

New Zealand's natural landscape, raw and dynamic, with rivers, lakes and mountains of epic proportions, is still wild, very unpopulated and refuge for a rich variety of marine and birdlife. Our journey takes you from the Kaikoura Coast, up to Blenheim, across to the west coast and Punakaiki Rocks, the glaciers and coastal wilderness and through the Southern Alps to the West Coast and on to Lake Wanaka.



At a glance

Duration: 14 days, 13 nights

Connection points:

Christchurch airport / Inter-Islander ferry
Queenstown airport

Activity level: moderate

Best season: October-April

Driving times

Kaikoura - Blenheim: 1 1/2 hours
Blenheim - Charleston: 3 1/2 hours
Charleston - Franz Josef: 3 hours
Franz Josef - Lake Moeraki: 1 1/2 hours
Lake Moeraki - Wanaka: 2 1/2 hours

Indicative Price from \$7,595

Price is for accommodation only and excludes meals, ground or air transport unless stated. [Contact one of our Travel Agents](#) or use [My Holiday](#) to contact the operators and book direct.



OCEANS TO ALPS

Raw Nature

South Island





Day 1 - Kaikoura, Canterbury

Stay [The Factory](#)

Just north of the township of Kaikoura, a converted dairy factory has direct beach access and views to the snow-capped mountains behind. Ideal for couples, families or friends this 3-bedroom cottage has plenty of room to relax.

Day 2 - Kaikoura, Canterbury

Do [Wings Over Whales | Whale Watching Fixed Wing Flights](#)

Stay [The Factory](#)

A stay in Kaikoura is not complete without seeing the whales. A 30-minute scenic flight leaves you plenty of time to relax and take lunch at the 'kai carts' where freshly caught koura (lobster) is sold by the sea.

Day 3 - Kaikoura, Canterbury

Do [Encounter Kaikoura | Albatross Encounter](#)

Stay [The Factory](#)

Birdwatchers and photographers will enjoy the Encounter Albatross tour which gets close to these amazing birds and many other species.

Day 4 - Blenheim, Marlborough

Stay [The Peppertree](#)

Blenheim is just one hour north of Kaikoura.

Blenheim is gateway to the Marlborough Sounds and Picton just 30 minutes north, so you will have time to take a water taxi and a short hike on the Queen Charlotte Track. Alternatively you could treat yourself to lunch at one of the fine winery restaurants.

Day 5 - Blenheim, Marlborough

Do [Wilderness Guides | Marlborough Sounds Sea Kayaking](#)

Stay [The Peppertree](#)

The Marlborough Sounds offer hiking, mountain biking and kayaking options with a good chance of seeing dolphins.

Day 6 - near Punakaiki, West Coast

Stay [Birds Ferry Lodge](#)

The drive from Blenheim to Birds Ferry brings you past Nelson Lakes so stop for lunch and a hike on the lovely lakeside tracks beneath the snowcapped mountains.

Book dinner at the Lodge or drive out to Cape Farewell seal colony and have dinner at The Bayhouse Cafe.

Day 7 - near Punakaiki, West Coast

Stay [Birds Ferry Lodge](#)

Spend the day exploring the grounds and local area and Punakaiki Rocks, on your own or with Andre as your guide. There is some fascinating early settler history as well as great walking.

Day 8 - Franz Josef, West Coast

Stay [Holly Homestead](#)

A couple of hours south brings you to Franz Josef township so take your time meandering down the coast today.

Day 9 - Franz Josef, West Coast

Do [Okarito Boat Tours](#) | [Okarito Birdlife Tour](#)

Do [Franz Josef Glacier Guides](#) | [Guided Glacier Trips](#)

Stay [Holly Homestead](#)

Get up early and head out to Okarito to join the boat tour where you drift quietly amongst feeding birds including the graceful Kotuku – Great White heron, Royal Spoonbills, the intrepid godwits from Siberia and Alaska, the leggy Pied Stilts, and many others.

The glaciers are best viewed from above so select a scenic glacier flight or a heli-hike in the afternoon.

Day 10 - near Haast, West Coast

Stay [Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki](#)

It is an lovely drive south to Lake Moeraki Wilderness Lodge. The lodge is utterly remote, beside a river that runs between Lake Moeraki and the sea. Dinner is booked for you at the Lodge tonight.

Day 11 - near Haast, West Coast

Stay [Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki](#)

Each day the lodge runs two complimentary guided nature activities. Go forest exploring, hiking, birding, kayaking or discover the freshwater ecology of the Moeraki River.

Day 12 - Wanaka

Do [Southern Alps Air](#) | [Siberia Experience Fly, Walk & Jetboat](#)

Stay [Lime Tree Lodge](#)

A spectacular 2 hour drive further down the West Coast and over Haast Pass to lakes Wanaka and Hawea. Take the Siberia Experience combo of stunning flight, hike and jet boat down a remote valley.

Limetree Lodge is just outside Wanaka township with sweeping views to the mountains beyond.

Day 13 - Wanaka

Do [Eco Wanaka Adventures | Nature Tour & Lake Cruise](#)

Stay [Lime Tree Lodge](#)

A half-day trip up Lake Wanaka to Mou Waho island and hike up to an idyllic little lake called the Arethusa Pool with panoramic views of Lake Wanaka. Your guide from Eco Wanaka Adventures will point out buff weka, falcons, wood pigeons, bellbirds, fantails, wax eyes, grey warblers, the occasional kaka, gecko lizards and wetas.

Day 14 - Journey's End

Queenstown airport is one hour from Wanaka and connects with other New Zealand destinations as well as direct flights from Australian cities.