

# Southern Drift - South Island Tour

12 days

No stone is left unturned as you venture into parts of the South Island less travelled. From the wild and pristine natural wonderland of Stewart Island, to the spectacular vistas of Mt. Cook through to Milford Sound, you will fall asleep under a blanket of mist with shadows on the still waters of the fiord.

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL  
Your South-Pacific Travel Specialists



Milford Sound Lodge



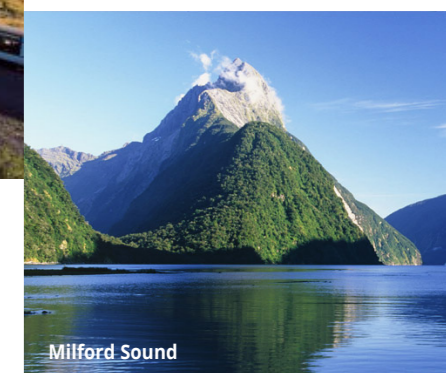
TranzAlpine train journey

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Punakaiki



Milford Sound

## Highlights

### Discover

- Franz Josef Glacier
- Cruise on Milford Sound
- Mount Cook National Park

### Explore

- Journey on the TranzAlpine Train
- Walk amongst lush rainforest
- Wildlife Sanctuary Stewart Island

### Learn/Do

- Jade factory demonstration
- Morelea Farm tour

### Relax

- Kayak on Milford Sound
- Untouched Stewart Island

### Taste

- 1 Highlight Dinner in Queenstown **HD**
- 11 full buffet breakfasts **B**
- 2 lunches **L**
- 6 dinners with wine **DW**

**Day 1: Welcome to Christchurch**  
On arrival at Christchurch Airport you'll be transferred by private car to your hotel. Spend some time at leisure to relax or explore on your own. Perhaps visit the International Antarctic Centre or Orana Wildlife Park, New Zealand's only open-range zoo. This evening meet your Travel Director for dinner. **Hotel: The George, Christchurch. DW**

**Day 2: Christchurch – Punakaiki**  
First up it's all aboard the famous TranzAlpine train. Rated as one of the world's great scenic railway journeys, you'll travel in the comfort of your carriage for the journey across the Canterbury Plains through the Southern Alps. You'll then re-join your coach at Arthur's Pass and travel to Punakaiki to view the Pancake Rocks and Blowholes. You'll stay in an eco-friendly resort right on the waterfront. Enjoy dinner while watching the thundering surf at your doorstep! **Hotel: Punakaiki Resort. B DW**

**Day 3: Punakaiki – Franz Josef**  
This morning you'll have a leisurely start to the day. Visit the small town of Hokitika, the heritage and cultural centre of the West Coast, for a greenstone (jade) jewellery

demonstration by a local carver. Then visit the West Coast Treetop Walk, where you may take a stroll through the canopy of this lush rainforest. Now you're off to the gold-mining town of Ross before arriving at Franz Josef, where you'll take a guided tour to the viewing area at the mighty Franz Josef Glacier with a local expert glacier guide. Your eco-friendly accommodation is set amid native bush, with an emphasis on relaxation and rejuvenation. This evening, why not enjoy Franz Josef's local geothermal hot pools or perhaps a massage. **Hotel: Te Waonui Forest Retreat, Franz Josef. B DW**

**Day 4: Franz Josef – Queenstown**  
You'll have the opportunity to see the glacier from the air on a scenic flight (own expense). Later today, travel over the Haast Pass and along the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, stopping at Makarora at lunchtime. Also stop to explore the historic gold-mining village of Arrowtown, followed by an orientation tour of Queenstown. Tonight you'll stay at Millbrook Resort, set amid sparkling streams and rolling hills in the Southern Alps and framed

by the Remarkables Mountain Range. This evening you'll dine at one of the resort's restaurants. **Hotel: Millbrook Resort, Queenstown, 3 nights. B DW**

**Day 5: Queenstown 'Free Time'**  
Today is free for you to explore New Zealand's adventure-capital at your leisure. Perhaps play a round of golf or indulge in spa treatment at your resort. Tonight you'll ride the Skyline Gondola to Bob's Peak for dinner with a view overlooking stunning Queenstown, the Remarkables and Lake Wakatipu. **B HD**

**Day 6: Queenstown 'Free Time'**  
Make the most of your extended stay in Queenstown. Why not take a trip to the Gibbston Valley Winery, take a jet boat ride down the mighty Shotover River or get wet white water rafting down the Kawarau River! Tonight you can dine at one of the many local restaurants and cafés in town, or simply relax at your resort. **B**

**Day 7: Queenstown – Milford Sound**  
Travel south along the shores of Lake Wakatipu to Te Anau on the shores of Lake Te Anau, the largest lake in the South Island. Later you'll travel through the rainforest of World

Heritage Fiordland National Park, sighting glaciers and mountain ranges before driving through the hand-hewn Homer Tunnel to a photographer's paradise surrounded by Pop's Lookout, Cleddau Valley and the amazing Mirror Lake, where the surroundings reflect perfectly on the lake. Afterwards, you'll walk to see the Chasm on your way into Milford Sound and take some time to kayak this majestic fiord and experience Milford Sound, New Zealand's most famous destination, part of the Fiordland National Park. Tonight stay at the magical Milford Sound Lodge, with views of the Cleddau Valley. **Hotel: Milford Sound Lodge. B DW**

**Day 8: Milford Sound – Stewart Island**  
This morning board your Southern Discoveries breakfast cruise to the Tasman Sea and enjoy the sights of Mitre Peak and Bowen Falls. Later, continue to the southern-most city in New Zealand, Invercargill. You'll board a ferry at Bluff to cruise to Stewart Island, the 3rd largest island in New Zealand, for a wondrous experience. With its clear, clean waters, lush rainforest, sweeping sands, flora and

fauna and unspoilt natural beauty, you'll get a glimpse into an enviable simpler, slower lifestyle. You can dine at one of the cafés or meet the locals at the hotel. **Hotel: Bay Motel, Stewart Island, 2 nights. B**

**Day 9: Stewart Island**  
This morning you're off on a Village and Bays tour before taking a cruise on Paterson Inlet and enjoying lunch. Paterson Inlet is the largest waterway on Stewart Island, where you'll see the many remote sandy beaches and wildlife. You'll stop at Ulva Island and this afternoon take a tour with staff from the Department of Conservation on Ulva Island's wildlife sanctuary. You'll learn about native birds like the Weka and spend time up close to native flora and fauna – a day of exploration and education. Tonight, try your hand at a bit of kiwi-spotting in the native bush near your accommodation. **B L**

**Day 10: Stewart Island – Mt. Cook**  
This morning you'll board a ferry and journey across Foveaux Strait, making your way back to the New Zealand mainland. Admire the rural farming views of Southland and the spectacular alpine scenery of the

Southern Alps as you travel towards Queenstown. Venture over the Lindis Pass and along the shores of Lake Pukaki into the Aoraki Mount Cook National Park. Mt. Cook, the highest mountain in the southern hemisphere, helped Sir Edmund Hillary hone his climbing skills in preparation for his conquest of Everest. Tonight enjoy dinner with a breathtaking mountain view. **Hotel: The Hermitage, Mt. Cook. B DW**

**Day 11: Mt. Cook – Christchurch**  
See Lakes Pukaki and Tekapo, where you'll stop to view the Church of the Good Shepherd. You're welcomed into the home of Angie and Stan Taylor to enjoy a barbecue lunch in their 240 hectare garden. Then travel along the Canterbury Plains to the Garden City of Christchurch. On a sightseeing tour see how Christchurch is being rebuilt after the earthquake of 2011. **Hotel: The George, Christchurch. B L**

**Day 12: Farewell from Christchurch**  
Say farewell to your fellow travellers as your Inspiring Journey comes to an end with your transfer to Christchurch Airport for your onward flight. **B**

### Flight information

Day 1 – Flights to arrive prior to 4.00pm into Christchurch Airport  
Day 12 – Flights to depart anytime from Christchurch Airport

**Airfares are not included**

## Optional Experience Day 5: Skippers Canyon

Located in Queenstown's back country, Skippers Canyon is one of New Zealand's best kept secrets. You will travel on Skippers Road alongside the Shotover River at a leisurely pace. You'll then reach Skippers Point in the Mount Aurum Conservation Area and enjoy morning tea. Ask your Travel Director for details.



Stewart Island



Gourmet food



Franz Josef Glacier

