



14 Day AAT Kings Southern Spirit 24/25

Discover the most pristine landscapes on the planet and gain an understanding of the rich Māori culture on this remarkable journey through New Zealand's South Island. From the drama of plunging glacial valleys and rugged snowcapped peaks to the serenity of silent, crystal-clear lakes, you'll be awed at every turn. The small but vibrant cosmopolitan cities studded throughout the Island are the human face of this natural wonderland.

Starts in: Christchurch
 Finishes in: Wellington
 Length: 14days / 13nights
 Accommodation: Hotel 3 star
 Can be customised: Yes

This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

Includes: All coach transport
 Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations
 Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving, instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)
 Includes: 24/7 support while touring in New Zealand
 Included: Christchurch City Tour
 Included: Cruise on the Interislander Ferry
 Included: Day trip to Stewart Island
 Included: Visit a Local Orchard
 Included: Visit a Pounamu Factory
 Included: Wellington City Tour
 13 breakfasts, 4 dinners

Day 1

Arrive early to get your bearings on a self-guided Christchurch tour. The best way to do that? Aboard the Christchurch Tram. Your journey not only takes you past jaw-dropping attractions – like the Transitional Cathedral, made largely of cardboard, and Turanga, the gold-clad central library – but also tells an inspiring story of community spirit in the rebuilding and reinvigoration of the city since the 2010/11 earthquakes.

Staying in:

- Ibis Hotel Christchurch (1 night)
-

Day 2

We peel off a couple more layers on a guided Christchurch tour before setting the GPS for Lake Tekapo, a blinding shade of turquoise accented by the soaring snow-capped peaks and wildflower-strewn fields that surround. It's quite the backdrop for the stone-hewn Church of Good Shepherd. Opt for a bird's-eye view on a scenic flight, taking you over Mount Cook and the Southern Alps, as well as Franz Josef and Fox glaciers.

Staying in:

- Heritage Gateway Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 3

Limestone put the pretty town of Oamaru on the map – its stately tree-lined streets are a parade of grand buildings. But it's just as popular today for nurturing New Zealand's oldest public gardens. Architectural drama of a different kind awaits in Dunedin, in the form of Larnach Castle, the only one of its kind in the country. This afternoon is at your leisure. We can point you in the direction of atmospheric art-lined alleys or toward Speights Brewery, a national institution. Or venture further afield on a Dunedin tour to discover the fur seals and penguins that pad around the Otago Peninsula.

Staying in:

- Kingsgate Hotel Dunedin (1 night)
-

Day 4

If you find yourself humming a Garth Brooks tune en route to Gore, you're probably not alone. Fun fact: this is the country music capital of NZ. Invercargill is obsessed with something else: motor vehicles. Tributes to speed legends colour the town, telling the story of everyone Burt Munro to Bill Richardson – his shed full of classic vehicles is the largest private collection of its type in the world.

Staying in:

- Kelvin Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 5

Invercargill is the gateway to the southernmost community in the country. Welcome to Stewart Island, a wild and wonderful drop of land that is 97% national parkland. Naturally, it's a magnet for endemic flora and fauna, as you'll discover touring valleys and bays with a local. Forest-clad Ulva Island is avian heaven, completely pest free and an important breeding and nesting ground for all manner of birds.

Staying in:

- Kelvin Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 6

Adventure, nature, food and wine, relaxation – Queenstown is like New Zealand's chocolate box; there's something for everyone. Talk to your Travel Director then head off in your own direction, perhaps to feel the wind in your hair on the high-octane Shotover Jet or bungy jumping off a bridge. Or to sip your way through surrounding vineyards. You might like to glide across Lake Wakatipu aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm, where a gourmet barbecue dinner awaits. Today's Queenstown tour is completely at your leisure.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)
-

Day 7

We wouldn't blame you for using today to linger by the banks of Lake Wakatipu, marvelling at sky-scraping Remarkables. But if you want to venture further afield, we have a few ideas. Top of our list today is an epic journey through Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound, carved by waterfalls and a playground for dolphins and seals as you'll discover on a Milford Sound cruise. There's a reason why this part of the island has World Heritage status.

Day 8

Atmospheric Arrowtown was born from gold, and its movie-set-like streets still shimmer today. It's hard to tear yourself away, but the Alpine country of the Southern Lakes is calling, from Lake Dunstan – pause for juicy stone fruit picked fresh from the tree – to oh-so-blue Lake Hawea and lovely Lake Wanaka, with its shoreline of poplars and willows. Over the Haast Pass, Franz Josef Glacier glistens like nature's gem. Get some perspective on an optional flight over this natural wonder – if the weather behaves, you may even get to land on it. How cool is this Franz Josef Glacier tour?

Day 9

On the wild West Coast, Hokitika may be small in size, but boy is it big in personality, not to mention natural attractions. Wander the windswept coast before discovering the town's other beauty: pounamu (native greenstone or jade). In Māori tradition, it's bad luck to buy this sacred stone for yourself. That's what your loved one is for, right? Steel yourself for Punakaiki's Pancake Rocks and blowholes; they owe their existence to the thundering surf that will lull you to sleep.

Day 10

After action-packed days, all you need to do today is sit back and enjoy the drama of the Heritage Highway en route to Nelson. Gaze over Buller Gorge – a deep canyon home to New Zealand's longest swingbridge – and Kahurangi National Park, a place of wild rivers, high plateaus, alpine herbfields and coastal forests.

Staying in:

- The Rutherford Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 11

The South Island's oldest city, Nelson is the ideal starting point for outings through Abel Tasman National Park. This pocket in the north of the island is a beguiling union of golden beaches framed by sculpted granite cliffs. It's home to one of the country's most legendary coastal tracks, if you fancy stretching your legs on a hike. Otherwise, drift away on a cruise around the coast, revealing unpeopled bays and dreamy inlets. The choice is yours.

Staying in:

- The Rutherford Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 12

Your tour of the South Island is about to take you to the North Island. All aboard the Interislander for a cruise through Queen Charlotte Sound, up the Tory Channel and across Cook Strait, from the South Island to the North, navigating a maze of arms and inlets into New Zealand's cool little capital of Wellington. Your local guide will help you get your bearings on a Wellington tour, then point you in the direction of some of the city's most innovative restaurants and bars. Wellington is a bit of a foodie mecca.

Staying in:

- Travelodge Wellington (1 night)
-

Day 13

Wellington also knows a thing or two about good coffee, and you'll need a strong one to get you through today's sightseeing. You may wish to linger in town, discovering Māori culture at Te Papa museum. Or head further afield on a Lord of the Rings movie tour or visit to Weta Workshop, where special-effects wizards work their magic creating goblins and dinosaurs for blockbuster films. Decisions, decisions.

Staying in:

- Travelodge Wellington (1 night)
-

Day 14

It's hard to say goodbye to your tour of the South Island of New Zealand. If you can't bear to leave, we have a few ideas up our sleeve to extend your holiday...

Tour details

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Departures: | Daily |
| Tour type: | Guided Coach Tour |
| Starts: | Christchurch |
| Finishes: | Wellington |
| Tour length: | 14 |
| Accommodation: | Hotel 3 star |
| Car/transport type: | |

Included activities

| | |
|----------|--|
| Includes | All breakfasts |
| Includes | 9 dinners |
| Includes | Airport transfers |
| Includes | Interislander ferry crossing |
| Includes | Real Journeys Milford Sound overnight cruise |
| Includes | Te Anau Glow Worm Caves |
| Includes | Punakaiki Rocks |
| Includes | Greenstone Jade craft experience |
| Includes | Christchurch City Sights tour |
| Includes | Te Papa Museum of New Zealand |
| Includes | Wellington City Sights Tour |

Accommodation summary