



ULTIMATE JOURNEYS

Specialising in Asia, Africa, Australasia and the Americas

SIMPLY THE BEST



Day 1 Arrive Auckland

On arrival at Auckland Airport collect your rental car

Day 2 Auckland - Waitomo Caves - Rotorua (350 km)

Travel south past rolling green hills and pastureland to the Waitomo Caves region. Beneath the surface of this ancient limestone region lies a labyrinth of caves and underground rivers. Expert guides provide historical and geographical commentary before you drift silently in a boat under the milky way of millions of glow worms on the cavern roof above you. Continue through farmland, lakeland and forest until the distinctive smell of sulphur and constant steam drifts let you know you are in tempestuous, geothermal Rotorua.

Day 3 Rotorua D

Experience Māori culture at Te Puia and take a tour through a thermal valley full of forceful geysers and bubbling mud pools. View woodcarving and weaving schools and see how these ancient arts are being passed on to a new generation. Explore Rainbow Springs Kiwi Wildlife Park, where you can get up close to the native flora and fauna. Then see New Zealand's agricultural industry in action at the Agrodome, a working farm where you can view a sheep shearing display and sheep dog trials. This evening enjoy a memorable night of culture, song and dance followed by dinner cooked the traditional Maori way on hot stones underground.

Day 4 Rotorua - Wellington (452 km)

Travel today is south via Lake Taupo. Follow the lakeshore before passing through Tongariro National Park where the three volcanic mountains of Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro dominate the scenery and on to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city.

Day 5 Wellington

Day at leisure. Wellington is compact, cultured and full of character. Nestled between harbour and hills, the downtown area is ideal for explorations on foot. Wellington is noted for its live theatre, art galleries, restaurants and cultural activities. On the waterfront is Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand's national museum, one of the best interactive museums in the world.

Day 6 Wellington - Picton - Christchurch (344 km)

This morning transfer to the Interisland Ferry to cruise across the Cook Strait and through the Marlborough Sounds to Picton. Connect with the Coastal Pacific train which journeys via Kaikoura to Christchurch. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel. (Self-drive travellers return their car in Wellington. On arrival in Christchurch, you will be met and transferred to your hotel).

Day 7 Christchurch – Greymouth - West Coast Glaciers (180 km)

This morning transfer to the train station. All aboard the Tranz Alpine train for a stunningly scenic journey through the rugged Southern Alps to Greymouth. (On arrival in Greymouth, self drive travellers collect your rental car at the train station. You may like to detour to Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and Blowholes where the surging sea has sculptured amazing shapes out of the rocks, before heading south). Travel this afternoon, down the wild, west coast. This remote area has a ruggedly beautiful landscape of vast rainforests, gushing waterfalls and snow capped mountains

Day 8 West Coast Glaciers

Today, at Franz Josef Glacier your expert tour guide will take you on a Glacier Valley Walk alongside the mighty Waiho River bed following the glaciers path of retreat in this remarkable landscape. Here you will learn about the glacier's history. Near the terminal face, you will be rewarded with spectacular views of the rapidly changing terminal face of the glacier. After your tour, relax in the Glacier Hot Pools, a haven of natural tranquillity, nestled in the lush rainforest.

Day 9 West Coast Glaciers - Queenstown (350 km)

A memorable trip through some of the most magnificent scenery in New Zealand. Journey through native beech forest and over the Southern Alps before arriving at New Zealand's adventure capital, Queenstown.

Day 10 Queenstown

Today's fully guided tour takes you for a scenic drive along the edge of Lake Wakatipu to Glenorchy where you will board a Dart River jet boat for a journey through the Dart River's braided river system surrounded by breathtaking snow-capped mountains, ancient native forest, waterfalls, and glacier valleys frozen in time. The ride is followed by an easy guided walk through ancient native beech forest and a 4WD safari ride with commentary on the surrounding countryside with views of scenery that has formed the epic backdrop for many international films, including 'The Lord of the Rings'.

Day 11 Queenstown - Milford Sound - Te Anau (406 km)

A full day journey into the heart of Milford Sound. Experience the world famous fjord, rich in dense rainforest, glacier carved valleys and beautiful waterfalls. Journey past the stunning Mirror Lakes and Eglinton Valley, a place of ancient alpine forest and gushing waterfalls. At Milford Sound, board your scenic cruise to see the wonders of Mitre Peak, glacier-scarred rock walls and waterfalls that tumble through valleys and crash into the sea far below. Later today continue on to Te Anau.

Day 12 Te Anau - Invercargill (160 km)

On arrival in Invercargill, self drive travellers will join a personal drive by coach tour of historic and heritage buildings, churches, Queens Park, civic amenities, gardens, residential areas and Oreti Beach. Seat-in-coach travellers will tour Invercargill's significant Heritage Buildings, Parks and Gardens. Travel via the Southern Scenic Route to explore the South Catlin's Coast. Highlights include stunning New Zealand Native forest, dramatic coastline, Curio Bay Petrified Forest and Porpoise Bay.

Day 13 Invercargill - Dunedin (210 km)

Continue to Dunedin, first settled by the Scottish and renowned as the "Edinburgh of the South". Self drive travellers may like to travel via the Catlins, New Zealand's "hidden gem". The Catlins is an area of great contrasts and natural beauty with an abundance of wildlife. From magnificent coastal cliffs and headlands, long sweeping beaches, coves and sandy bays; to extensive temperate rainforests, waterfalls and rolling farmland, the Catlins is a fascinating, rugged place "off the beaten track."

Day 14 Dunedin - Christchurch (363 km)

This morning is free for optional tours before travelling north to Christchurch. River crossings are a feature of the journey before the straight flat roads set amongst the Canterbury Plains lead you into Christchurch.

Day 15 Depart Christchurch

(return your rental car to the airport).

**PLEASE CALL US TO HAVE THIS ARRANGEMENT INCLUDED IN YOUR PLANS FOR
NEW ZEALAND**