

FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL



*Your South Pacific Travel Specialists*

# NEW ZEALAND

2023-2024 GUIDED HOLIDAYS



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# Southern Spirit



## Highlights

### ✂ Flexible Holidays

New Zealand's chefs make the most of the South Island's epic produce bounty. Dig in at restaurants across Queenstown, Christchurch and Wellington.

### 📍 Iconic Sites

New Zealand's cool little Capital, Wellington's diversions range from cultural Nirvana at Te Papa to the beehive-like Parliament building.

### 📷 Time For You

The gateway to Abel Tasman National Park, Nelson inspires calm. Find your own path in this wilderness paradise.

### 🏠 Sustainable Travel

MAKE TRAVEL MATTER EXPERIENCE The 'Eat My Lunch' program that you support ensures kids across New Zealand go to school with a packed lunch – and a full stomach.

### 🏔 Natural Wonders

An island off an island, Stewart Island is wild, wide and wonderful. Some 97% is national parkland – prepare for epic animal encounters.

## 1 Welcome to Christchurch

Arrive early in Christchurch to get your bearings in this forward-thinking city. The best way to do that? Aboard the Christchurch Tram. Your journey not only takes you past jaw-dropping attractions, but also tells an inspiring story of community spirit in the rebuilding and reinvigoration of the city since the 2010/11 earthquakes. **Hotel: Ibis.**

## 2 Christchurch – Oamaru

We peel off a couple more Christchurch layers on a city tour before setting the GPS for Lake Tekapo, a blinding shade of turquoise accented by the soaring snow-capped peaks and wildflower-strewn fields that surround. It's quite the backdrop for the stone-hewn Church of Good Shepherd. Opt for a bird's-eye view on a scenic flight, taking you over Aoraki/Mount Cook, the Southern Alps and Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere. **Hotel: Heritage Gateway. B D**

## 3 Oamaru – Dunedin

Limestone put the pretty town of Oamaru on the map – its stately tree-lined streets are a parade of grand buildings. But it's just as popular today for nurturing New Zealand's oldest public gardens. Architectural drama of a different kind awaits in Dunedin in the form of Larnach Castle, the only one of its kind in the country. This afternoon is at your leisure. We can point you in the direction of atmospheric art-lined alleys or toward Speight's Brewery, a national institution. Or venture further afield to discover the fur seals and penguins that pad around the Otago Peninsula. **Hotel: Kingsgate. B**

## 4 Dunedin – Invercargill

If you find yourself humming a Garth Brooks tune en route to Gore, you're probably not alone. Fun fact: this is the country music capital of NZ. Invercargill is obsessed with something else: motor vehicles. Tributes to speed legends colour the city, telling the story of everyone from Burt Munro to Bill Richardson – his shed full of classic vehicles is the largest private collection of its type in the world. **Hotel: Kelvin, 2 nights. B**

## 5 Stewart Island

Invercargill is the gateway to the southernmost community in the country. Welcome to Stewart Island, a wild and wonderful drop of land that is 97%

national parkland. Naturally, it's a magnet for endemic flora and fauna, as you'll discover touring valleys and bays with a local. Forest-clad Ulva Island is avian heaven, completely pest free and an important breeding and nesting ground for all manner of birds. **B**

## 6 Invercargill – Queenstown

Adventure, nature, food and wine, relaxation – Queenstown is like New Zealand's chocolate box; there's something for everyone. Talk to your Travel Director then head off in your own direction, perhaps to feel the wind in your hair on the high-octane Shotover Jet or bungy jumping off a bridge. Or to sip your way through surrounding vineyards. You might like to glide across Lake Wakatipu aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm, where a gourmet barbecue dinner awaits. **Hotel: Copthorne Hotel & Resort, 2 nights. B**

## 7 Queenstown Free Time

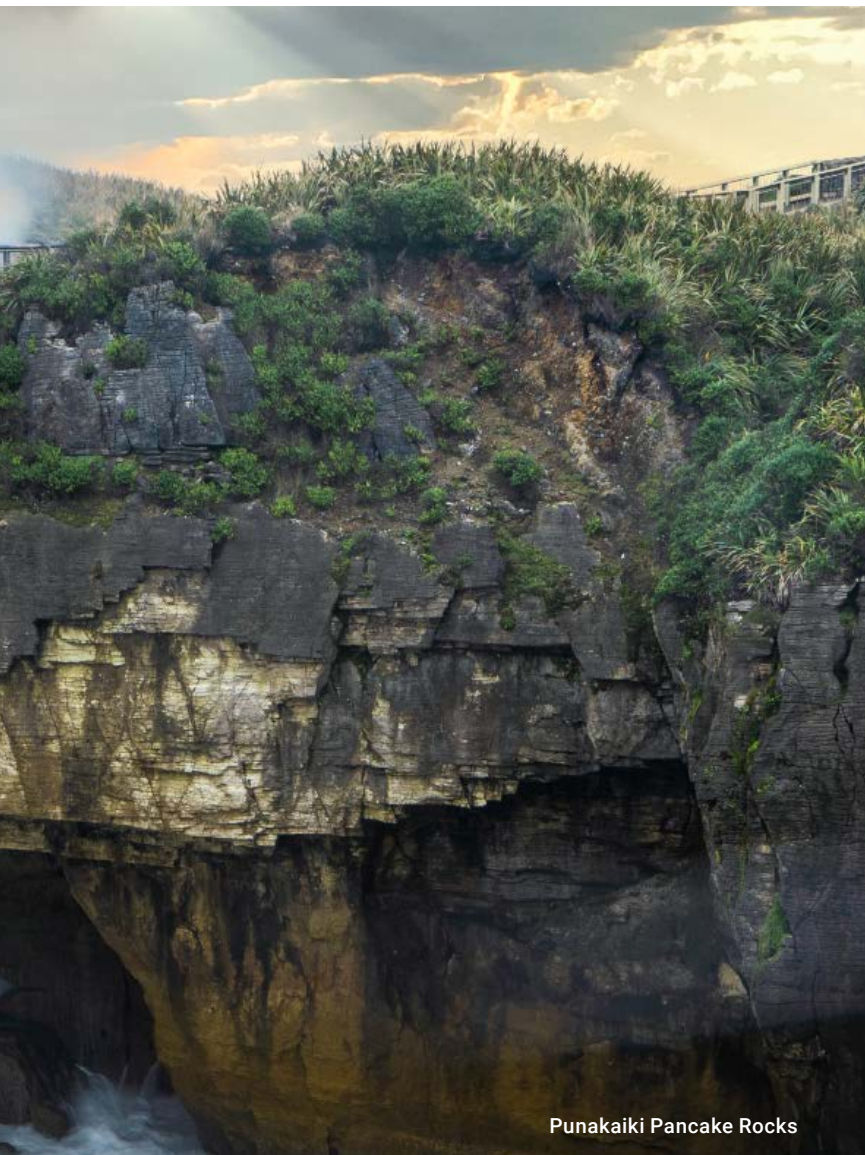
We wouldn't blame you for using today to linger by the banks of Lake Wakatipu, marvelling at sky-scraping Remarkables. But if you want to venture further afield, we have a few ideas. Top of our list today is an epic journey through Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound/Piopiotahi, carved by waterfalls and a playground for dolphins and seals. There's a reason why this part of the island has World Heritage status. **B**

## 8 Queenstown – Franz Josef/Waiu

Atmospheric Arrowtown was born from gold, and its movie-set-like streets still shimmer today. It's hard to tear yourself away, but the Alpine country of the Southern Lakes is calling, from Lake Dunstan – pause for juicy stone fruit picked fresh from the tree – to oh-so-blue Lake Hawea and lovely Lake Wanaka. Over the Haast Pass, Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere glistens like nature's gem. Get some perspective on an optional flight over this natural wonder – if the weather behaves, you may even get to land on it. **Hotel: Scenic Franz Josef Glacier (Graham Wing). B D**

## 9 Franz Josef/Waiu – Punakaiki

On the wild West Coast, Hokitika may be small in size, but boy is it big in personality, not to mention natural attractions. Wander the windswept coast before discovering the town's other beauty: pounamu (native greenstone or jade). In Māori tradition, it's bad luck to buy this sacred stone for yourself.



Punakaiki Pancake Rocks

## 6 Included Experiences

### Departure Dates

2022	2023	2024
Nov 24	Jan 05, 26	Jan 04, 25
Dec 15	Feb 02, 16	Feb 01, 08, 15, 22, 29
	Mar 02, 09	Mar 07, 21
	Apr 06, 27	
	Sep 07	
	Oct 05, 19	
	Nov 02, 23, 30	
	Dec 14, 21, 28	

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](http://aatkings.com). Or contact your local travel agent.

### Dining

13 Full buffet breakfasts B      3 Dinners D  
1 Lunch L                              1 Farewell Dinner FD

### Flight Information

Day 1 – flights to arrive prior to 4.00pm into Christchurch Airport  
Day 14 – flights to depart any time from Wellington Airport  
Flights are not included in the holiday price

That's what your loved one is for, right? Steel yourself for Punakaiki's Pancake Rocks and blowholes; they owe their existence to the thundering surf that will lull you to sleep. **Hotel: Ocean View Retreat. B D**

#### 10 Punakaiki – Nelson

After action-packed days, all you need to do today is sit back and enjoy the drama of the Heritage Highway en route to Nelson. Gaze over Buller Gorge – a deep canyon home to New Zealand's longest swingbridge – and Kahurangi National Park, a place of wild rivers, high plateaus, alpine herbfields and coastal forests. **Hotel: Rutherford, 2 nights. B**

#### 11 Nelson Free Time

The South Island's oldest city, Nelson is the ideal starting point for outings through Abel Tasman National Park. This pocket in the north of the island is a beguiling union of golden beaches framed by sculpted granite cliffs. It's home to one of the country's most legendary coastal tracks, if you fancy stretching your legs on a hike. Otherwise, drift away on a cruise around the coast, revealing unpeopled bays and dreamy inlets. The choice is yours. **B**

#### 12 Nelson – Wellington

All aboard the Interislander for a cruise through Queen Charlotte Sound, up the Tory Channel and across Cook Strait, from the South Island to the North, navigating a maze of arms and inlets into New Zealand's cool little capital of Wellington. Your local guide will help you get your bearings, then point you in the direction of some of the city's most innovative restaurants and bars. **Hotel: Travelodge, 2 nights. B**

#### 13 Wellington Free Time

Wellington also knows a thing or two about good coffee, and you'll need a strong one to get you through today's sightseeing. You may wish to linger in town, discovering Māori culture at Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand. Or head further afield on a Lord of the Rings movie tour or to visit the Weta Workshop, where special-effects wizards work their magic creating goblins and dinosaurs for blockbuster films. Decisions, decisions. **B FD**

#### 14 Farewell from Wellington

It's hard to say goodbye to the south of New Zealand. If you can't bear to leave, we have a few ideas up our sleeve to extend your holiday... **B L**

