

2019 ... 2020

Valid from 01 Sep 19 - 31 Aug 20

New Zealand

Escorted Coach Tours



FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL



Your South Pacific Travel Specialists

Luxury Small
Group Journeys

All-Inclusive
Coach Tours

15 Day *New Zealand Explorer*

Christchurch → Auckland

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL 
Your South Pacific Travel Specialists



Te Puia, Rotorua

Highlights

- + Visit the Church of the Good Shepherd
- + World Heritage listed Mt Cook National Park
- + Historic Arrowtown
- + Fiordland National Park
- + Spectacular Southern Lakes District
- + West Coast Glaciers
- + Punakaiki Pancake Rocks & Blowhole
- + Abel Tasman National Park
- + Thermal Wonderland of Rotorua
- + Stunning Coromandel Peninsula

Featured Experiences

- + Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise
- + Skyline Gondola & Dinner, Queenstown
- + Cruise the famous Abel Tasman National Park
- + Authentic Maori Village, Hangi & Cultural Performance

Iconic Sightseeing

- + International Antarctic Centre
- + Christchurch City Tram Tour
- + World of Wearable Arts & Classic Cars Museum
- + Scenic Interislander Ferry Crossing
- + Agrodome Farm Show
- + Te Puia Thermal Reserve
- + Hobbiton Movie Set & Farm Tour
- + Entry to Auckland Sky Tower
- + City tours of Wellington & Auckland

Day 1 Arrive Christchurch (D)

Welcome to Christchurch. On arrival, a representative will greet you at the airport and will transfer you to your downtown city hotel. Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner and drinks with your fellow travellers.

Stay: *Distinction Christchurch Hotel*

Day 2 Christchurch, Lake Tekapo (B,D)

Today begins with a unique experience combining history and sightseeing. Enjoy a journey in style through the changing face of Christchurch's city centre on-board a beautifully restored heritage tram. We then visit the International Antarctic Centre before crossing the Canterbury Plains, New Zealand's largest area of flat land that lies between the mighty Southern Alps and the Pacific Ocean. Its patchwork of agricultural activity ranges from grazing grass and wheat to herbs and sunflowers. On arrival at Tekapo, we stop to view the tiny Church of the Good Shepherd and the Collie Dog Memorial overlooking the lake. There is time this afternoon for some optional alpine flightseeing by ski-plane or helicopter over Aoraki Mt Cook, a world heritage listed national park covering over 70,000 hectares of breathtaking mountain scenery (subject to weather conditions).

Stay: *Peppers Bluewater Resort*

Day 3 Central Otago, Lake Te Anau (B,D)

Travel through the townships of Twizel and Omarama before beginning the ascent over the Lindis Pass to Cromwell, located deep in the heart of Central Otago in the valley of Upper Clutha. Travel through the lush farmlands of the region before arriving at the shores of Lake Te Anau, gateway to the Fiordland National Park.

Stay: *Distinction Luxmore Hotel*

Day 4 Spectacular Doubtful Sound Wilderness Experience (B,L,D)

After breakfast, travel to Manapouri and enjoy a leisurely cruise across this picturesque lake to West Arm. This is followed by a trip on New Zealand's most expensive road, travelling over the Wilmot Pass and pausing to experience the dense Fiordland rainforest and view Doubtful Sound glistening far below. Here you will board the spacious 'Patea Explorer' for a three-hour cruise through this pristine fiord. During the cruise, knowledgeable and friendly nature guides will share with you their passion for the region through their commentary. They will answer questions, point out landmarks and provide you with information about the varied wildlife you may encounter like dolphins, fur seals and the rare Fiordland crested penguin. As the majesty of Doubtful Sound unfolds before you, its vastness will take your breath away. Later this afternoon, travel on to Queenstown, regarded as New Zealand's premier holiday destination and enjoy dinner at your hotel on arrival.

Stay: *Copthorne Lakefront Hotel & Resort (2 nights)*

Optional overnight cruises on Milford Sound or Doubtful Sound are also on offer today subject to availability - ask us for details.

Day 5 At leisure in Queenstown (B,D)

Enjoy a free day to experience this magnificent alpine resort. Surrounded by majestic mountains, Queenstown boasts an incredible array of adventure and leisure activities in all forms, from extreme to relaxed exploration. Your guide will be happy to advise you on all the activities and options available. You might like to experience the thrills of a jetboat ride on the famous Shotover or Dart Rivers, cruise across Lake Wakatipu on the vintage steamship 'TSS Earnslaw', visit key film locations from the 'Lord of the Rings' trilogy or simply take a relaxing stroll around the tranquil shores of the lake your options are endless. Tonight, ride the Skyline gondola to the top of Bob's Peak where both the dining and the views are unsurpassed.

Day 6 Arrowtown, Franz Josef (B,D)

This morning, we visit Arrowtown. Set beneath the rugged Crown Range, this historic village was once a haven for the gold prospectors of the 1860's and features a fascinating collection of mining cottages with an atmosphere straight out of last century. Stop at Wanaka, a picture postcard resort on the lakes edge with a spectacular mountain backdrop. View the untouched wilderness and pristine lakes of the Mt Aspiring and Westland National Parks before arriving on the rugged and wild West Coast, home to the twin glaciers of Fox and Franz Josef.

Stay: *Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier*



On-Board



Day 7 Hokitika, Punakaiki (B,D)

Before our departure this morning, there is the opportunity to experience an optional scenic flight over this remarkable region (subject to weather conditions). At Hokitika, we stop to visit to a Pounamu (also known as Greenstone or Jade) factory. Pounamu is considered a treasure in Maori culture and is seen as a sign of status and power. At Punakaiki, marvel at the bizarre limestone landscapes that are the Pancake Rocks & Blowhole. Tonight's stay is at a friendly eco resort located in the Paparoa National Park and only a stone's throw from the beach.

Stay: *Punakaiki Resort*

Day 8 Murchison, Nelson (B,D)

Skirt the west coastline before heading inland to Murchison. Travel north through the Nelson Lakes region before arriving at Nelson, a city of charm based on a harbour that is the busiest fishing port in New Zealand. This afternoon, visit the World of Wearable Art & Classic Car Museum.

Stay: *Heritage Rutherford Hotel (2 nights)*

Day 9 Abel Tasman National Park (B)

Travel to Kaiterteri where you board your vessel for a scenic cruise of the famous Abel Tasman National Maritime Park. Cruise through the Astrolabe Roadstead to Torrent Bay and Bark Bay calling in to picturesque beaches and coves. Pause to view the antics at Tonga Island Seal Colony on your way to Totaranui. An optional coastal walk may be available for those wishing to spend time ashore – see your Guide for details.

Day 10 Picton, Wellington (B,D)

A short drive brings us to the picturesque fishing village of Picton. Board the Interislander Ferry and cruise through the spectacular Queen Charlotte Sound into Cook Strait, the channel that separates the South and North Islands. Enjoy stunning views of New Zealand's capital city as you arrive into Wellington Harbour. Enjoy a brief city tour taking in all the major sights and 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.

Stay: *Copthorne Oriental Bay Hotel*

Day 11 Taupo, Rotorua (B,D)

Leaving the city behind, we travel through rolling farmland as we enter the Tongariro National Park, dominated by the volcanic cone of Mt Ruapehu. Follow the Desert Road to the

popular lakeside resort of Taupo, located on the shores of New Zealand's largest lake. Stop to view the mighty Huka Falls and travel past massive pine forests to reach Rotorua, centre of Maori culture and famous for its geysers, boiling mud pools and steaming craters.

Stay: *Sudima Lake Rotorua (2 nights)*

Day 12 Rotorua Sightseeing (B,D)

Today begins with a visit to the Agrodome to see a unique New Zealand farm show. This is followed by a visit to Te Puia, home to Te Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve and the New Zealand Maori Arts & Crafts Centre. Here you will witness all of nature's thermal wonders including silica terraces and the famous Pohutu Geysir. Enjoy some free time this afternoon for optional activities before visiting Mitai Village for an evening of fun and culture. You will experience a traditionally prepared Maori Hangi (feast) followed by a cultural performance featuring Maori songs, chants and dance including the stirring haka.

Day 13 Hobbiton, Pauanui (B,D)

Cross the Mamaku Ranges into the Waikato region, well known for its dairy farming, world famous horse studs and champion Rugby team! 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. Later, we continue our journey on to Pauanui, a favourite New Zealand holiday beach resort for our overnight stay.

Stay: *Grand Mercure Puka Park Lodge*

Day 14 Coromandel, Auckland (B,D)

The Coromandel Peninsula is a beautiful, rugged area fringed with dozens of excellent beaches and is a place where many kiwis choose to escape the hustle and hype of city life. After a leisurely breakfast, we travel to Auckland, the 'City of Sails' and enjoy a comprehensive city tour on arrival. Included is a visit to the Auckland Skytower, the tallest free-standing structure in the Southern Hemisphere where you will experience 360-degree panoramic views over the harbours, city and surrounds. This evening, join your friends for a farewell dinner and drinks and relive the highlights and experiences of the last two weeks.

Stay: *Rydges Hotel*

Day 15 Depart Auckland (B)

Sadly, your holiday ends today and you will be transferred to Auckland airport to connect with your onward flight.



Inclusions

- + Maximum group size 35 guests
- + 14 nights premium hotel accommodation
- + Full breakfast daily (B), 1 lunch (L) & 13 dinners (D)
- + Travel by 5-star luxury touring coach
- + Guided by a professional Driver Guide
- + Welcome and farewell dinners with drinks included
- + All sightseeing, excursions and entrance fees as shown
- + Hotel portage
- + Complimentary airport transfers on arrival and departure

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