



ULTIMATE JOURNEYS

Specialising in Asia, Africa, Australasia and the Americas

HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW ZEALAND



Day 1 Arrive Auckland

On arrival you will be transferred to your accommodation.

Tour documentation will be handed over by your driver.

Day 2 Auckland - Coromandel Peninsula (150 km)

This morning collect your rental car from Auckland City depot. Make your way via the Pacific Coast Highway to the Coromandel Peninsula, renowned for its spectacular coastline and white sandy beaches.

Day 3 Coromandel Peninsula - Rotorua (190 km)

Travel through farmland, lake land and forest until the distinctive smell of sulphur and constant steam drifts let you know you are in tempestuous, geothermal Rotorua.

Day 4 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 5 Rotorua - Tongariro National Park (180 km)

Make your way south hugging the lakeshore of Lake Taupo to Tongariro National Park where the three volcanic mountains of Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro dominate the scenery. Optional sightseeing: You may like to enjoy a scenic flight and view some of the active volcanoes and crater lakes in the area.

Day 6 Tongariro National Park - Wellington (330 km)

Travel through the desert-like plateau to New Zealand's capital city, Wellington.

Day 7 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 8 Wellington - Picton - Blenheim (30 km)

This morning return your rental car to the Ferry Terminal Depot. Board the Interislander Ferry for your journey across Cook Strait to Picton. The picturesque seaside town of Picton is the gateway to the marine, forest and island attractions of the Marlborough Sounds. On arrival in Picton collect your rental car and make your way to Blenheim. The short drive takes you across the Wairau Plains past vineyards and wineries to the heart of wine-growing Marlborough.

Day 9 Blenheim

Day at leisure. In and around Blenheim you'll find a pleasing selection of cafes, restaurants, bars, shops, artisan food outlets and golf courses. There are more than 20 wineries within driving distance of the town, and most of them welcome visitors for sampling sessions.

Day 10 Blenheim - Nelson (115 km)

Make your way to the Nelson Tasman Region with its vibrant coastal towns full of bustling cafes, charming boutiques and funky art galleries. Rich with spectacular scenery, three national parks are within 90 minutes of the city.

Day 11 Nelson

Day at leisure and time for optional sightseeing. You may like to visit the Abel Tasman National Park and kayak, walk, or cruise through the park or a take helicopter flight over some of the film locations used in the Lord of the Rings Trilogy.

Day 12 Nelson - Hokitika (350 km)

Make your way down the West Coast and journey through Paparoa National Park with its coastal cliffs, limestone gorges and wild, deserted beaches. Enroute a stop is recommended at Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and Blowholes where the surging sea has sculptured amazing shapes out of the rocks.

Day 13 Hokitika - Franz Josef (135 km)

Continue down the West Coast. This remote area has a ruggedly beautiful landscape of vast rainforests, gushing waterfalls and snow capped mountains. At Franz Josef Glacier take an exciting scenic helicopter flight on to the glacier for a guided hike amongst some of the most pristine and awe-inspiring glacier scenery available. Your guide chooses the route as you go and with an eye for the most spectacular ice formations you'll be making your way through a wonderland of towering pinnacles and brilliantly blue ice. With panoramic views of the surrounding mountains this will be one of your most memorable experiences whilst in New Zealand. After your heli-hike, relax in the Glacier Hot Pools, a haven of natural tranquillity, nestled in the lush rainforest.

Day 14 Franz Josef - Wanaka (285 km)

Enjoy waterfalls and river scenery as you leave the coast and climb up the river valley to Haast Pass. The road snakes through the Aspiring National Park, and the vegetation becomes more sparse as you travel inland. Lakes Wanaka and Hawea make the last part of the trip beautifully scenic on the way to the lakeside town of Wanaka.

Day 15 Wanaka - Queenstown (115 km)

Journey south over the Clutha and Cardrona Rivers and via Lake Dunstan to Cromwell. Continue through the Kawarau Gorge before arriving at New Zealand's adventure capital, Queenstown. An alternative route today is via the Crown Range Road which is New Zealand's highest sealed highway. This route is shorter than the one via Cromwell however travel time may take longer due to the winding nature of the road (note this route is not recommended over winter).

Day 16 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 breath-taking 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 17 Queenstown - Milford Sound - Te Anau (405 km) L

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 across the Southern Alps, 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 18 Te Anau - Invercargill (160 km)

Make your way to Invercargill the country's southernmost city. Local food specialties include Bluff Oysters and blue cod and the museum houses an exhibition about New Zealand's subantarctic islands. It's a short journey to Bluff to see the Stirling Point signpost, indicating the distance to the South Pole and other parts of the world.

Day 19 Invercargill - Dunedin (245 km)

Travel north is recommended via the Catlins, New Zealand's "hidden gem". The Catlins region 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 20 Dunedin

Day at leisure. Dunedin and Coastal Otago is often referred to as the eco-capital of New Zealand. It is a region of natural beauty overlaid with a fascinating cultural history. On Dunedin's doorstep you will find incredible wildlife including the world's rarest penguins and the world's only mainland breeding colony of Royal Albatross.

Day 21 Dunedin - Mount Cook (330 km) D

Travel via Moeraki to view dozens of spherical boulders strewn along the windswept beach before reaching Oamaru. Then head inland via rugged hills, high country farms and stunning turquoise lakes before reaching the Aoraki Mount Cook National Park, a region that attracts mountain climbers, hikers and scenery fanatics.

Day 22 Mount Cook - Christchurch (325 km) B

This morning you may like to take an optional Tasman Glacier scenic flight or cruise before making your way across the patchwork fields of the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch.

Day 23 Depart Christchurch

Tour ends with rental car return to Christchurch Airport depot.

CALL US TO HAVE THIS ARRANGEMENT COSTED WITH YOUR FLIGHTS FROM YOUR CHOSEN DEPARTURE AIRPORT