



# South of the South - 16 Days

FULLY ESCORTED TOUR PACKAGE

## 16 DAYS – 15 NIGHTS

12th March – 27th March 2018

## \$5,395

Per person, Double or Twin Share

## \$1,195

Single Supplement

## DEPOSIT

\$100 on booking

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

\$1,000 due by 21st December 2017

\$4,295 due by 12th January 2018

## EARLY PAYMENT DISCOUNT

\$100 if booked and paid in full by 21st December 2017



## TOUR DESCRIPTION

Take in views of vast, undulating green fields that lead to the shores of turquoise blue lakes.

Experience New Zealand's natural landscape first hand; from native forests abundant with birdlife and jagged coastlines, to wandering through the delightful small towns and historic architecture that makes the South Island truly unique.

We're guaranteed to have an unforgettable adventure.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ The Catlins
  - ✓ Stewart Island
  - ✓ Taieri Gorge Railway
  - ✓ Penguin Place & Royal Albatross Centre
  - ✓ Larnach Castle
  - ✓ Nugget Point Lighthouse
  - ✓ Purakaunui Falls
  - ✓ Curio Bay
  - ✓ Invercargill
  - ✓ Tour of Invercargill and Bluff
  - ✓ Doubtful Sound
  - ✓ Queenstown
  - ✓ Walter Peak Station
  - ✓ Lake Wakatipu & TSS Earnslaw Cruise
  - ✓ Skyline Restaurant
  - ✓ Coronet Peak & Crown Range
  - ✓ Arrowtown
  - ✓ Wanaka
  - ✓ Oamaru
  - ✓ Christchurch & Red Bus Tour of City
  - ✓ Northern Explorer Train
- and lots more!



## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Monday 12th March | Dinner

Our tour departs from Auckland. We fly to Dunedin where we spend the first 3 nights. Dunedin is New Zealand's best kept secret, a city full of authentic welcoming characters, heritage buildings and abundant wildlife on its doorstep.

*Please contact us if you wish to fly from a different airport to Dunedin.*

### Day 2: Tuesday 13th March | Breakfast, Dinner

Today, we visit historical Olveston House for a guided tour around this national treasure. Olveston was built for Dunedin businessman, collector and philanthropist David Theomin and his wife Marie. It was opened as a historic house museum in 1967. Olveston House is like a time capsule as very little has changed.

After lunch, we depart from Dunedin's beautiful railway station on the Taieri Gorge Railway as it begins its scenic journey into some of New Zealand's most spectacular and iconic scenery. The train makes its way through the southern parts of Dunedin until arriving at Wingatui Junction where it turns off on to the Taieri branch. We cross the Taieri Plains and climb into the Taieri Gorge, a narrow and deep gorge carved out over many years by the ancient Taieri River.

### Day 3: Wednesday 14th March | Breakfast, Dinner

This morning is for nature lovers as we travel out to the Otago Peninsula where we can see Hooker's sea lions, one of the rarest sea lions in the world and seldom seen elephant seals. We start off by visiting Penguin Place at the foot of Taiaeroa Head. This private conservation reserve is dedicated to helping the endangered Yellow-Eyed Penguin. We visit the Royal Albatross Centre and see the world's only mainland breeding colony of Royal Albatross, the historic Fort Taiaeroa and the Little Blue Penguin colony at Pilots Beach. A wonderful morning close up and personal with nature.

After lunch, we return to Dunedin to go on a tour of Larnach Castle, New Zealand's only castle. We see its rich history and unique architecture that dates back to 1871 as well as exploring the exquisite gardens.

### Day 4: Thursday 15th March | Breakfast, Dinner

Today, we set off on an amazing journey through the scenic and historical area of the Catlins in the South Otago and Southland Coastal area. This area with its spectacular coastline, quiet beaches, waterfalls and extensive native forests has something for everyone. Travelling through Balclutha, our first stop is at Kaka Point for morning tea while looking out to sea over the beautiful beach.

Next on the list is the Nugget Point Lighthouse built in 1869 where a breathtaking walk takes us along a spectacular track to the lighthouse. After that, there is really only one stop to make and that is for our lunch in Owaka. The town's name comes from the Maori word for 'the place of canoes' as it is close to the Owaka River.

After lunch, our next stop is at the Purakaunui Falls which is one of the most photographed waterfalls in New Zealand and is at the heart of the Catlins Forest Park. An easy walk leads to the falls. At Curio Bay, best known as the site of a petrified forest some 180 million years old and home to a yellow-eyed penguin colony, we take a short walk to see the fossilised logs on the shore.

Our last visit of the day is to Waipapa Lighthouse and we may come across sea lions lounging around on the beach. Our overnight stay is in Gore, the proud home of Country Music and don't forget to take a photo of the 'fish'.

### Day 5: Friday 16th March | Breakfast, Dinner

This morning, we have a leisurely start to the day with our first stop at the Eastern Southland Gallery. There are many paintings here and New Zealand is represented by artists including Rita Angus, Theo Schoon and Ralph Hotere. The gallery has the largest holding of works by major New Zealand contemporary artist Hotere. After all this culture, it's time for some fun at the Hokonui Moonshine Museum where we find out how audacious many local moonshiners were in the face of police opposition.

Our next stop is at the Croydon Aviation Centre where we can enjoy the exhibits and have lunch in the cafe. Afterwards, we drive to Lumsden where we see the main streets lined with many heritage buildings. They house a number of quirky cafes, bars and restaurants then we are on our way to Invercargill for the night.

### Day 6: Saturday 17th March | Breakfast, Dinner

Today, we are off to Stewart Island for 2 nights. Here, we have the opportunity to relax into a simpler, slower lifestyle in time with the sea and the tides and attuned to the natural world of bush and beach. After our short flight, we join our local tour guide who takes us around many of the breathtaking sights of this special island. There is free time later in the day to explore the area around Halfmoon Bay near to our hotel on the waterfront.

### Day 7: Sunday 18th March | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Our Stewart Island exploration continues with a boat trip around the sheltered waters of Paterson Inlet. We visit the birdwatchers' delight of Ulva Island which is one of the few pest-free open sanctuaries in New Zealand and we may even spot some fur seals and penguins.

On the return journey, we relax on board and enjoy lunch whilst looking out over the myriad of secluded bays and coves that the locals have at their back doors.

### Day 8: Monday 19th March | Breakfast, Dinner

This morning, we fly back to Invercargill and meet up with local guide Lynette Jack. Lynette has been a guide for 25 years and is still passionate about her city and it shows. The tour takes us around the city seeing all the grand old restored buildings and we continue to Bluff. Bluff is the oldest European settlement in New Zealand and has a rich and varied history. We stop here for lunch. Who can resist the famous Bluff Oysters as they will be in season? Before returning to Invercargill, we stop for a photo opportunity at one of the most photographed signposts in New Zealand. We reach Invercargill early afternoon and there is some free time to explore or just relax back at the hotel.

Image courtesy of Paul Sorrell ©



#### **Day 9: Tuesday 20th March | Breakfast, Dinner**

This morning, we travel along the Southern Scenic Route through Riverton where we have morning tea overlooking the beach. We visit Te Hiko Heritage Museum then drive on through Colac Bay - this small town is a very popular surfing spot and even has a statue of a surfer riding a wave. Tuatapere is our lunch stop and we take a little time to look in at the The Yesteryears Museum then it's on to Manapouri. This is a historic area with many fabulous coastal vistas which we explore at a leisurely pace. We stay in Manapouri for the next 2 nights.

#### **Day 10: Wednesday 21st March | Breakfast**

This morning, we enjoy a cruise around the dramatic and unspoilt grandeur of Doubtful Sound. This large and naturally imposing fiord is the longest and with a depth of up to 421 metres (1,381 ft) is the deepest in the South Island. On the return journey, we visit the amazing Lake Manapouri West Arm underground power station. With its seven 122 megawatt generating units and operating maximum output of 800 megawatts, the power station generates enough electricity each year for about 619,000 New Zealand homes.

#### **Day 11: Thursday 22nd March | Breakfast, Dinner**

This morning, we set off on an adventure through the back road to Walter Peak Station. The views as we travel past the Mavora Lakes and through Mt Nicholas and Walter Peak Stations are indescribable and are unique to this part of the South Island. Following our arrival, we enjoy the surroundings of the Walter Peak Homestead. At lunchtime, we board the TSS Earnslaw for the journey across Lake Wakatipu to Queenstown where we stay for 2 nights. There is some free time this afternoon to enjoy looking around Queenstown. Tonight, we go up on the Skyline Gondola for dinner at the famous scenic Skyline Restaurant.

#### **Day 12: Friday 23rd March | Breakfast, Dinner**

We travel the short distance to Stoneridge Estate to visit the Blessed House and Gardens at Lake Hayes. Its sprawling gardens, tranquil water features and sculptures all represent the decades of dedicated and inspired work carried out by the Gore Family.

We then make the big climb up to the Coronet Peak Ski Resort to take in the magnificent mountain scenery and vast views of this spectacular region (depending on road and weather conditions). Next, we visit the historic and delightful Arrowtown. After lunch, we make another short but very picturesque trip around Lake Wakatipu to Glenorchy and Paradise - believe it!

#### **Day 13: Saturday 24th March | Breakfast, Dinner**

We take in more fabulous views as we make our way over the Crown Range (depending on road conditions) and stop at the historic Cardrona Hotel. It's one of New Zealand's oldest hotels and is one of only two remaining buildings from the Cardrona Valley gold rush era. We drive to Wanaka, a lively town with a carefree spirit and picture-perfect location then on to Omarama where we stop for lunch. Afterwards, we head to Oamaru with one of the country's oldest public gardens, renowned Victorian architecture and a rich heritage. We stay in Oamaru overnight and there is time to look around the town before dinner.

#### **Day 14: Sunday 25th March | Breakfast, Dinner**

We start our day by visiting the Steampunk HQ inside the 1880s Grain Elevator building in Oamaru. It's a unique museum of art, sound and light which shows an altered universe. One of the displays is The Portal, a retro-futuristic mirror and lighting installation with original glowing light sculptures. It has to be seen to be believed. Stopping for lunch in Timaru, we can see the intact Edwardian precinct in the city centre.

Driving on to Christchurch, we go on a tour of the city and see how it has bounced back after the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 with innovative new attractions as well as seeing some old favourites. After the tour, we head to our hotel for the night.

#### **Day 15: Monday 26th March | Breakfast, Dinner**

We depart Christchurch and head north. We take the inland route through the National Parks, St Arnaud and Wairau Valley before we arrive in Picton for our sailing on the Interislander to Wellington. Depending on road conditions after the recent earthquakes, we may drive north along the coast to Kaikoura where we stop for lunch before continuing to Picton. After crossing the Cook Strait, we head to our hotel in Wellington for our last night.

#### **Day 16: Tuesday 27th March | Breakfast**

Today, we enjoy a wonderful, relaxing journey as we make our way home on the Northern Explorer Train. The train passes through Tongariro National Park and winds its way through the famous Raurimu Spiral, regarded as an 'engineering masterpiece'.

*The final destination is Auckland but passengers can be dropped off at other stations along the way by prior arrangement.*