

Southern Highlights and Milford Track Guided Walk

Starting and finishing in Christchurch this tour allows time to self explore the tracks and trails of Mt. Cook National Park before venturing south and embarking on the world famous Milford Track Guided Walk. This fully guided and supported 4 day hike is with Ultimate Hikes and you spend the evenings in the wonderfully equipped lodges. From Queenstown head north to the West Coast and the glacier region before returning to Christchurch on board the Tranz Alpine Scenic Train.

Starts in: Christchurch
Finishes in: Christchurch
Length: 14days / 13nights
Accommodation: Hotel 4 star
Can be customised: Yes

This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

Includes: Late model rental cars

Includes: Unlimited kms

Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees

Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)

Included activity: Private transfer Christchurch International Airport to your accommodation

Included activity: Milford Track Guided Walk Day 5 - Milford Sound to Queenstown

Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch Train Station to your accommodation

Included activity: Milford Track 5 Day/4 Night Guided Walk

: Meals included: 13 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 4 dinners

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: GPS navigation

Includes: Additional drivers

Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Included activity: Private transfer accommodation to Christchurch Airport

Included activity: Milford Track Guided Walk - Day 1 - Queenstown to Glade House

Day 1



Private transfer Christchurch International Airport to your accommodation

On arrival, you will be met by a private driver and transferred to your Christchurch accommodation.

Welcome to Christchurch City

Christchurch New Zealand's garden city is steadily being transformed into a vibrant urban destination. Encompassing a large green belt, it is known for its wide tree lined avenues and lush gardens. A great way to explore the city or easy way to see the sights or ride the historic trams across town to the renowned botanic gardens and the unique cardboard Transitional Cathedral, that's right it is built of cardboard!

Your accommodation: The George Hotel

The George is the essence of supreme comfort. The award-winning 5 star hotel is opposite Hagley Park and just a few minutes stroll from the Botanic Gardens. It also has an award-winning restaurant, 50 Bistro onsite.



Day 2



Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Christchurch to Aoraki Mt Cook National Park

Today you'll drive through the heart of the South Island, crossing the vast Canterbury plains. Catch your breath in Geraldine before continuing through Fairlie. Ascending Burkes pass you'll come to the picturesque lakeside town of Tekapo.

Follow the road and take in the view of Aoraki Mt Cook (New Zealand's tallest mountain) from the shores of Lake Pukaki, known for its glacier fed turquoise blue colour. Continue along the lake to your final destination Mt Cook Village.

Your accommodation: Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium

The Hermitage Hotel ringed by magnificent snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps, is a world-renowned tourist destination and has been an icon of superior accommodation and dining since 1884.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park

At 3754 metres Aoraki-Mt Cook is New Zealand's highest mountain, located deep in the heart of the Southern Alps. From the Visitor Centre at the southern end of Lake Pukaki, you will be rewarded with magnificent views of this immense peak. As well as its impressive beauty, Mt Cook National Park is also home to a huge range of awe-inspiring sights and activities. Take to the air with Mt Cook Ski Planes for a scenic flight that includes a glacier landing. At around 27 kilometres long the Tasman Glacier is New Zealand's longest and a Glacier Explorers tour will give you the opportunity to see its unique features.

There are many short hikes in and around the park and these are well signposted. Those with an interest in the night sky should take a stargazing tour with the Hermitage Hotel. The region is considered to have one of the clearest night skies in the world and is one of the few gold-rated dark sky reserves worldwide.

The Hermitage Hotel complex offers fine dining, multiple cafes and a bar. Due to the remote location of the property, there are no shops and limited supplies at Mt Cook Village. Visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre for insight into this region's mountain climbing history. You'll also learn of Sir Ed's incredible achievements and his dedication to helping others around the world.

The Hooker Valley Track is an iconic track that offers one of the best day hikes in New Zealand. The trail winds through the Hooker Valley, passing swinging bridges, glacier-fed rivers, and offering breathtaking views of Aoraki/Mount Cook and its surrounding peaks. The Kea Point track is an easy walking track offering stunning views of the Mueller Glacier terminal lake and Aoraki/Mount Cook. Suitable for all ages and fitness levels, it's a great option for those looking for a shorter hike with incredible scenery.

Walking tracks in and around Aoraki / Mt. Cook National Park

There are many short scenic walks beginning in and around the Mt Cook Village, suitable for all ages and abilities. Located within the Mount Cook Village is the Department of Conservation information centre, where updates on the track conditions and suitability is available as well as information on the history of the area and its wildlife.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Glacier Explorers Mt. Cook

Experience 500 year old icebergs up-close on the Mt Cook terminal lake. The Glacier Explorers tour is the only one of its kind in New Zealand and one of only three in the world! Very few glaciers terminate into lakes and even fewer of them are accessible. See towering ice cliffs and floating icebergs from the safety of a specially designed boat. These boats provide a safe way to view unseen and inaccessible areas of New Zealand's largest glacier The Tasman.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Glacier Highlights - Scenic Flight with Glacier Landing

Take in the spectacular Southern Alps, including New Zealand's highest peak Aoraki Mount Cook and the constantly changing glacial landscape. See the Hochstetter Icefall as you fly beneath the face of Mount Cook then along the length of the Tasman glacier before landing on the glacier itself. Experience the silence of the mountains, broken only by the rumbling of an avalanche and creaking of the snow and ice beneath your feet. You'll take off again for another incredible flight over peaks, ice falls, alpine lakes and climbing huts. This flight offers fantastic close up views of Aoraki Mount Cook, Mt Tasman and the Southern Alps from Aoraki Mount Cook National Park.

Your accommodation: Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium

The Hermitage Hotel ringed by magnificent snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps, is a world-renowned tourist destination and has been an icon of superior accommodation and dining since 1884.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Aoraki Mt Cook National Park to Queenstown

Leaving the alpine region of Aoraki Mt Cook, you'll travel through the lakeside town of Twizel, then a little further to Omarama the gliding capital of New Zealand. Continue on over the Lindis Pass, one of New Zealand's highest roads with a summit of 971 metres. Arrive in the quaint village of Tarras, then continue on a short way to the historic Bendigo Reserve, one of Otago's original gold mining settlements.

Follow the road to Cromwell, and keep going through the sheer cliffs of the Kawarau Gorge towards Gibbston, one of New Zealand's premier wine growing regions. See the historic Kawarau Bridge where you can bungy jump or relax and watch others take the plunge. Approaching Queenstown, the Remarkables mountain range comes into view as you arrive into the adventure capital of New Zealand.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown

Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Explore Queenstown

Well-known as New Zealand's 'adventure capital', Queenstown is home to a range of adventures, from the world's first and most famous bungy jumps to jet boat thrills, white-water rafting, and skydiving. However, Queenstown offers far more than a fast-paced, action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of beautiful Lake Wakatipu beneath a soaring panorama of the Remarkables Mountain Range, this alpine town is surrounded by many historic, gastronomic, and scenic wonders. Take a stroll through the beautiful lakefront parks and gardens, browse through market stalls on weekends, dine in wonderful al-fresco restaurants, or ride on the 100-year-old historic Steamship - TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station. Take the Queenstown Gondola up to Bob's Peak and soak up the panoramic views of the magnificent lake and mountain ranges. And after all of that, if you do want the adrenaline rush, Queenstown is known for taking your pick from the Shotover Jet, Canyon Swing, Zipline, Luge, or Heli-hike.

Milford Track Guided Walk Briefing

Please check in at 2:45pm on the day prior to your walk for a group pre-track briefing. The briefing is held at the Ultimate Hikes Centre, Ground Floor, The Station Building, Duke Street Entrance, Queenstown. At the briefing, you will have the opportunity to confirm your dietary, medical information, and emergency contact details. You will be able to pick up any gear you need or purchase any last-minute items. The customer service staff will also give you an overview of what to expect while you are on track. If you cannot make the pre-track briefing, please contact Reservations on +64 3 450 1940 or info@ultimatehikes.co.nz as soon as possible.

Leave your vehicle at your Queenstown accommodation

This evening leave your rental car keys with the reception at your accommodation. Make sure you take any items with you and that the car fuel tank is full. The next morning Europcar staff will collect the rental car from your accommodation.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Shotover Canyon River Jet Boat Adventure

Riding the iconic 'Big Red' Jet Boat through the narrow Shotover Canyon is an exhilarating experience not to be missed. Your skilled jet boat driver pushes the boat to 85 kph, skimming across shallow water and past towering canyon walls. This 25 minute white water ride includes 360 degree spins and maximum thrills.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown

Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 6



Milford Track 5 Day/4 Night Guided Walk

Traversing the heart of New Zealand's wild fjord country, the Milford Track has long been described as "the finest walk in the world". Since Quintin Mackinnon pioneered the route in 1888, everyone from hardened trekkers to novices sporting their first pair of boots has taken up the challenge of the Milford Track.

The Fiordland National Park is the cornerstone of the Te Wahipounamu Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area. Enjoy close encounters with the native birdlife: the Robin; Kea; Weka; Fantail; Parakeet; Bellbird; even Kiwi have been spotted! Walkers on the track to Milford Sound encounter Fiordland at its most spectacular: deep lakes; silent fjords; luxuriant forest and sheer canyons carved out of imposing granite define this landscape. On fine days there is a postcard shot around every corner, but only when it rains and torrents of water cascade down the mountainsides have you truly experienced the magic of the Milford Track.

The Milford Track Guided Walk is a 5 day / 4 nights Queenstown to Queenstown all-inclusive guided walk through the heart of Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound. The package includes all transport, accommodation, meals, snacks, backpacks and rain jackets. Accommodation is in lodges and you will be led by expert Ultimate Hikes guides.

Milford Track Guided Walk - Day 1 - Queenstown to Glade House

The coach departs from the Ultimate Hikes Centre in Queenstown. Please arrive by 9.15am to meet your guides and board the coach for the two hour drive to Te Anau. We will have lunch in Te Anau before travelling on to Te Anau Downs, where a boat will take you up to the start of the track at the northern end of Lake Te Anau. It's a short walk to the historic Glade House, where you will be greeted with afternoon tea and shown to your room. Your guides will take you on a nature walk in the afternoon to give you an idea of the terrain and the environment you will be walking. In the evening, you'll have time to get to know your group over dinner.

Your accommodation: Milford Track Lodges

Milford Track Lodges have been purpose designed and built, with everything right down to the last nail flown in by helicopter! The result is sheer indulgence in the last place you would expect it. All lodges have drying rooms, flush toilets and hot showers complete with soap, shampoo, conditioner and even hairdryers. A full kitchen treats you with a three course dinner and cooked breakfast or enjoy a drink from the bar before dinner

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 7



Day 2 - Glade House to Pompolona

Your first full day of walking begins by crossing the Clinton River bridge. The smooth track follows the river up the valley to the Hirere Falls lunch shelter. Take a side walk to the wetlands, a complex eco-system unique to this section of track. After lunch look out for your first glimpse of Omanui/McKinnon Pass in the distance. You'll stay in the beech forest, until you come out onto the Prairie & detour down to soak your feet in Prairie Lake. From this meadow you can capture the true nature of the ice-carved Clinton Canyon. From here, it's a short climb to Pompolona Lodge. Today's walk is 16 km (10 miles) and takes 5-7 hours.

Your accommodation: Milford Track Lodges

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Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8



Milford Track Guided Walk Day 3 - Pompolona Lodge to Quintin Lodge

From Pompolona Lodge the track leads up to Lake Mintaro at the head of the Clinton Valley, before climbing the Omanui/McKinnon Pass in a series of zig-zags. Take your time and enjoy the views. At the top you can rest at McKinnon memorial before passing the highest point and stopping for lunch in Pass Hut overlooking the Clinton Valley. The descent into the Arthur Valley is steep and uneven so take care and use poles. Viewing platforms give you a great view of the Cascades waterfalls. Quintin Lodge is a welcome sight at the bottom of the Pass. Take a short break to revive with a drink and a snack then we highly recommend doing the optional 90-minute round trip to Sutherland Falls, at 580m/1904ft it is one of the highest in the world and well worth seeing. Today's hike is 15 km (9 miles) and takes 6-8 hours.

Your accommodation: Milford Track Lodges

Milford Track Lodges have been purpose designed and built, with everything right down to the last nail flown in by helicopter! The result is sheer indulgence in the last place you would expect it. All lodges have drying rooms, flush toilets and hot showers complete with soap, shampoo, conditioner and even hairdryers. A full kitchen treats you with a three course dinner and cooked breakfast or enjoy a drink from the bar before dinner

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 9



Day 4 - Quintin to Mitre Peak Lodge via Sandfly Point

Your final day on the track is the longest section at 21km. You'll walk down the Arthur Valley to the historic Boatshed. After a short break and a hot drink, the track continues on past MacKay Falls through lush beech forest to the lunch spot at Giants Gate waterfall. The final stretch of the track follows tranquil Lake Ada to Sandfly Point. From Sandfly Point it is a short boat trip across the renowned Milford Sound; the fjord often referred to as the eighth wonder of the world. Mitre Peak, the famously photographed pinnacle rises almost sheer from the Sound to a height of 1692m (5551ft). At Mitre Peak Lodge, relax in the bar enjoying the view, before sitting down to a celebratory dinner. Today enjoy 21km (13 miles) 6-8 hours of walking.

Your accommodation: Milford Track Lodges

Milford Track Lodges have been purpose designed and built, with everything right down to the last nail flown in by helicopter! The result is sheer indulgence in the last place you would expect it. All lodges have drying rooms, flush toilets and hot showers complete with soap, shampoo, conditioner and even hairdryers. A full kitchen treats you with a three course dinner and cooked breakfast or enjoy a drink from the bar before dinner

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 10



Day 5 - Mitre Peak Lodge to Te Anau and Queenstown

This morning after breakfast we'll take you on a cruise on Milford Sound. Watch for dolphins and fur seals and, if the waterfalls are in full flow, you'll have seen Fiordland at its very best! Following the cruise it's time to head back to Queenstown. The coach trip follows the scenic Milford Road through Homer Tunnel and on to Te Anau, where there will be a short break before the last leg of the journey to Queenstown. Lunch will be eaten along the way.

Your accommodation: Millennium Hotel Queenstown

Right in the heart of the action, the Millennium Hotel is just minutes from Queenstown's central shopping and entertainment district. Outdoor activities such as bungy jumping, white water rafting and jet boating are just some of the easily accessible activities nearby in New Zealand's adventure capital.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 11



Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Queenstown to Franz Josef Glacier via Wanaka

From Queenstown you'll cross the Crown Range, the highest sealed road in New Zealand to arrive in the Alpine town of Wanaka, gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park. Skirting the shores of both Lake Wanaka and Hawea, you will enter the small town of Makarora. Stop at Blue Pools for a 1-hour return walk through the native beech forest to a glacier-fed swimming hole. Continue on through the remote seaside settlement of Haast before heading up the wild West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beaches occasionally. Paringa Salmon Farm is worth a stop to stretch your legs, feed the fish, and stop for lunch and refreshments. Keep heading North and be sure to enjoy the view of the ever-changing towering snowcapped Southern Alps Mountain Range. Fox Glacier welcomes you first, then comes your destination for the night Franz Josef township.

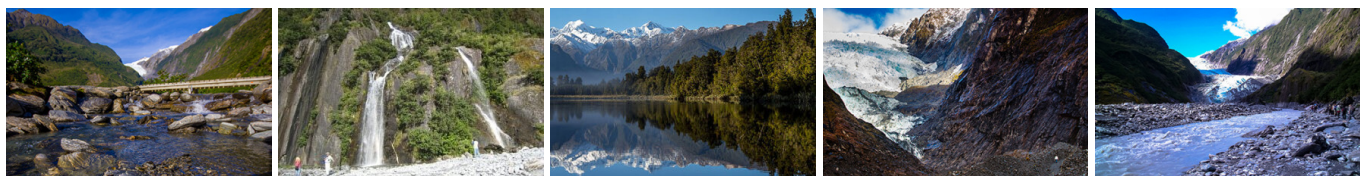
Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier

Only a breath away from the Franz Josef Glacier, Scenic Hotel is located in the heart of Franz Josef Village. Here you will find all of the amenities you would expect, as well as being close to the shops, restaurants and activities on offer in the beautiful Westland region.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12



Explore Franz Josef

Franz Josef is a small but lively town in the heart of the West Coast, known for its 12 km long glacier. Surrounded by lush rainforest-clad mountains the township has a vibrant and bustling atmosphere. To see the ice from a viewpoint you can walk along the valley floor to the viewpoint below the terminal face. However, to go on the glacier itself you must take a licensed helicopter tour.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

Take a spectacular scenic flight over two of New Zealand's most famous glaciers. Land at the head of one and view the incredible sight of this frozen river as it winds its way through ancient carved valleys. Should weather not be suitable to take this flight you are able to transfer your booking onto a similar tour on any of the Helicopter Line's operations in Queenstown or Mt Cook.

Your accommodation: Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier

Only a breath away from the Franz Josef Glacier, Scenic Hotel is located in the heart of Franz Josef Village. Here you will find all of the amenities you would expect, as well as being close to the shops, restaurants and activities on offer in the beautiful Westland region.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 13



Franz Josef to Greymouth Train Station

Today head north along the mighty West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild coast beach occasionally. Whataroa is the next town where you can see one of the world's rarest birds, the New Zealand white heron or Kotuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve, and guided tours from October to March will take you there. Ross is the site of an old gold mining town and some of the old buildings and workings remain. In fact, Ross is still home to one of the few working gold mines left in New Zealand and the local information center offers you the chance to pan for gold. Hokitika is a great place to explore craft and gift stores and head to the coast and take in the endless sea views. The Jade or Greenstone on offer in Hokitika is probably some of the best you will see in the country. The Hokitika Gorge is located 45 minutes inland and offers turquoise waters flowing through a narrow gorge. A great short walk will deliver you to this piece of paradise. Continue on to Greymouth, the largest town on the West Coast and the starting point for the next leg of your journey the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Drop your rental car at the Greymouth Train Station depot located at the train station building before boarding your train to Christchurch.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Greymouth to Christchurch

Considered one of the world's great train journeys, the TranzAlpine Scenic Train takes you from Greymouth to Christchurch. You'll travel across the South Island from the west to the east coast through Arthur's Pass National Park. From the comfort of your carriage see lush beech forest, deep river valleys and the spectacular peaks of the Southern Alps. Descend to the windswept Canterbury Plains before arriving in the city of Christchurch.

Private Transfer Christchurch Train Station to your accommodation

On arrival at the Christchurch train station, you will be met by a private driver and transferred to your accommodation.

Your accommodation: The George Hotel

The George is the essence of supreme comfort. The award-winning 5 star hotel is opposite Hagley Park and just a few minutes stroll from the Botanic Gardens. It also has an award-winning restaurant, 50 Bistro onsite.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 14



Private transfer accommodation to Christchurch Airport

A private transfer will collect you from your accommodation and transfer you to Christchurch Airport in time for your departing flight.

Farewell from New Zealand

Bid farewell to New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	South Island Self Drive
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	14
Accommodation:	Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	All breakfasts
Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	Private train station transfers
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Greymouth to Christchurch
Includes	Milford Track Guided Walk with Ultimate Hikes

Accommodation summary

Day 1	The George Hotel
Day 2	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 3	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 4	Millennium Hotel Queenstown
Day 5	Millennium Hotel Queenstown
Day 6	Milford Track Lodges
Day 7	Milford Track Lodges
Day 8	Milford Track Lodges
Day 9	Milford Track Lodges
Day 10	Millennium Hotel Queenstown
Day 11	Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier
Day 12	Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier
Day 13	The George Hotel