



# 25 DAY COMPREHENSIVE SOUTH ISLAND TOUR

April 22<sup>nd</sup> – May 16<sup>th</sup> 2010

Day 1 Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2010

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 Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2010

WELLINGTON – KAIKOURA (BD)

Today our South Island Tour really begins as **we cruise the Wellington Harbour out onto Cook Strait** aboard the Interislander and through New Zealand's only true sounds, the **picturesque Marlborough Sound into Picton**. Reboarding our coach from Picton we tour through the wine area of Blenheim, the largest town in the Marlborough region and New Zealand's largest grape growing and wine making region. From here we continue on passing **Lake Grassmere salt works** and arrive where the "Mountains meet the sea" in Kaikoura.

Day 3 Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010

KAIKOURA - CHRISTCHURCH (BD)

Today we have optional whale watching in Kaikoura before we continue south travelling the scenic route through to Kaiapoi, and into Christchurch. Christchurch is New Zealand's English city, the largest city in the South Island of New Zealand. To the west and north of Christchurch stretches the majestic Canterbury Plains, a flat alluvial plain cut by many braided rivers. It's a vibrant, cosmopolitan place with exciting festivals, theatre, art galleries, great shopping and award winning attractions.

Day 4 Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010

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 5 Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010

CHRISTCHURCH – HANMER SPRINGS – GREYMOOUTH (BD)

Travelling north passing the newly planted grapes of the North Canterbury Plains we **visit Hanmer Springs**. Time

for a soak in the warm mineral pools (own expense). Moving on we traverse the **Southern Alps** over the **Lewis Pass** and Rahu Saddle to Reefton. In August 1888, at the height of the gold rush, Reefton turned on electric street lighting before any other town in the Southern Hemisphere. We pass through several small townships before reaching Greymouth to **visit Shanty Town** - New Zealand's West Coast's living heritage featuring wonderful true stories and engaging, interactive activities make Shantytown one of New Zealand's premier cultural and heritage experiences. We then continue on to Hokitika, which is the gateway to the South Westland World Heritage National Park. The Arahura River, 5 miles north of Hokitika, is a traditional source of pounamu (greenstone) for the Maori people and still yields a large portion of the Coast's continuing supply.

Day 6 Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2010

GREYMOOUTH (B)

Today we continue **travelling through lush bush to view Lake Kanieri** and also the **Stanley Graham monument at Kowhitirangi** – an important part of West Coast history. This afternoon we have time to **visit other West Coast attractions including greenstone, gold and glass blowing factories**.

Day 7 Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010

GREYMOOUTH – HAAST (BD)

Today we travel through canopy rainforests past **South Westland's scenic lakes to the Franz Josef Glacier before traversing the Waikukupa Hill and Omoeroa and Cook Saddles to the Cook River Flats and the Fox Glacier**. We have the option at Franz Josef Glacier to experience a Helicopter Flight over the Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers. Following lunch, which is provided today, we travel on until we reach the rugged coastline at Haast where we spend the night.

Day 8 Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2010

HAAST – QUEENSTOWN (BD)

There are plenty of stops today for photo opportunities as we travel through the Haast River valleys and Haast Pass. Once in Otago the scenery changes dramatically to large glacial valleys and lakes. After a short break at Wanaka we travel to Cromwell before entering the Kawarau Gorge and visit the bungy platform before arriving in **Arrowtown and its various historic**

**attractions. This evening we take a cruise across Lake Wakatipu on the steamer TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station to dine at the Colonel's Homestead.**

**Day 9 Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2010**

**QUEENSTOWN (B)**

**Today is at leisure** and you have the chance to experience some of the many activities and sightseeing tours available. 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. Your Coach Captain will be happy to assist you with any information regarding bookings.

**Day 10 Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010**

**QUEENSTOWN – MILFORD SOUND - TE ANAU(BD)**

Leaving Queenstown we skirt the shores of Lake Wakatipu, New Zealand's third largest lake. We travel through Te Anau and **Fiordland National Park via the beautiful Eglinton Valley and climb to the Homer Tunnel, descend through the spectacular Cleddau Canyon to reach Milford Sound. Enjoy a cruise on the Sound**, which is dominated by the grandeur of Mitre Peak and the Bowen Falls.

**Day 11 Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2010**

**TE ANAU – DOUBTFUL SOUND – TE ANAU (BLD)**

Today we board our coach to travel to Lake Manapouri for what will be the highlight of our tour. **Cruising across Lake Manapouri** we reach West arm to board a **bus to cross the 647 m high Wilmot Pass to Doubtful Sound where we cruise to the Hall Arm to discover the "sounds" of silence.** Here dolphins and penguins usually play around the boat while you experience being back to nature. This short interlude with nature will leave a lasting memory. On returning to shore we retrace our journey back to **West Arm to travel underground to see the Powerhouse** hand hewn out of granite rock one kilometre down.

**Day 12 Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2010**

**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 13 Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**INVERCARGILL – BLUFF – INVERCARGILL (STEWART ISLAND OPTION) (BD)**

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. After the tour we visit

the local D.O.C. Office. For those not choosing the Stewart Island option, after our tour to Bluff the rest of the day is at leisure in Invercargill.

**Day 14 Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**INVERCARGILL – DUNEDIN (BD)**

Today we travel **the southern scenic route via the Catlins.** This route has such **diverse native bush reserve, petrified forests, wildlife, and water falls. We also travel through some of the South's last bastion of Podocarp Forest** before rejoining the main road to Dunedin. Tonight we dine with a decidedly Scottish air **enjoying the Haggis presentation** and dinner at the hotel.

**Day 15 Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**DUNEDIN (B)**

**This morning we tour the Edinburgh of the South – Dunedin City.** First we **visit Olveston House**, a Jacobean style home filled with early New Zealand paintings and antiques. Continuing we pass the Botanical Gardens and visit Baldwin Street the world's steepest street. This afternoon as an option perhaps visit the Dunedin Cadbury factory or join the Taieri Gorge Train excursion to the extremities of Dunedin City, or perhaps take a tour of the Otago Peninsular including a visit to Larnach Castle.

**Day 16 Friday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**DUNEDIN – ALEXANDRA (BD)**

Departing Dunedin we **tour through Lawrence** visiting the historic buildings and gold fields before moving on to **visit Roxburgh and the Dam. We tour on to Alexandra**, one of New Zealand's hottest places in summer. Locals and tourists flock here to relax amongst the rocky Central Otago mountains. It is the largest town on the Clutha River. We tour through to Clyde, to visit the Clyde Dam and the historic town of Clyde, before arriving at our accommodation.

**Day 17 Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**ALEXANDRA – OMARAMA (BD)**

We begin touring the **diverse Maniototo countryside** with its rocky tors. We **visit the Blue Lake at St Bathans**, before travelling **on to Naseby, the home of the International Curling Centre.** Travelling on we **visit McCraes gold mining area** then to Palmerston and Oamaru. We then travel inland and follow the Waitaki Valley past giant hydro dams and power schemes journeying through the Mackenzie Country.

**Day 18 Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**OMARAMA – MOUNT COOK - CHRISTCHURCH (BD)**

Today we **view the majestic alpine scenery of Aoraki (Mount Cook), National Park with its main focal point towering above us of Mt. Cook.** Time is available to enjoy an optional scenic flight over the ancient rivers of ice and the West Coast Glaciers, (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 on to Cave and then to Timaru. Heading north heading inland to Geraldine, home to many craft food and hobby outlets before once again joining State Highway 1 back into Christchurch, along the vast Canterbury Plains.

**Day 19 Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**CHRISTCHURCH – AKAROA (B)**

Today we tour to Akaroa, a tranquil historical French town nestled on Banks Peninsula. Admire the French architecture and street names as we walk through the historic town. We return to Christchurch via Gebbies Pass and Summit Road to view the many views of the Canterbury Plains and Lyttleton Harbour to the **famous "Sign of the Takahē"** nestled on the Cashmere Hills.

**Day 20 Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**CHRISTCHURCH – WESTPORT (BD)**

As an optional extra today we have the opportunity of travelling on the Tranz Alpine Train journey from Christchurch to Arthurs Pass. The TranzAlpine scenic train journey travels between Christchurch and Greymouth, from one coast of New Zealand to the other. 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. Those not taking up this option, will continue on along the Canterbury Plains, climbing Porters Pass into the vast hinterland where spectacular views can be had of the many ski fields in the area. We then meet up with the train travellers at Arthurs Pass. Traversing the Southern Alps via the Arthurs Pass we descent into the Otira Gorge area before descending through lush beech rain forest of the West Coast passing Lake Brunner and out to the Coast. Travelling the coastal highway we visit **Punakaiki and the famous "Pancake Rocks"** –formations of limestone sculpture formed over time by erosion to create blowholes. We then continue to travel through the **Paparua National Park** to Westport.

**Day 21 Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**WESTPORT – KARAMEA - WESTPORT (BLD)**

Today we **visit Denniston with a local historian, to view the museum** in remembrance of the historic incline. Moving on we view the various coalfields in the area as well as train loading facilities at Ngakawau. Today we have **lunch at the Karamea Hotel**. We also **visit Kohaihai the "Start or Finish" of the Heaphy Track**. Time allows for a **bushwalk across the swingbridge into a sub tropical forest**. We return to our accommodation in Westport.

**Day 22 Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**WESTPORT - NELSON (BD)**

This morning we wind our way around the lower Buller bush-clad gorge featuring Hawks Crag to Inangahua Junction and the Upper Buller Gorge to Murchison. Onwards to Kawatiri Junction we view the **Interpretation Panels on "The Nelson Rail Network"**. We then cross the Buller River one last time before visiting Lake Rotoiti

at St Arnaud in the Nelson Lakes region. We travel through the Golden Downs Forest following and crossing the Motueka River passing **Brightwater, the birth place of Lord Rutherford**, the man on our \$100:00 notes. From here we continue into Nelson, New Zealand's first City for the next two nights.

**Day 23 Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**NELSON (B)**

Today we **tour the rich apple growing areas of Richmond, Mapua, Tasman and Redwood Valley to Motueka** and then on to Kaiteiteri Beach, a hidden jewel in the top of the South Island, we cross the Takaka Hills to visit the Waikorupupu Springs, and Collingwood. Touring back before following the coastline back to Nelson.

**Day 24 Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**NELSON – WELLINGTON (BD)**

Today we continue our journey to **Picton and Waikawa Bay and Marinas** to board the Interislander and once again cruise the Queen Charlotte Sound leaving the mainland to Wellington Harbour. Wellington is a visitor friendly, upbeat, compact city which can claim to be the world's southernmost Capital. We then travel on to Wellington for our last night together.

**Day 25 Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

**WELLINGTON – HOME CITIES (B)**

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

#### TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- 24 nights quality accommodation, double/twin bed rooms with private facilities
- Baggage Assistance at each hotel
- All tour admissions as per the itinerary
- Breakfasts (B), Lunches (L) and Dinners (D) where indicated on the daily itinerary
- 2 Special Meals including: Walter Peak Dinner at the Colonels Homestead, and Haggis Ceremony – Dunedin
- 4 Scenic Boat Cruises including: The Cook Strait and Queen Charlotte Sounds, TSS Earnslaw Cruise on Lake Wakatipu, Milford Sounds, Lake Manapouri and Doubtful Sounds Cruise
- Touring in modern air conditioned Coach
- Complimentary Travel Bag and Map
- Roadside Morning Teas – where possible

#### TOUR PAYMENTS PER PERSON:

- Share Twin Accommodation \$4995.00
- Single Supplement Extra \$1755.00
- Deposit due at time of booking \$100.00
- Balance of tour payment due 6 weeks prior to tour commencement.