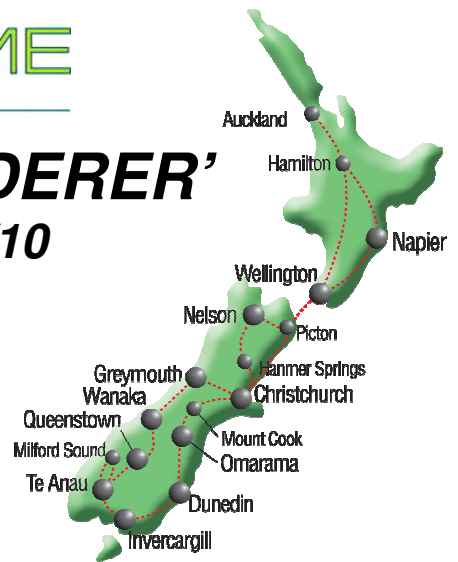


# 18 DAY SOUTH ISLAND 'WANDERER'

Departure Dates: 06/04/10, 1/09/10, 28/11/10



## Day 1 HOME CITIES – WELLINGTON (D)

Welcome aboard! Today we begin our South Island Tour with collections in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Taupo and Napier (only as required) en-route to our first nights accommodation in Wellington.

## Day 2 WELLINGTON – NELSON (BD)

Travelling to the Interisland Ferry Terminal in our Nations Capital City we board the ship for the **3 hour cruise across the Cook Strait into Queen Charlotte Sounds** (New Zealand's only true Sounds) to Picton, our first town that we will visit in the South Island. Picton is a small seaport at the head of the Queen Charlotte Sound offering a relaxed setting with beautiful beaches, easy bush walks and an outstanding climate. In the 1850's they talked of making it New Zealand's capital. ("So glad they didn't," the locals murmur). Now it has the best of both worlds, with award-winning restaurants and tourism activities together with the simplest of pleasures for all the family. From Picton we head inland through to **Pelorous Bridge**. Here we can walk through the Beech and Podocarp Forest as well as view the many sculptured **boulder's in the Pelorous River**. Continuing on for a tour of Nelson – this being our first city of New Zealand.

## Day 3 NELSON – CHRISTCHURCH (BD)

Passing **Brightwater, the birth place of Lord Rutherford, the New Zealand science pioneer who split the atom**, we travel through the Golden Downs Forest to Murchison viewing the Maruia Falls through the Maruia Forest over the Lewis Pass then into **Hanmer Springs** where there is time to soak in the mineral pools, (at own expense) before joining the upper reaches of the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch where **we enjoy the sights of the 'Garden City'** also known as "the most English city outside of England", en-route to our accommodation.

## Day 4 CHRISTCHURCH – GREYMOUTH (BD)

From Christchurch we have the option (at own cost) to traverse the Southern Alps aboard the famous Tranz-Alpine rail journey to Arthur's Pass. From your carriage you'll see the fields of the Canterbury Plains and farmland, followed by the spectacular gorges and river valleys of the Waimakariri River. The train then climbs into the Southern Alps. Once we have crossed into the Southern Alps we are met at the **Village of Arthur's Pass** by our coach for us to continue our journey to the West Coast **via the Otira Viaduct** opened in 1999. 'The Coast' as locals call it, is one of the world's special places, with mind-blowing topography. Ancient uplifts of the earth's crust created the impressive vertical ramparts of the main divide of the Southern Alps. These cloud-piercing mountains rise within 30km of a breathtaking coast. Five of our national parks are here, and South West New Zealand has been declared a World Heritage Area. We continue northward along the Coast to visit the **pancake rocks at Punakaiki** – these sedimentary rocks have been hammered by the sea, and wind erosion forming layered rocks giving a look of a large stack of pancakes, then return to our overnight accommodation in Greymouth.

## Day 5 GREYMOUTH – WANAKA (BD)

Our first stop this morning is at Hokitika where a **visit is made to the Greenstone and Glass Blowing factories** before continuing further south into the Westland National Park, the **home of Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers**. On arrival, time is available for optional scenic flights. Driving towards the southern end of the

South Island's West Coast Road, there is a strong sense of entering a primeval land, and a feeling of total isolation. Arriving at Haast, you are surrounded by a landscape of rainforest, wetlands, sand dunes and surf-pounded shingle beaches. This wilderness forms part of the **South West New Zealand World Heritage Area**, so designated because South Westland and Fiordland have some of the most dramatic forest and mountain scenery and natural resources in the world.

## Day 6 WANAKA – QUEENSTOWN (B)

From the Westland National Park we travel through the Haast River valleys and over the Haast Pass to Makaroa and onto the upper reaches of Lake Wanaka. Travelling past **Lake Hawea** we reach the **popular Lake Wanaka**, the starting point of the mighty Clutha River. This afternoon we travel via Cromwell following the Kawarau Gorge Road into historic Arrowtown – a quaint town away from the hustle and bustle with plenty of shops and historic remains from the Gold Rush days. Once in Queenstown **we enjoy an orientation tour of 'the town fit for a Queen' – Queenstown**. Queenstown has so many fine restaurants and dining options so the next 2 nights are free for you to explore the local restaurants, cafes and bars, or perhaps you'd like to take a cruise across Lake Wakatipu on the steamer 'TSS Earnslaw' to Walter Peak Station to dine at the Colonel's Homestead.

## Day 7 QUEENSTOWN (B)

**Today is at leisure**. Visit the Remarkable's or Coronet Peak. Experience the thrill of a jet-boat ride along the Shotover or Kawarau Rivers. Perhaps a scenic 4 wheel drive excursion through Skippers Canyon, or a tour to Glenorchy to visit Lord of the Rings movie sites, or maybe just browse in the many shops and galleries - it's up to you.

## Day 8 QUEENSTOWN – MILFORD SOUND – TE ANAU (BD)

Leaving Queenstown we skirt the shores of Lake Wakatipu, New Zealand's third largest lake, **alongside the towering Remarkables Ranges**. We then travel via the **beautiful Eglinton Valley** climbing to the Homer Tunnel before descending through to the spectacular Cleddau Canyon to reach **Milford Sound where we enjoy a cruise of the Sound**. The Sound is dominated by the grandeur of **Mitre Peak and the Bowen Falls**. Returning to Te Anau, to our overnight accommodation.

## Day 9 TE ANAU – INVERCARGILL (BD)

Travelling the **Southern Scenic Route to Invercargill**, we travel through Riverton on the shores of the Aparima River. Now a sea side resort and farming town, the former whaling station maintains its links with the sea. Scores of fishing boats and pleasure craft string along the jetties lining the South Bank. Continuing on **we visit the Queens Gardens and Southland Art Gallery and Museum** before arriving at our accommodation in Invercargill where we stay for the next two nights.

**Day 10 INVERCARGILL - BLUFF - INVERCARGILL (B)**

This morning we travel to Bluff. As an option we board the catamaran to Stewart Island. On arrival we have an escorted tour of the main island with one of the local identities. After the tour we visit the local D.O.C. Office. Those not choosing the Stewart Island option, today is at leisure in Invercargill.

**Day 11 INVERCARGILL – DUNEDIN (BD)**

Heading north we travel through some of New Zealand's most sheep populated areas through Gore, Balclutha and to the coast arriving in Dunedin – "**The Edinburgh of the South – Dunedin**". This afternoon we take in the **sights of this old Scottish City, including the historic Railway Building, the First Church of Otago, the Octagon, and the Otago University.**

**Day 12 DUNEDIN (B)**

**Today is at leisure.** Choose from the many optional activities that Dunedin has to offer. Perhaps a visit to Olveston House, a Jacobean style home filled with early New Zealand paintings and antiques, or Cadbury World - a sensation in sight, smell and sound. Experience the mystique of a working chocolate factory, sample and purchase Cadbury products and much more, or perhaps this afternoon join the Taieri Gorge Train excursion to the extremities of Dunedin City some sixty kilometres from the station, your coach captain will be happy to assist you with your choices.

**Day 13 DUNEDIN – OMARAMA (BD)**

Departing Dunedin we travel north to view the extraordinary spherical **Moeraki Boulders**, shaped rather like giant marbles. Then onto Oamaru - here we have time to look at the '**White Stone City**'. The old buildings have been constructed with local limestone. It was from Oamaru that New Zealand's first frozen meat was shipped in 1882 taking over three months to reach England, and thus began New Zealand's most important export industry. Travelling inland through Benmore and Otematata through sailors cutting we arrive at Omarama.

**Day 14 OMARAMA – CHRISTCHURCH (BD)**

A day for spectacular sights. We head north to skirt the shore of Lake Pukaki to **Mount Cook, New Zealand's highest mountain.** Time is available to enjoy an optional scenic flight over the ancient rivers of ice and the West Coast Glaciers (weather permitting – a highly recommended option). Travelling to Tekapo we witness the **magnificent blue waters of Lake Tekapo.** Here we visit the **Church of the Good Shepherd and the statue of the Collie dog**, before travelling the **vast Mackenzie Basin**, over Burke's Pass through Fairlie, Geraldine, and Ashburton and across the Canterbury Plains into Christchurch.

**Day 15 CHRISTCHURCH (B)**

Today we get the feel of this 'English City' with a **sightseeing tour of Christchurch City.** Our first visit being to the **Canterbury Museum**, where we learn about the history and geography of the area. Other sights include **Christ College, Hagley Park, and the Art Centre, with a stop at Brighton Beach** for a walk along the pier. This afternoon is free for you to enjoy the Garden City. Try a punt ride along the Avon River, or a Tram Ride through the streets of Christchurch, climb to the top of the Cathedral for outstanding views of the city or just relax at our accommodation.

**Day 16 CHRISTCHURCH – PICTON (BD)**

Departing Christchurch we continue on our northward journey through Kaikoura **viewing the seals basking on the rocks at the Ohau Point Colony** and along the rugged coastline passing Lake Grassmere salt works. On our arrival there is time for a tour of Blenheim showing us the highlights of this lovely city including a visit to sample some of the **local arts, crafts and wines** before we continue to Picton for the night.

**Day 17 PICTON – NAPIER (D)**

This morning rise early to board the Interislander back to the North Island with breakfast on board the ferry at your cost. The **Interislander cruises through the Queen Charlotte and Marlborough Sounds** to cross Cook Strait and on to Wellington. **On arrival we tour this, our Capital City.** It is a complete contrast to the sprawling urban mass of most other cities. Wellington is a visitor friendly, upbeat, compact city which can claim to be the world's southernmost Capital, then on to Napier for our last night **enjoying a farewell dinner together.**

**Day 18 NAPIER – HOME CITIES (B)**

Our last morning together. Travelling north we say goodbye to fellow travellers as we drop off on the way back to Auckland, keeping with us the fond memories of new acquaintances and lasting images of the beautiful South Island.

**TOUR INCLUSIONS:**

- 17 nights motel accommodation, twin/double rooms, (single rooms available with surcharge) all with private facilities
- Tour Admissions as per itinerary
- Breakfasts (B), and Dinners (D) where indicated on the itinerary
- Complimentary Travel Bag and Map
- Touring in modern air conditioned tour coach
- Roadside Morning Teas – where possible

**TOUR PAYMENTS PER PERSON:**

- Share Twin Accommodation \$2995.00
- Single Supplement Extra \$1395.00
- Deposit due at time of booking \$100.00
- Balance of tour payment due 6 weeks prior to tour departure date