

Decidedly Different Islands



Experience a colourful kaleidoscope of New Zealand life. Discover backroad places, country hospitality and nature in the wild.

14 days Auckland ~ Waitomo Caves ~ Rotorua ~ Napier - Martinborough ~ Wellington ~ Blenheim ~ Kaikoura ~ Mt Somers ~ Queenstown ~ Milford Sound ~ Wanaka ~ Franz Josef ~ Punakaiki ~ Christchurch

Included in your tour price:

- ~ All transport by comfortable air conditioned coach (maximum of 16 travellers)
- ~ Services of your experienced driver/guide
- ~ Quality, en suite accommodation
- ~ Glide by boat through Waitomo glowworm grotto
- ~ Enjoy a Maori concert and hangi dinner in Rotorua
- ~ Visit Rotorua Museum – a treasure trove of local history
- ~ Taste the fine wine of premier vineyards
- ~ Visit magnificent gardens
- ~ Visit Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre
- ~ Cruise on the Interislander ferry across Cook Strait to Picton
- ~ Take a return scenic flight to Milford and enjoy a nature cruise on Milford Sound
- ~ View the breath-taking Franz Josef glacier

Optional activities include:

- ~ A range of optional activities from whale watching cruises and kayaking to helicopter flights and glacier landings



Meals

Breakfasts (B) all are included

Three Lunches included (L) with the locals in unique locations;
Day 2 Rotorua Lodge, Day 3 Hawkes Bay Winery,
Day 8 Canterbury farm homestead

Four Dinners included (D) Day 1 Rotorua Maori hangi and concert; Day 6 Hotel d'Urville, Day 8 Stronechrubie, Day 13 Punakaiki Resort Hotel



Rotorua Thermal Reserve



Maori carving in Rotorua, the heart of Maori culture

Day 1: **Auckland ~ Waitomo Caves ~ Rotorua (D)**

Your driver/guide meets you at your hotel. We drive into the lush dairy farmlands of the Waikato and visit Waitomo's breathtaking glowworm cave in this dramatic limestone region. Later we drive through farmlands to Rotorua. This evening you will be touched by the warmth of a Maori concert – the traditional welcome to visitors – and a dinner that includes hangi food steamed in an earth oven.

Heritage Rotorua

Day 2: **Rotorua Sightseeing (B, L)**

Relax and enjoy leisurely touring in this lakeside town at the heart of Maori culture, geothermal activity and tranquil lakes. We visit Rotorua Museum before enjoying a special private lunch and choosing from a host of optional geothermal attractions and activities exclusive to this region.

Heritage Rotorua

Day 3: **Rotorua ~ Taupo ~ Napier (B, L)**

We visit stunning Orakei Korako thermal reserve and Huka Falls, where the Waikato River thunders through a narrow chasm, is an irresistible photo stop. From Taupo we cross the ranges to Napier. Renowned for Art Deco architecture, Napier was rebuilt in this style after a disastrous earthquake in 1931. Your guide will take you for lunch at one of the region's premier vineyards. Your hotel is on the waterfront.

Scenic Hotel Te Pania

Day 4: **Napier ~ Martinborough (B)**

This morning we drive the Art Deco trail with a specialist guide. We head south through Hawkes Bay's pastoral landscape of orchards, farms and vineyards to the Wairarapa region. We visit Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre, a sanctuary for rare and endangered species including kiwis and tuatara and stay in vineyard accommodation on the edges of Martinborough village.

Margrain Vineyard Villas

Day 5: **Martinborough ~ Wellington (B)**

In Wellington, the capital city, we visit Te Papa, the national museum and tour the city sights - to Oriental Bay and Mt Victoria for harbour and city views. Your inner city boutique hotel is at the heart of Wellington's eclectic café scene.

Bolton Hotel



Huka Falls



Kiwi at Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre



Day 6: Wellington ~ Blenheim (B, D)

Cruise by ferry across Cook Strait and through Queen Charlotte Sound to Picton in the South Island. We tour this premier wine and food region, including tasting at Cloudy Bay and boutique vineyards that put Marlborough on the map. We dine at Hotel d'Urville's highly regarded Wine Bar and Brasserie.

Hotel d'Urville

Day 7: Marlborough Sounds ~ Blenheim ~ Kaikoura (B)

Leave behind the dry, golden hills of Marlborough for the spectacular scenery of the Kaikoura Coast. Famed for whale watching cruises, Kaikoura is also the place for close encounters with seals and seabirds. Optional whale watch cruise.

The White Morph Inn

Day 8: Kaikoura ~ Mt Somers (B, L, D)

We continue down the coast and over the hills to the Canterbury Plains and Christchurch before driving to the foothills of the Southern Alps. We have a special farmhouse lunch before heading to the small village of Mt Somers. We dine in Stronechrubie's acclaimed restaurant tonight.

Stronechrubie

Day 9: Mt Somers ~ Queenstown (B)

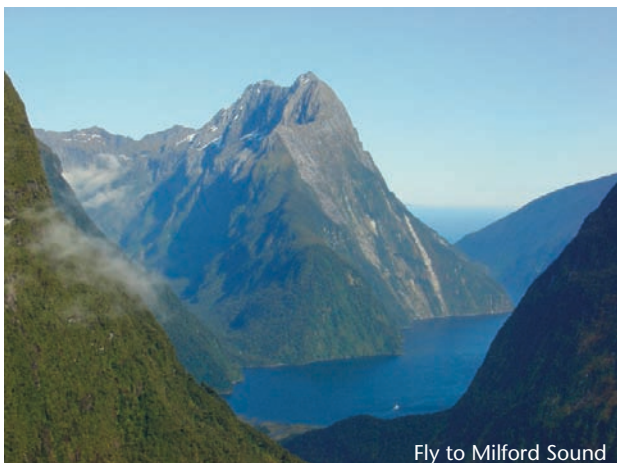
The landscape changes to turquoise lakes and sweeping vistas of tussock grasses and mountains. At Lake Tekapo the picturesque church and sheepdog statue are favourite photo stops. View Aoraki/ Mt Cook, New Zealand's highest mountain. The Lindis Pass, leads to rugged Kawarau Gorge and Queenstown. Your boutique hotel is close to town with views to Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables Range.

Browns Boutique Hotel

Day 10: Queenstown ~ Milford Sound ~ Nature Cruise ~ Queenstown (B)

This morning take a return flight to Milford Sound deep in the heart of Fiordland National Park. At Milford take a nature cruise down the sound, dominated by iconic Mitre Peak, it's a dramatic fiord landscape of waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife. Return to Queenstown by plane.

Browns Boutique Hotel





Day 11: **Queenstown ~ Arrowtown ~ Wanaka (B)**

Perhaps take an early morning jet boat ride on the spectacular Dart River in The Lord of the Rings country before driving to Arrowtown, a picturesque goldmining village. The road climbs up the Crown Range then down into the Cardrona Valley. We stop at quaint Cardrona Hotel and stay in Wanaka, a favourite Kiwi resort town on the edge of Lake Wanaka

Te Wanaka Lodge

Day 12: **Wanaka ~ Franz Josef (B)**

Heading into the mountain and rivers of Haast Pass in Mt Aspiring National Park. Take short walks on tracks through native beech forests to waterfalls and blue pools where trout lurk. We visit the Department of Conservation Centre for insight into this region's colourful history, flora and fauna. Continue north through the primeval rainforest of Westland World Heritage Park, stopping at Ship Creek for a stroll on the beach to the dune lake. At Franz Josef we view the advancing glacier.

Punga Grove

Day 13: **Franz Josef ~ Punakaiki (B, D)**

This morning you may choose to take an optional flight over the glaciers and Aoraki/ Mt Cook or perhaps visit Okarito's lovely lagoon, home of the rare kotuku, white heron. Jet boating from Whataroa is an ideal way to see this region. Travel up the coast passing mirror lakes, boulder-laden rivers with glimpses of the Southern Alps. At Hokitika browse the craft galleries – Pounamu (jade, greenstone) carving, glass blowing, wood and copper artisans. A coastal road following part of ancient Pounamu Trails used by Maori for centuries leads to your hotel. Visit Punakaiki Pancake Rocks - sculpted sea stacks and towering cliffs. If the tide is right, blowholes will be spreading clouds of spray. Farewell celebratory dinner in your hotel's Waterline restaurant.

Punakaiki Resort

Day 14: **Punakaiki ~ Arthur's Pass ~ Christchurch (B)**

Drive back down the coast to Greymouth and eastwards into the magnificent alpine scenery of rugged Otira Gorge and Arthur's Pass National Park. Crossing the Canterbury Plains we conclude your tour in Christchurch, an English style city of stone buildings, large parks and stunning gardens.

