

The Great Outdoors 17 days/ 18 nights

Auckland – Taupo – Tongariro National Park –
Christchurch – Lake Tekapo – Wanaka – Queenstown –
Doubtful Sound – Fiordland National Park



Highlights:

Auckland's Wild West Coast
Tongariro National Park
Mackenzie High Country
Wanaka AWD Safari
Dart River
Doubtful Sound overnight cruise
Routeburn Track hike
Kepler Track heli hike



ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Day 1

ARRIVAL AUCKLAND

(-/-/-)

You will be welcomed by a Maori Trails representative upon arrival. Private transfer in luxury vehicle to your selected Auckland City hotel.

The rest of day is at your own leisure to explore the ‘City of Sails’ as Auckland is known.

Auckland



New Zealand’s largest city, also known as Tamaki Makaurau, is consistently rated as one of the most livable cities in the World. Auckland is one of the few cities in the World to have 2 separate bodies of water—the Manukau Harbour on the Tasman Sea and the Waitemata Harbour on the Pacific Ocean, making it the ultimate marine playground.

Auckland’s amazing geography and warm, humid climate has created a unique lifestyle with a vibrant multicultural mix of the region’s cuisine, music, art and culture. Auckland, also known as the “City of Sails”, hosted the 2021 America’s Cup which has added an infusion of exciting new restaurants, bars and hotels. In the stylish precincts of Parnell, Wynyard Quarter, Viaduct Basin and Ponsonby scores of new and trendy restaurants can be found. Auckland is also home to more than 80 vineyards and consequently, wine tasting is popular not only on jet setting Waiheke Island but also on the outskirts of West Auckland in Kumeu.

The rest of day is at your own leisure

Overnight:

Park Hyatt Auckland 5*, King Harbour View Room

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Day 2

AUCKLAND

(B/-/-)



A 30-minute drive from downtown Auckland brings you to the Arataki Centre, the gateway to the rainforest. Enjoy breathtaking panoramic views from the sweeping decks extending from the Tasman Sea to the Pacific Ocean. Your eco-tour includes a guided walk in an area of untamed original rainforest where ancient

Kauri trees tower over the unique trees and plants that have developed separately from the rest of the world for millions of years. Next you will be taken out to the West Coast to enjoy a kiwi-style picnic lunch at a scenic location. After lunch, walk the clifftop tracks with stunning views along the coast and out across the Tasman Sea. Then walk in the regenerating rainforest with giant tree ferns and palm trees growing alongside the picturesque stream to unwind by a spectacular cascading waterfall. Before heading back to Auckland, venture on to an awe-inspiring west coast beach where you can stroll along the soft black sand, watch the surf waves crashing in and feel the clear ocean breeze

Overnight:

Park Hyatt Auckland 5*, King Harbour View Room

Day 3

AUCKLAND – TAUPŌ

(B/-/-)

Private transfer from your hotel to Auckland Airport for your domestic flight to Taupo (domestic flight not included)

Pick up your rental car at Taupo Airport, short self-drive to Taupo township

In the late afternoon, join a **Lake Taupo sunset cruise**

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

At the heart of New Zealand's central volcanic plateau sits the largest freshwater lake in Australasia, Lake Taupo, not only famous for water-skiing, sailing and kayaking but for being the world's largest volcanic crater. Experience a Taupo sunset enjoying a picturesque view of the town by water. Relax with a drink from the bar and listen to some Kiwi classic music before arriving at the carvings to witness an amazing view as the Māori Rock Carvings are lit up by flood lights. A wonderful evening tour with an opportunity to relax and socialize in a beautiful setting. Being a large, comfortable, covered catamaran, this is a great cruise for all weathers



Overnight:

Hilton Lake Taupo 5*, Deluxe Guest Room

Day 4

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK

(B/-/-)

Early morning, scenic self-drive along Lake Taupo up to Tongariro National Park (approx. 1hr).

At National Park Village, meet your guide for today's **Tongariro Alpine Crossing**

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner



Home to three active volcanic mountains, iconic and majestic landscapes, Tongariro National Park is a land of legends. New Zealand's oldest National Park, established in 1887, Tongariro is a dual World Heritage Area. This status recognizes both the park's Māori cultural and spiritual significance and its unique

volcanic features. With wide-open spaces, this is home to one of the world's best one day hikes – the famous Tongariro Alpine Crossing. This privately guided hike offers a majestic landscape of recent resultant volcanic activity and a vast array of colors and textures created by minerals released from within the Earth's crust. The 19km track leads up the saddle between Mt. Ngauruhoe and Mt. Tongariro. The landscape on Tongariro is peppered with different colored and shaped craters that have been active at different periods, scoured volcanic rocks, mountain springs and brightly colored emerald lakes

Difficulty: Good level of fitness required, 19km walk, total walking time 7 hours including stops. Gear can be rented at extra cost

Return to Taupo in the early evening

Overnight:

Hilton Lake Taupo 5*, Deluxe Guest Room

Day 5

TAUPŌ – CHRISTCHURCH

(B/-/-)

Return your rental car at Taupo Airport

Domestic flight Taupo-Christchurch (not included)

Pick up your rental car at Christchurch Airport, short drive to Christchurch downtown

Christchurch & Canterbury

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Christchurch, dubbed the “Garden City” is New Zealand’s third largest city and the largest on the South Island. The city is constantly evolving, filled with cutting-edge architecture alongside some of the oldest buildings in New Zealand. Christchurch has almost completed its rebuild after



the devastating 2010 and 2011 earthquakes and is now one of the newest cities in the world filled with street art, innovative projects and a bustling hospitality scene. The city boasts many parks, rivers and a typically English-style layout of central square and parallel streets. Christchurch is surrounded by mountains, the Canterbury Plains, beautiful coastline, and the Port Hills, which provide a dramatic backdrop to the city.

The surrounding Canterbury regions offers picturesque towns, turquoise lakes, powerful glaciers and the sky-piercing alps of the Mackenzie District and Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park.

The afternoon and evening are at your own in Christchurch

Overnight:

The George Christchurch 5*, Premium Executive Room

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Day 6

BANKS PENINSULA & AKAROA

(B/L/-)



A day tour to **Akaroa**, the only settlement attempted by the French in New Zealand, passes through the beautiful landscapes of the Banks Peninsula. This region was formed following violent eruptions of volcanos over 6 million years ago and the picturesque town of Akaroa itself sits in an

ancient volcano crater. You will travel to Akaroa over the beautiful Banks Peninsula on a high summit route which gives glorious views of farmlands, the Canterbury Plains and the distant Southern Alps as well as remote bays indenting the coastline. From the main wharf in Akaroa boats depart for a Nature Cruise on the harbor. See Hector Dolphins, little blue penguins, fur seals and local bird life. Learn more about the local history from your boat skipper and be awed by the volcanic cliffs that act as sentinels to the harbor entrance. You will have an opportunity to wander around the charming 175 year old French harbor side village of Akaroa with its museum of settler's history, art and craft shops and studios before enjoying lunch at an award winning café. Stops along the way will include, time and weather permitting, Barry's Bay Cheese Factory, Little River Art Gallery and Birdling's Flat.

Overnight:

The George Christchurch 5*, Premium Executive Room

Day 7

CHRISTCHURCH – LAKE TEKAPO

(B/-/-)

Today awaits you one of the most scenic day drives one can take in New Zealand. Leave Christchurch on the “Scenic Inland Route” on State Highway 73 & 77 via Waddington to Windwhistle. Here you travel through rich pastures of crop, dairy and sheep farming land – the patchwork quilt of the Canterbury plains. After Windwhistle, cross the Rakaia River and through the scenic Rakaia Gorge. Make sure to stop for a coffee or lunch in quaint Geraldine with its art and craft shops and home to one of New Zealand’s best cheeseries. Continue on State Highway 79 towards Fairlie. After Fairlie, turn right onto State Highway 8 in direction Lake Tekapo, from here the landscape changes as you ascend towards Mackenzie High Country, home to some of the most evocative hill country in the world. The Mackenzie High Country is different from any other region in New Zealand. Unique weather patterns dry out the soil and grasslands, creating its own desert-like landscape. This is a unique and mystical place of outstanding natural beauty, breathtaking backcountry wilderness, surrounded by the majestic Southern Alps.



In the evening, join an expertly guided **Stargazing tour**. In the heart of the South Island, the sky is so clear and vast that millions of stars seem to appear right before your eyes. In 2012, this area was declared the “Aoraki Mount Cook International Dark Sky Reserve” with light pollution strictly controlled. It is the only one of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, and one of only eight in the world. Within this reserve is New Zealand’s premier astronomical research center, the Mount John

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Observatory. Seeing this sky through a telescope is an experience unlike any other. Immerse yourself in the stunning surrounds, pristine night skies and sophisticated viewing technologies as your expert guide shares the science and stories of our Southern Skies. This activity is weather dependent.



Overnight:

Ranginui Luxury B&B 5*, Suite

Day 8

LAKE TEKAPO – WANAKA

(B/-/-)

Another day of magnificent scenery awaits you on your self-drive to Wanaka. First, take to the skies on the famous **Grand Traverse scenic flight** from Tekapo.

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner



The Grand Traverse is a spectacular scenic flight that explores the Mount Cook and Westland National Parks and shows you the region like no other flight. These flights are operated by modern, company owned Cessna 208B Grand Caravans with only 13 seats, all of them with its own window. Experience

turquoise glacial lakes, golden tussocks and braided river systems of the Mackenzie High Country before overflying remote High Country sheep stations and glacial valleys. Get up close to New Zealand's highest mountains and largest glaciers, including mighty Aoraki Mt Cook and the Tasman Glacier. See the South Island's West Coast including magnificent Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers spilling down the rainforests of the West Coast. Total flight duration approximately 50 minutes.

From the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo, follow State Highway 8 towards Queenstown & Wanaka. You will soon spot the distinctive milky blue waters of Lake Pukaki, Sir Peter Jackson chose this part of the Southern Alps as the setting for 'Lake Town' in 'The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug' as well as backdrop for major location scenes in all Lord of the Rings- and Hobbit movies.



Time permitting, turn off State Highway 8 just after the Visitor Center at Lake Pukaki onto State Highway 80 towards Mt Cook. Stop at “Peter’s lookout” for magnificent views of Mt Cook, New Zealand’s highest mountain at 3724 meters. Return to State Highway 8 and turn right towards Queenstown. Stop at Omarama for a visit to the famous Omarama Clay Cliffs (private land, donations appreciated). These otherworldly formations are made up of layers of gravel and silt, originally formed by the flow from ancient glacier over a million years ago. From Omarama, the road is ascending through the Lindis Valley towards Lindis Pass, one of four major alpine crossings in New Zealand. Descending on the other side, you arrive in Central Otago and you will notice a change in scenery and vegetation. Central Otago is known for its vibrant sky colors as well as hot and dry summers and bitter cold winters. After the small historic settlement of Tarras, turn right onto State Highway 8A and travel along Clutha River. Rejoin State Highway 6 just before Wanaka Airport.

The evening is at your own leisure in Wanaka

Wanaka

Wanaka is one of the favorite holiday places for ‘kiwis’ and, although smaller and quieter than Queenstown, provides an appealing mix of family fun, stunning scenery and a vibrant hospitality scene. Wanaka has the buzz of a genuine alpine resort town and is the ultimate hub for

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

outdoor adventures. Lake Wanaka, at 45 kilometers long and covering 190 square kilometers, is perfect for jet boating, kayaking and trout fishing. Absorb the unstoppable beauty of pristine wilderness and explore nearby Mt Aspiring National Park, one of New Zealand's largest National Parks, Wanaka is the perfect gateway to visit the Southern Alps.



Overnight:

Lime Tree Lodge Wanaka 5*, Black Peak Suite

Day 9

WANAKA

(B/-/-)

After breakfast, scenic one-hour self-drive to the small settlement of Makaroa.

Here meet your team at **Siberia Experience** for a day in the great outdoors of Mt Aspiring National Park.

Experience one of New Zealand's best half-day wilderness adventures that includes a scenic fixed-wing plane, a spectacularly remote hike and a hilarious jet boat ride. Your adventure starts at Makaroa, a scenic 45-minute drive from Wanaka where your pilot will welcome you for a

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

briefing before taking off in a small fixed-wing plane, perfectly suited for mountain flying. Every passenger has a window seat to fully appreciate unobstructed views of the UNESCO World Heritage scenery of Mt Aspiring National Park. This scenic flight will take you over Mt Aspiring National Park into the remote Siberia Valley. After a last turn, you land on a grassy strip in the middle of the mountains. Your pilot will accompany you the beginning of the track and explain you about the walk and the conditions.



From here you will be hiking for a good 2.5 hours through native beech forests, climbing out of Siberia Valley to the highest point on the track. Bird Song is all around you and you will feel a long way from crowds, absorbed into a remote wilderness. Continue down into the Wilkin Valley, walking along the grassy valley floor and surrounded by towering mountain peaks. Here your jet boat pilot will meet you for a thrilling and uniquely scenic 30 minutes jet boat ride back to Makaroa. Speed down the icy braided rivers of the Wilkin and Makaroa rivers. The waters of both rivers are glacial blue and the scenery around you is spectacular. This is a very kiwi experience – very far away from any crowds!

Overnight:

Lime Tree Lodge Wanaka 5*, Black Peak Suite

Day 10

WANAKA

(B/-/-)

Your private nature guide will pick you up after your breakfast for today's **Wild Hills Safari**.

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Climb aboard a comfortable all-terrain 4WD vehicle and experience a taste of Wanaka's spectacular lakeside scenery and insight into authentic farming life. West Wanaka Station (=high country farm) is a 30'000 acres property, otherwise not accessible to the public, and offers some of the finest scenery in New Zealand with a fascinating history both human and natural. Your local expert guide will bring the history, heritage, spectacular scenery and in-depth knowledge of farming practices to life for you. Enjoy leisurely nature walks, freshly brewed coffee and home baking at a very private mountain-top café. Lend a hand with our predator control program by helping check a trapline maintained the farmers. This is probably one of the most genuine and authentic adventures one can experience in New Zealand.



Overnight:

Lime Tree Lodge Wanaka 5*, Black Peak Suite

Day 11

WANAKA – QUEENSTOWN

(B/-/-)

After breakfast, self-drive to Queenstown via the Crown Range Road.



The Crown Range Road is a scenic alternative to State Highway 6 which runs from Wanaka through Kawarau Gorge to Queenstown. Follow the road up to tiny Cardrona, 25km south of Wanaka where gold was discovered in 1862 and today it is one of New Zealand's prime skiing

fields. From here the road twists uphill through bald, mica-studded hills to the tussock high-country of Central Otago. At the 1'076 meters pass, a great viewpoint overlooks Queenstown and Lake Wakatipu, before it switchbacks down towards State Highway 6 to Queenstown. Make sure you stop in Arrowtown, a beautifully restored historic town and easily the best preserved of New Zealand's Chinese communities, erected when gold was found in 1862.

The afternoon and evening is at your own leisure in Queenstown

Queenstown & Central Otago

The alpine resort of Queenstown is exciting, sophisticated and fantastically scenic. Queenstown sits on the shores of crystal clear Lake Wakatipu, one of the clearest and coldest lakes in the world, captivated by the majestic beauty of the surrounding mountains



and rivers. Queenstown has also been dubbed as the Adventure Capital of the world and with this title comes a plethora of adrenaline-inducing, heart stopping and hair-raising activities. The region around

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

Queenstown is characterized by jagged mountains, deep canyons, wild cascading rivers, crystal-clear lakes, rainforest, tussock grassland and fresh mountain air.

Central Otago' scenery is wild and untamed. Barren brown mountains, historic gold mining towns and dry hot summers mixed with frigid winters make Central Otago a commanding forceful land. In the 1860's this was a place of gold but today that gold is wine. Pinot Noir, the most fickle of grape varieties, excels in these southernmost vineyards and most of the wineries offer tastings and guided tours, some are home to world-class fine dining establishments.

Overnight:

Eichardt's Private Hotel Queenstown 5*, Lake View Suite

Day 12

QUEENSTOWN

(B/L/-)

Enjoy a day of personal exploration through one of New Zealand's most spectacular regions; from the history-rich gold rush town of Arrowtown to the vast wilderness of Glenorchy and Paradise. Wander through the historic cobblestoned streets of Arrowtown, a township with a vivid history. From here experience a spectacular drive along the shores of Lake Wakatipu towards Glenorchy, recently recognized as 'one of the most beautiful drives in the world. Stop at the famous Bennet's Bluff



ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

lookout for sweeping views across Lake Wakatipu. After lunch, embark on the exhilarating Dart River jet boat venturing deep into the world-renowned Mount Aspiring National Park. Enjoy a unique combination of breathtaking landscapes and a thrilling ride as you explore the braided, glacier-fed Dart River.

Disembark and your guide will talk you through the region's rich history and Maori legends and wander amongst ancient beech forests. On the way back to Queenstown, take a leisurely stroll around beautiful and historic Bob's Cove.

Overnight:

Eichardt's Private Hotel Queenstown 5*, Lake View Suite

Day 13

QUEENSTOWN

(B/L/-)

Your journey for today's **Lake Alta Hike** begins with a scenic drive up to the Remarkables Ski field; sit back and enjoy panoramic views across Queenstown. You begin your hiking adventure from the ski area base building (1600 meters/5'250 ft) before embarking on a steady climb to Shadow Basin. Traverse across rugged ridge line, through alpine fields and over glacial streams before reaching Lake Alta. Crystal-clear Lake Alta is a pristine glacial lake tucked up in the mountain range, hidden under a thick blanket through winter and has appeared in many movies including Vertical Limit, The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. Take in the tranquility of this remote wilderness and enjoy spectacular views across the Wakatipu Valley and keep an eye out for our local wildlife.

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner



Afternoon and evening at your own leisure in Queenstown

Overnight:

Eichardt's Private Hotel Queenstown 5*, Lake View Suite

Day 14

QUEENSTOWN – DOUBTFUL SOUND

(B/L/D)

Today requires an early start for your drive to Te Anau in the heart of Fiordland National Park.

Follow State Highway 6 south towards Kingston and Invercargill with Lake Wakatipu on your right. The road twists high above Lake Wakatipu with the “Devils Staircase” the most narrow and impressive part of the journey. From Kingston the road passes through rich pastures of dairy and sheep farming land, and more recently for deer farming. Turn onto State Highways 97 and 94 towards Te Anau.

Meet the **Doubtful Sound overnight cruise** team in Te Anau where you can safely park your rental car for the night.

Your adventure starts with a short drive down south from Te Anau to Manapouri. Here you start a cruise across Lake Manapouri, followed by another bus trip over the epic Wilmot Pass through Fiordland's rainforest into the Sound.

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner



At Deep Cave you board your luxury 65 foot (20 meters) vessel with 5 comfortable cabins, your home for the next 20 hours or so. Refreshments and lunch are served as you begin to explore the environs of Doubtful Sound such as Hall Arm, Crooked Arm, Bradshaw Sound and more. Activities include sightseeing and exploring, stops for photos and to observe marine mammals as well as fishing, kayaking or star gazing on clear nights. Dinner is served at one of the overnight anchorages – experience the quiet and peacefulness of the Sound once all other visitors and vessels have left.

Overnight:

Southern Secret Boat, Master Cabin

Day 15

DOUBTFUL SOUND – TE ANAU

(B/-/D)

After a light breakfast, you leisurely cruise back towards Deep Cove and journey back across Wilmot Pass to Lake Manapouri. From here travel back across the lake to Pearl Harbor in Manapouri, followed by a short drive back to Te Anau. Self-drive to Fiordland Lodge Te Anau.

The afternoon and evening are at your own leisure at Fiordland Lodge.

Pre-dinner drinks and gourmet dinner included at Fiordland Lodge.

Overnight:

Fiordland Lodge Te Anau 5*, Deluxe Lodge Room

Day 16

FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK

(B/PL/D)

Start off your day to the epic **Routeburn Track** with one of the most scenic drives in the world – on the famous Milford Sound Road from Te Anau to Divide Shelter. Highlight stops include Lake Te Anau, Eglinton Valley, Lake Marian and Mirror Lakes before arriving at Divide Shelter.



From here, your walk begins with an ascend through lush, temperate rainforest on a well-maintained track. The steady climb takes approximately 2 hours at a leisurely pace. Your expert guide provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the natural and human heritage of Fiordland.

Gaining an elevation of 400 meters, you emerge from the forest into the alpine environment with panoramic views of high snowy peaks, alpine lakes and deep bush clad valleys.

On a fine day, lunch is on the summit amidst the alpine tarns and in unfavorable conditions in the shelter of a nearby tramping hut. After

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner

lunch you have the option to take a walk down the Greenstone Valley or to Earland Falls, before returning to the Divide Shelter. Return to Te Anau by later afternoon.

Difficulty: A reasonable level of fitness and walking ability is required due to the 400 meters ascend and descent, 10km walk, walking time 4-5 hours

Pre-dinner drinks and gourmet dinner included at Fiordland Lodge.

Overnight:

Fiordland Lodge Te Anau 5*, Deluxe Lodge Room

Day 17

FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK

(B/PL/D)

Today's **Kepler Track heli hike** adventure begins with a short helicopter flight over scenic Lake Te Anau, beech forest and alpine vistas to Luxmore Hut on the Kepler Track. From this Department of Conservation hut, you explore the alpine tussock fields and enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding Fiordland mountains.

You have the opportunity of ascending all the way to the top of Mount Luxmore, weather and time permitting.

Your expert guide provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the natural and human heritage of Fiordland. After time in the alpine area, hike down the mountain on the well-formed Kepler Track.

ITINERARY:

B-Breakfast/L-Lunch/D-Dinner



The track descends through mountain and silver beech forest and passes under towering limestone bluffs to the sandy beach of Brod Bay, the pick-up point for the rewarding water taxi trip back to Te Anau. Return to Te Anau by late afternoon.

Difficulty: Medium level of fitness required, 800 meters descent, 8km walk, total walking time 5-6 hours.

Overnight:

Fiordland Lodge Te Anau 5*, Deluxe Lodge Room

Day 17

TE ANAU - QUEENSTOWN DEPARTURE

(B/-/-)

After breakfast, self-drive back to Queenstown Airport for your international flight back home (or individual extension)