milky blue green pools and a short walk delivers you to large moss covered boulders to explore.

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### Your accommodation: Rimu Lodge

Rimu Lodge is just a short drive from Hokitika, but once you arrive it feels like a world away. Set amidst New Zealand native bush each room takes advantage of the amazing West Coast views making for a relaxing retreat.

Meals included:            Breakfast



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## Day 11



### Hokitika to Franz Josef

Leaving Hokitika pass through the old gold mining town of Ross where some of the original buildings and workings remain. Ross is also home to one of the few working mines left in New Zealand. Continuing South pass through Harihari, the township Guy Menzies crash-landed in after he became the first person to fly solo across the Tasman. The next established town is Whataroa, a small township, home to some of the world's rarest birds - White Heron known in Māori as the Kōtuku. From here it is a short drive to arrive into the glacier region, on a clear day you'll spot the Franz Josef Glacier ahead of the township.

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### Hokitika Gorge

The Hokitika Gorge, around 45 minutes from the centre of Hokitika is a magnificent granite gorge lined with beautiful native bush. A short walk from the car park takes you over milky blue-green pools and delivers you to large moss-covered boulders to explore. One of the suspension bridges is closed, however, it is still possible to walk and view the Gorge. The drive out here from Hokitika is also quite something taking you through rich farmland with alpine mountain views.

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### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - West Coast Treetops Walkway

Come and enjoy a leisurely 45 minute to one hour stroll through the beautiful West Coast rainforest tree tops. Experience an exhilarating tree top adventure amongst temperate tree top giants. Experience life with the birds high in the ancient Rimu and Kamahi tree Canopy. There is easy access for all to enjoy along a steel platform 20 metres high and over 450 metres long. Following your walk, relax in their alfresco dining area, where you can enjoy the view with a wide selection of meal choices off the menu for lunch.

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### Your accommodation: Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef

Nestled amongst native West Coast rainforest at Franz Josef is a very special five-star retreat. Designed with utmost care of its precious environment, guests at Te Waonui Forest Retreat will find themselves encircled by rainforest and accommodated in natural and sustainable luxury.

Meals included:            Breakfast



## Day 12



### 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.

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### Franz Josef Glacier Heli-hike 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](#).

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### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Franz Josef Nature Tour with Glacier Valley Eco Tours

Unveil the hidden wonders of the Franz Josef Glacier Valley on this immersive, eco-conscious walking journey. Perfect for nature enthusiasts of all ages, this tour leads you through ancient podocarp rainforests and along pristine glacial rivers to witness the raw power of the ice from spectacular viewpoints. With a small group guarantee and expert local guides, you'll discover secret waterfalls, learn the fascinating stories of West Coast glaciology, and enjoy a relaxing break with hot drinks and cookies amidst the Southern Alps.

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### Your accommodation: Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef

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Meals included:            Breakfast



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## Day 13



### Franz Josef to Queenstown (via Wānaka)

Heading south you pass through the second glacier town of Fox Glacier before heading along the coast and into more classic West Coast bush scenery. We can recommend a stop at Knights Point Lookout elephant seals can often be seen basking on the sandy beaches at the far end of the point. Crossing the massive Haast River you turn inland and head into the valley climbing through mountains littered with waterfalls. The Haast Valley offers a spectacular view of the river and its enormous power. Along the way there is ample opportunity to admire Aspiring National Park and a stop at Roarig Billy Falls will leave you in awe. The Blue Pools near Makarora are a great 30-minute walk. The road from Makarora leads to Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea which will guide you into the stunning lakeside township of Wānaka before heading over New Zealand's highest sealed road, Crown Range Road and dropping into the Wakatipu basin, home to Queenstown. .

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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.

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### Cardrona Hotel

If you feel like spoiling yourself and learning about the area's history we recommend taking yourself out for lunch or dinner at The Cardrona Hotel, one of New Zealand's oldest and most iconic hotels which sits between Queenstown and Wānaka on the stunning Crown Range Road. Nestled in a beautiful mountain valley, the town of Cardrona boasts a rich and vibrant history: settled in the 1860s as hundreds of hopeful prospectors flooded into the valley chasing gold, the Cardrona Hotel was one of four hotels quickly established to offer accommodation, food, livery services and a coaching-stop for miners and travellers. With the short-lived gold mining boom beginning to wind down in the late 1800s, the area quietened down, with the Cardrona Hotel eventually becoming the sole remaining hotel in the valley. In more recent times the township of Cardrona has seen a resurgence in visitors, people clamouring to get a taste of old the old town feel, stopping in for a pint or delicious meal and a few fantastic photo opportunities in the quaint village that harkens back to a time of hope, gold and good fortune.

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### 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.

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### Your accommodation: Queenstown Park Boutique Hotel

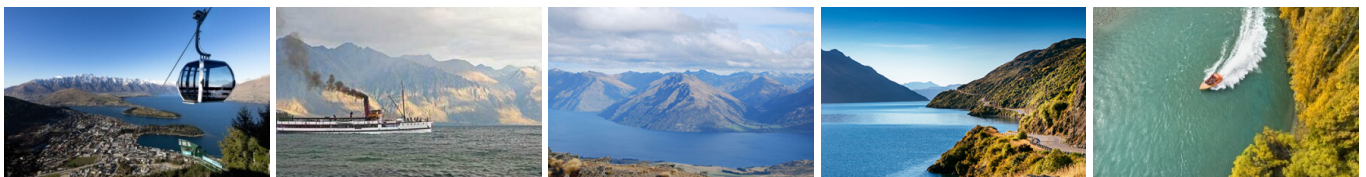
Queenstown Park Hotel is a boutique hotel with a modern romantic style in the heart of New Zealand's adventure capital. Set in peaceful parkland, savour views of Queenstown's majestic mountains. Enjoy easy access to the vibrant town centre where shopping, cafes and nightlife nestled on the shores of spectacular Lake Wakatipu.

Meals included:            Breakfast



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## Day 14



### 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.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Altitude Glenorchy Scenic Tour

No visit to Queenstown is complete without a trip to picturesque Glenorchy, located about 50 minutes away, nestled on the northern shores of Lake Wakatipu, home to some of New Zealand's best scenery and Middle-earth magic.

The tour visits numerous scenic locations and shares facts, stories and history about the region including Maori history. On tour you'll visit Glenorchy wharf, Paradise, Diamond Lake, and Lord of The Rings film locations. A delicious kiwi style morning or afternoon tea is included and the opportunity to pose as a Lord of the Rings character while you're there!

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## 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.

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## Your accommodation: Queenstown Park Boutique Hotel

Queenstown Park Hotel is a boutique hotel with a modern romantic style in the heart of New Zealand's adventure capital. Set in peaceful parkland, savour views of Queenstown's majestic mountains. Enjoy easy access to the vibrant town centre where shopping, cafes and nightlife nestled on the shores of spectacular Lake Wakatipu.

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner



## Day 15



## Queenstown to Te Anau

Passing through the bustling suburb of Frankton, follow the shores of Lake Wakatipu. The Remarkables mountain range towers over you on the stretch of road known as "The Devil's Staircase" leading you to the township of Kingston. You'll venture into Southland before crossing the rolling tussock lands of Mossburn (deer capital of New Zealand) and shortly arriving at Te Anau, the gateway to Fiordland National Park.

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## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Beekeeping and Honey Spinning Experience with Buzzstop

Discover the captivating realm of bees and beekeeping through this immersive introduction. Under the guidance of a knowledgeable local beekeeper, you will open and interact with a live hive, offering the chance to hold a frame teeming with hundreds of busy bees. Gain firsthand knowledge of the inner dynamics of these extraordinary colonies and their crucial significance to our global ecosystem.

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## 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.

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## Ata Whenua - Shadowland Film at Fiordland Cinema

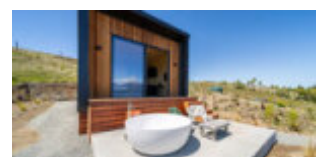
Ata Whenua refers to the southwestern coast of New Zealand and translates to English as "Shadow Land". This breathtaking short film will take you on an unforgettable journey through one of the most awe-inspiring landscapes on earth, Fiordland National Park. Shot by award-winning cinematographers with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

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## Your accommodation: Tukare Lookout

Perched on a historic vantage point once used by local iwi to observe Lake Te Anau, Tukare Lookout offers a unique blend of deep cultural history and breathtaking mountain views. This self-contained retreat invites guests to connect with the landscape and the surrounding forest restoration project. From the South Peaks to the North, it provides a peaceful, private space to reflect on the same stunning scenery that has watched over the region for generations.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 16



### Milford Sound Business Class with Real NZ and Altitude Tours - Includes Canapes

Embrace the spirit of Milford Sound in this exclusive tour, where rich storytelling and intimate encounters with the land and sea create an experience like no other. From the moment you step onto your high-end transfer in Te Anau, your journey becomes part of the adventure, with cultural storytelling, scenic stops, and exceptional service. Spacious reclining seats, curated refreshments, and panoramic windows ensure you travel in style. In Milford Sound, immerse yourself in the iconic beauty with a glass of New Zealand bubbles in hand, aboard the masterfully redesigned MV Sinbad. Relax in an elegant lounge, indulge in a generous selection of canapés, and take in the fresh Fiordland air from the top deck as expert storytelling brings the history, wildlife, and legends of this extraordinary place to life.

It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information, see here.

### Your accommodation: Tukare Lookout

Perched on a historic vantage point once used by local iwi to observe Lake Te Anau, Tukare Lookout offers a unique blend of deep cultural history and breathtaking mountain views. This self-contained retreat invites guests to connect with the landscape and the surrounding forest restoration project. From the South Peaks to the North, it provides a peaceful, private space to reflect on the same stunning scenery that has watched over the region for generations.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



## Day 17



### Te Anau to Dunedin

The drive from Te Anau to Dunedin takes you through classic Southland farmland scenery to Gore, the official home of country music in New Zealand. Continuing onward to the East Coast you'll pass through small farming communities and then on to State Highway 1. Balclutha is the next landmark town and gateway to the seaside community of The Catlins. From here it is a short drive through to Dunedin, known in Māori as Ōtepoti and known worldwide as "Edinburgh of the South".

### 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.

### Larnach Castle: Guided Tour & High Tea Experience

Larnach Castle, New Zealand's only castle, was built in 1871 by politician and merchant William Larnach, a visionary who played a key role in shaping the country's early history. On this guided tour, explore the castle's grand rooms, intricate architecture, and beautifully restored interiors while learning about the lives, dramas, and triumphs of its inhabitants. Wander through the award-winning gardens and enjoy stunning views of the Otago Peninsula. Perfect for history buffs, architecture lovers, and anyone seeking a glimpse into New Zealand's colonial past.

### 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: Larnach Lodge at Larnach Castle

Larnach is New Zealand's only Castle, built in 1871 and immaculately restored and maintained. Accommodation is offered in individually themed lodges set in glorious gardens.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Speciality Dinner



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## Day 18



### Dunedin to Mt Cook National Park

Heading north from Dunedin your first stop should be Moeraki to explore the famous and unique boulders strewn on the beach. Before heading inland along the Waitaki Valley you pass through the historic township of Oamaru and its Stone buildings. Take time to head into the old quarter and if your timing is right you may get to see some of the local resident little blue penguins. The Waitaki Valley makes a large contribution to New Zealand's electricity supply with its 3 hydro dams. Arriving into Omarama you are now truly in the high country but don't think these vast empty lands are useless, these are some of the country's most productive merino sheep stations. The turquoise waters of Lake Pukaki guide you the final 45 minutes to Aoraki Mount Cook Village

### 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.

### 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 Plus

Experience the best views in the park from the spacious top floor rooms of the magnificent Hermitage Hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



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## Day 19



## Dunedin to Christchurch

Heading north from Dunedin your first stop should be Moeraki to explore the famous and unique Moeraki Boulders strewn on the beach. 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 Christchurch then stay longer to see the blue penguins come ashore at dusk. The port town of Timaru is next and then the vast Canterbury Plains. Crossing New Zealand's longest bridge at Rakaia you can view some great examples of the South Island's famous braided rivers. Arriving in Christchurch City puts you close to the airport and the International Antarctic Centre, a visit is highly recommended. Here you can get as close to experiencing life on the frozen continent without actually visiting plus see New Zealand's little blue penguins and ride in a Haaglund Tracked vehicle.

## Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park to Christchurch

Leaving Aoraki Mt Cook National Park, travel a short distance for a stop at the visitor centre on the southern shores of Lake Pukaki. Learn about the formation of the region and take in the spectacular views of Aoraki-Mount Cook. Along the way, you'll reach Lake Tekapo which also displays the same reflective qualities as Lake Pukaki, making the waters bright turquoise. It's a great place to take a scenic flight, soak in a hot spring or just marvel at the magnificent views. From here you travel through Burkes Pass and into the rich farming valley that surrounds Geraldine. Continue across the vast Canterbury Plains to Christchurch.

## 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 Lyttleton Harbour which hosts fantastic markets on Saturday mornings.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - The Ultimate Alpine Experience Combo with Mount Cook Ski Planes and Helicopters

On this flight you will have the chance to fly in both the Ski Plane and Helicopter in the same day. Flying through the remarkable Tasman Valley and landing on the snow covered peaks with this scenic option is an unforgettable experience! Depart from Aoraki Mt Cook Airport in either our Ski Plane or Helicopter. Enjoy the beautiful views of the many mountains surrounding the picturesque Tasman Valley as you fly through one of the most beautiful regions New Zealand has to offer. The icebergs dotting lake the blue glacier lake, the Hochstetter ice fall and the cloud piercing Aoraki Mt Cook are some of the stunning views you will encounter on your journey through the Southern Alps. After landing high in the mountains you will get to spend some time enjoying one of the many snow covered peaks that Aoraki Mt Cook National Park has to offer. With snow covered shoes you will then fly back to the Aoraki Mt Cook Airport in the either the Ski Plane or the Helicopter. Giving you the opportunity to enjoy the magnificent scenery of the park in both aircrafts, making this flight option a spectacular once in a life time opportunity. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Kai Bites Share with Amiki Cultural Food Tours

Discover cultural treasures hidden in plain sight and savor the city's diverse flavors with this two-and-a-half-hour inner-city walk featuring kai stops, the perfect way to explore Ōtautahi Christchurch. This tour includes the Ōtautahi Hikoi stops and embraces the principles of manaakitanga (hospitality) and whanaungatanga (connection), emphasising the importance of sharing kai (food) in Māori culture. The cultural food tour celebrates the diversity of modern-day Ōtautahi-Christchurch. From historic tales of gathering mahinga kai along the riverbanks to sampling some of our finest contemporary flavours, this tour offers a sensory journey like no other.

## Your accommodation: Merivale Manor House

Originally built in the 1880's, Merivale Manor has been transformed into elegant motel and apartment accommodation. Less than 200 metres to central Merivale with its premier shopping, restaurants, cafes and bars.

Meals included: Breakfast



## Day 20



## 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!

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## Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Nationwide Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	20
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

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## Accommodation summary

Day 1	Park Hyatt Auckland
Day 2	On the Point
Day 3	On the Point
Day 4	Craggy Range
Day 5	Craggy Range
Day 6	QT Wellington
Day 7	QT Wellington
Day 8	Pihopa Retreat
Day 9	Pihopa Retreat
Day 10	Rimu Lodge
Day 11	Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef
Day 12	Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef
Day 13	Queenstown Park Boutique Hotel
Day 14	Queenstown Park Boutique Hotel
Day 15	Tukare Lookout
Day 16	Tukare Lookout
Day 17	Larnach Lodge at Larnach Castle
Day 18	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium Plus
Day 19	Merivale Manor House