

Classic | Alpine Highlights Tour

Christchurch to Queenstown – 7 Days

Alpine Highlights is also offered as a Queenstown to Christchurch tour.
See the end of this itinerary for details.

Day 1

Christchurch

Welcome to Christchurch

Kia ora!

Welcome to Christchurch – New Zealand’s Garden City! The largest city in the South Island, Christchurch is known for its historical earthquake in 2011 and how it rebuilt itself into a charming, multicultural city that blends modern architecture and technology with the existing 19th-century Anglican ‘gothic revival’ architectural influence.

After checking into your hotel and reading your welcome letter from your Tour Director, head out and explore all that Christchurch has to offer. This is the perfect opportunity to wander through the enticing stalls at Riverside Market or explore the botanical gardens before heading to the art gallery, museums and other city attractions.

After an exciting day on the town, your journey will officially begin as you join your fellow travellers and Tour Director at this evening’s welcome reception.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Dinner

Activities

Welcome reception

Day 2

Christchurch to West Coast

The TranzAlpine Scenic Train

Experience the world-famous TranzAlpine scenic train journey through the Southern Alps, emerging in the West Coast!

On this fantastic escape, you will see epic vistas, soar on the edges

of the ice fed Waimakariri River, traverse through the Great Divide, and experience ever-changing landscapes. The natural scenery isn't the only marvel, though. The TranzAlpine passes through the Otira Tunnel, a true engineering marvel of 100 years!

Once you arrive at the West Coast, a private coach will take you even further off the beaten track to Punakaiki, where you will explore curious limestone rock formations and blowholes.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

TranzAlpine Scenic Train Experience

Punakaiki Pancake Rock Excursion

Day 3

West Coast to Franz Josef

Explore the West Coast

This morning you'll start your West Coast adventure by visiting one of the South Island's most popular activities– the West Coast Tree Top Walk. This elevated adventure will get you acquainted with the locals – the ancient Rimu and Kamahi trees.

After your sky-high experience, continue south into Glacier Country. Franz Josef Glacier is quite special in that it survives in the warm coastal rainforest temperatures. With a short walk to a viewpoint, you'll get a fantastic view of the vast valley, as well as a sneak peak of Franz Josef Glacier itself. If you would prefer to get up close, we recommend booking an optional helicopter flight. This will ensure you are getting the best possible view of this natural wonder.

After your glacial experience and checking into the hotel, you'll have some free time to enjoy Franz Josef town. Indulge in a helicopter flight, nature walk or tap into some natural tranquility at the local hot pools.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

West Coast Tree Top Walk

Short Nature Walk to Glacier Viewing Point

Day 4

Franz Josef to Queenstown

Exploring the South

Today you will be exploring the mountainous Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey to Queenstown will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. Marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and stunning glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems.

Emerging on the other side of the pass, explore a local fruit hotspot before exploring the cobblestone streets of the historic goldmining settlement of Arrowtown.

After an exciting plunge into the history of this gold rush village, you will arrive in the world-famous resort town of Queenstown!

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (3 nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

Scenic coach journey through Haast Pass with stops along the way Haast Visitors Centre, Mrs Jones' Fruit Stall and Arrowtown Visit

Day 5

Queenstown

Explore Queenstown

Enjoy a free day to explore everything Queenstown has to offer.

Today, we highly recommend you join an excursion to the 8th Wonder of the World – it truly is a remarkable experience. Milford Sound / Piopiotahi is a scenic escape approximately three hours from Queenstown. The natural landscape will engulf you as you waltz through plunging valleys and towering peaks.

Take this encounter to the next level by booking a return visit by plane and soar like the Piopio (ancient bird) back to Queenstown.

Whether you've decided to hop aboard the steamship lake cruise on the iconic TSS Earnslaw, or marvel at the power of ancient roaring rivers – tonight you have a free evening to indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife. Sip cocktails and indulge in the sparkling views of Lake Wakatipu.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (3 nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Day 6

Queenstown

The Close to an Adventure of a Lifetime

Queenstown truly has something for everyone. Personalise your day to be as active or relaxed as you'd like. Whether it's exploring Walter Peak on a horse trekking adventure, joining the historic steamship across Lake Wakatipu or sipping wine in Gibbston Valley, there is no shortage of activities to delight your senses.

This evening is your 'final hurrah' as you enjoy a farewell dinner. This is the perfect time to reminisce and share photos and phone numbers with your new friends.

Accommodation

4 - 4.5 Star Accommodation (3 nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

Breakfast, Dinner

Activities

Farewell Dinner

Day 7

Queenstown

Departing Queenstown

Your journey will end after enjoying a final breakfast with your fellow travellers.

Not ready to leave Queenstown? Reach out to our Travel Centre to pre-organise your extended stay.

Meals

Breakfast

Activities

Transfer to airport

Classic | Alpine Highlights Tour

Queenstown to Christchurch – 7 Days

Alpine Highlights is also offered as a Christchurch to Queenstown tour. See the start of this itinerary for details.

Day 1

Queenstown

Welcome to Queenstown

Kia Ora!

Welcome to Queenstown, New Zealand's adventure capital! Queenstown is known for its dramatic mountain ranges, nearby vineyards, restaurants, and Lake Wakatipu.

After checking into your hotel and reading your welcome letter from your Tour Director, head out and explore all that Queenstown has to offer.

Explore the beach front, indulge in some retail therapy, and explore the beautiful rose gardens. Your journey will officially begin as you join your fellow travelers and Tour Director at this evening's welcome reception.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

A welcome drink is included in tonight's reception

Activities

Welcome Reception

Day 2

Queenstown

Explore Queenstown

Enjoy a free day to explore everything Queenstown has to offer. Today we highly recommend you join an excursion to the 8th Wonder of the World - it truly is a remarkable experience.

Milford Sound / Piopiotahi is a scenic escape approximately three hours from Queenstown. The natural landscape will engulf you as you waltz through plunging valleys and towering peaks. Take this encounter to the next level by booking a return visit by plane and soar like the Piopio (ancient bird) back to Queenstown.

Whether you've decided to hop aboard the iconic steamship the TSS Earnslaw to cruise on Lake Wakatipu, or marvel at the power of ancient roaring rivers - tonight you have the evening to indulge in Queenstown's exciting nightlife. Sip cocktails and indulge in the sparkling views across the lake.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Queenstown)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Day 3

Queenstown to Franz Josef

Exploring the South

Today you'll be exploring the mountainous Haast Pass. With changing landscapes around every bend, this journey of about five hours to Franz Josef will be one of the most scenic drives you may ever take. Marvel at the beaches, crystal blue lakes and rivers, mountain peaks, lush vineyards, charming plains and glaciers as your Tour Director guides you between local hidden gems. Stop in unique locations only the locals tend to stop at.

Tonight, is a free evening to experience Franz Josef. Schedule an amazing helicopter flight to the spectacular Franz Josef Glacier, go on nature walk or tap into some natural tranquility at the local hot pools.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

Scenic coach journey through Haast Pass with stops along the way

Day 4

Franz Josef to West Coast

Explore the West Coast

Franz Josef Glacier is quite special in that it survives in coastal rainforest temperatures. Before you head off up the coast, why not set off on a short nature walk? No matter which one you choose, you'll get a fantastic view of the vast valley and maybe even a sneak peak of Franz Josef Glacier itself.

Aboard the private coach, you'll journey further along the coastline, reaching the TreeTop Walkway. This elevated adventure will get you acquainted with the locals – the ancient Rimu and Kamahi trees of course.

This evening, you'll have free time to explore the beach at your leisure.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (1 night)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

West Coast Treetop Walkway & Cafe

Day 5

West Coast to Christchurch

The TranzAlpine Scenic Train

Before you escape into the Southern Alps aboard the world-famous TranzAlpine scenic train, a special excursion is beckoning - the Punakaiki Pancake Rocks. Here you will explore curious limestone formations and blowholes before joining the scenic journey to Christchurch at the Greymouth Railway Station.

Comfortably resting in plush, reclined seats, you will be surrounded by panoramic views. Start the journey by passing through the engineering marvel of the Otira Tunnel before emerging into a new landscape. Enjoy traversing through the Great Divide before a brief photo opportunity at Arthur's Pass. As you soar on the edges of the ice fed Waimakariri River, you'll see epic vistas in all directions while breathing fresh mountain air in the open carriage.

Just a few hours later, you'll arrive into 'The Garden City'.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Christchurch)

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

Punakaiki Pancake Rock Excursion
TranzAlpine Scenic Train Experience

Day 6

Christchurch

Explore Christchurch

Christchurch, the hub for South Island exploration is also a wonderful city that blends modern architecture and technology with the existing 19th-century Anglican influence. Often remembered for its earthquake in 2011, the city is rebuilding itself into a multi-cultural haven.

Today you are free to explore the museums, Riverside Markets, Punting on the Avon, Gondola and botanical gardens. There is also a multitude of delicious cafes tucked into quaint side streets we're sure you will love.

This evening you will re-join your fellow travelers for a farewell dinner at one of Christchurch's impeccable restaurants.

Accommodation

3 - 4 Star Accommodation (2 nights in Christchurch)

Meals Included

Breakfast, Dinner

Activities

Hop on hop off tram
Farewell Dinner

Day 7

Christchurch

Departing Christchurch

Your journey will end after enjoying a final breakfast at your hotel.

Not ready to leave Christchurch? Reach out to our Travel Centre to pre-organise your extended stay.

Meals Included

Breakfast

Activities

Transfer to airport