

## 11 Day South Island Tour

### Day 1: Christchurch to Mackenzie Country

This morning we'll explore iconic downtown Christchurch and your guide will show you the cool and creative ways the city is being rebuilt after the life-changing 2011 earthquake here. Christchurch folk are an innovative and creative bunch –the Transitional Cathedral, created from cardboard, is totally inspirational.

After lunch we leave the city behind and head for Lake Tekapo. The lake's breathtaking turquoise colour and mountain backdrop is a photographer's dream come true.

The tiny Church of the Good Shepherd stands right at the water's edge, proving that small is definitely beautiful. Grab some confetti and congratulate any passing brides– couples travel from all over the world for wedding shots in front of the chapel!

Tekapo has been declared an International Dark Sky Reserve and the super clear skies make it the best place in New Zealand to see the stars and galaxies on a clear night. Sit back, relax and enjoy.

#### INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Christchurch City Tour
- Visit the Church of the Good Shepherd
- Experience Tekapo's Dark Sky Reserve

### Day 2: Mackenzie Country to Queenstown

This morning if you're feeling energetic, hike up to the summit of Mt John. With awesome views of the Southern Alps, you'll feel on top of the world. Speaking of views, today's scenic drive to Queenstown is a show-stopper.

From the golden tussocklands of Mackenzie country –where epic battles of Return of the King were filmed – to the dramatic peaks of the Southern Alps, it's like you're driving into a postcard.

We'll pause for lots of photo stops en route to give your camera a workout, including a stop at the spectacular Kawarau Gorge. This also happens to be the World Home of Bungy, give it a go or enjoy watching the jumpers scream their way through the gorge!

Whether you're an adrenalin junkie, an avid hiker, wine taster or scenery lover, Queenstown has something for absolutely everyone. With two nights and plenty of daylight hours here, get ready – this town certainly knows how to live life to the max!

#### INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Hike up Mt John (optional)
- Visit Kawarau Gorge

### Day 3: Queenstown

With a full day in Queenstown, let's work on that bucketlist! There are heaps of options to choose from: paragliding over the lake, mountain bike parks and trails to die for, bungy jumping while your Haka friends cheer you on, horse riding through Lord of the Rings scenery, and swinging through a canyon are just a few of our favourites.

For scenery lovers, Milford Sound is a must-see. Whether you fly or drive, the scenery en route is as awesome as the destination. Once on the Sound, sailing beneath thundering waterfalls and towering cliff faces, you'll understand why some call it the "8th Wonder of the World"

Tonight you have around 40 bars to choose from – your guide will fill you in on their favourites – to share your adventures with your travel buddies, and party the night away.

#### INCLUDED

- Breakfast

### Day 4: Queenstown to Wanaka

One last morning in Queenstown to work on that bucket list. What will it be today - a canyoning experience, Lord of the Rings 4x4 safari, or a jet boat ride along the Shotover River? There are so many options. You decide.

After the excitement of Queenstown, the afternoon is a chance to chill.

Wanaka is Queenstown's slightly quieter little sister, a mere one hour drive away. On the way we'll stop in at charming Arrowtown, a historic gold rush village with heaps of old world character.

Blessed with towering peaks and a glacial blue lake, you'll soon see why Wanaka's considered to be one of New Zealand's most beautiful mountain towns. There are stunning hikes and bike rides all around for a welcome chance to relax.

#### INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Visit Arrowtown – a charming and historic gold rush village

### Day 5: Wanaka to Franz Josef

This morning is about exploring Wanaka. How, exactly, is up to you!

Optional activities include an aerobatic plane flight, skydiving, a bike tour along Wanaka's lakeside, or a lake cruise and nature walk on Mou Waho Island.

If none of those appeal, there are lots of scenic short walks in the area - including a visit to #thatwanakatree. Talk to your guide for the best options.

The journey to Franz is another stunner – many of our Haka Guides rate it as their favourite drive in New Zealand.

As we hit the road, we'll stop at one of our favourite lakeside lookout points at Lake Hawea or Lake Wanaka. Your guide will keep an eye on the weather and pick the best option.

From the cascading waterfalls of Haast Pass to classic Kiwi coastal views, you won't want to nap on the bus in case you miss anything. Your guide will have some epic surprise photo stops and short walks along the way.

We roll into Franz Josef around late afternoon/early evening. This UNESCO World Heritage area is famous for its spectacular glacier, just 5 kilometres from town, which is begging to be explored tomorrow.

## INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Lake Hawea Lookout
- Haast Pass

### Day 6: Franz Josef

With Aoraki/Mount Cook (New Zealand's highest mountain) twinkling behind the glaciers, Franz Josef is about as beautiful a setting as you can find in New Zealand.

Te Wahi Pounamu (which means 'the place of greenstone' in Māori) is the name given to this part of the West Coast because of the abundance of pounamu (greenstone/jade) to be found here. Included in your tour today is a special opportunity to carve your very own pounamu pendant at a local gallery.

There are heaps of ways to enjoy Franz Josef Glacier; weather permitting, to get up onto the bluest ice you can take a scenic helicopter flight and hike onto the glaciers. Maybe you'd prefer to kayak on a glacial lake; or just relax in the steamy hot springs down below. As well as the awesome glacier activities you could also try out quad biking, horseback riding and even a bit of group karaoke tonight in Franz Josef!

## INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Carve your own pounamu necklace

### Day 7: Franz Josef to Punakaiki

Driving along the incredible coastal road and exploring the lush forests around Punakaiki, it almost feels like you've stepped back in time. It's a rare treat to experience such remote prehistoric landscapes, so make the most of this awesome opportunity to unplug from the outside world.

Get excited; our trusty guides always have some surprises up their sleeves for this part of the trip, including a spot or two to get your feet wet.

We'll visit one of the famous artisan greenstone factories in Hokitika as we make our way north, as well as passing through some old gold mining towns before arriving in Punakaiki.

One of Punakaiki's many natural wonders is the subtropical rainforest – and we are staying in the heart of it for the next two nights!

Cook up a group dinner in this rainforest paradise, and be sure to end the day watching the sun set over the ocean tonight.

## INCLUDED

- Breakfast
- Visit Hokitika Greenstone Factory
- See the Punakaiki Pancake Rocks
- Stay in a rainforest retreat

### Day 8: Punakaiki

Whether you decide to soak up the sun on the unspoilt beaches or stroll through the rainforest to a chorus of birdsong, you'll shed your cares in this magical place.

A short walk to see a giant stack of pancakes is a must-do today: Punakaiki's limestone Pancake Rocks developed over 30 million years ago. You'll see what water pressure can do when the waves power through some seriously impressive blowholes—watch out for that spray!

Today you could try your hand at kayaking or exploring the region's underground caves by tube. There are also opportunities for horseback riding in Paparoa National Park. Or simply chill by the beach near your rainforest home.

On a clear night, head to the beach with your buddies and watch the stars come out to play—seriously, is there a better way to end the day?

#### **INCLUDED**

- Breakfast
- Stay in a rainforest retreat

### **Day 9: Punakaiki to Abel Tasman**

Cruising up north from Punakaiki, the scenery gets better and better. The powerful, untouched coastline gives way to river sand gorges before we drive over the hills and down towards the bayside town of Nelson, to stock upon supplies before our next remote hideaway.

Marahau, the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park, boasts golden beaches, tranquil lagoons and crystal clear waters. Abel Tasman is the perfect contrast to the wildness of the rain forests and mountains.

Why will you fall in love with Abel Tasman? Lush forests, sandy beaches, sheltered bays, and jaw-dropping views... not to mention the resident wildlife. Get ready to lose your heart to the most popular National Park in New Zealand.

#### **INCLUDED**

- Breakfast

### **Day 10: Abel Tasman National Park**

Abel Tasman... you beauty. Lush forests, golden sandy beaches, sheltered bays, and jaw-dropping views... not to mention the local seals, dolphins and bird life.

You might like to hike part of the Abel Tasman Coast Track— one of New Zealand's nine Great Walks— or paddle a kayak to Split Apple Rock. You could jump, slide, abseil, float and zipline your way through the park on an awesome canyoning adventure.

Fancy a relaxing day instead? Choose yourself a golden beach and make yourself at home.

#### **INCLUDED**

- Breakfast

### **Day 11: Abel Tasman to Wellington**

Today is the last day of your tour!

You'll start things off by learning to paddle a traditional waka (Māori war canoe).

Experience a karakia (blessing for protection), and learn tikanga (waka etiquette) all while getting out on the water to enjoy this unique included activity.

Our road trip continues along the northern edge of the South Island this afternoon. We'll make a quick stop at Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve (a film location for *The Hobbit: The*

Desolation of Smaug) and make our way through Havelock as we wind our way towards Picton to catch the afternoon ferry to Wellington.

As the lights of Picton Harbour fade into the night, relax on board together for a chilled evening.

The tour officially finishes at 8pm today in Wellington, but your accommodation tonight is included.

#### **INCLUDED**

- Breakfast
- Paddle a Waka (war canoe)
- Visit Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve
- Cook Strait Ferry Crossing to Wellington

**Teilnehmer:** max. 16 Teilnehmer (Mindestalter 18 Jahre)

**Transport:** Kleinbus

**Inkludierte Mahlzeiten:** Frühstück

**Übernachtung:** Lodges, Motels & Hostels

**Gepäck Limit:** 20 kg pro Person

**Rollstuhlgeeignet:** nein

**Geeignet für Menschen eingeschränkter Mobilität:** ja

(genauere Informationen auf Anfrage)

**Die Sprache während der Tour ist englisch**