



# FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL



*Your South Pacific Travel Specialists*

## New Zealand **Coach Holidays** 2025 / 26



20 Seat Business Class or 32 Seat Premium Economy



Combining rail, coach and breathtaking cruises including Milford Sound overnight cruise

# 19 Day Signature Rail, Cruise and Coach

Tour Highlight: Milford Sound Overnight Cruise



## THE MILFORD MARINER

For a majestic experience, spend the night on board the Milford Mariner. Cruise the full length of Milford Sound with commentary by a specialist nature guide. View the fiord's spectacular waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife. You are bound to encounter seals, maybe dolphins and penguins. As evening falls, enjoy a delicious carvery buffet, prepared by an onboard chef. Relax in the company of your fellow travellers or take in some stargazing before retiring to your cabin. Next morning, indulge in a hearty breakfast before heading back out to the Tasman Sea (weather permitting) and exploring more of the breathtaking fiord.

## TOUR CODE SGPR19

**STYLE** Signature Mid-Size Group  
**COACH** 32 seat Premium Economy  
**ACCOMMODATION** 4 star

**STARTS** Auckland  
**FINISHES** Christchurch

## GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

2025	2026
Sep 4, 12	Jan 2, 17, 24
Oct 1, 9, 27	Feb 7, 18
Nov 11, 26	Mar 14, 30
Dec 6	Apr 6, 28

**SEASONAL OFFER** Save \$250 pp on highlighted departure dates.

## ALL INCLUSIVE TOUR PRICE

Fully escorted tour includes transfers in New Zealand, Premium Economy 32 seat coach travel, 4 star accommodation, most meals, sightseeing and attractions.

Tour Highlight: 3 breathtaking Rail Journeys



## GLENBROOK VINTAGE RAILWAY

Experience the thrill of travelling by steam train as you meander through beautiful rural countryside on a vintage train hauled by one of the lovingly restored steam locomotives. Settle into the immaculate wood carriages and listen to the panting steam engine. A delightful morning tea is also included.



## COASTAL PACIFIC

Begin your journey from the coastal port of Picton, travel through the picturesque Marlborough Wine Region and the East Coast providing vistas of the Pacific Ocean and the coastal mountains. You may see amazing wildlife including dolphins, seals and penguins.



## THE TRANZALPINE

One of the great train journeys of the world. Depart Christchurch and travel through the patchwork farmlands of the Canterbury Plains, view alpine scenery, river valleys and spectacular gorges as you ascend to Arthur's Pass located in the centre of the Southern Alps.

## No hidden extras

### PREPAID ATTRACTIONS

- Kauri Museum
- Waitangi Treaty Grounds
- Hole in the Rock Dolphin Cruise
- Glenbrook Vintage Railway
- Skyline Rotorua Gondola and Luge Ride
- Agrodome
- Thermal mud pools and geysers\*
- Te Puia traditional Māori Hāngi and Concert
- Te Papa, NZ's National Museum
- Wellington Cable Car
- Cruise on the Interislander Ferry
- Coastal Pacific Rail Journey
- International Antarctic Centre
- Christchurch Tram
- TranzAlpine Rail Journey
- Cruise Lake Wakatipu on the TSS Earnslaw
- Lakes District Museum
- **HIGHLIGHT** Milford Sound Overnight Cruise
- Larnach Castle\*
- City sights tour of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin

\*Guided tour.

### COACH FEATURES

- 32 Premium Economy Comfort seats on a full-size coach
- 2 door access; seat back tray table; cup holder
- Restroom; daily onboard Wi-Fi allowance

### EXPERIENCE

- Personalised Meet and Greet on arrival
- Return airport transfers in New Zealand
- Professional Coach Captain
- Experienced Tour Leader
- 17 nights 4 star accommodation
- Milford Sound Overnight Cruise
- 6 two night stays
- Hotel portorage
- 3 rail journeys
- 4 cruises
- All sightseeing and prepaid attractions
- Extensive Optional Activities
- Signature Documentation Pack



“The Milford Sound Overnight Cruise is a ‘must do’ once-in-a lifetime experience.”

- A. R. - Past Traveller

### MEALS

- 18 cooked breakfasts including a specialty breakfast: Stratosfare Restaurant, Rotorua
- 12 sumptuous dinners including complimentary pre-dinner drink at the Welcome Dinner and 3 specialty dinners: Māori Hāngi and Concert, Rotorua; Walter Peak Homestead, Queenstown; Farewell Dinner including pre-dinner drink, Christchurch
- 2 delicious morning teas including a Devonshire Tea: Larnach Castle
- Enjoy GPT Hotel Wine Time (discounted drinks)

Day 1: Dinner not included for anyone arriving later than 8pm.

## Itinerary and Hotels

(B) Breakfast. (L) Lunch. (D) Dinner. (SD) Specialty Dinner.

### DAY 1: Arrive Auckland (D)

On arrival into Auckland, you will be met by a Grand Pacific Tours representative and transferred to your hotel. This evening enjoy a complimentary pre-dinner drink when you meet your Tour Leader and travelling companions for dinner.

**Hotel** Grand Millennium Auckland

### DAY 2: Auckland - Bay of Islands (B,D)

Enjoy a city tour of Auckland, dubbed the ‘City of Sails’, before travelling to Matakoho to enjoy a visit and informative talk at the Kauri Museum. Travel via Whangarei to Paihia, situated in the heart of the beautiful Bay of Islands. Enjoy a guided tour of the Waitangi Treaty Grounds, the location of the signing of the treaty between the Māori tribes and the British.

**Hotel** Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands (2 nights)

### DAY 3: Bay of Islands (Free Day) (B)

Today is a free day. Choose from the many optional activities available, including the Cape Reinga coach trip via Ninety Mile Beach or a spectacular scenic flight. This evening is also free, you may like to enjoy a relaxing dinner cruise (optional).

### DAY 4: Bay of Islands - Auckland (B)

This morning cruise through the beautiful Bay of Islands aboard a luxury catamaran to Cape Brett, where a historic lighthouse keeps watch over Piercy Island, or as it is popularly known, the ‘Hole in the Rock’. Keep an eye out for dolphins and other marine life. Upon return to Paihia, travel south via Whangarei, before returning to Auckland. This evening is free to explore the many eateries surrounding your hotel.

**Hotel** Grand Millennium Auckland

### DAY 5: Auckland - Rotorua (B,D)

This morning travel to Glenbrook Vintage Railway for a nostalgic 15 kilometre trip back in time on a beautifully restored vintage steam train including a delightful morning tea. Depart Glenbrook and travel through magnificent countryside of rolling hills and green pastures famous for dairying. Continue to Rotorua renowned for its geothermal activity and Māori culture.

**Hotel** Pullman Rotorua (2 nights)

### DAY 6: Rotorua (B,SD)

Today begins with a gondola ride and breakfast at Skyline Rotorua. There is also time for a thrilling luge ride! Next stop is the Agrodome for an action-packed hour of farming entertainment and education that is unlike anything you’ve seen before. Enjoy some free time this afternoon before travelling to Te Puia to see the boiling mud pools and awesome geysers that Rotorua is famous for. This evening experience an entertaining Māori Hāngi and Concert.

### DAY 7: Rotorua - Wellington (B,D)

Travel along the Thermal Explorer Highway to the spectacular Huka Falls. Continue to Lake Taupo for some free time to enjoy this scenic lakeside town. Travel via the Tongariro National Park and continue south to New Zealand’s capital city, Wellington.

**Hotel** James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor (2 nights)

### DAY 8: Wellington (B)

A highlight this morning will be time to explore Gallipoli: A Scale of War exhibition at Te Papa, New Zealand’s National Museum. Cutting edge technology brings these stories to life through the eyes of New Zealanders who found themselves in extraordinary circumstances. Reboard your coach for an extensive city tour. This afternoon ride the Wellington Cable Car to Kelburn Station where you can explore the Cable Car Museum or stroll through the Botanic Gardens. This evening is also free to explore Wellington’s lively food scene.

### DAY 9: Wellington - Kaikōura - Christchurch (B,D)

This morning board the Interislander Ferry and enjoy the scenery as you travel through the Marlborough Sounds to Picton. Join the Coastal Pacific, a truly spectacular rail journey that follows a thin wedge of land between the Pacific Ocean and the Kaikōura Ranges. Meet your coach in the fishing village of Kaikōura for the journey to the garden city of Christchurch.

**Hotel** Distinction Christchurch Hotel (2 nights)

### DAY 10: Christchurch (B)

Today visit the International Antarctic Centre, designed to provide an informative account of life in Antarctica. This is followed by an introductory city tour of Christchurch. This afternoon includes a journey on board the Christchurch Tram at leisure. This evening is free to explore the local cuisine.



Ride the Wellington Cable Car for stunning views of New Zealand's capital city.

**DAY 11: Christchurch - Arthur's Pass - Franz Josef (B,D)**

This morning board the TranzAlpine, renowned as one of the great train journeys of the world. Travel over massive viaducts, river valleys and spectacular gorges as you ascend to Arthur's Pass. Board your coach and travel to Hokitika, famous for its Greenstone before arriving at the township of Franz Josef where time is available to experience a scenic flight (optional, weather permitting) over the spectacular glaciers.

**Hotel** Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier

**DAY 12: Franz Josef - Queenstown (B)**

See the snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps as you travel south via the Haast Pass, before arriving into picturesque Queenstown, situated on the shores of magical Lake Wakatipu. This evening is free to dine at one of the many fine restaurants.

**Hotel** Millennium Hotel Queenstown (2 nights)

**DAY 13: Queenstown (Free Day) (B,SD)**

Today is a free day to explore Queenstown. Your crew will assist with the many optional activities available. This evening board the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw and cruise across Lake Wakatipu to Walter Peak Station. Sit back, relax and enjoy a delicious gourmet barbecue dinner featuring a menu of seasonal, fresh and locally sourced food at the Colonel's Homestead. After dinner enjoy a short farm tour then reboard the TSS Earnslaw for a sing along by the piano as you cruise back to Queenstown.

**DAY 14: Queenstown - Milford Sound Overnight Cruise (B,D)**

This morning travel to Arrowtown and visit the Lakes District Museum. Continue via Te Anau to Milford Sound and board the Milford Mariner for your amazing overnight cruise. There is plenty of time to view the fiord's spectacular waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife - you're bound to encounter seals and if you're lucky maybe dolphins and penguins. There are opportunities to explore the shoreline by tender boat or kayak (swimwear required) - or to simply relax on board. As evening falls enjoy a delicious carvery buffet prepared freshly by the onboard chef.

**Overnight** Milford Mariner

**DAY 15: Milford Sound - Te Anau (B,D)**

Start the day with a hearty breakfast before heading back out to the Tasman Sea (weather permitting) to explore more of the fiord. Return to the wharf to meet your coach and enjoy the scenic drive to Te Anau where you will enjoy an afternoon at leisure. You may like to visit the Te Anau Glowworm Caves (optional).

**Hotel** Distinction Luxmore Hotel Lake Te Anau

**DAY 16: Te Anau - Dunedin (B,D)**

Travel via Gore and Balclutha to Dunedin, famous for its stunning Edwardian and Victorian architecture dating back to the gold rush of the 1800s. Enjoy a city tour of New Zealand's oldest university city.

**Hotel** Scenic Hotel Dunedin City (2 nights)

**DAY 17: Dunedin (B)**

Travel along the picturesque Otago Peninsula to Larnach Castle. On a guided tour you will hear the tragic and scandalous tales which make up the castle's history. Enjoy time to wander around this Garden of International Significance followed by a delicious Devonshire Tea. Return to Dunedin for some free time. Optional activities to consider include a wildlife excursion to observe animals in their natural habitat or a guided tour of Olveston Historic Home, containing a wealth of treasures of a bygone era.

**DAY 18: Dunedin - Christchurch (B,SD)**

Today travel to the small town of Oamaru, famous for its limestone architecture before continuing to Christchurch. This evening enjoy a pre-dinner drink and reminisce on memories shared with your new friends at the farewell dinner.

**Hotel** Distinction Christchurch Hotel

**DAY 19: Depart Christchurch (B)**

Time to say goodbye. You will be transferred to the airport for your flight home after a memorable New Zealand holiday.

**Great Journeys New Zealand** manage the Seasonal Timetable and scheduled Maintenance Days for both the Coastal Pacific and TranzAlpine rail journeys. If a rail journey is not scheduled to run on a specific date affecting our advertised tour inclusions, this is beyond the control of GPT. Please refer to our Touring Disclaimer regarding how a refund will be managed.



Above: Cruise through the beautiful Bay of Islands to Piercy Island, or as it's popularly known, the Hole in the Rock. Below: Experience an entertaining Māori Hāngi and Concert at the geothermal wonderland of Te Puia. PIC: Graeme Murray



## Optional Activities



### **DARRYL'S LUNCH OR DINNER CRUISE**

Enjoy a gentle meander up the Waitangi River to view local birdlife and the thundering Haruru Falls all whilst enjoying a fresh display of local cuisine.



### **ROTORUA CITY AND LAKES TOUR**

Discover Rotorua's natural scenery onboard an Amphibious WWII Landing Craft. Includes three lake visits with a 'Splashdown' into Lake Tikitapu and Okareka.



### **OLVESTON HISTORIC HOME**

Visit New Zealand's finest historic mansion, built in 1906. The house is still breathtakingly furnished revealing the opulence and grandeur of the Edwardian age.