

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL



Your South Pacific Travel Specialists

NEW ZEALAND

2023-2024 GUIDED HOLIDAYS



FIRST CHOICE 3-17 day Fully Curated Experiences From page 24

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Contrasts of New Zealand



Highlights

Local Connection

Ever wondered about Southern Alps life on the land? Enjoy lunch with farmers, Angie and Stan Taylor, and go behind the scenes.

Insider Knowledge

World Heritage listed Milford Sound/Piopiota is remarkable to look at; it's even more thrilling when its flora and fauna is decoded by your oh-so-knowledgeable cruise guide.

Cultural Immersion

Discover just how strong Māori culture is at Te Pā Tū Māori Experience, celebrating art, tradition and cuisine. Bring your appetite for a hangi meal, cooked underground.

Sustainable Footprints

MAKE TRAVEL MATTER EXPERIENCE Operation Nest Egg may sound James Bond-esque, but it's actually a National Kiwi Hatchery project to care for the country's kiwi population.

Wildlife & Nature

You'd be forgiven for thinking you'd be transported to Mars when you arrive at Rotorua, a place where steam and mud pop, fizz and swoosh at every turn.



1 Welcome to Auckland

New Zealand's largest city is also one of its prettiest, as you'll discover exploring at your leisure. Arrive early to linger in its hip harbourside precincts, where galleries and design-driven stores await. You'll have worked up an appetite by the time you meet your fellow travel companions for a few local tipples at a Welcome Reception and dinner. **Hotel: The Grand by SkyCity, 2 nights. DW**

2 Auckland

If you didn't get your Auckland bearings yesterday, you will today. Have your camera poised as you reach Mission Bay, a dreamy waterside suburb where the blues patchwork to the horizon. Then get snap happy at Bastion Point and the Michael Joseph Savage Memorial, offering epic vistas over Auckland and its harbours. Want some tips on how to spend your free afternoon? How about going behind the scenes of the All Blacks or cruising to Waiheke Island to sip more wine? **B**

3 Auckland – Rotorua

You could be forgiven for thinking Rotorua's landscapes are a sci-fi movie set. Mud pops and jettisons from bubbling geysers, and steam rushes skywards from cracks in the Earth. The surrounding forest is a fertile habitat for New Zealand's national bird, being protected and bred at the National Kiwi Hatchery Aotearoa. The cotton-ball kiwi is under threat in the wild; at the hatchery, passionate conservationists reveal how they are saving the population, one incubated egg at a time. Tonight, dive deep into Māori culture and traditions at Te Pā Tū Māori Experience, where your hangi Highlight Dinner is cooked underground. **Hotel: Millennium. B HD**

4 Rotorua – Auckland – Queenstown

Lord of the Rings fanatics, prepare for a day of goosebumps – breakfast is served in the very spot that Frodo and Bilbo once lived. The Hobbiton Movie Set is all rolling hills and emerald pastures, a storybook landscape for The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit trilogies. The feel-good vibes will follow you all the way to Queenstown, where some of the country's most awarded restaurants await. Whether you're in the mood for bulging burgers or lakeside tapas, ask us for recommendations. **Hotel: Millennium, 3 nights. B**

5 Milford Sound/Piopiota

Bring your stamina and sense of adventure – things get a little wild today. Nature rules as you skirt gleaming Lake Wakatipu, over the Devil's Staircase to Te Anau, the alpine gateway to World Heritage listed Fiordland National Park. Once you've paused to admire the drama at Mirror Lakes, Knobs Flat, Hollyford Valley lookout, Cleddau Valley and the Chasm, you'll begin to understand why Rudyard Kipling called this the 'Eighth Wonder of the World'. You haven't even seen Bowen Falls or Milford Sound/Piopiota yet... Cruise the latter with an eagle-eyed guide, on the lookout for fur seals and dolphins. **B L**

6 Queenstown Free Time

Take today at your own pace. Like things fast and furious? Feel the wind in your hair on the high-octane Shotover Jet, perhaps. Prefer to be able to talk while you cruise? Glide across Lake Wakatipu aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue lunch. Wherever you wander, be sure to save space for tonight's Highlight Dinner at Postmasters Café, a historic Arrowtown cottage replete with picket fence and Instagrammable gardens. **B HD**

7 Queenstown – Lake Tekapo

Whether pinot noir grapes or cherries, things grow well in Central Otago. Get a taste for the region's stone fruit at a local orchard. Mountain drama – including views of Aoraki/Mount Cook – is your backdrop en route to Lake Tekapo, with water so turquoise it looks like a Renaissance painting. This part of the country is ravishing and remote; the lack of light pollution means dazzling Southern Hemisphere stargazing at UNESCO Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve. It's handy to have an astronomer in your company to decode the constellations of the Milky Way. Life in perspective... **Hotel: Pepper's Bluewater Resort. B DW**

8 Lake Tekapo – Christchurch

The Canterbury region of the west coast is a bucolic union of grassy plains, mirror-like lakes and snow-capped mountains, the kind you might see on postcards. Enjoy some warm Kiwi hospitality at Morelea, the home of Angie and Stan Taylor. Indulge in a Be My Guest barbecue lunch and hear about a lifetime spent in farming in New Zealand. You'll also get to



International Dark Sky Reserve, Lake Tekapo

witness Angie preparing her famous pavlova dessert. After soaking up country life, you'll arrive in Christchurch ready to explore the Garden City.
Hotel: Distinction, 2 nights. B BG

9 Christchurch

Start your last full day of your travels touring the beautiful English city of Christchurch, which is not only rebuilding itself after the devastating 2010/11 earthquakes, but is changing the way architects think about design. Case in point the mind-bending Transitional Cathedral, made largely of cardboard, and Tūranga, the gold-clad central library. A big day leads to a big evening joining your Travel Director and travel mates for a celebratory Farewell Dinner featuring produce from the Canterbury region.
B FD

10 Farewell from Christchurch

You've travelled hundreds of kilometres across two islands, likely taken thousands of photos, and made countless memories and new friends. The only thing left to do is plan your next tour. **B**



Hobbiton

10 Included Experiences

Departure Dates

2022	2023	2024
Oct 07, 21	Jan 06, 13, 20, 27	Jan 05, 12, 19, 26
Nov 18, 25	Feb 03, 10, 17, 24	Feb 02, 09, 16, 23
Dec 09, 23, 30	Mar 03, 10, 17, 24, 31	Mar 01, 08, 15, 22
	Apr 07, 21	
	May 19	
	Jun 09	
	Jul 07	
	Aug 25	
	Sep 08, 22	
	Oct 06, 13, 20	
	Nov 10, 17, 24	
	Dec 01, 08, 15, 22, 29	

A limited number of single rooms are available. Ask your local travel agent at time of booking.

See available prices and departure dates from 01 Apr 2024 at aatkings.com. Or contact your local travel agent.

Dining

- 9 Full buffet breakfasts B
- 1 Lunch L
- 1 Be My Guest Lunch BG
- 2 Highlight Dinners HD
- 2 Dinners with wine DW
- 1 Farewell Dinner FD

Flight Information

Day 1 – flights to arrive by 4.00pm into Auckland Airport
 Day 10 – flights to depart any time from Christchurch Airport

***Internal-holiday flight:** Please note that the price above includes land and internal-holiday airfare, which is required to be booked in order to fulfill the holiday itinerary:

Day 4 – Auckland to Queenstown

Return airfares from your home port are not included in the price above.

