



Pure Discoveries Kauri Tour

Join us for a three week small group journey that will take you on an adventure like no other. Experience the breath-taking scenery of snow-capped Alps, wander through lush tropical rainforests and relax on wide sandy beaches. You will learn how this beautiful land has been shaped by ancient volcanoes and southern seas, by Māori warriors and colonial settlers. Friendly local guides will share their cultural, historical and ecological expertise as you travel throughout Aotearoa - 'the land of the long white cloud'.

Starts in: Auckland
Finishes in: Christchurch
Length: 23days / 22nights
Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
Can be customised: Yes

This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

Includes: All coach transport
Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring
Included: Wellington Cable Car
Included: Marlborough Wine Tour
Included: Abel Tasman National Park Cruise

plus much more...

Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations
Included: Introducing Te Papa Museum Tour
Included: Cruise on the Interislander Ferry
Included: Nelson Orientation Tour
Included: 'Your Choice' Kaikoura - Whale Watch Cruise OR Wings Over Whales

Day 1



Kauri Tour with Pure Discoveries

This journey spans the entire 'land of the long white cloud', from the far north to the magnificent south.

Kauri, the name explained: the Kauri is among the world's mightiest of trees. They are one of the longest-living tree species in the world, as well as the largest. Kauri are considered a taonga (treasure) by many New Zealanders, particularly Māori, who see the health of Kauri as a sign of general wellbeing of the ngahere (forest) and the people.

With friendly local guides providing cultural, historical, and ecological expertise, this tour offers a deep, enriching connection to Aotearoa's people and breathtaking environment. Get ready for three weeks of unparalleled discovery.

Arrive into Auckland

Haere mai – welcome! Arrive in Auckland where you will be met and transferred to your accommodation. Spend the afternoon and evening at your leisure exploring the 'City of Sails'.

Your accommodation: M Social Hotel Auckland (or similar)

A contemporary hotel for the curious, the explorers and those who thrive on new experiences. Functionally chic, this contemporary hotel overlooks the vibrant Princes Wharf that is home to a good array of dining, entertainment and shopping experiences.



Day 2



Auckland to Bay of Islands

Travel north via Auckland's iconic Harbour Bridge to visit Reed Memorial Park. Here, walk along an elevated canopy walkway through a remnant of the original kauri forests – some kauri trees are known to be at least 500 years old. Take in the picturesque Whangārei Falls, formed more than 2 million years ago, before continuing to the Bay of Islands – a stunning region of 144 subtropical islands scattered through warm shallow waters and bays abundant in natural wonders and marine life. Regarded as the birthplace of New Zealand, the Bay of Islands is rich in both Māori culture and early European history. You are welcomed to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds to learn the story of Waitangi, including the signing of the 1840 treaty between Māori tribes and British settlers; the magnificent meeting house; the interactive and contemporary museum; and the war canoe (waka). Next, take a ferry to the seaside village of Russell, spending the next two nights at the historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel.

Your accommodation: Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell (or similar)

The historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel is located on the waterfront in the charming village of Russell. Choose from a range of rooms including the Waterfront rooms with their spectacular views across to Paihia or the family rooms for those needing extra space. The onsite restaurant and bar is also a great place to relax and take in the views.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Bay of Islands

'Your Choice' day! Today you have the choice of two excursions:

A) Discover the Far North of New Zealand.

This full-day coach tour will take you to Cape Reinga, the northernmost tip of New Zealand, where you can watch the Pacific Ocean collide with the Tasman Sea – and where according to Māori legend, spirits depart on their journey to the homeland of Hawaiki. In the morning, we will travel from Russell to Paihia on the Belle Bay Ferry, where we'll join a Great Sights coach (other passengers will be on board) for an unforgettable journey to the very tip of the North Island, travelling along the sand-swept shore of Ninety Mile Beach (Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe). During the trip you will have the opportunity to try sandboarding down sand dunes on boogie boards, take in magical views as you stand beneath the iconic Cape Reinga lighthouse, and enjoy the drive on the vast and empty Ninety Mile Beach. A knowledgeable local guide will share fascinating stories and insights throughout the day, bringing the region's rich history and culture vividly to life. At day's end, we'll return to Russell from Paihia aboard the Bay Belle Ferry. Depart Russell at 7.00am and return to Russell at approximately 7.00pm. Lunch is included.

B) Hole in the Rock cruise & tour of Russell.

This morning, enjoy a breathtaking cruise aboard a purpose-built catamaran through the pristine waters of the Bay of Islands and along the dramatic Cape Brett Peninsula. Take in views of the historic Cape Brett Lighthouse and the famous 'Hole in the Rock' – a highlight of the journey. Weather permitting, the boat will cruise slowly through the Hole and into the stunning Grand Cathedral Cave. Your skipper will provide engaging and informative commentary throughout the cruise. The Bay is rich with marine life and native bird species, so keep watch for dolphins, whales, and seabirds along the way. The cruise includes a stop at Otehei Bay on Urupukapuka Island, where you can purchase lunch (own cost), take a swim, or go for a leisurely walk. This afternoon, return to Russell and meet a local guide for an entertaining insight into this pretty little town's rip-roaring past, when drunken sailors earned it the name 'the hell hole of the Pacific'. Visit some of New Zealand's most historically significant buildings and enjoy sweeping views from Flagstaff Hill.

Your accommodation: Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell (or similar)

The historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel is located on the waterfront in the charming village of Russell. Choose from a range of rooms including the Waterfront rooms with their spectacular views across to Paihia or the family rooms for those needing extra space. The onsite restaurant and bar is also a great place to relax and take in the views.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Bay of Islands to Auckland

Head south through rural towns and past delightful beaches before arriving in Auckland, New Zealand's largest and most cosmopolitan city, to enjoy a sightseeing tour of the 'City of Sails' including panoramic views from Bastion Point; trendy Parnell Village; the lovely bays of the waterfront drive; and the vibrant Viaduct Harbour area. We also enjoy a guided tour of the Auckland Museum, which gives an excellent introduction to the artistic legacy and cultures of the indigenous peoples of the Pacific.

Your accommodation: M Social Hotel Auckland (or similar)

A contemporary hotel for the curious, the explorers and those who thrive on new experiences. Functionally chic, this contemporary hotel overlooks the vibrant Princes Wharf that is home to a good array of dining, entertainment and shopping experiences.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Auckland to Coromandel Peninsula

Travel across the fertile Hauraki Plains to Thames, then head up the western side of the Coromandel Peninsula. This coastal drive is quite spectacular, and on a clear day, keep an eye out for the SkyTower which can be seen across the Firth of Thames. Ride the nearby Driving Creek Railway, climbing 120 metres on a narrow-gauge line to the 'EyeFull' Tower for panoramic views of the surrounding countryside and back over the Hauraki Gulf. Next, drive east across the Peninsula through beautiful scenery to reach the resort of Whitianga on Mercury Bay.

Your accommodation: Oceans Resort (or similar)

Only a stone's throw from the golden sands of Buffalo Beach, you will find the relaxed luxury Whitianga Apartments of Oceans Resort. All apartments have a full kitchen including oven, cook top, microwave as well as their own personal laundry with washing machine and laundry necessities provided.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Coromandel Peninsula

White cliffs, golden beaches, inviting turquoise waters, and green forests are the colours of the Coromandel, with scarlet highlights courtesy of the flowers of Pohutukawa trees in summer, making this one of our favourite regions. Rightly famous is Hot Water Beach, where warm springs bubble up through the sand, and when the tide is right you can dig out your very own 'spa' pool for a wallow in the warm waters. Afterwards, enjoy a scenic walk to Cathedral Cove, where you'll spend time soaking up the beauty of one of New Zealand's most photogenic beaches before returning the same way. Next, your driver will take you to Cooks Beach – named after Captain James Cook who sailed on the HMS Endeavour into Mercury Bay in 1769. Famous for its long golden sandy beach, it is now a popular retreat for Kiwis during summer months.

Your accommodation: Oceans Resort (or similar)

Only a stone's throw from the golden sands of Buffalo Beach, you will find the relaxed luxury Whitianga Apartments of Oceans Resort. All apartments have a full kitchen including oven, cook top, microwave as well as their own personal laundry with washing machine and laundry necessities provided.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Coromandel Peninsula to Rotorua

Taking the Pacific Coast Highway through the beachside towns of Whangamatā and Tauranga in the beautiful Bay of Plenty before turning inland to visit a well-formed bushwalk with scenic lookouts over Okere Falls. From there, we continue on to Rotorua, the epicentre of New Zealand's geothermal activity and Māori heritage. No visit to Rotorua would be complete without a stop at Te Puia, where we explore its active geothermal sites, experience the nation's centre for indigenous arts and crafts, and learn about Kiwi conservation projects. At Te Puia it's part of their culture to welcome, guide, entertain, and treat you like part of the family and you are treated to a private guide throughout your time here.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Rotorua (or similar)

Rotorua's largest 4 star deluxe hotel is perfectly situated in the heart of the city overlooking Lake Rotorua. Five levels of accommodation offer guests a wide variety of scenic views.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Rotorua

'Your Choice' day! Today you have the choice of two excursions:

A) Visit the Waimangu Volcanic Valley.

Site of the eruption of Mt. Tarawera in 1886, the devastating eruption buried local Māori villages and destroyed the world-famous 'Pink and White' silica terraces, once considered to be the eighth wonder of the world. This catastrophic event changed the landscape forever and created the valley you can now walk through, past boiling craters and jewel-coloured steaming lakes. Take a cruise across Lake Rotomahana to the site of the old silica terraces, hear the story of Guide Sophia, and see the new terraces of silica slowly forming.

B) Experience the real Middle-earth with a visit to the Hobbiton Movie Set.

Visit the delightful setting for The Shire that featured in Peter Jackson's films, The Lord of the Rings trilogy and The Hobbit film series. Your Hobbiton guide will escort you through the ten-acre site, recounting fascinating details of how the movie set was created (other visitors will join this tour). The Hobbit Holes, Green Dragon Inn, The Millhouse and other structures created for the films can be viewed, and you will see how this beautiful piece of Waikato farmland was transformed into The Shire from Middle-earth. At Bagshot Row, you'll get an authentic glimpse into Hobbit life, including time to explore one of two beautifully detailed Hobbit Holes.

This evening visit Tamaki Māori Village for Te Pā Tū. The evening experience and feast is aligned to and changes with the maramataka (Māori lunar calendar). Feast on Māori song, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) amidst towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and forest-formed amphitheatre. Hākari (feasting) begins with forest horotai (canapes) and culminates in a lavish four-course fusion feast. Hāngī is featured in varied seasonal menus designed by Māori chefs served to table – al fresco when warm, or in the wharekai (dining room) if cooler. During summer months, Tū Te Rā celebrates harvest and concepts concerning ancient Māori warfare and peace. Over winter months, Tū Te Ihi celebrates the Matariki star cluster with mystical ritual, energy, and passion. Return hotel transfers included – other travellers will be on board.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Rotorua (or similar)

Rotorua's largest 4 star deluxe hotel is perfectly situated in the heart of the city overlooking Lake Rotorua. Five levels of accommodation offer guests a wide variety of scenic views.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 9



Rotorua to Napier

Visit the powerful Huka Falls then view the vast Lake Taupō – more inland sea than lake, though its fresh waters teem with trout. Across the lake stands the mighty volcanic peaks of Ruapehu, Ngāuruhoe, and Tongariro, within the Tongariro National Park. Then continue on to Napier to view one of the world's most complete examples of Art Deco architecture, second (arguably) only to Miami Beach. This joyful seaside town had a tragic birth, being virtually levelled by fierce fires that followed the devastating 1931 earthquake. Napier was rebuilt in the most up-to-date style of the time, which today is referred to as Art Deco. This afternoon our local guide brings history and architecture alive with entertaining stories as we discover Napier on foot. Today's journey has brought us to the North Island's wine country, so this evening's treat is dinner at New Zealand's oldest winery, Mission Estate, where you enjoy dinner in the restored seminary buildings with sweeping views of Napier.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Te Pania (or similar)

Scenic Hotel Te Pania offers 4-star accommodation of a truly international standard. The hotel's slender, curved form echoes the shape of the bay. Enjoy sweeping views out over the water from a premium waterfront location on Marine Parade.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 10



Napier to Wellington

Travel through the vineyards and orchards of Hawke's Bay and the bush-clad ranges of the Wairarapa into New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. On arrival, view New Zealand's magnificent Parliament Buildings including the iconic 'Beehive' building. From the Kelburn lookout take the Wellington Cable Car down into the central city precinct before visiting Te Papa – one of the most exciting museums in the world, featuring New Zealand insights; the shaping of its land, the spirit of its diverse peoples, its unique wildlife, landscapes and its distinctive popular culture.

Your accommodation: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Wellington (or similar)

Located less than five minutes away from the waterfront in Wellington, this modern hotel offers luxury and convenience.

Adjacent to Wellington Cable Car, leading to the Botanic Garden, offering panoramic views of the city and home to a variety of dining and waterside activities.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 11



Wellington to Nelson

Your day commences with one of the most beautiful ferry journeys in the world. Travelling through the waters of Cook Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound, the ferry is often accompanied by dolphins riding the bow waves. Disembarking in Picton, travel the short distance to Blenheim in the heart of the Marlborough wine country. Enjoy a wine tasting at one of Marlborough's premier wineries – what better way to enjoy this region famous for its Sauvignon Blanc? From Marlborough, cross to the Nelson district – a corner of the South Island blessed with a sunny microclimate and your base for the next two nights.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Interislander Ferry: Premium Plus Lounge Upgrade

Enjoy the scenic ferry cruise between the North and South Islands in style with a Kaitaki or Aratere Premium Plus Lounge ticket. This gives you access to an exclusive onboard lounge providing comfortable seating, free internet access, Sky TV, newspapers and magazines, complimentary food and beverages. Access restricted to passengers 18 years and over.

Your accommodation: Heritage Rutherford Hotel Nelson (or similar)

The Rutherford Hotel Nelson offers luxurious accommodation with a full complement of features designed to help you achieve the most from your stay. Situated at the doorstep of three national parks and an unmatched range of sandy beaches, blue seas and mountain wilderness.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12



Abel Tasman National Park

Paradise found! Abel Tasman National Park is a mosaic of golden coves, and turquoise lagoons sheltered by forested ranges to the south. With few roads in this pristine wilderness, most journeys are made by boat. Enjoy a morning cruise exploration of New Zealand's smallest National Park. View world-famous Split Apple Rock, New Zealand Fur Seals, golden sands, and the turquoise waters of Anchorage, Bark Bay, Tonga Quarry, Awaroa, and Tōtaranui Beach. After the cruise, transfer back to Nelson for an orientation tour of the charming city before having the afternoon at leisure to explore at your own pace.

Your accommodation: Heritage Rutherford Hotel Nelson (or similar)

The Rutherford Hotel Nelson offers luxurious accommodation with a full complement of features designed to help you achieve the most from your stay. Situated at the doorstep of three national parks and an unmatched range of sandy beaches, blue seas and mountain wilderness.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 13



Nelson to Kaikoura

Depart Nelson and drive through farmlands and pine plantations, then the Rai Valley to the vineyards surrounding Blenheim in the Marlborough Wine Country. From here travel south down the stunning eastern coastline, along the thin ledge of land pinned between the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean and the rugged ranges, to Kaikōura – where the mountains meet the sea.

'Your Choice' day! Today you have the choice of two excursions:

A) Whale Watch Cruise.

Take a 2-hour Whale Watch cruise experience, aboard a modern purpose-built catamaran for an exciting, close-up encounter with the Giant Sperm Whale in their natural environment. The upwelling of nutrient rich waters around Kaikōura support an abundant and diverse fauna of vertebrates, fish and marine mammals. At times you may also see Dusky Dolphins and the rare Hector Dolphins, NZ fur seals, sea lions, and a large variety of seabirds, including the smallest of the penguins, the Little Blue Penguin.

B) Wings Over Whales.

Gain an aerial perspective during a 30min “flightseeing” tour on the world of whales and dolphins in Kaikōura's stunning marine environment from the comfort of a high fixed-winged aircraft for unobstructed viewing. Enjoy panoramic views of Kaikōura's stunning coastline, towering mountains, and sparkling Pacific Ocean, combining incredible marine life encounters with breathtaking scenery.

Your accommodation: Sudima Hotel Kaikoura (or similar)

This state-of-the-art waterfront hotel in Kaikoura has a 4.5-star rating with an outstanding in-house restaurant, a bar and conference facilities.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 14



Kaikoura to Christchurch

The road south follows the wild coastline, affording constantly changing seascapes and spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean before turning inland and climbing the Hundalee Ranges. Then descend into the rolling farmland of North Canterbury, passing through a number of small country towns before entering the city of Christchurch. This afternoon we join punting boatmen, resplendent with straw boaters and traditional Edwardian dress, for a relaxing cruise in flat-bottomed punts along the River Avon through the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. Afterwards, enjoy a journey in style onboard a beautifully restored heritage tram through the changing face of Christchurch's city centre.

Your accommodation: Distinction Hotel Christchurch (or similar)

This 4-star hotel is centrally located in the revitalised Cathedral Square. Ideally positioned in the heart of the city, a short stroll from the Avon River, Botanical Gardens, Christchurch Casino, Cashel Mall and new Christchurch Convention Centre.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 15



Christchurch to Fox Glacier

From Christchurch, traverse the Southern Alps aboard the famous TranzAlpine rail journey to Arthurs Pass. From your carriage you'll see the fields of the Canterbury Plains and farmland, followed by the spectacular gorges and river valleys of the Waimakariri River. Your train then climbs into the Southern Alps. On arrival in Arthurs Pass, reboard your coach to continue the journey to the West Coast. Pass through historic towns reaching Hokitika and its galleries specialising in pounamu (greenstone) jewellery and art works. Continue south through forests and farmland, with views of the Alps to the east and the Tasman Sea to the west, to Franz Josef, then on to the small remote village of Fox. The huge rivers of snow and ice of the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers flow from vast snowfields high in the Southern Alps, down almost to sea level.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Scenic Plus Upgrade with Great Journeys NZ

Travel onboard the TranzAlpine train with the Scenic Plus Carriage. When you take your Scenic Plus seat, you'll be treated to more than sensational scenery. Hosted in an exclusive carriage, the Scenic Plus dining experience will fill your senses with the authentic flavours of rural New Zealand, inspired by the lands you see through your window. Cross the fertile Canterbury Plains then wind through the gorge of the Waimakariri River and climb into Arthur's Pass National Park, a base for alpine sports, trekking and hunting. For lunch, enjoy a seasonal menu inspired by the mountains and rivers of the TranzAlpine train journey served on board in the Scenic Plus carriage. From the valleys of the snow-capped mountains, descend into the lush rainforests of Westland, to conclude the journey at the town of Greymouth.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Neve Discoverer Scenic Heli Flight with The Helicopter Line

Get ready to lift off in the safe hands of your pilot, gazing over staggering ice formations and rugged South Island terrain. Then you'll touch down on the snowy glacial plains, inhale the mountain air and take snaps with your chopper before heading back to base. Duration is 20 minutes. The Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers are constantly moving. On this flight, which glacier we land on and where is dictated by daily movement of the ice formations and the weather patterns that these vast areas of ice impact.

Your accommodation: Fox Glacier Te Weheka Hotel (or similar)

A modern, purpose built boutique Fox Glacier hotel. Distinctions Te Weheka Boutique Hotel provides a balance of luxury, privacy and location, while being only a short stroll to Fox Glacier village.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 16



Fox Glacier to Wanaka

Have your camera ready for your visit to nearby Lake Matheson for a morning stroll – when conditions are right the lake perfectly mirrors beautiful Mt. Cook in its still waters. Head over the Haast Pass along the river road beside the icy river and deep into Mt. Aspiring National Park. The atmosphere lightens as we reach lovely Lake Wānaka, reflecting the mountain peaks that in winter offer superb skiing, and the pretty resort town of Wānaka.

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

Explore the glacial icefalls of not one but two glaciers! Fly over both the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers, soaring first over the townships and then following the ice flow high up into the upper reaches. Land in the snow at the head of one of the glaciers and survey the path the glacier has carved below you. Duration is 30 minutes with snow landing.

Your accommodation: Edgewater Resort Wanaka (or similar)

Edgewater is Wanaka's leading hotel located right on the edge of Lake Wanaka. A short stroll to the town centres shops, cafes and restaurants and close to many walking trails the resort is ideal to explore this wonderful Alpine setting.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 17



Wanaka

"Your Choice" day! This morning you have the choice of two excursions:

A) Lake Cruise & Island Nature Walk.

Join a passionate local eco-guide as you depart Wānaka by boat and cruise to the predator-free Mou Waho Island. From the beach landing, a walking track climbs steadily through native vegetation, alive with birdsong, leading to the island's secret – a hidden lake, complete with its own tiny islands. The 3km return track is uneven in places however hiking poles are provided and the guide moves at the pace of the group, with breaks and seating at regular intervals. Upon reaching the lake you can relax or even swim, or choose to continue a little further to the summit for sweeping 360-degree views of Lake Wānaka, its surrounding mountains, and the Arethusa Pool below.

Take part in the island's future by planting a native tree, leaving your mark on this important conservation refuge. Predator-free sanctuaries like Mou Waho are vital for the protection of many birds including the Buff Weka. Thanks to a successful programme here, a thriving population has been established, and these charismatic, flightless birds often appear during your visit.

B) Experience a rugged off-road adventure with a Kiwi twist.

The perfect mix of incredible scenery, history, heritage, and farming life. Explore remote and seldom travelled back roads of an authentic New Zealand High Country farm overlooking sparkling Lake Wānaka. Surrounded by snow-capped peaks, glaciers and wild river valleys, you'll see farm animals including Red Deer, cattle, and sheep, up close and in their natural environment. Visit historical sites and experience what life was like for Wānaka's first farmers. With two optional walks through pristine alpine meadows and ancient lakeside forests, this journey offers a unique insight into Wānaka's rich history, heritage, modern-day farming life and breath-taking scenery.

This afternoon is at your leisure to relax or enjoy your own choice of activities.

Your accommodation: Edgewater Resort Wanaka (or similar)

Edgewater is Wanaka's leading hotel located right on the edge of Lake Wanaka. A short stroll to the town centres shops, cafes and restaurants and close to many walking trails the resort is ideal to explore this wonderful Alpine setting.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 18



Wanaka to Te Anau

Depart Wānaka, with your first stop at the much-photographed Cardrona Pub, before traversing the Crown Range Road to visit historic Arrowtown – a delightful gold rush village nestled below the beautiful peaks that surround the sparkling Arrow River. Continue your journey via the road pinned between the base of the Remarkables mountain range and spectacular Lake Wakatipu. Journey through a glacial-formed valley that is now farmland, to reach Lake Te Anau, the largest (by volume) freshwater lake in the South Island and gateway to Fiordland National Park. On arrival in Te Anau, discover the wild beauty of Fiordland by jet boat. Journey from the glistening lakefront in Te Anau to the quiet banks of the Waiau River, travelling the waters as far as the deserted shores of Lake Manapouri. Experience a hidden world framed by solemn mountains and wild forest, steeped in natural beauty and rich in history. Visit a 220-acre working support farm, featuring a fully restored 100-year-old woolshed, for an authentic Southland experience. Meet a local farmer and gain insight into New Zealand's agricultural heritage, and enjoy a sheep-shearing and dog-mustering demonstration.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

Explore a mysterious underground world of rushing water, before drifting in silent darkness beneath the luminous shimmer of hundreds of glowworms. Your excursion duration is approximately 2 hours. Your journey begins with a scenic cruise across Lake Te Anau to the western side of the lake. Upon arrival there is time to view informative displays at Cavern House before your experienced guides invite you to accompany them underground in small groups. As you explore by path and small boat, observe how the rushing water sculpts the rock formations before gliding through silent darkness to the glowworm grotto. The delicate incandescence of hundreds of tiny glowworms is a magical sight. Afterward, relax on your return cruise to Te Anau.

Your accommodation: Distinction Hotel Luxmore, Te Anau (or similar)

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

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 19



Te Anau to Milford Sound to Queenstown

The journey from Te Anau to Milford Sound is one of the most scenic experiences you can have on four wheels. Fiordland National Park, part of the Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area, is one of the great wilderness areas of the Southern Hemisphere. The scenery is spectacular with lofty mountains and deep valleys carved out by Ice Age glaciers. Described by Rudyard Kipling as the 'eighth wonder of the world', Milford Sound is breathtaking in any weather. Board a comfortable vessel for a cruise past towering Mitre Peak to the Tasman Sea. Keep an eye peeled for seals and dolphins which are often seen in the waters of the fiord. Following the cruise, retrace your journey back to Te Anau, travelling via the Cleddeau Gorge, Homer Tunnel, and the lovely Eglinton Valley, then across the Southland farmlands and around spectacular Lake Wakatipu to Queenstown.

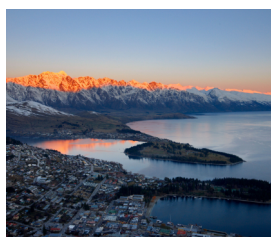
Your accommodation: Scenic Suites Queenstown (or similar)

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style, comfort and spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu and the Southern Alps. The hotel prides itself on its 4-star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 20



Queenstown

Surrounded by majestic mountains and set on the shores of crystal-clear Lake Wakatipu, the natural beauty and the unique energy of Queenstown create the perfect backdrop for a visit full of adventure, exploration, or relaxation. Today is free for you to do your own thing: thrill-seekers may choose to zip-line at Bob's Peak, get drenched on a Shotover jet-boat ride or go white-water rafting. Other enjoyable but less hair-raising activities include the gondola ride up to Bob's Peak, or a 4WD safari to Skippers Canyon. Boutique wineries and local gardens welcome visitors, and the classic steamship TSS Earnslaw is an elegant way to discover Lake Wakatipu during a cruise to Walter Peak High Country Farm.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Queenstown Panorama with The Helicopter Line

Fly above Queenstown over the Whakatipu Basin and spend 20 minutes capturing the stunning panoramic views of Queenstown, Lake Whakatipu and Glenorchy. Experience a serene and remote alpine landing with views of mountaintops, the glacially formed shores and sweeping high country grasslands.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Wilderness Jet with Dart River Adventures

Enjoy a jetboat ride on crystal-clear water in a wild and picturesque landscape, amidst the towering peaks, glaciers and ancient forests of Mount Aspiring National Park. With unrivalled National Park access, the boats cover up to 90km of river; the longest jet boat ride in the region. This relaxed pace half-day tour is ideal for those looking to take their time and make the most of being in this phenomenal place. Your guides give you their authentic touch, sharing stories of the area's rich history, the Greenstone trail and renowned Maori legends.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Queenstown Lord of the Rings Tour with Nomad Safaris

For those keen on The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings films, join Nomad Safaris for an unexpectedly delightful journey. Enjoy a half-day tour that visits the spectacular backdrops to much of the action in 'The Lord of the Rings'. This tour is based around several of the specific sites where filming took place. These are real places - there are no film sets - they are areas of outstanding natural beauty. In safari-equipped 4WD vehicles, you will be taken on a true off-road adventure. Experienced guides will take you through diverse scenery around the Whakatipu Basin while providing an informative commentary along the way. See historic Arrowtown and go over the Arrow River, as well as experiencing the truly remarkable views from the Skippers Canyon Saddle. Some of the sites you will visit during this tour include 'The Ford of Bruinen' and 'The Pillars of the Kings'.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Skippers Canyon 4WD Adventure Tour with Nomad Safaris

Nomad Safaris offers a complete 4WD tour into the historic Skippers Canyon. The Nomad Safaris Skippers Canyon adventure is a half-day heritage tour that follows the rugged and once treacherous Skippers Road. Travel the road that was hacked by hand into the sheer cliff sides of the Shotover River Valley making this one of the most adventurous roads in the world. Enjoy the awe-inspiring scenery from high above the gorge. The Shotover River was known as the richest river in the world in the days of the gold miners. Gold is still being found today, therefore, you may get lucky and find a pot of gold.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Gourmet Food & Wine Tour with Appellation Wine Tours

Experience an indulgent and diverse full-day wine touring adventure showcasing the very best sights and tastes from the Central Otago region. Your experienced wine guide will lead you on a tasting journey, travelling in style in a luxury Mercedes-Benz minivan, through the three main contrasting wine sub-regions of Gibbston, Cromwell and the Bannockburn basin.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Boutique Wine Tour with Appellation Wine Tours

Join a small-group wine tour offering a great taste of Central Otago's wine, history, sights and cuisine. Visit local wineries in the Gibbston Valley, Cromwell and Bannockburn areas to sample some of the excellent wines being produced in this area. Stop in for lunch at a vineyard restaurant and take a tour around the vineyard, barrel hall and see the wine-making facilities (weather permitting). Savour a delightful platter-style lunch made with locally sourced produce and accompanied by a flight of estate wines.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - TSS Earnslaw Cruise & Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Lunch

Steeped in Queenstown's pioneering history, your experience commences with a cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the 1912 vintage steamship, the TSS Earnslaw. This steamship is one of the last remaining fully functional coal-fired passenger ships in the southern hemisphere. Disembark at Walter Peak High Country Station, one of the first farms set up in the region and still a working farm. In the ambience of the Colonel's Homestead, enjoy a delicious gourmet BBQ lunch which the chefs will prepare in front of you. After lunch, enjoy a quintessential Kiwi farm experience including a sheep shearing demonstration, or take a walk around the beautiful lakeside gardens before the cruise back to Queenstown.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Canyon Jet Boat Ride with Shotover Jet

Shotover Jet is the only company permitted to operate in the Shotover River Canyons. Enjoy a thrilling jetboat ride skimming over thrashing rapids in just inches of water through the narrow twisting gorges of the Shotover River. Experience the adrenaline rush as your driver skillfully whips the boat past rocky outcrops and skims around crags and boulders then hold on as the driver spins the boat in the 'trademark' Shotover Jet 360-degree spin.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - TSS Earnslaw Cruise & Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Dinner

For a dining experience like no other, cruise across Lake Wakatipu on the iconic 1912 vintage steamship, the TSS Earnslaw. This steamship is one of the last remaining fully functional coal-fired passenger ships in the southern hemisphere. After enjoying the steamship journey and lake views, disembark at Walter Peak High Country Station, one of the first farms set up in the region and still a working farm. In the ambience of the Colonel's Homestead, enjoy a delicious gourmet BBQ dinner which the chefs will prepare in front of you. After dinner, enjoy a quintessential Kiwi farm experience including a sheep shearing demonstration. On the night-time cruise home, enjoy a sing-a-long with the ship's pianist or breathe in the fresh night air on the deck as you watch the lights of Queenstown draw nearer.

Your accommodation: Scenic Suites Queenstown (or similar)

Scenic Suites Queenstown offers guests exquisite style, comfort and spectacular views over Lake Wakatipu and the Southern Alps. The hotel prides itself on its 4-star hospitality that will make your stay in Queenstown even more memorable.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 21



Queenstown to Mt Cook to Twizel

Continue north through the rugged Kawarau Gorge, past pretty Lake Dunstan, and across the distinctive Central Otago countryside to the Lindis Pass. Descend into the unique Mackenzie Basin where the Southern Alps dominate the horizon. Take a beautiful drive along Lake Pukaki to Mt. Cook Village, home to New Zealand's tallest peak, Aoraki/Mt. Cook. We stay overnight in the rural town of Twizel.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Alpine Vista Scenic Heli Flight with The Helicopter Line

This short scenic option is ideal if you're looking for the opportunity to experience the thrill of a helicopter flight with incredible alpine views. Sweep through the rugged high country landscape of the Ben Ohau mountain range to a landing site in the mountains (snow is subject to seasons). Enjoy the fantastic vista from this alpine setting as you look out to the mountains and glaciers, and down the valleys that were carved out by glaciers centuries ago.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Optional - Glacier Explorers

Experience 500 year old icebergs up close and join a guided excursion for a memorable encounter with New Zealand's largest glacier, the Tasman Glacier. Transfer into the Tasman Valley then take a guided 30-minute alpine walk learning about the flora along the way as well as the features and behaviour of the glacier before reaching the Tasman Glacier Terminal Lake. See towering ice cliffs and floating icebergs from the safety of a specially designed boat. Board a custom-built MAC Boat and cruise the lake with an experienced guide to explore icebergs and the terminal face of the glacier itself - see the ice melt and hear the moraine rocks splash into the murky waters. This will give a true perspective of how awesome the glacier is.

Your accommodation: Distinction Mackenzie Country Hotel, Twizel (or similar)

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

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 22



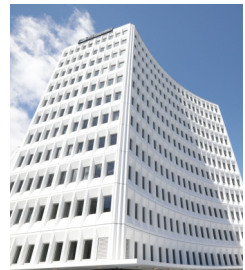
Twizel to Christchurch

Visit a local home set on the shores of Lake Tekapo and learn the secrets of making a Pavlova – a truly Kiwi dessert! For morning tea, enjoy the taste of your pavlova as you drink in the views of this beautiful lake. View the Church of the Good Shepherd, one of New Zealand’s most-photographed spots; a tiny church set against a majestic backdrop of the Southern Alps. Pass across the high country’s tussock plains, through the small rural towns of Fairlie and Geraldine, and onto Ashburton. From here travel across the fertile Canterbury Plains to Christchurch. This most English of New Zealand cities suffered a succession of terrible earthquakes in 2010/11. Post-earthquake the city combines urban regeneration and innovation with heritage, culture, and creativity. This is the final part of our journey together, so tonight we enjoy a relaxed farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Your accommodation: Distinction Hotel Christchurch (or similar)

This 4-star hotel is centrally located in the revitalised Cathedral Square. Ideally positioned in the heart of the city, a short stroll from the Avon River, Botanical Gardens, Christchurch Casino, Cashel Mall and new Christchurch Convention Centre.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 23



Depart Christchurch

Haere rā – farewell from New Zealand. After breakfast you are transferred to the Christchurch Airport for your return home, taking with you your fond memories of your time in New Zealand. Alternatively, should you wish to extend your stay, we can assist you with additional travel arrangements.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Small Group Escorted Tour
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	23
Accommodation:	Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	M Social Hotel Auckland (or similar)
Day 2	Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell (or similar)
Day 3	Duke of Marlborough Hotel, Russell (or similar)
Day 4	M Social Hotel Auckland (or similar)
Day 5	Oceans Resort (or similar)
Day 6	Oceans Resort (or similar)
Day 7	Millennium Hotel Rotorua (or similar)
Day 8	Millennium Hotel Rotorua (or similar)
Day 9	Scenic Hotel Te Pania (or similar)
Day 10	DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Wellington (or similar)
Day 11	Heritage Rutherford Hotel Nelson (or similar)
Day 12	Heritage Rutherford Hotel Nelson (or similar)
Day 13	Sudima Hotel Kaikoura (or similar)
Day 14	Distinction Hotel Christchurch (or similar)
Day 15	Fox Glacier Te Weheka Hotel (or similar)
Day 16	Edgewater Resort Wanaka (or similar)
Day 17	Edgewater Resort Wanaka (or similar)
Day 18	Distinction Hotel Luxmore, Te Anau (or similar)
Day 19	Scenic Suites Queenstown (or similar)
Day 20	Scenic Suites Queenstown (or similar)
Day 21	Distinction Mackenzie Country Hotel, Twizel (or similar)
Day 22	Distinction Hotel Christchurch (or similar)