

South Island Great Walks Explorer

9 - 18 February 2022

9 nights

TOUR OVERVIEW

Have you always wanted to explore New Zealand's Great Walks but been put off by the thought of carrying a heavy pack or staying in DOC huts? This is your chance to walk parts of the famous 'Great Walks', the Milford, Kepler and Routeburn tracks, while carrying only a day pack and with the comforts of beautiful lodgings along the way. On this South Island adventure, you will experience the dramatic landscapes and magnificent wilderness of Fiordland National Park and the majesty of Aoraki Mt Cook National Park. Additional walks include the Sam Summers loop in Queenstown and Mount John near Lake Tekapo. This is the year to enjoy some of the finest walks in the world in while they are less crowded.



TOUR INCLUSIONS

- The services of an experienced New Zealand based Calder & Lawson Tours tour manager
- 9 nights' accommodation (twin share)
- Meals as specified in the itinerary
- Local walking guides
- All group transfers
- Admissions as detailed in the itinerary
- Activities and sightseeing tours with local guides as detailed in the itinerary
- Pre-tour material

COVID INFORMATION

We know there is a lot of uncertainty caused by the latest Covid-19 outbreaks and so wanted to assure you of our policies. All travelers and tour managers on our tours are required to be fully vaccinated for Covid-19. If any of our NZ tours are unable to operate due to govt restrictions we will reschedule, hold your money in credit or refund you in full.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Marvel at the lush forest on a day hike on a section of the Milford Track, New Zealand's original Great Walk.
- Cruise Milford Sound.
- Enjoy the tranquility of early evening as you stay at Milford Sound Chalets right in the heart of the Sound
- Stand at the top of the Great Divide separating east and west flowing rivers on the Routeburn Track,
- Meander through ancient Beech forest on the Kepler Track.
- Experience the Dart River by jet boat.
- Enjoy a day hike along the Hooker Valley trail to the lake nestled at the bottom of Aoraki Mount Cook.

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

- Domestic flights/travel to Queenstown and from Christchurch (*arrangements can be made for you at an additional cost*)
- Travel insurance
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Beverages during included meals, unless specified
- A 2.5% surcharge if you wish to pay by credit card
- Personal expenses



IS THIS TOUR FOR ME?

This is a moderate level walking tour with walks most days. The longest could be up to 7 hours and the shortest less than a couple of hours. You should have recent experience of walking for that long on consecutive days.

We recommend you wear good sturdy walking shoes or boots. According to DOC guidance for the Great Walks you can expect the track to be generally well formed and well-marked, some sections may be rough, muddy or steep. Major stream and river crossings are bridged.



TOUR PRICE

Share twin per person	NZD \$5,950
Single supplement	NZD \$1,290

GROUP SIZE Minimum 10, maximum 15

VARIATIONS IN TRAVEL We can make arrangements for any travel you would like to do before or after this tour. Please contact us to discuss your requirements.



TOUR MANAGER

John Matheson will be your tour manager and Rosanne will accompany him. John has worked in the travel industry for over 40 years, the majority of these as a director of Calder & Lawson. He has led many overseas walking tours and now that he is retired, he is looking forward to walking and exploring some special 'off the beaten track' places in New Zealand.

John specialises in the organisational aspects of the tour. He works closely with the local guides, ensures that the tour goes according to schedule where possible, keeps an eye on the operational details, and sorts out any changes, cancellations, or unforeseen difficulties.

HOW TO SECURE YOUR PLACE ON THIS TOUR

A deposit of \$500 is required to secure your place on the tour. When minimum numbers are reached, the tour will become a 'confirmed departure' and your deposit will be non-refundable. At that point we will advise when the tour payment is due. If the tour is unable to operate as a result of government travel restrictions due to Covid-19, you will have the choice of transferring your deposit to another tour or receiving a full refund.

- [Click here](#) to complete the online registration form, pay the \$500 deposit and your place in this tour is secured.

- Or you can complete a paper registration form. You can download one from the website www.calderandlawsonontours.co.nz, or give us a call and we will email or post one to you.

- **TERMS & CONDITIONS**

Can be found on the website www.calderandlawsonontours.co.nz, on the back of the paper registration form or on the summary page when you complete an online registration. There is a 2.5% surcharge if you wish to pay by credit card.

VARIATIONS This itinerary is Version 1 dated 27/10/2021 and is subject to change. Exchange rate fluctuations may result in a change to the tour price.

DAILY ITINERARY

Wednesday 9 February 2022

Your home - Queenstown

Meals: D

Overnight: Crowne Plaza
Queenstown

Arrive in Queenstown at your leisure today and make your way to your overnight hotel located in downtown Queenstown within easy access to the lakefront, shops and cafes of this iconic tourist centre.

Enjoy a welcome dinner with the group this evening to get to know your fellow walkers and tour managers.

Thursday 10 February

Queenstown - Milford Sound

Meals: B/L/D

Walks: Shorts walks Milford Road

Drive: 4 hours

Overnight: Milford Sound Chalets

Almost every New Zealander will have heard of Milford Sound - often called the 'Eighth wonder of the world', and today will not disappoint as you head out early from Queenstown along the Eglington valley straight towards Milford Sound. On the way you will stop off for some short walks to see the beauty of Fiordland at the Mirror Lakes, The Chasm and Marian Gantry. If you are lucky you could spot our cheeky and intelligent native alpine parrot, the Kea, as you go through the Homer Tunnel.

As you emerge from this amazing tunnel and descend into the Cleddau valley, you'll be in awe of the stunning sight of Milford Sound, the steep valley walls and thousands of waterfalls all around. Once in the fiord itself, hop onto a boat to cruise the Sound and experience the full length of this majestic place. The steep walls of the iconic Mitre Peak plunge deep into the inky dark water, as seals frolic on nearby rocks and Fiordland crested penguins dive down for their dinner. You'll get up close and personal with thundering waterfalls, and hopefully spot a pod of dolphins.

Tonight the group will stay in the heart of Milford Sound when all other tourists have left, relishing the silence of the fiord to ourselves.

Friday 11 February

Milford Sound - Te Anau

Meals: B/L/D

Walk: 10km - 3 hours

Elevation: +/- 200m

Overnight: Distinction Lodge
Lakefront Te Anau

After waking up in the peaceful serenity of Milford Sound, take a boat this morning to Sandfly Point on the Milford Track to hike a wee way up the trail to Giants Gate Waterfall. Wandering along in the lush green forest you'll think you've stumbled right into Narnia! After lunch retrace your steps along the stunning Milford Road to Te Anau.

In the afternoon, take a lakeside walk to visit the Te Anau Bird Sanctuary operated by the Department of Conservation, where we can see endangered Takahe and listen to the DoC experts talk about how they're bringing this species back from the brink of extinction. These charismatic large blue birds were once thought extinct until Dr. Geoffrey Orbell rediscovered them in the nearby Murchison Mountains in 1948. Since then many conservation efforts have increased the population, which as of 2020 stands at 418 individual birds.

Saturday 12 February

Te Anau

Meals: B/L

Walk: 9.5km 2 - 3 hours

Elevation: +/- 50m

Overnight: Distinction Lodge
Lakefront Te Anau

This morning you'll take on another of the Great Walks - hiking a section of the famous Kepler Track. Walking through a sea of lush green ferns, in native beech forest, alongside the stunning clear waters of the mighty Waiau river, you'll relish the fresh air and feel miles away from civilisation. Afterwards you'll have the option to either extend your walk along the lakeside or board a boat across Lake Te Anau to experience the amazing glow worm caves. Turn off your torch to see thousands of sparkling lights all over the ceiling of the caves! Afterwards you will return to Te Anau for a free evening to enjoy the lakeside and town.

Sunday 13 February

Te Anau - Queenstown

Meals: B/L/D

Walk: 7.4 km, 2 - 3 hours

Elevation: +/-370 m

Overnight: Crowne Plaza
Queenstown

Today you leave the Te Anau region for Queenstown. Once there, set out on a hike popular with the locals, known as 'Sam Summers Loop'. This takes you up to an old miners hut with great history and intriguing water sluicing channels. You will walk along and above a great river gorge and see a beautiful waterfall, and views out over Lake Wakatipu before heading back to the bustle of Queenstown for the evening.

Monday 14 February

Queenstown

Meals: B/L/D

Walk: jet boat trip/no walking

Elevation: +/- 210m

Overnight: Crowne Plaza

Queenstown

Today give your legs a rest as you head to the Dart River where you'll experience a unique combination of breath-taking scenery and an exhilarating ride as you follow the braided, glacier-fed rivers by jet boat with exciting 360-degree spins along the way. Your guides will talk about the area's rich history, the Greenstone trail and countless Maori legends. It's a complete Queenstown to Glenorchy experience in an untouched natural wonderland.

This afternoon you'll have some free time to yourself back in Queenstown before dinner with the group.

Tuesday 15 February

Queenstown

Meals: B/L

Walk: 17.6km 5-7 hours

Overnight: Crowne Plaza

Queenstown

Today is a chance to reconnect with nature on a hike of the famous Routeburn track. Drive along Lake Wakatipu to Glenorchy at the head of the Lake, and on into Mt Aspiring National Park. Once on the trail you will walk alongside the crystal clear glacial water, among lush rain forest, fields of ferns, moss and lichen dripping from the tree branches. Along the way you'll hear the birdsong chorus of grey warblers, kakariki, fantail, and tomtit and if lucky you might spot the endangered Mohua or blue duck.

Your lunch today is a picnic at Routeburn Flats Hut with stunning views across to alpine meadows, the Humboldt Mountains and the Routeburn Falls cascade. This is a fantastic walking day but quite long, shorter walking options may be available. After a big day, enjoy a free night in Queenstown.

Wednesday 16 February

Queenstown - Mt Cook

Meals: B/L/D

Walks:

Tasman Glacier < 2km (30 mins)

Kea point 5km return (1.5 hours) or

Red Tarns 3km (2.5 hours) +/- 350m

Overnight: Hermitage Mt Cook

Today you leave behind the Queenstown region and head north towards Aoraki Mount Cook. On the way stop at the historic town of Cromwell and the stunning Lindis Pass. After reaching Mount Cook village you head out to see the Tasman Lake and glacier. Depending on the weather, you can then either walk from the village to Kea point to spot some of the cheeky birds, or if you feel like a challenge, tackle the steps up to the red tarns with amazing views back to Aoraki itself. Tonight you'll stay at the magical Hermitage hotel in the heart of Mount Cook Village with stunning views from your room over the mountains.

Thursday 17 February

Mt Cook area

Meals: B/L/D

Walk: 10km 3-4 hours

Elevation: +/- 120m

Overnight: Hermitage Mt Cook

Be sure not to forget your camera today, because the views are spectacular as you walk along the trail to the Hooker valley and lake, nestled at the bottom of Aoraki Mount Cook, and at the end of the Hooker Glacier. You will also have great views of Mt Tasman, Mt Sefton and Mt Jellicoe, all with their own glaciers dripping off them. After returning to the hotel in the evening we'll celebrate our adventures together with a stunning evening meal at the Panorama room.

Friday 18 February

Mt Cook - Christchurch

Meals: B/L

Walk: 8km 2-3 hours

Elevation: +/- 330m

After a hearty breakfast, you'll travel to Christchurch via Lake Tekapo where you will hike along the lakeshore before emerging above the treeline on Mt John for breathtaking views of the lake and surrounding mountains.

Afterwards have a lunch stop and check out the picturesque 'Church of the Good Shepherd' before heading north to Christchurch in time for flights out after 3pm.

