

# New Zealand

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# 18 Day *New Zealand Grandeur*

Christchurch → Auckland

**FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL**   
Your South Pacific Travel Specialists



Waiheke Island

## Highlights

- + 2 night stays in Queenstown, Dunedin, Wellington, Rotorua & Auckland
- + West Coast Glaciers
- + Spectacular Southern Lakes District
- + Fiordland National Park
- + Dunedin, the Edinburgh of the South
- + World Heritage listed Mt Cook National Park
- + Coastal village of Kaikoura
- + Wellington, the nation's capital
- + Boutique wine village of Martinborough
- + Stay in the Tongariro National Park
- + Thermal Wonderland of Rotorua
- + Auckland, the City of Sails

## Featured Experiences

- + World famous TranzAlpine train journey
- + Overnight Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise
- + High Tea at Larnach Castle
- + Taieri Gorge Railway
- + Stargazing tour, Mt Cook
- + Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre
- + Exclusive Lake Rotoiti cruise
- + Authentic Maori Hangi & Cultural Performance

## Iconic Sightseeing

- + Entry to Franz Josef Thermal Pools
- + Guided tour of Larnach Castle
- + Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre
- + Visit the Church of the Good Shepherd, Lake Tekapo
- + Scenic Interislander Ferry Crossing
- + Wine tasting, Martinborough
- + Te Puia Thermal Reserve
- + Treetop eco-walk amongst the Redwoods
- + Hobbiton Movie Set & Farm Tour
- + A visit to historic Arrowtown

## Day 1 Arrive Christchurch (D)

'Kia Ora'. Welcome to New Zealand. A representative will greet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. This evening, join your fellow travellers for a welcome dinner and drinks.

Stay: *Rydges Latimer Hotel*



Tamaki, Rotorua

## Day 2 TranzAlpine, Franz Josef (B,D)

A short drive brings us to the tiny train station of Springfield, gateway to the majestic Southern Alps. Board the award-winning TranzAlpine train for the spectacular rail journey to Arthurs Pass, the South Island's highest altitude settlement. Enjoy thrilling vistas over deep gorges as you travel alongside the ice-fed Waimakariri River and traverse the mighty Southern Alps, where spectacular views of the chiselled alpine landscape will take your breath away at every turn. On to the west coast glacial village of Franz Josef where you can relax and soak in the thermal pools after an invigorating day and sumptuous dinner.

Stay: *Te Waonui Forest Retreat*

## Day 3 Wanaka, Queenstown (B)

Before our departure this morning, there is the opportunity to experience an optional scenic flight over this remarkable region (subject to weather conditions). Later, view incredible scenery as you travel past the untouched wilderness and pristine lakes of the Mt Aspiring and Westland National Parks. There is time to wander around the popular lakeside township of Wanaka before stopping at the historic gold mining village of Arrowtown, once a haven for the gold prospectors of the 1860's and home to a fascinating collection of mining cottages.

Stay: *Heritage Queenstown Hotel (2 nights)*

## Day 4 At leisure in Queenstown (B)

Queenstown is regarded as New Zealand's premier holiday destination and today is free to experience this magnificent alpine resort. Queenstown boasts an incredible array of adventure and leisure activities and your Coach Captain can assist with any optional activities you would like to do. Experience the thrills of riding on the world famous Shotover Jet Boat, perhaps cruise Lake Wakatipu on the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw, take a 4WD tour to the gold mining area of Skippers Canyon or for the adventurous, try white water rafting. Alternatively, browse in the many shops and galleries.

## Day 5 Overnight Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise (B,L,D)

Skirt the shores of Lake Wakatipu and travel through lush farmland to Te Anau. On to Manapouri, where you enjoy a leisurely cruise across this picturesque lake to West Arm. This is followed by a short coach trip on New Zealand's most expensive road, travelling over Wilmot Pass and pausing along the way to experience the dense Fiordland rainforest and view Doubtful Sound glistening far below. At Deep Cove, your crew and the 'Fiordland Navigator' await. Designed along the lines of a traditional scow, the 'Fiordland Navigator' blends old world charm with modern comfort and as you cruise through some of the fiord's most stunning scenery, knowledgeable and friendly nature guides will share with you their passion for the region through their commentary. After dropping anchor in a sheltered cove, you can choose to explore the shoreline by kayak or tender boat or you can simply relax on board. As the majesty of Doubtful Sound unfolds before you, its beauty and vastness will take your breath away.

Overnight: *Fiordland Navigator*

## Day 6 Manapouri, Dunedin (B,D)

Enjoy a hearty breakfast this morning before exploring other parts of the fiord. We retrace our steps back to Manapouri where you re-join your coach for the journey to Dunedin, the Edinburgh of the South.

Stay: *Distinction Dunedin Hotel (2 nights)*

## Day 7 Otago Peninsula, Taieri Gorge Railway (B)

Enjoy spectacular views across the Otago Peninsula as you travel to Larnach Castle. On your guided tour, learn about its tragic and mysterious history before enjoying a High Tea in the Grand Ballroom. This afternoon, board the famous Taieri Gorge Railway. From Dunedin, the train sneaks across the Taieri Plains and climbs into the Taieri Gorge, a narrow and deep gorge carved out over aeons by the ancient Taieri River. The natural wonders combined with the challenges of man-made engineering will leave you amazed.

## Day 8 Moeraki, Mt Cook (B,D)

Stop to view the mystical Moeraki Boulders before travelling up the Waitaki Valley to Omarama. Your journey continues into the World Heritage Mt Cook National Park, with its 70,000 ha of breathtaking alpine scenery. After dinner, enjoy a guided tour of the Digital Dome Planetarium before your astronomy guides take you to their outdoor stargazing site where you explore different elements of the spectacular southern sky.

Stay: *Mt Cook Hermitage Hotel*





Redwoods Treetop Walk

**Day 9 Lake Tekapo, Kaikoura (B)**

At Lake Tekapo, stop to view the Church of the Good Shepherd. Then cross the fertile Canterbury Plains to Christchurch. From here, we head to the picturesque coastal town of Kaikoura, nestled on a narrow strip of land with the mountains to the west and the Pacific Ocean to the east.

Stay: *White Morph Heritage Boutique Collection*

**Day 10 Picton, Wellington (B)**

Continue north on to the charming fishing village of Picton where you board the Interislander Ferry and cruise through the spectacular Queen Charlotte Sound into Cook Strait. Enjoy stunning views of New Zealand's capital city as you arrive into Wellington Harbour.

Stay: *The Bolton Hotel (2 nights)*

**Day 11 At leisure in Wellington (B)**

Enjoy a brief city tour taking in all the major sights and then there is free time for exploring on your own. Situated on the Wellington waterfront, a visit to Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand, is highly recommended. Another very popular excursion is a visit to the Weta Workshop, a world-leading design and special effects facility for major Hollywood film makers.

**Day 12 On to Martinborough Wine Village (B,D)**

The town of Martinborough is located at the centre of the Wairarapa wine region and because of its close proximity to Wellington, makes it a popular weekend destination for locals. Many boutique wineries are within an easy walk of the town square and the region is particularly well known for its production of Pinot Noir wines.

Stay: *The Martinborough Hotel*

**Day 13 Pukaha Mount Bruce, Tongariro National Park (B,D)**

This morning, enjoy a guided tour of the Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, a captive-breeding sanctuary for some of the country's most threatened wildlife and home to the only white kiwi in captivity. Continue north along the Desert Road to Tongariro, New Zealand's oldest national park and a dual World Heritage area.

Stay: *Chateau Tongariro*

**Day 14 Taupo, Rotorua (B,D)**

First stop today is Taupo where you will enjoy time to stroll around this popular lakeside resort. View the mighty Huka Falls and Wairakei Geothermal Project before arriving at the

popular resort town of Rotorua. This evening, we enjoy a tour of Te Puia Thermal Reserve and are treated to a traditional Maori hangi (feast) and cultural performance featuring Maori songs, chants and dance including the stirring haka.

Stay: *Millennium Rotorua (2 nights)*

**Day 15 Exclusive Lake Rotoiti Cruise & Redwood Treetop Walk (B)**

Today's highlight is an exclusive cruise across the serene, clear waters of Lake Rotoiti. Explore native bays and coves of the lake under sail on our luxury catamaran and bathe in the thermal waters of the Manupirua hot springs, accessible only by boat. Later, enjoy a suspended treetop eco-walk amongst Rotorua's gentle giants in the Redwood Forest and get a unique bird's eye perspective of these 110 year old trees and the lush flora below.



Te Puia, Kiwi

**Day 16 Hobbiton, Auckland (B,L)**

After a leisurely breakfast, we cross the Mamaku Ranges into the lush farmlands of the Waikato. At Matamata experience a guided tour of Hobbiton, the movie set used in the block-busting 'Lord of the Rings' and 'Hobbit' films. Learn how this beautiful piece of farmland was transformed into The Shire from Middle-Earth and be sure to take a photo at the gate to Bilbo Baggins house, "Bag End", looking out over the whole set to the hills in the distance. Enjoy a festive lunch at The Green Dragon Inn before travelling on to Auckland, the 'City of Sails'.

Stay: *Pullman Hotel (2 nights)*

**Day 17 At leisure in Auckland (B,D)**

Today is free to explore New Zealand's largest and most vibrant city. Perhaps take the ferry to Waiheke Island and enjoy lunch at one of the many superb vineyards, stroll around the trendy suburbs of Parnell and Ponsonby or sail Waitemata Harbour aboard a genuine America's Cup racing yacht. Your options are many. This evening, join your friends for a farewell dinner with dinks and relive the many great experiences of the last eighteen days.



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