

Southern Scenic Wonders & Wildlife Tour

Begin your journey in Christchurch and travel south through New Zealand's most untouched and dramatic landscapes, where snow-dusted peaks and turquoise glacial lakes form an awe-inspiring backdrop. Venture deep into Fiordland for an unforgettable overnight experience at Waitai Lodge, helicopter over the serene waters of Piopiotahi - Milford Sound, surrounded by towering granite cliffs, misty waterfalls, and ancient rainforest, before experiencing this untouched piece of Fiordland. Continue to Queenstown, where alpine luxury meets adventure, and indulge in world-class cuisine and local wines. Then journey to the base of Aoraki - Mount Cook, where vast alpine valleys and some of the clearest night skies on earth invite wonder and reflection.

Starts in: Christchurch
Finishes in: Christchurch
Length: 12days / 11nights
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: Kai Safari with Amiki Cultural Food Tours

Included activity: Royal Albatross Centre - Unique Albatross and Fort Taiaroa Tour

Included activity: Half Day Ben Lomond High Country Experience with Black NZ - Lunch Included

Included activity: Gibbston Valley Wines - Cave Tour

: 10 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 dinner, 1 special dinner

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: Big Sky Stargazing

Included activity: Oamaru Penguins Premium Evening Viewing

Included activity: Helicopter from Milford Sound into Martins Bay - Lunch and Dinner Included

Included activity: The Original Onsen Evening Session

Included activity: Lake Dunstan One Day Wonder Tour with Bike It Now!

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: 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.



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.

Christchurch to Oamaru

Crossing the vast Canterbury Plains as you head South, State Highway 1 crosses many braided rivers that start their life as glacial melt water high in the Southern Alps. New Zealand's longest bridge at Rakaia crosses such an example. The towns of Timaru followed by Oamaru are worth a short detour to the town centre. The town of Oamaru is most famous for its buildings constructed with the unique locally quarried white stone. One of the most popular things to do here is to see the blue penguins come ashore at dusk. The colony is just out on the point and an information centre dedicated to the penguins will give you a great insight into their lives.

Explore Oamaru

Oamaru, a town of distinctive charm on New Zealand's South Island, is renowned for its remarkable collection of whitestone buildings. Crafted from the locally quarried 'Oamaru Stone,' these ornate structures, many of which were originally grain and wool stores, lend a unique character to the town. The preserved Harbour/Tyne Historic Precinct is a highlight, where these magnificent buildings continue to stand, some still serving their original purpose while others now house an intriguing array of curious shops, gift stores, restaurants, and a motoring museum. Beyond its architectural grandeur, Oamaru boasts a vibrant shopping scene with numerous galleries and iconic stores. Immerse yourself in the whimsical world of Steampunk, a defining element of the town's creative spirit. As dusk falls, head to the harbor front to witness the charming spectacle of a little blue penguin colony returning to their burrows, and keep an eye out along the coastline for sightings of the rare yellow-eyed penguins.

Oamaru Penguins Premium Evening Viewing

Oamaru's Blue Penguins nest close to town under the cliffs along the Historic Harbour foreshore. The Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony is just beyond the Victorian Heritage Precinct and you are within walking distance of the town centre, close to shops, restaurants and accommodation. When penguins are on shore and have chosen to nest in the Blue Wing it is possible to see them within a couple of feet of you. At the appropriate times of the year you may see them incubating eggs or guarding the tiny chicks. You can watch the chicks as they wait for their daily meal to return with their parents.

You will be seated 2-3 metres from where the blue penguins arrive and cross into the colony. And be treated to an informative commentary by a trained guide. This Viewing is 1 and a half hours and includes the opportunity to enter the breeding colony on a boardwalk and walk among the blue penguin nesting burrows.

Your accommodation: Poshtel

This is not simply a place to sleep and eat before you move on to the next location. Designed by Carter Smith Architecture + Interiors, each room creates a distinct atmosphere all its own. Together they combine to create a myriad of interwoven stories, a collection of art and objects that provide guests with a truly unique NZ experience.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Oamaru to Dunedin

The drive from Oamaru to Dunedin takes you along the Otago Coastline and some of the earliest inhabited places in New Zealand. Just south of Oamaru is Totorā Estate and it is from here that the modern meat export industry was born. Sheep carcasses were processed here before being sent to England in 1882 by the first freezer ship, the clipper Dunedin.

One of the most intriguing places to explore is Moeraki and the Moeraki Boulders. These unique geological features are easily accessed and well signposted from the main highway. Some of the boulders actually contained dinosaur bones but according to Maori legend they were gourds washed overboard as a waka (canoe) was wrecked on a nearby reef.

Matanaka is a short detour off the main road and here you can take a short walk to see some of the oldest remaining buildings in the South Island.

Arriving into Dunedin you can appreciate the city's Edwardian and Scottish heritage through its fine buildings particularly around the Octagon and city centre and parking your car close by and exploring on foot is highly recommended. A not to be missed building is the railway station, recently listed as one of the world's top 100 buildings to see.

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.

Royal Albatross Centre - Unique Albatross and Fort Taiaroa Tour

The Royal Albatross colony at Taiaroa Head on the Otago Peninsula is the only mainland breeding colony of Royal Albatross in the world. From the centre, it's a short walk to the observatory for the privilege of seeing the greatest of all seabirds. Wander through the McMillan Gallery and learn more of the history and wildlife of the area. The Unique Taiaroa experience offers a comprehensive 90 minutes guided tour of both the Albatross colony and Fort Taiaroa. Enjoy spectacular Albatross viewing from the Richdale Observatory including the introductory "Attenborough" video and albatross breeding cycle information. The Fort Taiaroa guided tour takes you back into New Zealand's colonial past. It covers the Maori and European occupation of the headland with a visit to 'Fort Taiaroa,' underground fortifications beneath the Albatross Colony. Walk through the underground tunnels to the 1886 Armstrong Disappearing Gun that is still in working order. This was established to counter the anticipated threat of invasion from Tsarist Russia.

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, Speciality Dinner



Day 4



Dunedin to Te Anau

The drive to Te Anau takes you through classic Southland farmland scenery. Pass through the tranquil river town of Balclutha, the largest town in South Otago, which hosts a range of shops and services. Balclutha is memorable for its arched concrete bridge, under which flows the mighty Clutha River. The river is open for salmon and trout fishing all year round. As you head inland, you will pass through the small rural town of Clinton before reaching Gore, the official home of country music. It's also known for great fly fishing, with the Mataura River and many other productive streams close by. Take time to enjoy the lush farmland scenery as you journey east towards your lakeside destination of Te Anau, the gateway to Fiordland National Park and Piopiotahi-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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Pure Wilderness Jet Boat with Fiordland Jet

Jet boat down the Waiau river, across Lake Manapouri, to the ancient forest of the Fiordland National Park. Enjoy the thrill of jet boating down the majestic trout-filled Waiau River, to the serene Lake Manapouri. Step foot into the Fiordland National Park and go for a short walk while learning about the ancient beech forest and ferns. Your jet boat ride includes a number of stops at the exact locations of the filming the "Fellowship of the Ring" on the Waiau or "Anduin River". The driver will tell you the inside story of the filming the Lord of the Rings on this river. The trip will also include some thrilling 360 degree turns and spins as well as interesting interpretation about the flora and fauna and the local European and Māori history.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Doubtful Sound Sea Plane Flight

Running short of time? This is the perfect way to experience Doubtful Sound. Fly over Lake Manapouri and the South Fiord of Lake Te Anau to the remote wilderness of Doubtful Sound. See stunning waterfalls and unspoilt scenery which will leave you in awe of this dramatic region. This flight takes you to a remote area of the South Islands' rugged West Coast. Sometimes called the Sound of Silence, there is a cloistered serenity within Doubtful Sound that is a contrast with its near neighbour, Milford Sound. At 421 metres deep Doubtful is the deepest of the fiords and is long and winding with three distinct arms. The distance from Deep Cove to the open sea is around 40.4 kilometres. It is also home to New Zealand's highest waterfall - the Browne Falls at 836m (2,742 ft).

Your accommodation: The Cinema Suites

The Cinema Suites in Te Anau offers luxurious, themed accommodation that combines the charm of a classic cinema with modern comfort. Each suite is thoughtfully designed with cinematic decor, featuring plush furnishings, state-of-the-art amenities, and stunning views of the surrounding landscapes.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Helicopter from Milford Sound into Martins Bay - Lunch and Dinner Included

Sit back and enjoy the scenery as your guide drives you through the heart of the Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound. Enjoy a spectacular scenic helicopter flight from Milford Sound to Martins Bay, followed by an impressive lunch set amongst the wilderness in our private location. The afternoon is yours to enjoy. Explore the Martins Bay sand dunes by foot, taking in the rugged beauty of this isolated West Coast beach. Alternatively, choose to relax at Waitai Lodge in front of the fire with a good book and enjoy a soak in the outdoor hot tubs. The group reunites for a delicious three-course dinner accompanied by a fine selection of New Zealand beer and wine. Sit back, relax, and reflect on a great first day.

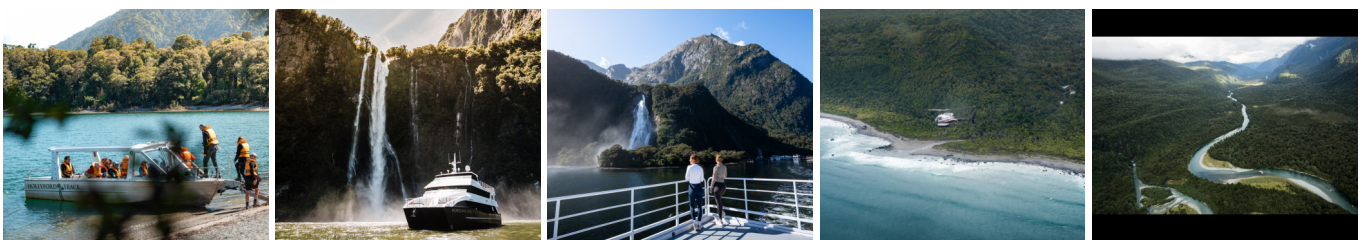
Your accommodation: Waitai Lodge Fiordland Escape

Tucked along the water's edge where rainforest meets alpine slopes, Waitai Lodge anchors refined comfort in deep wilderness solitude. Full-height glass and warm timber open toward calm lake waters and ridgelines. Surrounded by rainforest trails, the lodge serves as a self-contained base for guided backcountry journeys, boat trips, and remote restoration.

Meals included: Lunch, Dinner



Day 6



Waitai Lodge to Milford Sound and return to Te Anau - Breakfast & Lunch Included

Awake to the sound of bird song. Enjoy a hearty breakfast before joining your guide on a scenic jetboat ride across Lake McKerrrow. Take in the ever-adapting ecosystem as it shifts from a mountainous beech forest to a wetland and a vibrant coastal scenery. Marvel at ancient temperate rainforest with thousand-year-old giants such as native Rimu and Kahikatea. Alternatively, relax in the lodge while you appreciate your remote location. Regroup at the lodge in time for morning tea, before boarding your helicopter flight back to the dramatic Milford Sound. Marvel at Milford Sound's vertical granite walls rising from the sea while aboard the Fiordland Jewel for your luxury cruise. Your guide will then return you to Te Anau or Queenstown while you take in the impressive scenery.

Te Anau to Queenstown

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

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.

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, Lunch



Day 7



Half Day Ben Lomond High Country Experience with Black NZ - Lunch Included

Begin your adventure at Ben Lomond Station, accessed through a private road leading you into a world of breathtaking landscapes. Your morning will be spent exploring the expansive grounds of the station, climbing the ridgeline to witness panoramic views of the Shotover River, Mt Dewar, and Skippers Canyon. With countless scenic stops along the way, your guide will share the rich history and captivating stories of the region, as you traverse grazing lands, native forests, lakes, and rivers, and visit old mining huts and settlements. After crossing several rivers, you'll arrive at Moonlight Lodge where a gourmet picnic lunch awaits, providing the perfect fuel for your afternoon adventures. Continue your exploration of this high country station with options to embark on nature walks through stunning Beech Forest, delve into the gold mining history (including a chance to try gold panning), or simply relax and soak in the serene surroundings before making your way back through the station to your accommodation. On select days, you may have the chance to meet John Foster, the owner of Ben Lomond Station. John will share insights into the area's farming practices, the station's history, and his experiences living in this remote part of New Zealand, offering a truly authentic glimpse into local life.

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

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Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Queenstown to Gibbston

Following Lake Wakatipu head towards Frankton, crossing the iconic Shotover River. Pass Lake Hayes and follow the Kawarau River as it winds through the landscape to reach your destination, Gibbston. Also known as the 'Valley of the Vines' Gibbston is home to popular vineyards, cellar doors and restaurants.

Gibbston Valley Wines - Cave Tour

Gibbston Valley Winery is home of New Zealand's largest wine cave. They offer daily wine cave and tasting tours to the region's oldest vineyard - their very own Home Block. You will experience wine tasting in the wine cave and catch a glimpse of the winemakers in action. The tour includes a tasting of three varietals in the cave and a visit to the Home Block Vineyard, originally planted by the founder and wine pioneer Allan Brady in 1983.

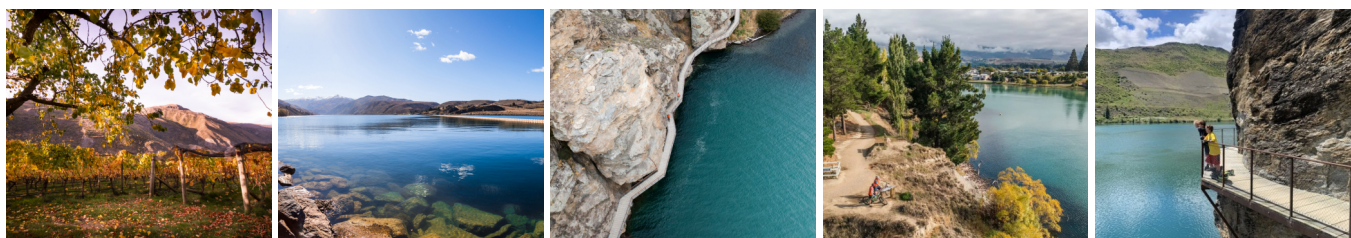
Your accommodation: Kinross Cottages

Kinross Cottages is located in Gibbston Valley, on a working vineyard, with stunning mountain views. Enjoy wine tasting in the on-site coffee shop, or relax in the outdoor hot tub.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



Gibbston to Clyde

Follow the Kawarau Gorge to Cromwell, famous for its stone fruit orchards and in the right season you can purchase this fresh fruit from the many roadside stalls.

Pass through Cromwell and over Deadman's Point Bridge which crosses Lake Dunstan. This lake was formed on the Clutha River as a result of the construction of the Clyde Dam. Between Cromwell and the Clyde Dam, the lake passes through the beautiful Cromwell Gorge. Arriving into the small historic gold mining town of Clyde you will notice many of the original buildings that have become iconic to the town.

Clyde

This historic Central Otago town, with its beautifully preserved stone buildings and tree-lined streets, is a living tribute to the region's gold-rush era. Located on the banks of the mighty Clutha River and overshadowed by the impressive Clyde Dam, it offers a fascinating blend of old-world charm and modern engineering.

Today, Clyde's fame is equally tied to its status as a premier cycling hub. It is the start (or end) of the iconic Otago Central Rail Trail, and a key junction for two other spectacular trails: the Roxburgh Gorge and the stunning Lake Dunstan Trail. Whether you're a serious cyclist or a casual rider, these trails offer breathtaking scenery and a unique way to experience the landscape.

Beyond its history and trails, Clyde is a treat for the senses. It's a stone's throw from some of Central Otago's finest boutique wineries, famous for their elegant Pinot Noir. The town itself boasts a delicious food scene, from cosy cafés to excellent restaurants, making it the perfect place to refuel after a day of exploration.

Lake Dunstan One Day Wonder Tour with Bike It Now!

The Lake Dunstan Trail is a two-way trail that links the townships of Clyde and Cromwell. The trail offers cyclists and walkers a 58km ride (Grade 1-3) through unique and fascinating landscapes so characteristic of Central Otago as it journeys along Lake Dunstan, the Kawarau River and the mighty Clutha River Mata-au.

The ride has two very different sections Old Cromwell (Smiths Way) to Cornish Point – great Grade 1 riding along Lake Dunstan and the Kawarau River. Visit the Vineyards, cafes and Hotels along the way. Once you pass Cornish Point the trail changes to Grade 2 and Grade 3.

This section is highlighted by the stunning engineering associated with the cantilevers. You need to be prepared for climbing switchbacks (Cairnmuir Ladder has 9 of them), steep drop offs, narrow trail spots while riding on loose gravel. You will need to be competent and confident with cycling on these type of trail features and surfaces to enjoy this experience. Coffee Afloat beckons at the base of the Cairnmuir Ladder – allowing for a recharge before those switchbacks.

Your accommodation: Olivers Central Otago Accommodation

Eleven rooms, divided into Stables and Lodge accommodation, superbly blend the old with the new creating a contemporary ambience integrally linked with bygone days. Schist walls, stone floors, rough sawn timber beams and stable doors enhance the 1860s theme while the six Lodge rooms showcase elegant contemporary interiors.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10



Clyde to Aoraki Mt Cook Village

Leaving Clyde, follow Lake Dunstan towards Cromwell which sits at the head of the Kawarau Gorge and the historic old town on the lake edge is well worth the visit. The buildings are now home to quaint shops and cafes. The old town buildings were relocated from the valley that now sits deep under Lake Dunstan. Continue along Lake Dunstan until you reach the historic and scenic Bendigo Reserve, which was one of Otago's original gold mining settlements. Well marked paths will guide you to the remains of stone cottages and other buildings from this bygone era. The Lindis Pass is one of New Zealand's highest roads with the summit reaching 971 metres. The tussock covered hills offer an unusual contrast as you pass from Central Otago into the Mackenzie Basin. The towns of Omarama and Twizel are the last stops before you arrive at the turn off to Aoraki Mt Cook. In Mt Cook Village a myriad of activities are available scenic ski plane or helicopter flights with glacier landings to kayaking on a glacial lake and a host of walks to suit all abilities. At The Hermitage Hotel the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre is a must see.

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - 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.

Big Sky Stargazing

Mt Cook is far from the city lights and therefore has some of the darkest skies in New Zealand, perfect for viewing the night sky! Their fully trained guides are delighted to show you the beautiful southern night sky using the naked eye, state-of-the-art astronomy telescopes, and binoculars at the outdoor viewing platform. If the weather is not favourable, then there will be an indoor alternative featuring New Zealand's first full-dome digital Planetarium, high-definition video images on a suspended 9m wide x 4.5m high full dome. Unleash your imagination as you discover the night sky, including the Southern Cross, seasonal ecliptic objects, planets, star clusters, moons, distant galaxies, and even our very own galaxy, the spectacular Milky Way!

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



Day 11



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.

Kai Safari with Amiki Cultural Food Tours

Immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of the new city while exploring its emerging foodie scene. Learn about the lives of early Māori and their contemporary lifestyle. Uncover hidden gems and hear stories of how Ōtautahi-Christchurch envisions the future. Enjoy visits to beloved modern New Zealand restaurants, where you can sample seasonal shared plates made from local produce. Indulge in new favourite dishes, savouring a variety of local food and beverages, each with its own unique story that highlights the region's offerings..

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 12



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!

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Self Drive Touring
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	12
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Merivale Manor House
Day 2	Poshtel
Day 3	Camp Estate at Larnach Castle
Day 4	The Cinema Suites
Day 5	Waitai Lodge Fiordland Escape
Day 6	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 7	The Dairy Hotel Queenstown, A Naumi Chapter
Day 8	Kinross Cottages
Day 9	Olivers Central Otago Accommodation
Day 10	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium Plus
Day 11	Merivale Manor House