

South Island Spectacular

14 DAYS SOUTH ISLAND
FROM £1,925



The South Island deserves its own tour, so much is there to see and do. From the action-packed adventure playground of Queenstown to the remote tranquility of Milford Sound, and the majestic peaks of the Southern Alps, this is a memorable journey through some of New Zealand's most iconic landscapes

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPERIENCE

A guided heli-hike into the dramatic alpine landscape of Franz Josef Glacier

Blow your mind with a visit to Puzzle World in Wanaka

A vintage steamship cruise on Lake Wakatipu

A cricket match at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch

Walking along the Matukituki Valley to discover views of the Rob Roy Glacier

A memorable visit to Milford Sound, one of the most beautiful sights in New Zealand

A scenic railway journey through the Taieri Gorge from Dunedin

New Zealand's French colony at Akaroa

Whale watching from Kaikoura by boat or from the air

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Christchurch

We meet your flight and transfer you to your hotel: the rest of the day is free for you to relax or explore.

Day 2 Christchurch to Greymouth to Hokitika

Board the TranzAlpine train for one of the world's great rail journeys, across the Southern Alps, over Arthur's Pass and down to the West Coast. This scenic route requiring numerous viaducts and tunnels was an engineering triumph when it was completed in 1923.

Collect your rental vehicle at the railway station and take an afternoon drive down the rugged West Coast to Hokitika. This gold-mining-era town still has a frontier feel: open artists' workshops offer carved jade and other Maori crafts.

Day 3 Hokitika to Fox Glacier

Travel into Westland National Park, which extends from the surf-pounded beaches of the West Coast to the stunning snow-capped Southern Alps. Head into the native rainforest of the Westland National Park through the settlement of Franz Josef to Fox Glacier Village. Many of our travellers book a thrilling helicopter flight (weather permitting) to fly over the rivers of ice and land on a snow-field.

Day 4 Fox Glacier to Wanaka

Make a morning visit to Lake Matheson, where a clear day rewards you with superb reflections of the Mount Cook range. Continue south through the ever-changing scenery of native rainforest, bush-fringed lakes, crystal clear mountain streams and wild beaches into the rugged beauty of the Haast Pass to cross the Southern Alps mountain range. Travel around the shores of glacial Lakes Hawea and Wanaka into the charming township of Wanaka.

Day 5 Wanaka

Explore the lake on a cruiser or kayak. Take a self-guided hike along the Matukituki Valley or drive to Glendhu Bay for beautiful views. For a natural high, there are jet-boat thrills and sky-diving trips. Relax in the evening at Cinema Paradiso, a classic movie theatre with an interesting choice of seating!

Day 6 Wanaka to Queenstown

An easy drive today over the Crown Range through orchards and farmlands to Queenstown. This is South Island's busiest resort for good reason: it is the country's adventure playground, and now offers a huge choice of exciting activities. From winter ski through summer activities to autumn grape harvests, Queenstown is a year-round destination with something for everyone.

Day 7 Queenstown

A free day to explore as you wish! Hire a bike to pedal a section of the National Cycle Trail, or take a scenic cruise on the steamship *TSS Earnslaw*. Bungee jumping and white-water rafting are two of the hair-raising thrills that local operators offer. Or walk by the lake, take a cable car up to the Skyline restaurant for lunch and a wine-tasting tour in the afternoon: it's up to you.



Day 8 Queenstown to Milford to Te Anau

It is almost impossible to visit South Island and not make the pilgrimage to Milford Sound, one of the most remotely beautiful places in the world. Most visitors opt for a coach trip, to avoid the challenging drive deep into Fiordland National Park. The easiest way to appreciate the jaw-dropping scenery and natural beauty is from a boat out to Mitre Peak and the mouth of the Sound onto the Tasman Sea, a narrow opening missed by Captain Cook almost 250 years ago! On your return, overnight at Te Anau.

Day 9 Te Anau to Dunedin

Roll through New Zealand's sheep country to Dunedin. Founded by the Scots, given the Gaelic name for Edinburgh, this stone city has some striking buildings: our favourite is the exuberant Railway Station with its decorative tiles. Real ale drinkers will enjoy a tour of Speights Brewery.

Day 10 Otago Wildlife Excursions

New Zealand has some extraordinary wildlife and just outside the city, the Otago Peninsula provides the opportunity to see Royal Albatross on their only mainland nesting site. Nearby you may see yellow-eyed penguins, fur seals and sea lions!

Day 11 Dunedin to Mount Cook to Twizel

Time to head along the coast road, pausing at the 65-million-year-old Moeraki Boulders. Turn inland to Mt Cook National Park and take a short walk to Kea Point, or further along the Hooker Valley for wonderful views of New Zealand's highest mountain. Overnight in the country township of Twizel.



Day 12 Twizel to Christchurch

We challenge you to drive past the Church of the Good Shepherd at Lake Tekapo without stopping for a photo! The intense blue of the lake is thanks to its glacial waters. Cross the Canterbury Plains towards Christchurch and on arrival, drop your rental vehicle at the downtown depot.

Day 13 Christchurch

Pre-earthquake features that earned Christchurch its label as the most English city outside of England remain, including punts on the River Avon and the Botanic Gardens. But the city is changing almost every day with new buildings, like the amazing 'cardboard' Cathedral, while bars and restaurants pop up almost over-night – ask us for a recommendation for your final evening in New Zealand. Possible day trips to Kaikoura, or Akaroa.

Day 14 Depart Christchurch

After breakfast we transfer you by private car to Christchurch airport for your flight home.



ACCOMMODATION

We arrange accommodation that balances quality with location and that we have seen for ourselves. We favour a 4-star central hotel in Christchurch, with a mix of independent hotels and charming B&Bs elsewhere. Should our preferred accommodation be unavailable, we reserve the right to book an alternative and adjust the tour price up or down accordingly. If you prefer to stay at boutique hotels and unique lodges, please ask us to quote for a luxury version of this itinerary.

GUIDE PRICES

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| LOW SEASON (May-Sep) | from £1,925 |
| SHOULDER SEASON (Oct-mid Dec, Apr) | from £2,049 |
| PEAK SEASON (mid Dec-Mar) | from £2,185 |

These prices EXCLUDE flights and stopovers, which start at £1,100 (see page 21). Single supplements apply: prices on request.

- Prices are per person based on two travelling/sharing including
- Meet & greet at Christchurch airport
 - Private transfer to your Christchurch hotel
 - 13 nights' accommodation in quality hotels and B&Bs
 - Breakfast each day
 - Intermediate car hire with unlimited kilometres & daily insurance
 - TranzAlpine rail journey over Southern Alps

1. Soft pedalling, Queenstown
2. Wanaka River Journeys
3. Whale watching, Kaikoura
4. Fly fishing, the South Island
5. Dunedin Railway Station