

INDEPENDENT TRIPS

South Island Explorer 10D/9N

Nature & Adventure

10 Days / 1 Country

New Zealand

Departure city: **Christchurch, New Zealand**

End city: **Christchurch, New Zealand**



WHAT YOU GET

9 Nights hostel, 3 or 4-star hotel accommodation, depending on package

Airport Transfers, Accommodation transfers & Van
Christchurch airport pick-up & drop-off
All transportation as per Itinerary

Lunch on Day 8

Active, multi-sport adventure
Milford Sound Cruise Experience
Franz Josef Glacier Valley Experience
Abel Tasman by Land & Sea Experience

Equipment during Experiences
 Milford Sound 2 hour nature cruise
Franz Josef Glacier Valley Experience: Breathable rain jacket, waterproof over-trousers, socks & sturdy boots, woollen hats & gloves (if required)
Abel Tasman by Land & Sea Experience: Freedom walk, catamaran sailing tour, morning & afternoon tea

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- *Other meals & drinks
- *Optional activities
- *Personal expenses
- *Tips for guides
- *Travel insurance

Trip Description

Christchurch Airport Pick-up

As you arrive at Christchurch Airport you will be transferred to your accommodation for check-in. Enjoy the afternoon and evening free to settle in this beautiful city.

See the best of the South Island and travel from Christchurch to Queenstown, Franz Josef, Nelson and back on a 10-day adventure with great activities!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Take a peaceful boat ride in the serene Milford Sound
Walk through the Franz Josef Glacier Valley on a day tour
Experience a stunning Anchorage sailing and walking trip

Christchurch to Queenstown

This morning you will travel onward from Christchurch to the Adventure Capital of New Zealand - if not the world - Queenstown! Make your way to the bus departure point outside Canterbury Museum to catch your bus.

Queenstown is a scenic town in the South Island of New Zealand. It's one of the most beautiful regions and offers year round attractions. The town sits on the edge of Lake Wakatipu and is surrounded by the Southern Alps. The most breathtaking sight is the Remarkables, which is a saw-toothed range of mountains on the opposite side of the lake from the town. After arrival, make your way to your accommodation for check-in and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to settle in and overnight.

Milford Sound Day Tour

Make your way to the departure point today, to visit Milford Sound, undoubtedly one of the world's most spectacular natural phenomena, and to journey along the 295km Milford Road through Fiordland National Park, equally impressive.

Leaving Queenstown, you will travel on modern comfortable buses that include informative and entertaining commentary from experienced local guides, along the shores of Lake Wakatipu and into southern farmland to Lake Te Anau, the largest lake in the South Island. After a morning tea stop (own expense), travel along the lake and into Fiordland National Park. Enter the picturesque Eglinton Valley, a place of ancient alpine forest and gushing waterfalls and one of only a few road-accessible glacier valleys in New Zealand, and take advantage of the photo opportunities on offer along the Milford Road, like the stunning Mirror Lakes, where on a calm day the surrounding mountain ranges are perfectly reflected in the still waters, and Knobs Flat, where glaciers have carved their mark on the terrain. Your glass-roof coach will provide amazing views of the dramatic skyline as you cross the Main Divide of the Southern Alps, with stunning mountain peaks all around. Stop at Monkey Creek and sample some of the purest water in the world (but watch out for cheeky kea-native mountain parrots!). Travel under the mountains through the Homer Tunnel, a 1.2km passageway drilled into solid rock, then experience The Chasm, a short but impressive walk over footbridges spanning a series of powerful, swirling waterfalls and rapids.

At Milford Sound, board your 1 hour 45 minute Southern Discoveries Scenic Cruise and set off to explore the region that Rudyard Kipling called the Eighth Wonder of the World. Travel the length of the fiord and out to the Tasman Sea, gliding past glacier-scarred rock walls and waterfalls that tumble through valleys and crash into the sea far below. Lush native forest clings to steep cliffs, while wildlife including seals, penguins and dolphins are regular visitors to the icy waters. Mountain ranges surround the fiord, including Mitre Peak which rises dramatically from the depths to a height of 1,692 metres above sea level. During your cruise the crew will entertain you with commentary on the natural history and wildlife of the area, and the large top deck allows amazing viewing and panoramic photo opportunities. Large covered seating areas and viewing windows are located on other levels.

After your cruise, return to Queenstown by bus and overnight.

Queenstown Free Day

Today is free to enjoy yourself in Queenstown. There are so many things to see and do here, it's impossible to ever get bored! Some optional activities include:

SHOTOVER JET (US\$128 pp)

Prepare yourself for the ultimate Jet Boating experience with Shotover Jet - the unique, breathtaking white water ride and adrenaline rush you'll never forget.

SKYDIVE QUEENSTOWN:

- 15,000ft - EXOSFEAR / 200KPH (US\$415 pp)

- 12,000ft - STRATOSFEAR / 200KPH (US\$321 pp)

- 9,000ft - TROPOSFEAR / 200KPH (US\$283 pp)

Queenstown to Franz Josef

This morning, make your way to the bus departure point to catch the bus that will take you from Queenstown to the incredible town of Franz Josef. On arrival, check-in to your new accommodation and overnight.

Franz Josef Glacier Valley Experience

The Franz Josef Glacier Valley Walk will take you up alongside the mighty Waiho River bed, following the glacier's path as it winds its way through this remarkable landscape. Here you will learn about the glacier's history, see what this majestic giant leaves behind, and learn the legend of Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere. After a brief climb you will be rewarded with spectacular views of the glacier's rapidly changing terminal face.

This leisurely and informative journey can be tailored to suit groups of most abilities and interests, so no trip is ever the same. Accessing some exclusive trails and including great storytelling from your experienced and well-trained guide, there has never been a more extraordinary time to visit the Franz Josef Glacier.

Optional Upgrades:

GLACIER HELI HIKE (US\$350 pp)

The Franz Josef Glacier helicopter tour is a once in a lifetime experience that should not be missed. From the moment you step on board our chopper, your experience and highly trained pilot will whisk you away, up and over the jaw-dropping landscape.

HELI ICE CLIMB (US\$422 pp)

The closest you can get to the Franz Josef Glacier. Glacier climbing in New Zealand is considered by many to be the best in the world, and no one does it better than Franz Josef Glacier Guides. Ice climbing at Franz Josef is a day packed with excitement and adventure, and we'll be with you every step of the way.

Franz Josef to Nelson

Today you will leave Franz Josef to travel to the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park, Nelson. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to settle in and overnight.

Abel Tasman by Land & Sea Experience (L)

Today, you will be picked-up from your accommodation in Nelson to embark on a journey that will restore your connection with nature. Start the day sailing through the best of the Abel Tasman coastline via Split Apple Rock into the gorgeous resort community of Kaiteriteri. Take in the golden beaches and bays, islands and birdsong before arriving at Anchorage. Around midday, abandon the ship at Anchorage for a stunning and invigorating walk through lush native forest to Marahau. Feel the freedom, soak up the ambience and take in the views of New Zealand's coastal paradise. At the end of the tour you will be dropped-off back at your Nelson accommodation for overnight.

Nelson to Christchurch

Today we say goodbye to Nelson and make the return journey to Christchurch where you will spend your last night. On arrival check into your new accommodation and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to relax and enjoy the southern New Zealand vibe.

Christchurch Airport Drop-off

Today is your last day of the trip. Enjoy the morning in Christchurch before checking out of your accommodation in time to catch your return airport transfer, where this amazing adventure will come to an end. Optionally you can spend more nights in Christchurch at extra cost, please contact us if interested.

