

IF YOU SEEK THE BEST OF NATURAL WONDERS

 Lake Tekapo
Mackenzie

Discover it for yourself

Snow-capped mountains, star-filled skies, unique wildlife, and delicious foodie experiences await in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Savour every moment on this 10-day itinerary.

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Days 1-2: Christchurch/Akaroa

Join locals for a stroll in Christchurch's lush Botanic Gardens and delight in the reinvigorated CBD with its boutiques and eateries. Learn about the post-quake rebuild on a guided tour or hire bikes to explore the inner-city cycle paths.

Ride the Christchurch Gondola to see the patchwork of the Canterbury Plains stretch out before you. Spend a day in the little French-style coastal settlement of Akaroa, home to a unique Garden of International Significance at The Giant's House. Cruise or kayak on Akaroa Harbour to see penguins, fur seals and the endangered Hector's dolphin up close.

Days 3-4: Lake Tekapo

Take in the sweeping views of Lake Tekapo from the iconic Church of the Good Shepherd, built by the European settlers who made the rugged Mackenzie Basin their home. Soar high above the lake's turquoise waters on a flight with Air Safaris and see the Southern Alps, Aoraki Mt Cook and majestic glaciers from a birds-eye view.

As night falls, watch the wonders of the universe emerge in the inky skies of this special place, which holds International Dark Sky Reserve status. Hear the stories of the stars and see them for yourself with Ngāi Tahu's Dark Sky Project.

Day 5: Aoraki Mt Cook

Be awestruck by New Zealand's highest maunga (mountain), whether you see it from the air or surrounding National Park. Enjoy an easy alpine walk on the Hooker Valley Track complete with swing bridge crossings and glacier views, or head out on the water with the Glacier Explorer to touch the icebergs floating below New Zealand's largest glacier.

Finish your day at nearby Omarama with a visit to the otherworldly Clay Cliffs, followed by a soothing soak in the mineral waters of Omarama Hot Tubs.

Days 6-7: Oamaru

The meandering braids of the Waitaki River will lead you out to the coast and the heritage town of Oamaru with its distinctive whitestone buildings. Discover rich Victorian architecture on a walking tour and visit New Zealand's oldest public gardens, then travel forward in time to the fascinating world of Steampunk.

Sample local craft beer and cheeses, and at sunset watch 'rush-hour' as little blue penguins flock home after a busy day of fishing.

Days 8-9: Dunedin

Head south to Moeraki and marvel at the ancient spherical boulders strewn on the beach, looking like a giant's game of marbles. Explore Dunedin's rich Scottish heritage on a city walking tour as well as its vibrant street art and galleries.

Step back in time at historic Larnach Castle and Toitū Otago Settlers Museum. If you seek once-in-a-lifetime natural wonders, the Otago Peninsula is the place to visit the world's only mainland breeding colony of Northern Royal Albatross, as well as fur seals and New Zealand penguins.

Day 10: Queenstown

Bring your time in New Zealand to a spectacular close as you cross the landscapes of Central Otago wine country into Queenstown. Sample the best of three leading wineries on a progressive lunch with Alpine Wine Tours or try a half-day wine tour by e-bike with Nomad Safaris.

