

## **THE BEST OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

### **Day 1 - Arrive Melbourne**

Transfer to your hotel.

This afternoon, you will be met by your guide for a afternoon / evening sightseeing tour of Melbourne.

General sightseeing of City, with St Kilda if time permits. Visit Cooks cottage, the historic cottage of the famous explorer, Captain James Cook & before dinner, the guide will take the clients to the Eureka tower a look at Melbourne from highest platform in the southern Hemisphere. Drop off at the tram stop for late dinner aboard the historical Colonial Tramcar dining restaurant.

20:35 Tram stop no. 125 Normamby Road, Corner of the Clarendon Street  
Join the Colonial Tramcar at Tram Stop Number 125 Normanby Road, enjoy dinner on board the Tramcar, which offers diners an enjoyable perspective whilst travelling through Melbourne's leafy boulevards and past best attractions.

### **Day 2 - Melbourne**

\* Please note : as tour departs prior to sunrise it can be extremely cold depending on the time of year, so layered clothing is recommended which can be removed as the day warms up. Wear clothes as for hiking, sturdy shoes, warm socks, a cap and sunglasses, and don't forget your camera!

04:00 You will be met by your guide for a Half day ballooning tour across the Yarra Valley.

14:00 This afternoon, you will be met by your guide for your evening tour to Phillip Island.  
From the city you by-pass Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs before driving through beef and dairy cattle farms, horse breeding studs and swampland. A home made afternoon tea will be enjoyed on route before you pass through an interesting valley that's home to the world's longest earth worm. As you skirt Westernport and views of French Island we cross over the bridge to Phillip Island.  
Recognised as a world leader for environmental conservation, Phillip Island's sandy and rocky shorelines team with wildlife including over 200 species of birds. Time permitting you can view the local fisherman cleaning their catch of the day whilst battling amongst the fight of gulls and pelicans.  
Have a quick distant view of Churchill Island, home to Victoria's oldest garden and crop of wheat. On Phillip Island's northern side, look out for masked lapwings, spoonbills, ibis, herons and black swans. You then visit the south-side and check out some local surfers on a pristine beach overlooking the highest point of the island.  
It's now time to visit the Koala Conservation Centre. This is one of the few areas in Victoria where you can see a protected koala colony. Walk amongst the treetops in nature reserve bushland and see wild koalas within touching distance! You may spot a wild wallaby or two as well. Time permitting we pass Swan Lake, the island's largest fresh water lake, and head to the Nobbies. From this magnificent headland, the views stretch over Mornington Peninsula and Bass Strait. One and half kilometres offshore are Seal Rocks, home to Australia's largest Australian Fur Seal colony.  
Finally you get to the Penguin Parade. Each evening at dusk Little Penguins arrive in groups on the beach after a day of fishing. See them waddle their way into the dunes where their burrow nests are situated. You have access to the less populated boardwalks enabling you to gain close contact with the penguins without any hustle and bustle. Seeing, hearing and learning about the penguin

behaviour, and their daily routines is an amazing experience.

Your evening finishes with dinner in the township of Cowes before returning to Melbourne late evening.

### **Day 3 - Melbourne**

This morning, you will be met by your guide for a full day sightseeing tour along the Great Ocean Road.

Leaving the city you head over the magnificent Westgate Bridge. This bridge offers awesome views of the Docklands, as well as a panoramic view of the city skyline. You will soon arrive at Geelong and to Corio Bay. Corio Bay is a wonderful mix of old wharves, wool stores and a fully restored 1930s sea bathing complex. See wonderful examples of century old housing and the 100 brightly painted bollards dotted around the bay depicting some of Geelong's local historic characters, each having its own story to tell.

At Torquay the Great Ocean Road starts. Known as the world's most inspiring coastal drive, follow its winding trail through the lush Otway rainforests, to the breathtaking, windswept drama of the Shipwreck Coast. For much of the way the road clings to the coastline, twisting and turning, every bend revealing a sight more spectacular than the last. At Lorne you will visit a lookout perched high on the hillside where you really get to see the Great Ocean Road from a bird like perspective. Another highlight of the day is a stop at Kennett River. In this area, high in the trees is a colony of wild koalas. See these creatures in their natural habitat, hanging from trees and looking after their young, oblivious to their human onlookers.

After lunch in Apollo Bay, you will make your way to the Shipwreck coast area of the Great Ocean Road; your first stop, The Twelve Apostles. These giant rock stacks soar from the swirling waters of the Southern Ocean and are a central feature of the spectacular Port Campbell National Park. The dramatic and imposing limestone cliffs that are the backdrop to the Apostles tower up to 70 metres, while the tallest of the rock stacks is around 45 metres high. Venturing further west you will visit Loch Ard Gorge. Your first view will be of towering cliffs, sparkling blue-green sea and a small, sandy beach. It's hard to imagine that the drama of one of Victoria's most tragic shipwrecks was played out at this very spot more than 120 years ago, giving its name to the gorge.

Travel inland through dairy farm country on the way back to the city.

### **Day 4 - Melbourne / Alice Springs**

10:20

Arrive Alice Springs

Your personal driver will greet you near the sliding glass security doors holding up a welcome board with your name on it. After introductions are complete, your driver will collect your bags and walk you to your private limousine.

Transfer to the hotel.

Depart the hotel for your half day sightseeing tour of Alice Springs.

Built on European achievements set against a backdrop of Aboriginal culture, Alice Springs is Australian most famous outback town and oasis in the desert.

Visit the Cultural Precinct, home to some of the most interesting cultural and historical attractions in Alice Springs, encompassing the natural history of the region, Aboriginal culture and the more recent European settlement, performing and visual arts. The attractions which make up the Alice Springs Cultural Precinct include: Araluen Arts Centre, Central Australian Aviation Museum, Museum of Central Australia, Albert Namatjira Gallery, Strehlow (Aboriginal) Research Centre

and Northern Territory Craft.

Visit the oldest buildings in Alice Springs, Overland Telegraph Station. Wonder in amazement at the unique medical service of the Royal Flying Doctor then step into the largest classroom in the world, School Of The Air. Stand on ANZAC Hill enjoying 360 degree panoramic views of the majestic MacDonnell Ranges and Alice Springs.

Return to your hotel in the afternoon.

#### **Day 5 - Alice Springs / Ayers Rock**

Although the landscape appears barren, your guide will point out features and landmarks that can be easily missed by the untrained eye. From the mighty Red River and Ghost gums that feature throughout this landscape, to the world's oldest river, the Finke, you'll soon realise that this part of Australia is like no other. 200km south of Alice Springs, you arrive at Erldunda, a roadhouse and highway intersection. This popular tourist rest stop takes its name from the Erldunda cattle station, originally started in 1881 by police Commissioner Mr. R Warburton.

Turning right, you now travel west along the Lasseter Highway, which takes its name from an optimistic if not tragic early explorer and gold prospector....but that's a whole other story.

Stop at the Camel Farm and learn about the impact camels had in opening up Central Australia. Camels, ideally suited to the hot, dry climate of Australia's interior, were imported in the 19th century and remained the principal means of outback transport until railways and roads were established. You have the opportunity to ride a camel (own expense).

Half way along your journey you'll call into Mount Ebenezer Roadhouse, with friendly staff and real outback hospitality. There is ample opportunity for you to explore an authentic art and craft gallery, with items hand made by residents of the local Aboriginal community.

(Lunch will be provided at either the Camel Farm or Mount Ebenezer Roadhouse)

Your next stop is a great opportunity to photograph the world's largest flat-top mountain, or "Mesa", Mount Connor. Many people travelling from Alice Springs to Ayers Rock mistake this amazing site for the real rock, from a distance it's easy to see why.

Upon arrival into Ayers Rock Resort the features of the Resort are pointed out to you before being transferred to the Longitude 131° and assisted with check-in.

Your package includes:

2 Nights at Longitude 131° in a Luxury Tent, full breakfast, lunch & dinner daily & all beverages

Once general check in & orientation is complete, the Longitude 131° staff will transfer your party to the Ayers Rock resort to commence your private afternoon Kata Tjuta tour with your drive guide.

Journey to the Kata Tjuta look-out point. Kata Tjuta is made up of 36 enormous and spectacular sandstone domes formed around 350 million years ago. Many of these areas are still subject to Aboriginal law, and are strictly off limits, as Aboriginal ceremonies are still conducted in these areas or hold special significance to the local people. One of the areas that is not subject to this prohibition but still

demands tremendous respect is Wałpa Gorge, your next Outback Private Tour Highlight.....

Step back in time and possibly hear the spirit voices as your private guided walk into Wałpa Gorge begins. The Wałpa Gorge walk follows the creek between the two 546 metre high rock domes.

Along your guided walk, you will learn about the amazing processes that occurred in nature to make up this spectacular mountainous rocky outcrop. Walking out of Wałpa Gorge, you will see the birthplace to Uluru and Kata Tjuća in the distance. As you journey through the National Park, your guide will point out special areas and features of this arid region that many visitors do not get to appreciate. Return to Longitude in time for your Table 131° Experience

Table 131° is an unforgettable dining experience not to be missed. Dine out on sumptuous outback fare and discover the wonders of the southern night sky. Experience stunning 360° views of Uluru and Kata Tjuća from the Dune Top while enjoying sunset drinks and canapés. Then feast on three delicious courses complemented with the finest Australian wines at our outdoor dining venue under the stars. Return to the Dune House for complimentary after dinner drinks.

Table 131 is subject to weather and outdoor conditions permitting. Times are seasonal and subject to sunset times which vary throughout the year.

#### **Day 6 - Ayers Rock**

Meet your guide at the Longitude 131° reception for your morning Private Red Centre Helicopter flight. You will be transferred by Longitude staff to the Ayers Rock resort to be transferred by private vehicle to the General Aviation (Ayers Rock Airport)

Enjoy the spectacular sights within the Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park from a unique perspective. After a short, but all important safety briefing after check in, you will board one of our aircraft for a 30 minute scenic flight around Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (The Olgas).

We then head towards Kings Canyon. On the way we overfly Lake Amadeus providing spectacular views of the largest dry salt lake in the Northern Territory. On your arrival at the Kings Canyon Resort our staff will transfer you to Kings Canyon in our air-conditioned coach. You will have the opportunity to do the Creek Walk which runs along the bottom of the canyon and takes approximately one hour to complete. On completion of the walk you will be returned to the helipad, once airborne we will overfly Kings Canyon to give you an aerial perspective of the Wattarka National Park.

Upon completion of the flight, your driver-guide will return you to the Ayers Rock Resort complex for your transfer back to Longitude 131°.

12:00 Enjoy a gourmet lunch or tastings plates which vary according to the season with inclusive drinks at the Dune House.

13:00 You venture west to the Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park to begin your privately guided Uluru walks. Take a leisurely stroll into the Mutitjulu watering hole, where you will learn the Aboriginal significance of this area and see Aboriginal paintings.

Take the Mala Walk as the ancient Aboriginal people did, strolling into cylindrical caves and learning the Aboriginal significance and value of this fascinating and sacred area. See the natural colour of Uluru and amazing cave formations.

From your private viewing area, you will now see a sight that has been inspiring people for thousands of years, this is the "Sunset Over The Rock". Watch Uluru light up with the evening sun and learn why Uluru changes colour.

Dining at Longitude is generally a shared experience where you can meet and enjoy the company of our outback "family" together whilst enjoying our daily changing modern Australian cuisine enhanced by indigenous flavours.

Relax over pre-dinner drinks and canapés served in the Dune House 30 minutes after returning from your tour. Then enjoy a three course dinner with chosen wines either with your fellow guests or sitting separately.

### **Day 7 - Ayes Rock / Cairns**

Arrive Cairns

**Day 8 – Cairns** You will be met by your guide in your hotel lobby for a full day Ocean Spirit Cruise. Together, you will walk to Marlin Jetty A Finger in time for the cruise departure.

Boarding commence at 08:00 for your full day cruise to Michaelmas Cay. Your cruise includes morning and afternoon tea, snorkelling equipment and semi-submersible tour. Lunch is included. Cruise concludes at approximately 5.00pm, at which time hotel drop offs will commence.

MICHAELMAS CAY - Michaelmas Cay is a picturesque reef sand island surrounded by magical coral gardens teeming with an incredible diversity of marine life. The Cay is a protected seabird sanctuary playing host to over 20,000 migratory seabirds ... one of the most important nesting sights in the Southern Hemisphere.

**OCEAN SPIRIT CRUISES** offers daily cruises to Michaelmas Cay for SNORKELLING, DIVING SAILING on Australia's magnificent Great Barrier Reef. Set Sail aboard our five star catamaran and enjoy a reef experience - a day to remember.

**Day 9 – Cairns** Full day tour at Kuranda.

Luxury touring to the discerning traveller must extend its boundaries beyond plush surrounds and extra ordinary service. This supreme day tour encapsulates these high standards and includes some of this region's true icons. When you are met at your accommodation by your driver as guide in your exclusive private coach your adventure in the tropics begins. Your first port of call is the Kuranda Scenic Railway, enjoying Gold Class Service. This is a fantastic way to take in the absolutely spectacular journey which comprises unsurpassed views of World Heritage Listed rainforest, steep ravines and picturesque waterfalls within the Barron Gorge National Park.

Your journey ends in Kuranda where your driver will be waiting to transfer you into the village. Enjoy free time to explore the famous markets and shops of quaint village before your next highlight – a return journey back to Cairns via the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, the world's most beautiful rainforest experience. Glide over the rainforest canopy and take advantage of the two stops en-route to enjoy a walk through the rainforest or visit the CSIRO Interpretive Centre.

Arriving at Caravonica, our next stop is Tjapukai Aboriginal Culture Park, a magical, mystical world dedicated to preserving and presenting authentic Aboriginal culture with the aid of technology. Theatres, a museum, an art gallery and a

traditional Aboriginal camp combine to give visitors a complete and meaningful glimpse of the rich and ancient culture. After the shows, it is time to visit Tjapukai's signature Boomerang Restaurant for lunch which offers a daily 4-5 star buffet lunch which includes a range of fish and meat dishes, healthy salads, homemade soups and breads accented with condiments, chutneys, dressings and salsas influenced by indigenous ingredients such as mountain pepper, lilli pilli, quandongs and other bush foods. All of this in your own luxury vehicle, and with a private Aussie guide. This experience of Australian offerings is sure to redefine your acceptance of the term "luxury touring".

#### **Day 10 - Cairns / Sydney**

Arrive Sydney. Transfer to your hotel.

**Day 11 – Sydney** You start the day by flying over the stunning Blue Mountains world heritage wilderness. So much of this region can really only be appreciated from the air. Cloud permitting, this low level flight takes in the Three Sisters and some of the area's most spectacular gorges.

Your first landing is at fabulous Middlebrook Station, a beautiful 11,000 acre family owned working property. Be welcomed as guests by the station owners to experience day-to-day life on a typical Australian sheep and cattle station. See first hand some of Australia's unique wildlife, enjoy a homemade morning tea in the bush and a gourmet BBQ lunch in the homestead garden.

Your second landing is in the heart of the Hunter Valley wine country where you will have the opportunity to sample some of the many fine wines of this picturesque region.

The day is not over yet! You re-board your aircraft for an extraordinarily scenic journey back to Sydney following the beautiful coastline, Sydney's famous Northern Beaches and of course the sparkling Harbour as the city lights appears.

**Day 12 – Sydney** Full day Sydney sightseeing tour.

Depart your hotel for an unforgettable Panoramic Sydney tour. This morning you'll see the historic Rocks area (Old Town of Sydney) and hear early convict history. Enjoy magnificent views of the Opera House & see Sydney Harbour Bridge. See the shopping heart of the city including the Queen Victoria Building and Centrepont Tower.

Also visit Sydney's trendy new district, Oxford Street and elegant Paddington with its terrace houses. Arrive at the famous beaches; see Tamarama, Bronte and stop at the Bondi beachfront to stroll, enjoy morning coffee or tea (at own expense). See surfers, famous Aussie lifesavers and Sydney's most spectacular panoramic viewpoint.

Return to Sydney via Sydney Heads lookout, Watsons Bay, Kings Cross & Mrs Macquaries Point for unsurpassed views of the Harbour Bridge & Opera House.

Board your Captain Cook Cruises vessel at Jetty No. 6 Circular Quay to commence a lunch cruise. Enjoy stunning views of Sydney Harbour from the upper deck, whilst enjoying an a la carte lunch on board. Cruise concludes at Circular Quay - you have the option to disembark at approximately 2.00pm .

You have just less than one hour of leisure time prior to the Opera House tour. If there is anything in particular you wish to see in Circular Quay, please advise your guide.

See inside the world's most recognisable sails. Experience this miracle of architecture and engineering. A work of art that came into existence against impossible odds - to become one of the busiest performing arts centres in the world.

Working with new, rich audio-visual components, where images are projected onto the fabric of the building - our guides will take you on an emotional journey, engrossing you in a story to rival any opera plot with its dramatic twists and turns.

You'll visit at least one of our venues - where we live performance every day. Some 1,500 performances, from opera to circus, rock and cabaret, are staged each year to audiences of around 1.5 million.

(Please note: the guide is only permitted to talk once the Opera House guide has finished talking)

At the conclusion of the Opera House Essentials tour, a transfer will be waiting for you outside the Sydney Opera House Trust for your transfer back to your accommodation.

**Day 13 - Depart Sydney** \*\*\* End of arrangements in Australia \*\*\*

### **NEW ZEALAND**

**Day 1 – Auckland** Arrive Auckland International Airport, transferred to your hotel.

Situated on a narrow isthmus between two beautiful harbours, Auckland the "City of Sails" is New Zealand's largest city with a population of over 1 million. Auckland's Waitemata Harbour, so named by the Maoris as the "sea of sparkling waters", has brought prosperity to the city. Besides being New Zealand's main shipping port Auckland is also the main terminal for overseas traffic. The warm sunny climate, with its generous and evenly distributed rainfall is ideal and there are beautiful parklands and garden reserves throughout. The many miles of coastline provides Aucklanders with the means to enjoy their favourite sport of yachting.

**Day 2 - Auckland**

09:00 am

This morning, depart in your private vehicle for a full-day sightseeing tour of Auckland. Your tour begins with a drive to the top of Mt. Eden, for a panoramic view of the city and surrounds. Then continue to the Auckland Domain, a lovely public park that contains the Auckland Museum, an imposing neo-classical building set on the highest point in the park grounds.

On arrival at the Museum, visit the Maori Display Court, which exhibits the largest collection of Polynesian artifacts in the world. During your visit of the museum, you will have time to experience the excellent displays, exhibits and memorabilia from New Zealand's participation in the two World Wars. Highlights of this area include an extremely rare and authentic Japanese Zero and a British Spitfire.

Leaving the museum, travel through the inner suburb of Parnell, restored in the old colonial style, and along the scenic waterfront for a visit to Kelly Tarlton's Underwater World and Antarctic Encounter.

On arrival, make your way through to the Antarctic Encounter to see a replica of Captain Robert Falcon Scott's 1911 Antarctic hut, built and used by Scott and his team before their fateful attempt to be the first to reach the South Pole. You then board a heated Snow Cat and enter an environment where a penguin colony lives at -7 degrees C. Finally, visit Kelly Tarlton's Underwater World for a walk through a perspex tunnel, with fish swimming above and around you.

### Day 3 - Auckland – Waitomo – Rotorua

08:00 am This morning, leave Auckland in your private vehicle, travelling south via the Southern Motorway through some of the sprawling suburbs of South Auckland and Manukau City. Then cross the Bombay Hills, an area known for its light volcanic soil thus popular for market gardening. Continue through the fertile plains of the Waikato district, renowned for its horse studs and dairy farms, to Waitomo in the King Country.

Arrive Waitomo. On arrival enjoy a visit to the Waitomo Glow-worm Caves with their fascinating limestone formations, first discovered in the 1800's. In the glow-worm grotto take a boat ride silently along an underground river beneath a canopy of lights made by the minute larvae on roof above you. Tours depart every half hour from 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Finally, travel via the Fitzgerald Glade and over the heavily forested Mamaku Ranges to Rotorua, located in the Bay of Plenty.

Rotorua is situated on a volcanic rift which stretches in a 200 km (124 mile) line from White Island, off the coast of the Bay of Plenty, to Lake Taupo and the volcanoes of the Tongariro National Park in the Central Plateau of the North Island. Rotorua is a forestry, farming and light industrial centre. The Maori culture in Rotorua contributes greatly to the attractions of this holiday city, where you can enjoy the culture and entertainment of the true Polynesian people.

06:30 pm Later this evening, you will be collected from your accommodation and transferred to Tamaki Village.

07:15 pm Please report to Tamaki Village, State Highway 5 for your traditional Maori Hangi Dinner & Cultural Performance on a local marae. Enjoy a night of truly authentic, traditional culture & entertainment. Experience the pre-European lifestyle & customs of the Maori's ancestors as the Maori Village of "Te Tawa Ngahere Pa" comes alive with tribal songs, dances and activities. Join in a time of sharing & feasting on foods cooked the traditional Maori way on hot stones in an authentic earthen oven.

### Day 4 - Rotorua

08:30 am This morning depart in your private vehicle for your sightseeing tour of Rotorua.

08:45 am Please report to the Helipro office located at Te Puia for your White Island Helicopter flight.

Words cannot express the experience that is walking on the active crater floor of White Island. This unique lunar landscape is an integral part of our Pacific ring of fire. White Island is located 52km off the Bay of Plenty Coastline and HELIPRO will take you there.

White Island (or Whakaari as it was named by the Maori before Europeans arrived) is one of New Zealand's most active volcanoes. But don't worry, the constant rumblings and large plume of steam do not mean that the island is about to explode. White Island's active volcanic vents, steaming Crater Lake, bubbling hot streams and desolate mining ruins combined create a surreal experience. You will land on the Island (subject to volcanic conditions) for a 1 hour guided tour to the crater and sulphur works.

Also, when present the sighting of Dolphins in the Pacific Ocean over which we fly



12:00 pm contrast to create an inspiring excursion. Duration: approx: 3hrs.  
On return from your flight, continue with sightseeing of Rotorua.

#### **Day 5 - Rotorua – Wellington**

08:00 am This morning depart your hotel for your journey to Wellington, travelling through plantations of pine forest to Taupo, a township located on the edge of Lake Taupo. The approach from Wairakei offers spectacular views over the town, lake and distant mountains. En route a stop is made to see the pounding Huka Falls, hukanui in Maori meaning a "great body of spray". See the waters of the Waikato River forced through a narrow gap between rocks at great force. Later, you might also like to visit the Craters of the Moon for a walk through this eerie moonscape of boiling mud and hot steam.

After travelling through Taupo township follow the shores of beautiful Lake Taupo to Turangi, located at the southern end of the lake. Then continue south to the army town of Waiouru travelling through rolling farmland to reach the Central Plateau, enjoying spectacular views of Mounts Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro, all located in the Tongariro National Park. From Waiouru continue along State Highway 1 to the rich sheep and dairy-farming district of the Manawatu, before following the idyllic Kapiti Coast to Wellington city, New Zealand's Capital City.

Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand lies at the southern end of the North Island. On the shores of a magnificent harbour and surrounded by the rugged beauty of green hills, it is one of the most scenic cities. Some of the best views are obtained from the hilltops especially from Mt Victoria lookout. The newest attraction in the "capital" is New Zealand's National Museum. Named "Te Papa" (our place) it contains a wealth of information on New Zealand's past, present and future, many interactive exhibits, multi-media database and fascinating collections. A must see while in Wellington.

#### **Day 6 - Wellington – Picton - Blenheim**

10:00 am This morning depart on a tour of Wellington, New Zealand's Capital City. Your tour includes a drive past Old St Paul's Church, a beautiful church in the colonial gothic style, and Parliament Buildings. Enjoy a drive to the summit of Mount Victoria for wonderful views of Wellington city and harbour. Later enjoy a visit to the Botanical Gardens.

01:00 pm Following the tour, you will be transferred to Wellington Ferry Terminal.

01:20 pm Final reporting time at the Wellington Interislander Ferry Terminal. Please see ferry information enclosed with your documents.

02:05 pm Depart Wellington on your Cook Strait Ferry crossing to Picton. Be sure to make your way outside (if conditions allow) as the ferry heads into the Marlborough Sounds as the sight of the Sounds, with its steep bush clad hills rising out of the sea and the heavily indented coastline, is always memorable.

05:15 pm Approximate arrival time at the Picton Ferry Terminal.

On arrival, you will be transferred to Blenheim by private vehicle. On arrival, your driver will drop you off at your accommodation.

Blenheim regularly tops the sunshine stakes and has consequently earned the title of the Sunniest Town in New Zealand. Orchards, vineyards and horticultural products benefit from the sunny climate of the Marlborough region. The country's most extensive area of grapes is planted in the Wairau Valley and has earned international acclaim. The wine trail is now established linking the various wineries of the region and is a popular attraction. Blenheims art & craft trail includes more

the 30 Marlborough craftspeople open to visitors, including weavers, artists, silk painters, bone carvers, potters and wood sculptors. The town also has two art galleries and a number of public parks and gardens.

#### **Day 7 - Blenheim - Christchurch**

09:00 am This morning, depart Blenheim to Christchurch in your private vehicle. First follow Highway 1 along the coastline to Kaikoura then continue South to Christchurch.

Christchurch is known as the "most English City outside England" or the "Garden City". The city was planned around the Canterbury Cathedral, whose 65 metre spire dominates almost any view of the city. Gothic in design, and like many of the city's buildings, the cathedral is built out of rough grey local stone. From the unique Summit Road there is a magnificent view of the Canterbury Plains, bounded on the west by the Southern Alps and on the east by Lyttelton Harbour and the Banks Peninsula.

01:00 pm On arrival, commence brief sightseeing tour of this "garden city", with its tree lined Avon River and many elegantly landscaped parks and suburbs. Your tour includes a drive past some of Christchurch's architecture, from the neogothic beauty of the Cathedral and Museum to the striking designs of the Town Hall and Arts Centre. Next, a visit is made to Mona Vale Homestead, set in a landscaped floral parkland, with a garden for every season, ducks on the river, a lily pond and a fernery. Continue to the upper Cashmere Hills for sweeping views of the city, Lyttelton Harbour, patchwork quilt Canterbury Plains and weather permitting, the Southern Alps.  
Spend the afternoon at leisure.

07:00 pm This evening, you will be collected from your accommodation and transferred to Tram Stop by private vehicle.

07:30 pm Join the Christchurch Tramway for a unique dining experience. Depart from the tram station stop in Cathedral Junction for a four course dinner, including welcome drink and tea/coffee. Enjoy your sumptuous 4 course meal in the luxury of our air-conditioned, colonial style dining tram and take in the spectacular scenery and heritage of Christchurch's picturesque central city.

#### **Day 8 - Christchurch**

08:15 am Depart Christchurch Rail Station on the TranzAlpine Train to Greymouth. The TranzAlpine is one of the best train journeys in the world. The journey heads across the Canterbury Plains, through spectacular gorges and viaducts of the Southern Alps mountain ranges, through lush green beech forest and idyllic lakes, and on to the West Coast town of Greymouth.

On arrival, depart in your private vehicle for your journey to Franz Josef Glacier township travelling south over swiftly flowing rivers and through virgin stands of native forest.

En route, pass Hokitika, which is a major centre for the working of greenstone. Hokitika is also the centre of a region that is rich in history and nearby is a wealth of native forests, lakes and rivers.

Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers. Most famous of the West Coast's attractions are the world-renowned Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers. Despite the consistent retreat throughout much of this century, the Franz Josef Glacier, like the Fox Glacier, has been on the advance since 1985. Both glaciers are a spectacular sight, located 25 kms apart in the Westland National Park, a National Park of alpine peaks, snow

fields, forests, lakes and rivers.

#### **Day 9 - Franz Josef - Queenstown**

08:30 am This morning, you will be collected from your accommodation and transferred to Helicopter Line office for your Heli Hike excursion. Please note that all flights are weather dependant. PLEASE WEAR warm upper body clothing (3 - 4 layers) leggings or light trousers and bring sunglasses, sunscreen and a waterproof jacket (one will be provided if required). Moderate fitness is required.

09:30 am Depart on your Franz Josef Glacier Heli Hike. Combine an awesome 10 minute helicopter flight over the Franz Josef Glacier with a unique guided walk amongst the ice caves, pinnacles and seracs of this pristine alpine environment. You will spend approximately 2 hours on the ice before returning by helicopter to Franz Josef. All equipment is provided (glacier boots, talonz, socks & ice axe).

01:00 pm Depart Franz Josef in your private vehicle and travel further south along the rugged West Coast to the tiny community of Haast, located on the coast where the wide Haast River meets the sea.

From Haast, turn inland and traverse State Highway 6, which offers wonderful views of the Southern Alps. The Haast Pass, linking Westland with the Southern Lakes District of Central Otago, is most dramatic, providing a sudden contrast between the lush vegetation of the west and dry tussocked Otago landscape.

Then descend to Wanaka, following the shorelines of Lakes Wanaka and Hawera. Finally, travel via the township of Cromwell and the Kawarau River to Queenstown.

Queenstown, a region of exceptional and diverse beauty, is a leading resort in the South Island, with inveterate world travellers regarding it as one of the premier scenic areas in the world. Backed by steep mountains, Queenstown lies in the curve of Lake Wakatipu at the head of its own small horse-shoe shaped bay. It is the South Island's principal resort, drawing visitors the year round with its lake and mountain scenery, exhilarating climate, changing seasons and wide range of excursion possibilities.

#### **Day 10 - Queenstown**

08:00 am You will be collected from your accommodation and transferred to The Station Building by private vehicle.

08:15 am Please report to Combo Desk, The Station Building for your Shotover Hi-Five. Catch the Shotover Jet through the canyons, and then enjoy your scenic helicopter flight to the top of the Skyline complex. Visit Skyline Complex to take in the views then play on the Luge and return to town by the gondola.

#### **Day 11 - Queenstown - Milford Sound - Queenstown**

07:30 pm You will be collected from your accommodation for Milford Sound Day Trip by private vehicle.

A memorable day! Depart Queenstown for a day of unsurpassed scenery, beginning with a drive along the shores of Lake Wakatipu. Continue through lush farmlands to Te Anau, the Gateway to the Fiordland National Park. Travel on through the beech forests of the Eglinton Valley before entering the Hollyford Valley, and descending through the Homer Tunnel into Milford Sound. During your journey, there is time for photo stops and short walks along the way.

12:30 pm Departing from the Milford Wharf Visitor Centre, enjoy an extended and leisurely two and a half hour cruise of Milford Sound with Real Journeys. There is plenty of

time to explore points of interest and to view stunning scenery, including waterfalls, rainforest and towering peaks while the onboard nature guide provides detailed interpretation in English. Following your two and a half hour nature cruise you will be returned to Milford Wharf.

03:30 pm Enjoy a scenic flight from Milford Sound to Queenstown.

### **Day 12 - Queenstown – Mt Cook - Christchurch**

8:00 am This morning depart in your coach for your journey to Christchurch via Mount Cook. Your journey begins by following the Kawarau River to the township of Cromwell. You then cross the Lindis Pass, which links northern central Otago with Mt. Cook and the Mackenzie Country. This inland route winds through some of the most evocative hill country to be found in New Zealand, with the forever-present Southern Alps splitting the South Island distinctly into west and east. Continue north to Omarama and the southern most tip of Lake Pukaki, before following the shoreline to Mt. Cook village.

12:00 pm Whilst at Mt Cook, you have the opportunity (weather permitting) to take an OPTIONAL ski plane flight high over mountainous landscapes to the Tasman Glacier. The breathtaking scenery and glacier landing is an exciting experience.

01:30 pm After your visit, depart Mt Cook for Christchurch, retracing your route along the shoreline of Lake Pukaki to Lake Tekapo, a turquoise glacial lake. A stop is made at the lake's edge to look at the simple stone Church of the Good Shepherd and nearby, the bronze sheep dog.

Continue through this windswept plateau of rolling tussock country, via the townships of Fairlie and Geraldine. The road then takes you across the patchwork quilt Canterbury Plains to Christchurch city.

### **Day 13 - Christchurch**

\*\*\* End of arrangements in New Zealand \*\*\*