



Fiords Pinot & Glaciers Short Break

8 days | starts in Invercargill/ finishes in Christchurch

This tour departs from Invercargill and heads to the pristine lakes, carved fiords, and towering mountains blanketed in beech forest and that make up Fiordland. Walk amongst the beech trees, with the soft spongy leaf litter underfoot and green moss dripping from the undergrowth, to a viewpoint affording stunning views of Lake Manapouri and the rugged Kepler Mountains beyond. Enjoy the spectacular journey as we descend into Milford Sound, stopping for another walk in the beautiful Hollyford Valley en-route. Arrive in the Sound in the late afternoon, when most of the crowds have departed for the day, and board your vessel for an overnight cruise on the Sound. Accompany your nature guide in the naiaid to look for the local wildlife - Fiordland Crested penguins, seals and dolphins can all be found here.

Back on land, we travel through the rolling hills of Southland to Lake Wakatipu and the lovely village of Arrowtown. Relax in the shade of the iconic oak trees, or join the adrenalin vibe in Queenstown. Sample local pinot noir and other award winning wines. Cross the main divide to the west coast and experience a remote and untouched wilderness on an informative and exhilarating jet boat ride. Walk the wild west coast beaches and hidden lakes, and feel the power of the mighty rivers of ice in glacier country. Take a boat trip on the serene waters of Okarito Lagoon. Enjoy the transition from lush bush to the dry plains of Canterbury on our journey over Arthur's Pass to Christchurch, where your tour comes to an end.

Day 1 Invercargill – Te Anau

You will be met at the Invercargill airport or your central city accommodation at around 9:30am. We drive inland to Fiordland and Lake Manapouri, one of the prettiest and deepest lakes in the country, flanked by high mountain ranges and fringed with native beech forest. After a picnic lunch by the lake, we do a superb hike through the cool cover of the beech forest with springy leaf litter underfoot on the Kepler Track, one of our country's 'Great Walks' [2hrs; Grade 2]. We continue a short distance to our accommodation in the sleepy town of Te Anau. (B/L/D)

Day 2 Te Anau – Milford Sound

Today we take the time to explore the amazing Milford Road on the way into Milford Sound, stopping to admire the many small lakes and viewpoints along the way. We do a lovely walk into the Hollyford River Valley [3hrs; Grade 1]. In the evening when most of the tourists have departed for the day, we board our vessel which takes us out into the sound. Seals, penguins, dolphins and an array of birds are commonly seen as dusk falls, as we spend the evening on board the vessel. There is the option of sea kayaking in the sound to appreciate the nature at a closer level. (B/L/D)

Day 3 Milford Sound – Arrowtown

Disembarking from our overnight cruise, we make our way to the lovely quiet village of Arrowtown, via the famous Kawarau Suspension Bridge to view Queenstown's most famous pursuit – the bungee jump, where any adventure vacation junkies are invited to make a jump! We spend the next two evenings in a lovely cottage a stones throw from Arrowtown's restaurants and cafes. (B/D)

Day 4 Arrowtown/Queenstown

Today you can explore the area at your own pace. Arrowtown is a mere 20 minutes from Queenstown and there is the option of visiting the hustle and bustle of the 'adrenalin capital of the world' for the day. There are many adventure activities at hand to invigorate the body and soul such as mountain biking, horse riding, and paragliding to name but a few. Alternatively you can relax in idyllic Arrowtown where there are plenty of cafes and

Tour Map



Grade



Tour Details

Tour Price: \$3,200
Single supplement: \$630

Deposit: \$400
What's included? See bottom of page.

Departure Dates:

Nov 12 – 19, 2011
Dec 8 – 15, 2011
Jan 15 – 22, 2012
Feb 22 – 29, 2012
Mar 22 – 29, 2012

Tours outside these dates are run on demand for groups of 8+ people and can be customised to suit your requirements.

shops to keep you occupied, or even some pleasant short and long hiking trails. (B)

Day 5 Arrowtown – Haast

We tackle the spectacular Crown Range road and head into the beautiful lakeside town of Wanaka. After a quick chance to explore and a latte, we continue to the mystical Haast Pass where you can stretch your legs and walk the final few kilometres to the top on the old bridle path [2hrs; Grade 2]. This trail follows a crystal clear stream through mountain beech forest, and the area is a habitat for our rare Mohua bird (yellowhead), which often can be heard singing high in the canopy as we walk. We continue in the bus on to one of the country's most remote towns, Haast, nestled by the roaring sea in the World Heritage Park. In the afternoon we experience one of New Zealand's greatest inventions, a jet boat ride. This exhilarating ride takes us up a remote and beautiful river as our guide provides us with excellent information about the local area whilst negotiating rapids and submerged logs. (B/L/D)

Day 6 Haast – Franz Josef

We do a short walk [Grade 1] to explore a rugged driftwood strewn beach at the forest edge on our way up the coast to the mighty glaciers. At Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers, remarkable in that they snake right down into temperate rain forest, you can opt to do the additional activities of a guided walk on the ice [Grade 3], or perhaps a helihike where you explore the upper reaches of the glacier after first viewing the river of ice from a helicopter. Alternatively, we can take you on a hike to the terminal face of the glacier [2hrs; Grade 1], or around a forest fringed lake offering unparallel photo opportunities on a clear day [2hrs; Grade 1]. We stay in the alpine village of Franz Josef. (B/L/D)

Day 7 Franz Josef – Hokitika

We visit a tiny seaside settlement of Okarito. Here we do a boat tour that takes us deep into the Okarito Lagoon, a huge unmodified wetland full of birds including the elusive Kotuku or White Heron, where we learn about the amazing history of the area and appreciate the large variety of wading birds. On clear days the view of the Southern Alps from the across the lagoon are second to none. In the afternoon we enjoy a walk in the hills behind the village, featuring more great views [3hrs; Grade 2]. We then head up the coast to our final stopover of Hokitika. Eat out at a local restaurant. (B/L)

Day 8 Hokitika – Christchurch

We explore the town of Hokitika and visit a pounamu (greenstone) workshop where we learn about the history and significance of pounamu to Maori from this region and indeed the whole of the country. Then we drive over the spectacular Arthur's Pass, stopping for a short walk through mountain beech forest, alpine tussock and herbfields, [2hrs; Grade 2] to stretch our legs on the way back to Christchurch and the end of the tour. We will be back in Christchurch by approximately 5 pm. (B/L)

Included in the tour package:

All prices are in New Zealand dollars and include New Zealand Goods & Services Tax of 15%. The fare includes just about everything including: 7 nights accommodation; 5 evening meals, 6 lunches, 7 breakfasts and plenty of healthy snacks in between [as indicated on the itinerary]; 2 guides; a Milford Sound overnight cruise and kayak; a West Coast jetboat ride; an Okarito Lagoon guided kayak bird watching tour; and all transport and guided hikes.

Not included in the tour price are 2 evening meals where we eat out at local restaurants; 2 lunches; wine and beer [you are welcome to BYO], and any other adventure activities you would like to do along the way, such as a scenic flight. We have indicated just some of the options in the itinerary, but the possibilities are endless!

Level of Difficulty:



Grade 1

Walks on well formed walking trails or beaches with a mostly even surface, possibly with some slopes or steps. Distances walked average 5 - 10km, with a 50-150m altitude gain. For this grade we recommend an average level of fitness.



Grade 2

Walks on well formed walking trails with some slopes or steps. There may be muddy patches, tree roots and rocks to negotiate. Distances walked average 5 - 12km, with a 150-400m altitude gain. For this grade we recommend an average level of fitness.

Testimonials

"Many thanks for a great holiday. I had a wonderful time. Your country is truly beautiful. I really appreciated your organisation, the care you took with us, the information provided, the great food and terrific walks and boat rides. I take pleasure in recommending you to my friends and others. All the best in the future."

Sue Rawlinson, Australia, Mar 10

"Excellent weather which was a plus. Great hosts, well organised trip. We were made to feel at home in New Zealand. Plenty of food. Local knowledge and stories were an important part of our journey. Would recommend this trip to anyone."

Yvonne & Freeman Puckridge, Australia, Mar 10

"Joyce and John, What more can I say - wonderful hosts, best toilets ever, fabulous food and of course the wine. It is so beautiful and so many wonderful places to see and photograph. Each day has brought one surprise after another. My memories are filled with tremendous enjoyment. Many thanks for such a special time with such a lovely group of people and friends for the future. I will be back, Cheers."

Annette Houghton, Australia, Jan 10

"To Joyce and John, Many thanks for a most memorable slice of my introduction to New Zealand. You were incredibly warm and knowledgeable hosts, and this has been such a jolly crew, due in large part to your skill at managing our adventures."

Janet McLennan, USA, Nov 09