



b) **Walking Option 1: Astrolabe Beaches and Bays (7km, 2.5 hour walk)** After the Full Park Scenic Cruise, disembark at Apple Tree Bay for a self-guided walk to fabulous Anchorage Beach. Late afternoon shuttle transfer back to Nelson.

c) **Walking Option 2: Forest and Swing-Bridge (10.5km, 4 hour walk)** After the Full Park Scenic Cruise, disembark at Medlands Beach for a rewarding and varied self-guided walk to Anchorage Beach including the scenic highlights of the South Head lookout, the famous Falls River swing-bridge and Cleopatra's Pool. Late afternoon shuttle transfer back to Nelson.

DAY 6 • NELSON TO PUNAKAIKI (B)

Driving via the Nelson Lakes National Park - an enchanting alpine landscape of rugged peaks, forests, stunning glacial lakes and the beginning of the awe-inspiring Southern Alps make a stop at the quaint village of Saint Arnaud on the shores of Lake Rotoiti. Turn inland to follow the Buller River Gorge - one of the world's best but least-known scenic drives, carved out of the forest by 19th century prospectors, it follows the deep river gorge, often crossing it on single-track bridges. Emerging from the forest the road hugs the coastline south to the small settlement of Punakaiki - renowned for its wild, rugged coastline and the famous 'Pancake Rocks' - these stratified limestone stacks are an extraordinary monument of nature. *Punakaiki Resort, Punakaiki*

DAY 7 • PUNAKAIKI TO FOX GLACIER (B)

Journey south along the Great Coast Road which was recently voted one of the top ten coastal drives in the world by Lonely Planet. Pass through historic towns reaching Hokitika and its galleries specialising in pounamu

(greenstone) jewellery and art works. Stretch your legs at the dramatic Hokitika Gorge where the blue/green waters pass through the rugged rocks. Continue south through forests and farmland, with views of the Alps to the east and the Tasman Sea to the west, to Franz Josef then on to the small remote village of Fox. The huge rivers of snow and ice of the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers flow from vast snowfields high in the Southern Alps, down almost to sea level. Weather permitting, an optional helicopter ride with a snow landing is a terrific way to experience the sheer grandeur of these West Coast glaciers (extra cost). *Distinction Hotel Fox Glacier*

DAY 8 • FOX GLACIER TO WANAKA (B)

Have your camera ready for your visit to nearby Lake Matheson for a morning stroll - when conditions are right the lake perfectly mirrors beautiful Mount Cook in its still waters. Head over the Haast Pass along the river road beside the icy river and deep into Mt. Aspiring National Park. The atmosphere lightens as we reach lovely Lake Wanaka, reflecting the mountain peaks that in winter offer superb skiing, and the pretty resort town of Wanaka. *Edgewater Resort, Wanaka - 2 nights*

DAY 9 • WANAKA (B) This morning you have the choice of two excursions:

- a) **Today join a passionate local eco-guide as you depart Wanaka by boat** and quickly leave civilization behind as you cruise across the lake to a predator-free island. The walking track leads from the landing and climbs steadily through native vegetation filled with very vocal birdlife to the top to the "island's secret" - a lake on top of the island with small islands in it! Unique and very photogenic, the echo of birdsong here is astounding. Carrying on

a little further you come to the very top of the island and have a sweeping 360-degree view of Lake Wanaka, its surrounding mountains and valleys, and the Arethusa Pool below. This is the perfect spot to relax and enjoy the panorama. The flightless Buff Weka often join visitors on the island; this rare flightless bird has been extinct on Mainland NZ since 1920.

- b) **Experience New Zealand's most authentic 4WD adventure** - the perfect mix of incredible scenery, history, heritage and farming life. Explore remote and seldom travelled back roads of an authentic New Zealand High Country farm overlooking sparkling Lake Wanaka. Surrounded by snow-capped peaks, glaciers and wild river valleys you'll see farm animals including Red Deer, cattle and sheep up close and in their natural environment. Visit historical sites and experience what life was like for Wanaka's first farmers. With two optional walks, through pristine alpine meadows and ancient lakeside forests, this journey offers an unique insight into Wanaka's rich history, heritage, modern-day farming life and breath-taking scenery.

This afternoon is at your leisure to relax or enjoy your own choice of activities.

DAY 10 • WANAKA TO TE ANAU (B)

Depart Wanaka with your first stop at the much photographed Cardrona Pub before traversing the Crown Range road to visit historic Arrowtown - a delightful gold rush village nestled below the beautiful peaks that surround the sparkling Arrow River. Continue your journey via the road pinned between the base of the Remarkables mountain range and spectacular Lake Wakatipu. Journey through a glacial formed valley that is now farmland, to reach Lake Te Anau, the largest (by volume) freshwater lake in the South Island and gateway to Fiordland National Park. *Distinction Hotel Luxmore, Te Anau*

DAY 11 • TE ANAU TO MILFORD SOUND TO QUEENSTOWN (B,L)

The journey from Te Anau to Milford Sound is one of the most scenic experiences you can have on four wheels. Fiordland National Park, part of the Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area is one of the great wilderness areas of the Southern Hemisphere. The scenery is spectacular with lofty mountains and deep valleys carved out by Ice Age glaciers. Described by Rudyard Kipling as the 'eighth wonder of the world', Milford Sound is breath-taking in any weather. Board a comfortable vessel for a cruise past towering Mitre Peak to the Tasman Sea. Keep an eye peeled for

seals and dolphins which are often seen in the waters of the fiord. Following the cruise, retrace your journey back to Te Anau travelling via the Cledeau Gorge, Homer Tunnel and the lovely Eglinton Valley then across the Southland farmlands and around spectacular Lake Wakatipu to Queenstown. *Scenic Suites Queenstown - 2 nights*

DAY 12 • QUEENSTOWN (B) Surrounded by majestic mountains and set on the shores of crystal-clear Lake Wakatipu, the natural beauty and the unique energy of Queenstown create the perfect backdrop for a visit full of adventure, exploration or relaxation. Today is free for you to do your own thing: thrill-seekers may choose to zip-line at Bob's Peak, get drenched on a Shotover jet-boat ride or go white-water rafting. Other enjoyable but less hair-raising activities include the gondola ride up to Bob's Peak, or a 4WD safari to Skippers Canyon. Boutique wineries and local gardens welcome visitors and the classic steamship TSS Earnslaw is an elegant way to discover Lake Wakatipu during a cruise to Walter Peak High Country Farm.

DAY 13 • QUEENSTOWN TO MT. COOK TO TWIZEL (B)

Continue north through the rugged Kawarau Gorge, past pretty Lake Dunstan and across the distinctive Central Otago countryside to the Lindis Pass. Descend into the unique Mackenzie Basin where the Southern Alps dominate the horizon. Take a beautiful drive along Lake Pukaki to Mt. Cook Village, home to New Zealand's tallest peak, Aoraki/Mt. Cook. *Mackenzie Country Hotel, Twizel*

DAY 14 • TWIZEL TO RURAL CANTERBURY (B,D)

Visit a local home set on the shores of Lake Tekapo and learn the secrets of making a Pavlova - a truly Kiwi dessert! Enjoy morning tea the taste your pavlova as you drink in the views of this beautiful lake. View the Church of the Good Shepherd, one of New Zealand's most-photographed spots: a tiny church set against a majestic backdrop of the Southern Alps. Pass across the high country's tussock plains, through the small rural towns of Fairlie and Geraldine and onto Ashburton. *Accommodation*

a) **Rural homestay:** Here you are met in small groups by your hosts who will extend their hospitality to you to with a tour of their property, perhaps a visit with the animals, and a delicious home-cooked dinner before a cosy night's stay in a local home.



b) **Local hotel:** spend the night in a local hotel enjoying dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 15 • ASHBURTON TO CHRISTCHURCH (B,D)

After breakfast re-assemble to travel across the fertile Canterbury Plains to Christchurch. This most English of New Zealand cities suffered a succession of terrible earthquakes in 2010/11. The city is now reinventing itself with exciting new sights including the 'Cardboard Cathedral' and various pop-up bars and restaurants. Upon arrival in central Christchurch punting boatmen, resplendent with straw boaters and traditional Edwardian dress take you for a relaxing cruise in flat-bottomed punts along the River Avon through the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. Enjoy a journey in style onboard a beautifully restored heritage tram through the changing face of Christchurch's city centre. This is the final part of our journey together so tonight we enjoy a relaxed farewell dinner at a local restaurant. *Distinction Hotel, Christchurch*

DAY 16 • DEPART CHRISTCHURCH (B) Haera - farewell from New Zealand. After breakfast you are transferred to the Christchurch Airport for your return home taking with you fond memories of your time in New Zealand. Alternatively, should you wish to extend your stay, we can assist you with additional travel arrangements.

