Fiona Donaldson - Personal Travel Manager
0403868746
www.travelmanagers.com.au/ptm/FionaDonaldson/



South Island Wilderness Encounters Tour

Your journey begins with the iconic TranzAlpine rail crossing to the West Coast, where you will explore the limestone wonders of Punakaiki and the subterranean magic of glowworm caves. In Franz Josef, take to the skies for a glacier heli-hike before heading south to the alpine charm of Wānaka for an island cruise and walk. The adrenaline ramps up in Tāhuna / Queenstown with jet boat sprints and clay target shooting, followed by a deep dive into the prehistoric silence of Piopiotahi / Milford Sound on an overnight voyage. You will conclude this epic circuit back in Queenstown, soothing your muscles with a floating sauna session on Lake Wakatipu.

Starts in:	Christchurch
Finishes in:	Queenstown
Length:	14days / 13nights
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: Late model rental cars

Includes: Unlimited kms

Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

plus much more...

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

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

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

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

Welcome to Ōtautahi / Christchurch, the South Island’s garden city, where historic heritage meets contemporary urban design. Whether you’re exploring the Avon River, wandering through expansive botanical gardens, or discovering contemporary art galleries, Christchurch offers plenty to uncover. As the gateway to the Canterbury Plains and Southern Alps, the city is also the perfect base for refined farm-to-table dining, scenic adventures, and alpine escapes

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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 archetecture. 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.

Your accommodation: Sudima Christchurch City

Sudima Christchurch City is a brand new 5-star boutique hotel, ideally located on Victoria Street. Amidst an array of cafes, restaurants and bars, stay only a martini olive pips’ throw from beautiful Hagley Park and Christchurch’s CBD. Experience the garden city in comfort and style.



Day 2







Shared Transfer from Christchurch CBD Accommodation to Christchurch Train Station with Christchurch Touring Company

You will be met by a driver at your Christchurch Accommodation and transferred to the railway station.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Christchurch to Greymouth Scenic Plus with Great Journeys NZ

Great Journeys New Zealand's Scenic Plus carriage provides comfort and vast panoramic views, making our TranzAlpine scenic train journey the perfect way to explore coast-to-coast through the 'Great Divide' and the indomitable spine of mountains that partitions New Zealand's South Island. Scenic Plus offers an all-inclusive experience on the unique TranzAlpine scenic rail journey to invigorate all the senses! Feast your eyes on epic scenery while you savour regionally inspired cuisine paired with sumptuous wine and beer all from the comfort of your luxurious seat – a hosted dining experience like no other. Quite simply, we have done everything we can to ensure you feel at peace as you sink back in your seat and soak up the scenery.

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.

Greymouth to Punakaiki

The short drive north to Punakaiki takes you along the wonderful west coast with ample opportunity to view the surf and the steep bush-clad mountains. Punakaiki is most famous for the Pancake Rocks and Blowholes. Visitors are often less aware of the many other great experiences available. Located in the heart of the Paparoa National Park, the area offers guided beach, forest, and mountain walks, canoeing, wildlife, horse trekking, surfing, gemstone hunting, caving, and climbing, heritage sites. There are taverns, cafes, and restaurants, and a great range of accommodation. The area also boasts a vibrant arts and crafts community and a cooperative gallery.

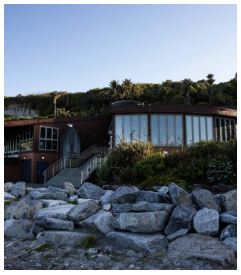
Punakaiki

Nestled on the rugged and raw West Coast, Punakaiki is a place where nature puts on a dramatic show. This small coastal town is the gateway to Paparoa National Park and is home to one of New Zealand's most famous natural wonders: the Pancake Rocks and Blowholes. Carved by the power of the Tasman Sea over millions of years, the Pancake Rocks are a geological marvel. Layer upon layer of compressed limestone and sandstone have created a bizarre stack of rock formations that truly resemble giant stacks of pancakes. At high tide, a spectacular sight awaits as the sea surges into caverns beneath the rocks, erupting through vertical blowholes in a thunderous spray. Beyond the main attraction, Punakaiki offers a deep connection to the wild West Coast environment. You can explore the lush native rainforest and coastal flora on short walks like the Truman Track, which leads to a stunning coastal arch and a secluded beach. The area is also known for its local art and craft galleries, providing a great opportunity to find a special souvenir.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Punakaiki

Scenic Hotel Punakaiki is a modern, award-winning hotel complex, architecturally designed to harmonious with the local environment. Nestled in the foothills of Papaproa National Park the resort has spectacular views of the Wild West Coast beaches while all rooms have rainforest and/or ocean views.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3







Pancake Rocks

The Pancake Rocks are a very popular tourist destination at Dolomite Point, south of the main village. The Pancake Rocks are a heavily eroded limestone area where the sea bursts through several vertical blowholes during high tides. Together with the 'pancake'-layering of the limestone (created by immense pressure on alternating hard and soft layers of marine creatures and plant sediments), these form the main attraction of the area.
The Pancake Rocks are presently explorable by several walkways winding through the rock formations, some are pathways, and others are carved into stairways up and down the rock faces. State Highway 6, the only through road on the West Coast, passes through the town.

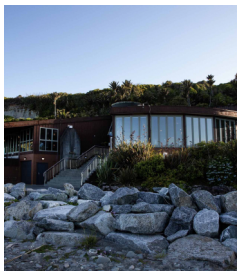
Underworld Rafting and Glowworm Experience with Underworld Adventures

A superb four hour Black Water Rafting adventure in the Paparoa National Park. You meander through a paradise of stalactites and stalagmites in the upper dry levels of the cave. You then enter a slow moving underground river on which you float in your tube using only the natural light of an awe inspiring display of glow worms for navigation. Emerge from the cave into a remote and untouched world before leaving its tranquility for the rushing bubbling waters of the low grade Nile River Rapids. It is important you understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

Paparoa National Park

Paparoa National Park on the South Island’s West Coast is most famous for its sculpted limestone cliffs, including the Pancake Rocks and blowholes at Dolomite Point. The best place to base yourself for exploring the park is the small village of Punakaiki.
The limestone base of the park makes this a spectacular destination, with karst limestone formations scattered amongst lush green forests and carved out river canyons. There are a number of opportunities for the unguided day tripper to safely experience the subterranean cave systems. The oldest tourist destination in the park is the Fox River Cave Walk, a safe cave walk with 200m of an underground network to explore, or visit the Punakaiki cavern located right beside State Highway 6 – just remember to bring a good flashlight.
To really understand the flora and fauna of the park, make sure to stop and visit the caves and rivers, or for a more adventurous experience, black water rafting with Underworld Adventures. For more information on walks and caves in Paparoa National Park, visit the Department of Conservation website.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Punakaiki



Scenic Hotel Punakaiki is a modern, award-winning hotel complex, architecturally designed to harmonious with the local environment. Nestled in the foothills of Papaproa National Park the resort has spectacular views of the Wild West Coast beaches while all rooms have rainforest and/or ocean views.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4







Punakaiki to Franz Josef Glacier

The drive South on State Highway 6 takes you through many West Coast towns. The first is Greymouth, the commercial centre for the West Coast. Just south of the town is Shantytown a replica gold rush town with lots of great displays from yesteryear.
The next town is Hokitika and this is a great place to explore the craft and gift stores. The Jade or Greenstone on offer in Hokitika is probably some of the best you will see in the country. The Hokitika Gorge, off the beaten track and inland a little is a spectacular 50 minute detour. Turquoise waters flowing through a narrow gorge. A great short walk will deliver you to this piece of paradise.
Ross is the site of an old gold mining town and some of the old buildings and workings remain. In fact Ross is still home to one of the few working gold mines left in New Zealand and the local information centre offers you the chance to pan for gold.
Continuing south Hari Hari is the township that Guy Menzies decided to land in (or rather crash land) as he became the first person to fly solo across the Tasman.
Whataroa, a small township on the main road is where you would head off to see one of the worlds rarest birds. The entire population (somewhere between 150 and 200 birds) of the New Zealand white heron or kotuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve and guided tours from October to March will take you there.
Arriving in to the Glacier region you catch your first glimpse of Franz Josef Glacier from a few kilometres out as it flows from the Southern Alps. Franz Josef township is a lively place with a great atmosphere, plenty of choice to dine out and some wonderful activities to enjoy.

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.

Okarito Lagoon Guided Kayak Trip (2 hours) with Okarito Kayaks

Kayaking is by far the best way to enjoy the flora, fauna, and scenic grandeur of New Zealand's largest unmodified coastal wetland. Previous experience is not necessary. Okarito Lagoon covers more than 3240 hectares of shallow open water and is well known for its outstanding bird life, including white heron and royal spoonbill. Exploring the open water and river channels that lead you deep into the heart of the rainforest is like stepping back in time to pre-European conditions and on a clear day, you enjoy fantastic views of Mt. Cook and the Southern Alps. Your guide will take you to their favourite spots where you'll discover the flora, fauna, and history of the lagoon.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier

Only a breath away from the Franz Josef Glacier, Scenic Hotel is located in the heart of Franz Josef Village. Here you will find all of the amenities you would expect, as well as being close to the shops, restaurants and activities on offer in the beautiful Westland region.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5







Explore Franz Josef

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

Franz Josef Glacier Helihike 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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - One Hour Private Tub with Waiho Hot Tubs

Relax and unwind in the soothing comfort of fresh, warm water and aromatic wood smoke. Enjoy your own private tubs, nestled in a lush rainforest setting on New Zealand’s West Coast. These wood-fired hot tubs combine the soothing comfort of warm water with the unique atmosphere of wood smoke to give you an unforgettable experience.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier

Only a breath away from the Franz Josef Glacier, Scenic Hotel is located in the heart of Franz Josef Village. Here you will find all of the amenities you would expect, as well as being close to the shops, restaurants and activities on offer in the beautiful Westland region.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6




Franz Josef to Wanaka

Heading south you will climb over the Fox hills before arriving at the small town of Fox Glacier. If it's a nice day enjoy spectacular reflections of snowcapped mountains in Lake Matheson, located just 5 minutes west of Fox. Heading south from fox enjoy the amazing scenery of the Southern Alps, and sneak peeks of the rugged beaches while winding through ancient temperate rainforests. At Knights Point Lookout, elephant seals can often be seen basking on the sandy beaches at the far end of the point. Crossing the Haast River you’ll turn inland and through the mountainous valley littered with waterfalls. A great suggested stop along this route is the Blue Pools. Continue on past lakes Hawea and Wanaka into the alpine township of Wanaka.

Wānaka

Nestled on the shores of one of New Zealand's largest lakes and framed by the stunning Southern Alps. Wānaka is an alpine village that perfectly blends adventure, breathtaking scenery, and a laid-back vibe. In winter, Wānaka transforms into a bustling hub as snow sports enthusiasts flock to its renowned ski fields, Treble Cone and Cardrona, as well as cross-country at Snow Farm. As the gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park, it offers endless opportunities for hikers, with trails winding through remote wilderness, majestic peaks, and serene river valleys. Closer to town, you’ll find a network of scenic walking tracks, such as the popular Mount Iron Track, and from the lakefront, it is a short walk to "That Wanaka Tree". For thrill-seekers, Wānaka is an adrenaline playground, offering skydiving, paragliding, downhill biking, rock climbing, and jet boating.

Your accommodation: Edgewater Wanaka

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 7







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.

Wanaka to Queenstown

Leaving Wanaka, you head over New Zealand's highest sealed road, Crown Range Road, before dropping into Queenstown. This drive only takes about an hour, but you should allow more time to enjoy the magnificent scenery and explore the walks and many stops en route, including the Cardrona Distillery, wonderful views from Crown Range's highest point over Queenstown, the picturesque town of Arrowtown, and if time allows, even the wineries in Gibbston.

Queenstown

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

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Gondola and Buffet Dinner with Skyline Queenstown

With breathtaking views across Queenstown and Lake Wakatipu, the Skyline Complex is a must-do. Catch the fully enclosed gondola to the summit for a remarkable panorama of the city's surroundings. Wander the outdoor viewing decks then enjoy a gourmet buffet meal in the Stratosphere Restaurant.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown

Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



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 - Gold Heritage: Macetown with Nomad Safaris

A true four-wheel drive, off-road adventure exploring the abandoned gold mining settlement of Macetown. Follow the miners’ old wagon trail and explore the historic gold mining town. Long since abandoned after the gold rush, Macetown has now been transformed into a Department of Conservation reserve. Experience the narrow, rugged road and learn about the tumultuous history of the region as you take in the town remnants and spectacular scenery. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see here.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - TSS Earnslaw Cruise and Walter Peak Gourmet BBQ Lunch

Enjoy a quintessential Kiwi experience a delicious barbeque lunch and a farm tour in a stunning lakeside setting. First, take a scenic cruise from Queenstown to Walter Peak High Country Farm on board the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw, one of the last remaining fully functional coal-fired passenger ships in the southern hemisphere.
Disembark and take in the picturesque shores of the Station. Relax on the lakeside terrace at the Colonel's Homestead Restaurant and savour the aromas of the best local produce being cooked on the grill. The seasonal menu has plenty to choose from salads, vegetables and succulent meat with plenty of delicious dietaries on offer as well. Finish your meal with a scrumptious dessert before joining an entertaining farm demonstration or exploring the beautiful lakeside gardens.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown



Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 9






Queenstown to Gibbston

Following Lake Wakatipu had 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

To the east of Queenstown, tucked inside the Kawarau Gorge, is the Gibbston. Stretching to Lake Hayes in Arrowtown, Gibbston is known for its wineries.
Bordering the road on both sides, the land is extensively planted with grapes, and there are many opportunities to taste the pinot noir, a variety the region is famous for. Some of its notable wineries include Peregrine, Chard Farm, Gibbston Valley, and Two Paddocks.
An ideal spot for lunch is Amisfield Winery and Bistro (a must for any foodie) located at Lake Hayes, just a 10-minute drive from central Queenstown, or, for a more family-friendly option, there is the Fume restaurant at Gibbston Valley Wines.
The Gibbston isn't just about wine; opposite Chard Farm is the Kawarau Suspension Bridge, built in 1880 to provide access to the goldfields in the region. 108 years late, it became the location of the world’s first commercial bungy jumping operation, and you can still take the 43 metre leap today.

Epic Duo - Clay Target & Jet Sprint Boat

With a mix of skill and speed, this combo is for you to have the chance to Shoot over to the Oxbow Gun Club and show off your skills in the Clay Target Shooting range before taking a ride on our custom-built Jet Sprint Boat, where you’ll clock 0 – 100 in just 2.5 seconds!

Gibbston Valley to Queenstown

Leaving the Gibbston you will head towards Queenstown on State Highway 6, this will take you past the Kawarau Bridge Bungy centre, over the Shotover River and into Queenstown. One optional detour worth considering is a visit to historic Arrowtown en-route, a great place to stop for a bite to eat.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown

Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10







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.

Te Anau

It is the gateway to Fiordland National Park and a perfect base to visit Piopiotahi-Milford Sound. The Milford Road originates here, and this is arguably one of the most scenic stretches of highway in the country. Te Anau sits on the shores of spectacular Lake Te Anau, which reaches depths of 417 meters. Te Anau Township is the starting point for many walking tracks, including two of New Zealand's Great Walks, the Milford track and the Kepler track. Apart from hiking, you could go kayaking, lake cruising, fishing, or exploring Te Anau Glowworm Caves. You could go for a bike ride alongside the lake towards Lake Manapouri, on a popular Lake to Lake biking route. Along the way, you will pass a bird sanctuary specialising in Takahe, and other native birds.

Ata Whenua - Shadowland Film at Fiordland Cinema

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

Your accommodation: Distinction Te Anau Hotel & Villas

The Te Anau Hotel and Villas offers a range of accommodation from hotel rooms and suites to villas. Ideally located on the lake front this hotel is just a few minutes stroll from the shops, cafes and many activities Te Anau has to offer.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 11







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).

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.

Te Anau Glowworm Caves with RealNZ

Begin your Te Anau Glowworm experience with a scenic cruise across Lake Te Anau on board the luxury catamaran, Luminosa, to the western side of the lake. On arrival, you'll enter the caves through Cavern House, where informative displays detail the history of this 12,000 year old underground network. You'll then explore by limestone pathway while your guide points out hidden whirlpools, sculpted rock formations, and a rushing underground waterfall. See a magical display of thousands of glowworms as you glide through the darkness in a small boat.

Your accommodation: Distinction Te Anau Hotel & Villas

The Te Anau Hotel and Villas offers a range of accommodation from hotel rooms and suites to villas. Ideally located on the lake front this hotel is just a few minutes stroll from the shops, cafes and many activities Te Anau has to offer.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12







Te Anau to Milford Sound

The road to Milford Sound has countless photo opportunities and short walks. The Mirror Lakes create perfectly clear reflections of the surrounding mountains and glacier-formed meadows. Further along, you'll pass through the Homer Tunnel, an incredible feat of engineering at 1219 metres long. Milford Sound is the only sound accessible by road, making it very popular to visit. Coming into the village, you'll be greeted with an amazing view of Mitre Peak, which rises spectacularly from the waters up to the sky. Real Journey cruises can take you out into the sound where you'll receive a wealth of information on how this magnificent area has been formed and experience first-hand the multitude of waterfalls that line the fjord.
Note: Please make sure to allow 2.5hrs to Milford Sound, this takes into account the current road works on the Milford Road."

Milford Mariner Overnight Cruise

The Milford Mariner offers you a very special dinner, bed and breakfast experience on Milford Sound. Onboard the Milford Mariner you will cruise the full length of this spectacular fiord to the Tasman Sea before anchoring for the night in sheltered Harrison Cove. Accompanied by a nature guide you can go exploring in the tender craft and kayaks or simply relax on deck. After the day's activities, you enjoy a delicious evening buffet in the spacious saloon before retiring to your private cabin.
The vessel itself was designed along the lines of a traditional New Zealand coastal trading scow to reflect Fiordland's heritage. Departing from the Milford Wharf, the Milford Mariner cruises the length of Milford Sound to the Tasman Sea leisurely exploring on the way many points of interest, there is plenty of time to view the waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife and the experienced nature guide on board will be able to answer any questions you may have. After reaching the open sea, subject to weather and favourable conditions the sails are hoisted for a period. The vessel returns to the calm and shelter of Harrison Cove for your overnight stay. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information, see here.

Your accommodation: Overnight Boat in Milford Sound

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

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 13





Milford Sound to Queenstown

Enjoy the wonderful drive along the Milford Road as you head back towards Te Anau. Crossing the rolling tussock lands you pass through Mossburn, the deer capital of New Zealand. Following the lake north the Remarkable mountain range towers over you as you approach the adventure capital of Queenstown.
Note: Please make sure to allow 5.5hrs to Queenstown, this takes into account the current road works on the Milford Road.

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60 Minute Social Sauna Session at Watershed Saunas Queenstown

Forget everything you know about traditional spas. Step onto a floating pontoon and into a world of heat and ice, right in the heart of Queenstown. This isn't just a sauna; it’s a front-row seat to the dramatic peaks of the Remarkables, all while bobbing gently on the crystal-clear waters of Lake Whakatipu.
Over 60 invigorating minutes, you’ll cycle through the deep, restorative heat of the timber sauna and the thrill of the glacial plunge. Whether you’re brave enough to tip a waterfall bucket of lake water over your head or prefer to lounge on the deck soaking up the alpine air, the rhythm is entirely yours. This is pure, floating bliss that leaves you glowing long after you step back onto the wharf.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown

Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 14




Return your vehicle to Queenstown Airport

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

Farewell from Aotearoa / New Zealand

Bid farewell to Aotearoa / New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Māori, it is said mā te wā, which is not goodbye, it is see you soon!

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	South Island Self Drive
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Queenstown
Tour length:	14
Accomodation:	Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Sudima Christchurch City
Day 2	Scenic Hotel Punakaiki
Day 3	Scenic Hotel Punakaiki
Day 4	Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier
Day 5	Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier
Day 6	Edgewater Wanaka
Day 7	Millennium Hotel Queenstown
Day 8	Millennium Hotel Queenstown
Day 9	Millennium Hotel Queenstown
Day 10	Distinction Te Anau Hotel & Villas
Day 11	Distinction Te Anau Hotel & Villas
Day 12	Overnight Boat in Milford Sound
Day 13	Millennium Hotel Queenstown