



**GREAT JOURNEYS
NEW ZEALAND**
AOTEAROA BY TRAIN

Classic | NZ Highlights Tour Auckland to Queenstown. 15 days

Day 1 Auckland

Explore Auckland

Welcome to Auckland, New Zealand's City of Sails! Auckland is known for its multicultural hub of food, music, arts, and culture.

After checking into your hotel and reading your welcome letter from your Tour Director, head out and explore all that Auckland has to offer. This is the perfect opportunity to visit the Sky Tower or go shopping along bustling Queen Street. You may even fancy a drink in one of the charming bars or eateries of Vulcan Lane.

Your tour officially begins this evening, as you join your fellow travellers and Tour Director this evening for a welcome reception.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

A welcome drink is included in tonight's reception.

Activities

Welcome Reception

Day 2 Ohakune

The Northern Explorer Scenic Train

A Scenic Journey to Ohakune

Today, you will marvel at rural New Zealand's lush landscapes from the comfort of your seat onboard the Northern Explorer scenic train journey. From the green pastures of the Waikato to the icy mountain streams of Ruapehu, you won't want to miss a moment. If you are interested in culture and history, be sure to listen to the audio commentary



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as you cross historic viaducts and traverse up the Raurimu Spiral, an engineering marvel. This experience is one like no other.

Enjoy an elevated experience as you visit the volcanic plateau. Learn about Tongariro National Park which is home to three volcanic mountains and recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

At the base of this geological wonder is Ohakune, 'the carrot capital of New Zealand', where you'll stay the next two nights to experience your chosen adventure.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Ohakune)

Meals

Breakfast

Activities

- Northern Explorer Scenic Train Experience
- Mini excursion to view expansive views across the volcanic landscape

Day 3 Ohakune

Discover Tongariro National Park

Today is free for you to discover one of the region's many exciting excursions. Choose from the optional activities on offer and personalise your perfect holiday. Perhaps you will hop aboard a rail cart journey or join a horse trekking experience that takes you along expansive hills, mountains, rivers and into native forest.

If you're after an active day, why not explore Ohakune's historical cycle trail? Rent e-bikes and discover old viaducts, tunnels, old settlers' camps and reclaimed native forests along the Old Coach Road!



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Day 4 Wellington

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Ohakune)

Meals

Breakfast

A Scenic Journey to Wellington

After breakfast, we begin our day by travelling to the Tūroa ski field. You won't want to leave this mini excursion to Middle Earth without a panoramic photo in hand!

Joining the Northern Explorer train once again, you will wave goodbye to Ohakune as you settle into your uber-comfortable seat. Don't get too comfortable though; dramatic rivers, gorges and ravines are just around the bend! Stretch your legs and explore the open-air carriage to acquire the best view on the train.

As you glide through rich green farmland and past a dramatic coastline, why not indulge in a treat from our onboard licensed café? All too soon the train will arrive into Wellington leaving the picturesque Porirua Harbour behind.

You have arrived at Wellington Railway Station. Welcome to New Zealand's windy capital! You won't want to waste a moment of time after checking into the hotel - your evening is free to explore this award-winning culinary capital from Queen's Wharf, Cuba Street and beyond.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Wellington)

Meals

Breakfast, Afternoon tea aboard the train



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Day 5 Wellington

Activities

- Northern Explorer Scenic Train
- Mini excursion to view expansive volcanic views across the North Island

The perfect day does exist – and it includes exploring Wellington!

Today is free for you to experience vibrant Wellington as you please. Start by joining our Wellington City introduction tour and then heading off to explore Cuba street's cafes, bookstores and eccentric shops. Get cultured at the Te Papa Museum or Zealandia to uncover the rich stories of Aotearoa New Zealand. You won't get bored with the plethora of activities on offer. From urban eco-sanctuary, cable cars, botanical gardens and more, the list goes on! If you need any suggestions or recommendations, just reach out to your experienced Tour Director.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Wellington)

Meals

Breakfast, Dinner

Activities

- Wellington City Introduction Tour
- Group Dinner

Day 6 Blenheim

Crossing the Cook Strait Adventure to the South

This morning you will say poroporoaki ki te motu raki (good-bye to the North Island) as you sail to the South Island, crossing the Cook Strait on the Interislander ferry. As the shores of the North Island slowly disappear, enjoy a hearty seafaring breakfast on board.



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Around midday, you will be spoiled with captivating harbour views as you enter the Queen Charlotte Sound. Admire the beauty of this coastal paradise as you arrive at the gateway of the South Island, Picton. Step off the Interislander Ferry and join your next world-class experience onboard a Marlborough Wine Tour!

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals

Breakfast

Activities

- Interislander Ferry
- Marlborough Wine Tour

Day 7 Kaikōura

The Coastal Pacific Scenic Train

After enjoying a delightful breakfast, the morning is yours to explore.

You'll hear the hoot of the Coastal Pacific train as it pulls in, to bring you on yet another scenic experience. This time – along the rugged coastline of the South Island. On this train journey, you will glide across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless voyage of breath-taking beauty. Keep an eye out for the fur seals lazing on the rocks!

Once in Kaikoura, the evening will be yours to enjoy some iconic kai moana (seafood) either at the sublime Sudima Kaikoura or at one of the popular restaurants.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals

Breakfast

Activities Included



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**Day 8
Christchurch**

Coastal Pacific Scenic Train Experience

Explore Kaikōura

Today will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. You will have the opportunity to go whale watching! Enjoy today's optional thrill of an up-close encounter with the world's largest-toothed predator, the Giant Sperm Whale who live in the waters of Kaikoura year-round.

Want to get an aerial experience of the wildlife? Why not request a plane ride to capture the true grandeur of it all?

Whether you have decided to go whale watching or swimming with the dolphins and seals, we're sure you will be feeling peckish. Head to the hub of the action on the main street to sample some iconic New Zealand food - you can't go wrong with the humble Kiwiana fish and chips. Work off the deep-fried delights by wandering through the wonderful array of local artisan stores and souvenir shops.

In the late afternoon, your journey will continue, once again, on the Coastal Pacific Train en route to Christchurch, or "The Garden City". The spectacular scenery won't cease to amaze as you journey south through the rolling hills and extensive plains. Enjoy the relaxing journey with a glass of wine in hand.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Christchurch)

Meals

Breakfast, Dinner on train

Activities

Coastal Pacific Scenic Train Journey

**Day 9
Christchurch**

Christchurch, the hub for South Island exploration is also a wonderful city that blends



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modern architecture and technology with the existing 19th-century Anglican 'gothic revival' architectural influence. Often remembered for its earthquake in 2011, the city is rebuilding itself as a multicultural haven. So, without further delay, jump on the historic tram to learn the history, tales and culture of Ōtautahi Christchurch.

Enjoy your free time as you explore the Arts Centre, Quake City Museum, Christchurch Art Gallery, and Botanical Gardens. Ride on the city tram to uncover Christchurch's great history, or relax as you punt on the Avon River. There is also a multitude of delicious cafes tucked into quaint side streets we're sure you will love. If you are in the mood for something different, set off for Akaroa, an 'incroyable' French coastal settlement just an hour and half from the city centre.

Dinner awaits as you join your fellow travellers once again to tell them about the exciting places you have discovered.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Christchurch)

Meals

Breakfast, Dinner

Activities

- Christchurch Tram City Tour
- Group Dinner

Day 10 Christchurch to Punakaiki

The moment has come to experience the world-famous TranzAlpine scenic train journey through the Southern Alps emerging in the West Coast!

On this fantastic escape, you will see epic vistas, soar on the edges of the ice fed Waimakariri River, traverse through the Great Divide, and experience ever changing landscapes. The natural scenery isn't the only



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marvel though. The TranzAlpine passes through the Otira Tunnel, a true engineering marvel of 100 years!

Once you arrive on the West Coast, a private coach will take you even further off the beaten track to Punakaiki, where you will discover the Pancake Rocks. Here you will explore curious limestone formations and blowholes before finishing your day in the historic town of Greymouth.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Lunch on the train

Activities Included

- TranzAlpine Scenic Journey
- Punakaiki Pancake Rock Excursion

Day 11

Greymouth to Franz Josef - West Coast

Explore the West Coast

This morning you'll start your West Coast adventure by visiting one of the South Island's most popular activities – the Treetop Aerial Walkway. This elevated adventure will get you acquainted with the locals – the ancient Rimu and Kamahi trees.

After your sky-high experience, continue south into Glacier Country. Franz Josef Glacier is quite special in that it survives in the warm coastal rainforest temperatures. With a short walk to a viewpoint, you'll get a fantastic view of the vast valley, as well as a sneak peak of Franz Josef Glacier itself. If you would prefer to get up close, we recommend booking an optional helicopter flight. This will ensure you are getting the best possible view of this natural wonder.

After your glacial experience and checking into the hotel, you'll have some free time to enjoy



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Day 12

Franz Josef to Queenstown

Franz Josef town. Indulge in a helicopter flight, nature walk or tap into some natural tranquillity at the local hot pools.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities Included

- West Coast Treetop Aerial Walkway & Café
- Short Nature Walk to Glacier Viewing Point

A Unique Kiwi Style Road Trip

Today you will be exploring the mountainous Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey to Queenstown will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. Marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and stunning glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems.

Emerging on the other side of the pass, explore a local fruit hotspot before exploring the cobblestone streets of the historic goldmining settlement of Arrowtown. After an exciting plunge into the history of this gold rush village, you will arrive in the world-famous resort town of Queenstown!

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (3 Nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities Included

- Scenic coach journey through Haast Pass with stops along the way



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**Day 13
Queenstown**

- Haast Visitors Centre, Mrs Jones' Fruit Stall and Arrowtown Visit

Enjoy a free day to explore everything Queenstown has to offer.

Today we highly recommend you join an excursion to the 8th Wonder of the World - it truly is a remarkable experience. Milford Sounds/ Piopiotahi is a scenic escape approximately three hours from Queenstown. The natural landscape will engulf you as you waltz through plunging valleys and towering peaks.

Take this encounter to the next level by booking a return visit by plane and soar like the Piopio (ancient bird) back to Queenstown. Whether you've decided to hop aboard the steamship lake cruise on the iconic TSS Earnslaw, or marvel at the power of ancient roaring rivers - tonight you have a free evening to indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife. Sip cocktails and indulge in the sparkling views of Lake Wakatipu.

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (3 Nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

Breakfast

The Close of an Adventure of a Lifetime

Queenstown truly has something for everyone. Personalise your day to be as active or relaxed as you'd like. Whether it's exploring Walter Peak on a horse trekking adventure, joining the historic steamship across Lake Wakatipu or sipping wine in Gibbston Valley, there is no shortage of activities to delight your senses. This evening is your 'final hurrah' as you enjoy a farewell dinner. This is the perfect time to reminisce and share photos and phone numbers with your new friends.

**Day 14
Explore Queenstown**



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Day 15
Departing Queenstown

Accommodation

3.5 - 4 Star Accommodation (3 Nights in Queenstown)

Meals

Breakfast, Dinner

Activities

Farewell Dinner

Departing Queenstown

Your journey will end after enjoying a final breakfast with your fellow travellers. Not ready to leave Queenstown? Reach out to our Travel Centre to pre-organise your extended stay.

Meals

Breakfast

Activities

Transfer to airport