

Mount Cook Lily

14 DAYS SOUTH ISLAND
FROM £3,420



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This escorted tour squeezes more jaw-dropping scenery into two weeks than any other! The South Island has an unparalleled variety of landscapes from the majestic Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers, to the stunning views across Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown, to the Remarkable Mountains, plus the wilderness of Fiordland.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Wellington

Haere mai – welcome! We greet you on arrival and take you to your hotel. Today you are free to explore. Depending on your interests, we suggest a stroll along Oriental Parade, or a city tour (at own cost) to pack more in!

James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor, Wellington

Day 2 Wellington to Nelson

Enjoy one of the most beautiful ferry journeys in the world. From the South Island port of Picton it's a short drive into Sauvignon country, so we pause at a Marlborough winery for a tasting session, before arriving in Nelson.

Heritage Rutherford Hotel, Nelson (2 nights)

Day 3 Abel Tasman National Park YOUR CHOICE

This pristine wilderness of hidden coves and bush-clad ranges is best explored by boat and on foot. Choose one of these options:

Scenic Cruise: 3-4 hours (no walking) – The morning cruise reveals the golden sands and turquoise waters of Anchorage, Bark Bay, Tonga Quarry, Awaroa and Totaranui Beach, plus Split Apple Rock and (we hope) fur seals. Return to Nelson for a free afternoon.

Astrolabe Beaches & Bays (plus 2.5 hour walk) – After the Scenic Cruise, disembark at Apple Tree Bay for a self-guided walk (7 kms) to fabulous Anchorage Beach. Late afternoon shuttle transfer to Nelson.

Forest & Swing-Bridge (plus 4 hour walk) – After the Scenic Cruise, disembark at Medlands Beach for a self-guided hike (10.5 kms) to Anchorage Beach: highlights include South Head lookout, Falls River swing-bridge and Cleopatra's Pool. Shuttle transfer to Nelson.

Day 4 Nelson to Punakaiki

We travel through Nelson Lakes National Park to the shores of Lake Rotoiti, then follow the gold-miners' route, crossing the Buller River Gorge by single-track bridges. Emerging onto the west coast, we marvel at Punakaiki's Pancake Rocks: limestone stacks weathered by the stormy Tasman Sea.

Punakaiki Resort, Punakaiki

Day 5 Punakaiki to Fox Glacier

The Great Coast Road – one of the world's 10 most scenic coastal drives – is our route today, to Hokitika, where there's the chance to browse excellent art and craft galleries, and on to Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers. These rivers of ice flow down almost to sea level and (weather permitting) there's time for an optional (at own cost) helicopter trip to see them at closer quarters!

Distinction Hotel, Fox Glacier

Day 6 Fox Glacier to Wanaka

A stroll beside Lake Matheson may be rewarded by a fabulous photo of Mount Cook mirrored in its waters. Then head over the Haast Pass through Mt Aspiring National Park to Lake Wanaka – for many South Islanders, their favourite spot for R&R.

Edgewater Resort, Wanaka (2 nights)

Day 7 Wanaka YOUR CHOICE

Nature lovers may take a **lake cruise to a conservation island with an eco-guide** to discover native birds like the flightless Buff Weka OR you can choose to enjoy a **scenic 4WD adventure to a high country farm** above the lake.



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Day 8 Wanaka to Te Anau

Drive over the Crown Range to charming Arrowtown, a gold rush village, then down the eastern shore of spectacular Lake Wakatipu to Te Anau: gateway to Fiordland National Park.

Distinction Hotel Luxmore, Te Anau

Day 9 Te Anau to Milford Sound to Queenstown

We follow river gorges through a wilderness of ancient rain forests and arrive at Milford Sound. Our small ship cruise takes us past Mitre Peak towards the Sound's opening into the Tasman Sea. In a tour packed with scenic journeys, today's is unforgettable!

Scenic Suites, Queenstown (2 nights)

Day 10 Queenstown

What a stunning resort! Sophisticated Queenstown and Lake Wakatipu are yours to enjoy. The choice of optional experiences (at own cost) is awesome: zip-line, jet-boat and bungee thrills, with a gondola glide to Bob's Peak, a cruise on *TSS Earnslaw*, wine-tasting or walking more relaxing ideas!

Day 11 Queenstown to Mt Cook to Twizel

Leaving Queenstown by the Kawarau Gorge we cross Central Otago and drive beside Lake Pukaki into the Southern Alps to get as close to Aoraki Mount Cook as is possible by road.

Mackenzie Country Hotel, Twizel



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Day 12 Twizel to Rural Canterbury

Drop in on a local home and learn all about Pavlova – a real Kiwi dessert! Enjoy a slice and drink in views of Lake Tekapo with your cup of tea, before visiting the Church of the Good Shepherd on the lake shore. Crossing the tussock plains to Ashburton, you have a choice of accommodation tonight.

Accommodation YOUR CHOICE

EITHER spend the night in a local hotel with dinner 'on us' in the restaurant OR taste Kiwi hospitality on a rural Homestay: take a tour of the property, enjoy a home-cooked dinner and talk to your hosts about anything from rugby to farming before a night in their guest room.

Day 13 Ashburton to Christchurch

We cross the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch – and what better way to see this most English of New Zealand cities than from a punt steered by an Edwardian-era boatman on the River Avon? Then we take a trip on a heritage tram through a city re-inventing itself after the 2010/11 earthquakes, with exciting buildings like the 'cardboard' Cathedral. Tonight we come together for a farewell dinner.

Distinction Hotel, Christchurch

Day 14 Depart Christchurch

After breakfast we transfer you to Christchurch airport or, if we are making additional arrangements for you, set you on the next stage of your trip of a lifetime. Haere ra!

EXPERIENCES INCLUDED

- Scenic Interislander Ferry journey across the Cook Strait
- Wine tasting at one of Marlborough's premier wineries
- Cruise the turquoise waters of Abel Tasman National Park
- Visit world-famous Pancake Rocks and blowholes at Punakaiki
- See native birds on a conservation island – OR – take a scenic 4WD adventure in Wanaka
- Explore the historic gold rush village of Arrowtown
- Cruise, with a picnic lunch, on the breathtaking Milford Sound
- Enjoy true Kiwi hospitality with morning tea at a local home on the shores of Lake Tekapo
- Relax as you're guided along Christchurch's Avon River on an authentic Edwardian punt



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- 1. Milford Sound
- 2. Wellington
- 3. Mount Cook Lily
- 4. On the beach, Abel Tasman National Park
- 5. Moreaki Boulders