



# MACKINNON Winter Tour (ASI14W)

## Stray Journeys South Island Itinerary

**Start:** Christchurch

**Finish:** Christchurch

**Duration:** 14 days/13 nights

**Departs:** Tuesdays & Thursdays

*NB. Stray Journeys Winter Itinerary valid 5 May – 4 October 2019.*

### DAY 1: Christchurch to Kaikoura

Haere mai (welcome)! Your adventure begins when we depart from the Christchurch International Airport this morning and enjoy a beautiful drive up the coast to seaside Kaikoura. You have the afternoon free for activities to check out the amazing marine wildlife that call this area home. Go on a whale and dolphin spotting tour, search for seals sunning themselves at Goose Bay or walk to the peninsula lookout for breathtaking views.

**Accommodation included:** Warm modern hostel

**Optional activities:** Whale watching by boat or by plane, swimming with dolphins, guided fishing trip

**Free activities:** Walk around the peninsula and up to the lookout

### DAY 2: Kaikoura to Picton

Leaving Kaikoura this morning, we wind our way up the rugged coastal roads for the top of the South Island. We arrive into Picton around midday so you have plenty of time to explore this charming port town – go for a walk to take in the stunning views of the Marlborough Sounds or kick back and relax in the spa at your accommodation.

**Accommodation included:** Cosy villa

**Free activities:** Walks and hikes, relax in the accommodation's spa pool

### DAY 3: Picton to Marahau (Abel Tasman)

Enjoy a free morning to relax and explore Picton. There's time for you to take advantage of the free fishing gear and bikes on offer from the accommodation. You will meet your group at midday and we will cruise through the famous Marlborough vineyard area and the coastal town of Nelson on the way to our amazing overnight stop of Marahau, right on the edge of the Abel Tasman National Park.

**Accommodation included:** Unique accommodation on the edge of the national park

**Optional activities:** Wine tasting

### DAY 4: Marahau (Abel Tasman)

You have the entire day free to explore this stunning coastal national park renowned for its golden sand beaches. An Aqua Taxi ride is included in your tour, but you are welcome to upgrade to sailing or kayaking. Hike, sail, kayak or skydive – Abel Tasman National Park is gorgeous no matter which option you choose.

**Accommodation included:** Unique accommodation on the edge of the national park.

**Activities included:** Walk part of the Abel Tasman track and catch an Aqua Taxi home.

**Optional activities:** Full day sailing trip, kayaking, skydiving, swim

## **DAY 5: Marahau (Abel Tasman) to Franz Josef**

Buckle up for an awesome day driving down the incredibly scenic 'wild' West Coast, an area known for its untamed beaches and spectacular rainforest. We'll pass through Buller Gorge and down a stretch of road that was labelled one of the top ten drives in the world by Lonely Planet. We'll view the seal colony at Cape Foulwind before continuing further down the coast to the geographic wonder of Punakaiki's Pancake Rocks and blowholes. Here we'll take a walk around these unique limestone rock formations and stop for a bite of lunch. Our next stop is the historic gold mining town of Greymouth to collect passengers connecting from Christchurch. From here we'll continue on, via Hokitika, to the quaint township of Franz Josef, home to the mighty Franz Josef Glacier.

**Accommodation included:** Lodge in the middle of the rainforest

**Free activities:** Buller Gorge, Cape Foulwind Seal Colony, Pancake Rocks and Blow holes, Hokitika greenstone store

## **DAY 6: Franz Josef**

Enjoy a full free day to explore the glacier. Live your glacier walking dream with a guided tour through a world of ice on the glacier or hike from town to view it from below, then unwind in the relaxing spa pools afterwards.

**Accommodation included:** Lodge in the middle of the rainforest

**Optional activities:** Guided Glacier Heli-hike, Glacier Valley Walk Free Activities: Any of the good bush walks in the area

## **DAY 7: Franz Josef to Wanaka**

Depart early to take a walk along the shores of the amazing mirror-like Lake Matheson, and then travel through the mountainous Haast Pass and Makarora with plenty of photo stops along the way. We pass by the beautiful Lake Hawea on our way to arrive in Wanaka by late afternoon.

**Accommodation included:** Central hostel

**Free activities:** Lake Matheson walk, Ship Creek walk, Blue Pools walk, Thunder Creek Falls walk, explore Wanaka

## **DAY 8: Wanaka to Queenstown**

This morning, head out to cycle some of New Zealand's most beautiful bike paths along the lake before we depart Wanaka and cruise down to the famous original A.J. Hackett bungy site, where you can take the plunge - if you dare! Then, it's on to the 'Adventure Capital of the World!' Queenstown offers an optional big (make that huge) night out with a variety of excellent restaurants, pubs and live music.

**Accommodation included:** Central hostel

**Included activities:** Scenic bike ride around the lake (suitable for all levels)

## **DAY 9: Queenstown**

With so much to see and do in and around Queenstown, you need three full days to take it all in! To get you started, a couple highlight activities are included in your package. Today, you'll take an exhilarating jet boat ride amongst breathtaking scenery in the morning and then have the afternoon free for more Queenstown fun.

**Accommodation included:** Central hostel

**Activities included:** Jet boat ride

## **DAY 10: Queenstown**

Depart early on a day long trip to the jaw dropping Doubtful Sound in stunning Fiordland National Park, where you'll take a three hour wilderness cruise and learn more about this incredible natural wonder. You will return to Queenstown in the evening. Lunch is not included (you can purchase sandwiches and snacks on the day), so make sure you bring lunch, snacks and water.

**Accommodation included:** Central hostel

**Activities included:** Doubtful Sound day trip

## **DAY 11: Queenstown**

Make the most of your final free day doing any of the other incredible activities on offer or further exploring Queenstown. If you haven't already, we recommend riding the gondola or walking to the top of the hill for spectacular views of the town, lake and surrounding mountains.

**Accommodation included:** Central hostel

**Optional activities:** Any adventure activity that we mad Kiwis can dream up (bungy, swing, jetboating, skydiving, mountain biking, zipline, horse riding...), trip to Milford Sound

## **DAY 12: Queenstown to Aoraki/Mt Cook**

Depart Queenstown early to drive over the Lindis Pass through the beautiful Mackenzie Country and past the vivid blue waters of Lake Pukaki. Then, we head north to our amazing stop at the base of New Zealand's highest mountain Aoraki/Mt Cook, arriving in the early afternoon.

**Accommodation included:** Stunning alpine lodge

**Optional activities:** Visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre, scenic flights, 4WD Tasman Valley tour

**Free activities:** Take photos of awe-inspiring scenery, do one of the many great short walks to the Hooker Glacial Lake

## **DAY 13: Mt Cook (via Tekapo) to Rangitata**

Leaving Mt Cook, we make our way through a landscape made famous in the Lord of the Rings films. We'll stop to admire the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo and the Church of the Good Shepherd – a famous photo stop. Relax in the Tekapo hot pools, go snow tubing or ice skating or hike up to the Mt John observatory where you'll witness stunning views of the lake from above. After lunch, we will continue to our overnight stop in Rangitata Peel Forest. Tonight, we'll stay in one of Canterbury's original sheep stations.

**Accommodation included:** One of Canterbury's original sheep stations

**Optional activities:** Tekapo Hot Springs, Ice skating (April-Sept), Snow tubing (June-Sept)

**Free activities:** Visit Lake Tekapo, Mt John walk, Rangitata forest walks

## **DAY 14: Rangitata to Christchurch**

This morning, you will have the opportunity to sign up to a Lord of the Rings tour or to explore the stunning Peel Forest scenery on horseback. We'll arrive in Christchurch late afternoon, where your tour comes to an end - we hope you had a blast on your New Zealand journey!

**Optional paid activities:** LOTR tour, horse trekking

**Free activities:** Explore Christchurch by foot, check out the Cardboard Cathedral and inner-city street art

## **What's Included:**

- Experienced tour guide
- 13 nights' accommodation
- Multi-share accommodation (or upgrade to twin/double/single)

## **Free Activities:**

- Aqua Taxi ride, Abel Tasman
- Scenic bike ride, Wanaka
- Jet boat ride, Queenstown
- Day trip to Doubtful Sound

## **What to Bring:**

- Camera
- Sturdy walking shoes/boots
- Warm clothing
- Waterproof jacket
- Hat & sunscreen
- Bathers/towel
- Water bottle
- Toiletries
- Motion sickness tablets
- Insect repellent

## Notes:

- Standard accommodation is **dorm share** in hostels, cabins and lodges
- Upgrades to twin/double and private rooms are available subject to availability
- Luggage is limited one backpack, bag or case per person with a maximum weight of 15kg plus a day pack
- Trips are not suited to children aged 6 years or under. 7 – 17 year old's may travel if accompanied by a parent or legal guardian
- A basic level of fitness is required for medium length walks

This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over New Zealand's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.