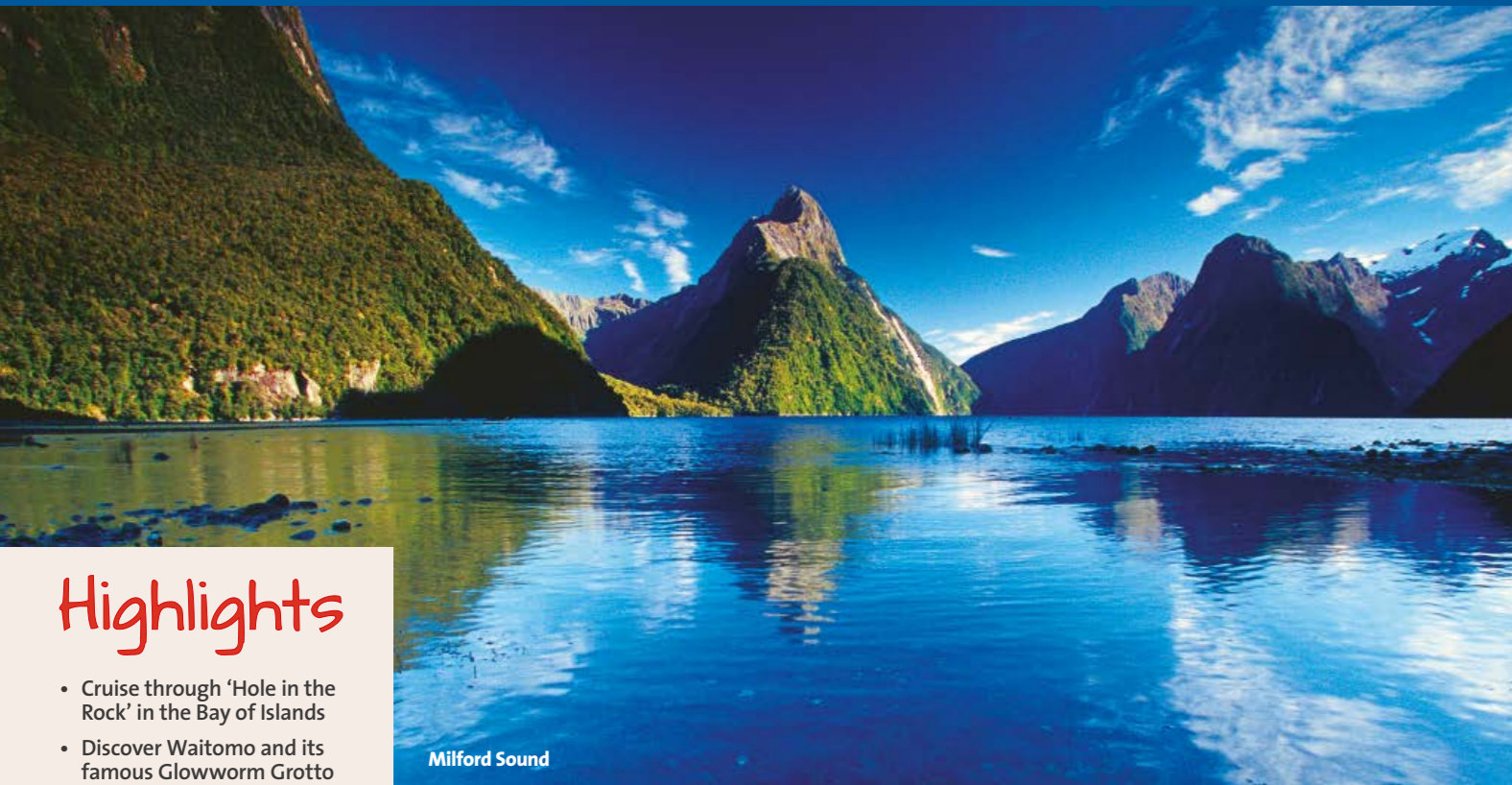


Best of New Zealand Escorted Tour

18 days

From the white sandy beaches of the North Island, to the snow-capped mountain of the South Island, you'll explore every nook of New Zealand. A heart-pounding haka welcomes you to Rotorua for a taste of Maori culture. A world-renowned train journey tops-off your time in New Zealand with scenic splendour.

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL
Your South Pacific Travel Specialists



Milford Sound

Highlights

- Cruise through 'Hole in the Rock' in the Bay of Islands
- Discover Waitomo and its famous Glowworm Grotto
- Immerse yourself in Maori culture with the Tamaki family over dinner 🍷
- Journey through Mt. Ruapehu Tongariro National Park
- By My Guest at Shenandoah for an afternoon tea experience 🍵
- Explore Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand 🏛️
- Savour a delicious Kiwi BBQ at Morelea Farm 🍖
- Travel past magical glaciers, mountains and rainforest en route to Milford Sound
- Taste Central Otago stone fruits at a local orchard
- Discover fascinating Franz Josef Glacier
- Visit a jade factory and marvel at artists at work
- Walk around Punakaiki Pancake Rocks
- Travel the TranzAlpine Train
- Included Choice experiences 🗳️
- Private car airport transfers on arrival and departure
- Enjoy New Zealand wines with all hotel dinners
- Experienced Travel Director and Driver Guide

Dining

- Breakfast of choice (6) **BC**
- Full buffet breakfasts (11) **B**
- Be My Guest lunch (1) **BG**
- Be My Guest afternoon tea (1) **BG**
- Dinners with wine (7) **DW**
- Highlight dinners (4) **HD**
- Farewell dinner (1) **FD**

Day 1: Welcome to Auckland
On arrival at Auckland Airport you'll be met and transferred by private car to your hotel. Later, why not visit the Sky Tower for amazing views of the city and surrounding volcanic hills? Amble down Queen Street, to the main shopping precinct or on to the Viaduct Harbour. Take a seat in the sunshine and enjoy the sights on Waitemata Harbour. This evening meet your Travel Director for a welcome reception at your hotel.
Hotel: The Langham, Auckland.

Day 2: Auckland – Bay of Islands
This morning depart Auckland city and travel north over the Harbour Bridge. Journey through Orewa and along the scenic Hibiscus Coast, the birthplace of Sir Edmund Hillary. Enjoy a stop at Parry Kauri Park, then it's on to Whangarei, the northern-most city in New Zealand. This afternoon you'll travel into the Bay of Islands. Experience spectacular scenery as you cruise through game fishing waters to Cape Brett and, weather permitting, through the famous

'Hole in the Rock' formation. The return trip to Paihia cruises through picturesque islands. Keep your eyes peeled for marine life. This evening enjoy dinner with wine at the hotel.
Hotel: Copthorne Resort (Water View), Bay of Islands, 2 nights. B DW

Day 3: Bay of Islands Included Choice
🗳️ This morning relax with your Breakfast of Choice. Today choose one from a range of Included Choice sightseeing experiences. Perhaps go on a dolphin watching cruise, journey around Kerikeri on a wine tasting tour, or take a guided walk through Russell, New Zealand's first capital. Explore the Waitangi Treaty Grounds and watch a dazzling Maori cultural performance. Or this evening sail aboard a historic tall ship as the sun sets. Your Travel Director will assist you in booking all of your chosen optional experiences. **BC**

Day 4: Bay of Islands – Auckland
Before departing the Bay of Islands, if you didn't visit the Waitangi Treaty Reserve yesterday, you may wish

to do so today. This is where New Zealand's founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed (own expense). This afternoon sit back and relax as you make your way down through Northland's lush farmland scenery. From fresh sushi to mouth-watering seafood, from authentic Indian curries to decadent desserts, your highlight dinner tonight at Eight Restaurant at The Langham will satisfy any and all dining cravings. **Hotel: The Langham, Auckland. BC HD**

Day 5: Auckland – Rotorua
A city sights tour will start your day in Auckland. Travel around the waterfront to Mission Bay, with a stop at Bastion Point and the Michael Joseph Savage Memorial, for stunning photos of Auckland and surrounds. Follow the meandering trail of the Waikato River to Waitomo Caves. Tour the amazing limestone caverns and cruise through the still waters of the sparkling Glowworm Grotto. 🍷 Tonight an evening of culture, history and scrumptious food awaits

you at the Tamaki Maori Village. Wander through the ancient forest village and learn about Maori art forms and traditions, followed by a concert featuring local performers. Experience an authentic Maori Hangi meal, steamed underground in the traditional way. **Hotel: Millennium Hotel, Rotorua, 2 nights. B HD**

Day 6: Rotorua Included Choice
🗳️ This morning relax with your Breakfast of Choice. Today choose one from a range of Included Choice sightseeing experiences. Perhaps unwind at the Polynesian Spa. Visit Te Puia and tour through the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve. Or you could take a fascinating tour of the Hobbiton movie set. Or explore Rotorua and its three lakes in an amphibious WWII era Duck. Your Travel Director will assist you in booking all of your chosen optional experiences. **BC**

Day 7: Rotorua – Wellington
Say Haere Ra (goodbye) to Rotorua this morning and journey out through

pine forests and farmland to a little hidden spot, Huka Falls. From here the road unfolds in a broad panorama of Lake Taupo, New Zealand's largest lake. You'll then journey south over the Central Plateau, New Zealand's main volcanic area. Travel along the Kapiti Coast, to the gorgeous historic villa, Shenandoah. 🍵 Join Simon and Claudia for a Be My Guest afternoon tea with a 'Kiwi twist'. Take a walk around their beautiful property to meet the animal members of the family and stop in at the big red barn and marvel at their collection of Harley Davidson motorcycles and memorabilia. The team will have a tough time getting you to leave. This evening, as you follow the state highway, the Kapiti Coast becomes New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. Tonight dinner with wine is included at your hotel. **Hotel: James Cook Grand Chancellor, Wellington. BC BG DW**

Day 8: Wellington – Blenheim
Why not discover more of Wellington this morning. There's time to visit

the Parliament buildings and the Beehive, home to New Zealand's politicians. 🍷 Later you'll visit Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand and explore the fascinating exhibits at your leisure, including their unique Marae (Meeting House). Cruise the Cook Strait into tranquil Queen Charlotte Sound. The village of Picton is next, then it's on to Blenheim for a city sightseeing tour. Tonight enjoy a 5-course highlight dinner prepared from local produce and matched with wines of the Marlborough region, including selections from Villa Maria and Saint Clair wineries. **Hotel: Chateau Marlborough, Blenheim. B HD**

Day 9: Blenheim – Christchurch
This morning stop to meet some New Zealand fur seals at Ohau Point, and watch as they frolic and play in the tidal currents. Take a helicopter flight out of Kaikoura (own expense) for whale and dolphin viewing. Or stop in at one of many local eateries and sample a Kaikoura seafood delight, crayfish. This afternoon's journey

follows the Pacific Ocean coastline where roaring sea meets enormous bush-clad mountains. Travel across the Northern Canterbury Plains and into Christchurch. Tonight, speak with your Travel Director about dining recommendations in Christchurch's inner city. **Hotel: Novotel, Christchurch. B**

Day 10: Christchurch – Twizel
🍷 Visit Morelea Farm, a typical working sheep farm, where you'll get a taste of traditional New Zealand country life. You'll be welcomed into the home of Angie and Stan Taylor and their 240 hectare garden. You'll have the chance to experience sheep shearing and farming demonstrations before enjoying a Be My Guest barbecue lunch, and wait until you try Angie's famous Pavlova dessert! Listen to the family's story of growing up in rural New Zealand and their challenges of farming in the foothills of New Zealand's Southern Alps. See Lakes Tekapo and Pukaki, and visit the iconic **Continued over page >**



Tamaki Maori Village



Franz Josef Glacier



Rural Homestay: Day 6

A warm welcome awaits you on your New Zealand rural homestay and your hosts will provide you with wonderful Kiwi hospitality that really makes you feel 'at home'. Enjoy dinner and breakfast, a tour to introduce you to their way of life and comfortable accommodation in their home or cottages. You may choose to meet the animals, which may include sheep, cows, deer and many others, or simply relax and enjoy the company of your hosts in scenic surroundings. Please make your choice at time of booking.



Best of New Zealand Escorted Tour

18 days

continued



Overlooking Queenstown



Morelea Farm (Be My Guest)

BEST BUYS

Please check our website for up to date pricing and specials



Bay of Islands



Hokitika Jade Factory

> From previous page

Church of the Good Shepherd on your way to Twizel. **Hotel: MacKenzie Country Inn, Twizel. B BG DW**

Day 11: Twizel – Dunedin

Your day starts with a photo stop at the Waitaki Hydro Power Scheme and Benmore Dam. From the Waitaki Valley you'll travel through to the township of Oamaru, with its stately tree-lined streets and its famous white limestone buildings. This afternoon you'll make your way down to the southern-most city in New Zealand, Dunedin. With the rest of your afternoon at leisure why not take part in an optional experience to see more of the region. Tonight, enjoy dinner with wine at your hotel. **Hotel: Scenic Hotel Southern Cross, Dunedin. B DW**

Day 12: Dunedin Included Choice – Te Anau

🔴 This morning choose one from a range of Included Choice sightseeing experiences. You have the option

to tour Larnach Castle, ride the historic Taieri Gorge Railway, take the Monarch Wildlife Cruise or experience an interactive of tour Speight's Brewery. This afternoon travel through lush green pastures, crossing sheep-filled farming land. Meander your way up into the Fiordland National Park to the South Island's biggest lake and the town of Te Anau. Tonight, enjoy dinner with wine at your hotel. **Hotel: Distinction Hotel, Te Anau. B DW**

Day 13: Te Anau – Queenstown

Today you will want to have your camera battery charged, and ready to go! Journey out to Milford Sound on one of the most scenic roads you will ever see, travelling through native rainforests, alluvial flats and meadows. You will stop at Mirror Lakes and then it's on to the Homer Tunnel, man's attempt to master the sheer rocky ranges. Marvel at the stunning Cleddau Valley, stop for a little walk to the

Chasm, and then it's on to Milford Sound, where you will cruise the waters of this natural wonder. Your cruise takes in the Bowen and Stirling Falls, glacial hanging valleys, and the sheer pinnacle of Mitre Peak. From Milford Sound, you will travel on to the beautiful sights of Queenstown. An orientation tour skirts the shores of Lake Wakatipu. Tonight you may want to take a gondola to Bob's Peak and dine at the Skyline Restaurant, Stratosfare, overlooking Queenstown (own expense) – the ultimate way to end a highlight day! **Hotel: Millennium Hotel, Queenstown, 2 nights. B**

Day 14: Queenstown Included Choice

🔴 This morning relax with your Breakfast of Choice. Today choose one from a range of Included Choice sightseeing experiences. You have the option to ride the Shotover Jet, take a gondola to Bob's Peak for thrilling luge rides, or visit the Skyline Restaurant for dinner. Or take a 4WD

minibus tour through spectacular Skippers Canyon. Perhaps visit Kiwi Birdlife Park or journey deep into the mountains to Mt. Nicholas High Country Farm for lunch. After a day of activity, enjoy a peaceful evening cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue highlight dinner at the Colonel's Homestead. Then enjoy an entertaining after-dinner farm show providing a glimpse into high-country farm life. On the cruise back to Queenstown, join in a sing-a-long or a dance across the polished wooden floors of the Earnslaw. **BC HD**

Day 15: Queenstown – Franz Josef

This morning you will begin the passage out to wild West Coast. Stop and visit the faithfully restored gold mining settlement of Arrowtown. Then travel over to Cromwell, where you will stop in at a local orchard for a taste of the town's delicious stone fruit. It is a day of gorgeous lakes, as

you will see the vivid blue waters of Lakes Dunstan, Hawea, then Wanaka. You will then travel over Haast Pass and view the sheer drop of Thunder Creek Falls. Your final destination for today is the extraordinary Franz Josef Glacier. You may want to view the glacier on a helicopter flight (own expense). Tonight, enjoy dinner with wine at your hotel. **Hotel: Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier (Douglas Wing), Franz Josef. BC DW**

Day 16: Franz Josef – Punakaiki

This morning explore Franz Josef Glacier. Then it's time for an adventure amongst temperate rainforest giants on the West Coast Treetop Walkway, followed by a visit to Hokitika, home of the native greenstone (jade) for a factory visit and jewellery demonstration. Later, travel to Punakaiki to view the Pancake Rocks and blowholes. You'll spend the night in an eco-friendly resort, right on the waterfront. This evening enjoy dinner with wine at

your hotel, while watching the surf thundering at your doorstep. **Hotel: Punakaiki Resort, Punakaiki. B DW**

Day 17: Punakaiki – Christchurch

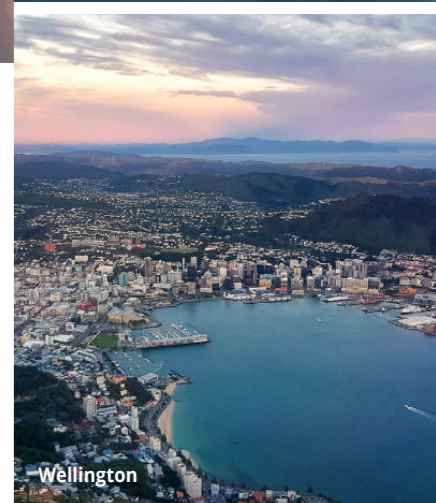
Travel to the alpine village of Arthur's Pass where you'll board the TranzAlpine, one of the world's most scenic train trips. The train forges through tunnels and over viaducts with panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, icy rivers, beech forests, gorges and river valleys. This evening join your Travel Director for a farewell dinner with wine. **Hotel: Novotel, Christchurch. B FD**

Day 18: Farewell from Christchurch

Your holiday concludes this morning. You'll be transferred by private car to Christchurch for your onward flight. **B**

Flight information

Day 1 – Flights to arrive prior to 4.00pm into Auckland Airport
Day 18 – Flights to depart anytime from Christchurch Airport
Airfares are not included



Wellington

Optional Experience
Day 3:
Cape Reinga
Day Tour

Journey north from the Bay of Islands, exploring the natural wonders of the very top of New Zealand on a full day tour. You will see the grandeur of the mighty Kauri trees, the expanse of Ninety Mile Beach and the mystique of Cape Reinga. Ask your Travel Director for details.



TranzAlpine train journey



TSS Earnslaw on Lake Wakatipu

