

NEW ZEALAND

12 DAYS



New Zealand - the last nation to be settled, home to stunning landscapes, adventure sports, and fascinating mythology. It is the land of the Maori, bestowed with snow-capped peaks and unexplored rain forests, pristine lakes, ocean bays, glaciers and fiords, geysers and volcanoes. Your journey begins in the "City of Sails", Auckland, on the North Island. Drive inland to Rotorua, an area world famous for thermal waters and Pohutu Geyser. Flying southward to Mt. Cook National Park on the South Island, your hotel is high on a hilltop overlooking a valley and one of five glaciers in the area. Sir Edmund Hillary trained on some of the 140 peaks that tower over 7,000 feet. Drive through incredibly beautiful forests and along crystal clear lakes on your way to Milford Sound, on the western coast. There is more spectacular countryside as you move on to Queenstown, where you visit an old gold mining town and

take a ride on a jet boat. During your stay in Christchurch, you visit the famous International Antarctic Center to see and "feel" what it's like to be in Antarctica.

Then, if your personal schedule permits, fly on to Tahiti for seven relaxing days aboard the luxury cruise ship, "M/S Paul Gauguin", as you sail in and out of lagoons and explore the islands of French Polynesia.

- Each departure limited to 20 guests
- Luxury hotels or best in each location
- Three a la carte meals a day (table d'hote, if unavailable), including beverages of your choice
- Professionally escorted
- All sightseeing, including entrance fees and special events as indicated in the itinerary
- Arrival and departure transfer by private car

COMBINE THIS TRIP WITH TAHITI!

Day 1 and Day 2 (Tuesday and Wednesday)

USA - AUCKLAND

Depart the States on the beginning of your journey to New Zealand. You lose one day traveling westward across the International Date Line.

Day 3 (Thursday)

AUCKLAND, NORTH ISLAND

Upon your arrival at the Auckland airport, you are brought by private car to your hotel - the **Stamford Plaza**. In the center of town, close to shopping, it is one of the city's pre-eminent hotels. This sleek, elegant property features a glass and granite three-story lobby adorned with oxidized copper sculpture and glorious floral arrangements. Private accommodations are decorated with native tawa wood furniture.

Called the "City of Sails" or the "Queen City" by natives, you begin your city sightseeing with a visit to Mount Eden, Auckland's highest point, from which you have a 360-degree panorama of the region. To the west is the Tasman Sea; to the east is the Pacific Ocean. Auckland is an isthmus bounded by the Waitemata Harbor and the Manukau Harbor. Just beyond Waitemata is Hauraki Gulf with 23 offshore islands; it is the locals' most favorite place to sail. Auckland has the greatest number of pleasure boats per capita of any coastal city in the world.

This evening, join your tour manager and travel companions for cocktails and à la carte dinner. (B,L,D)



Bath House, Rotorua



Maori Warrior

Day 4 (Friday)

AUCKLAND — ROTORUA

Your journey continues today as you drive past green pastures, forests, and crystal clear lakes. You come to a fascinating landscape, where reminders of Rotorua's volcanic history are everywhere. Clouds of steam around the city give the atmosphere a fascinating "otherworldly" feel.

Rotorua is also renowned for its thermal waters, considered by many to have miraculous healing properties; and the first sanatorium here was built in 1880. The sulphurous waters are regarded by some to be beneficial in the treatment of arthritis and rheumatism; others enjoy the water as a pleasant form of relaxation.

Your hotel is the **Millennium Rotorua**, at the edge of the lake, a few blocks from the center of town and Bath House Museum. The expansive lobby has gray and white marble, natural wood, lovely stone flooring, and Maori art; and there is a lovely terrace fresh with banana trees, philodendron, and trays of flowers, overlooking the pool.

Dine this evening in the **Nikau** restaurant at the hotel, decorated with its namesake palms, Paunga ferns, and tapestries. You make your à la carte selections from a delicious offering of fine food in the elegant, yet relaxed, setting. (B,L,D)

Day 5 (Saturday)

ROTORUA

After your breakfast buffet this morning, you visit Whakarewarewa, one of Rotorua's most active thermal areas. You see the lively Pohutu Geyser, which erupts about 20 times a day and gushes to a

height of more than 100 feet. Here at "Whaka", there are also hot mud pools, hot springs, and a Maori *pa* (fortified settlement to which the Maori would retreat when under attack).

Nearby is the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, where skilled Maori carvers and flax weavers can be seen at work. At a Maori settlement, you pass thermal waters that tribal people have used for generations for cooking, washing, and heating. (B,L,D)

Day 6 (Sunday)

ROTORUA - MT. COOK, SOUTH ISLAND

Today you depart this lovely plateau by air for Mount Cook National Park, on South Island – the crowning glory of the magnificent Southern Alps range. This terrain was the training ground for Everest climber Sir Edmund Hillary.

In 1991, Mt. Cook itself lost about 34 feet of height in a massive landslide; however, it is still an impressive 12,316 feet, and it remains New Zealand's highest mountain. Within this park are 140 peaks over 7,000 feet as well as five of New Zealand's largest glaciers.

Your arrival at the "rooftop of New Zealand" is particularly thrilling, as your aircraft brings you right to the glacier in the Aoraki Mount Cook National Park. Your hotel, the **Hermitage**, sits on the panoramic hilltop, between the valley and the glacier. This stone and wood chalet is cheerful and relaxing, but the highlight is the magnificent view – the mountains, the glaciers, and the glacial lakes. Tonight, you dine at the hotel, which has a wonderful variety of entrees; game dishes are a specialty here. After dinner, relax with your companions with a coffee or after-dinner drink in the lounge. (B,L,D)

Day 7 (Monday)

MT. COOK — TE ANAU

This morning, you drive southward along the Southern Alps toward the Fiordland National Park – New Zealand's largest national park and a World Heritage Park. This unspoiled region holds sheer mountains and remote deep valleys that give you an understanding of some of the Maori legends – such as one about the lost tribe Te Anau.

You visit the Te Anau Caves, which feature whirlpools, magical waterfalls, and a glow-worm grotto. This evening, you stay at the **Centra Te Anau**, a picturesque wood and stone inn with majestic mountain and tranquil lake views. The dining room here offers savory dishes of venison, lamb, and seafood. (B,L,D)

Day 8 (Tuesday)

TE ANAU

After breakfast, you drive past incredibly beautiful landscape along Lake Te Anau, and on through dense forests and the "Avenue of the Disappearing Mountain", where you cannot believe your eyes. Rudyard Kipling described the journey to Milford Sound as "the eighth wonder of the world". Passing through the Homer Tunnel, the road drops down into the Cleddau Valley, with its awesome chasm, and then on to the breathtaking view of Milford Sound. Although called a sound, geographically it is actually a fiord (a previous glacial area filled with seawater).

This afternoon, you take a boat on a 10-mile excursion from the southernmost end of Milford Sound to Dale Point, on the open sea. During your cruise, you see such landmarks as the hanging valley called Sinbad Gully, Mitre Peak (5,560 feet rising directly from the ocean floor), and Anita Bay (where Maori once came for greenstone for their weapons). At Seal Point, you may be able to see some Southern Fur Seals; this is one of the few areas in the fiord where they can climb out of the water onto the rocks. Look for the Fiordland Crested Penguin (the world's rarest penguin), which lives and nests around Milford Sound.



Mt. Cook

You return to **Centra Te Anau** for overnight. (B,L,D.)

Day 9 (Wednesday)

TE ANAU – QUEENSTOWN

Traveling north this morning, you arrive in Queenstown, set on an inland plateau, surrounded by mountains, on the shore of Lake Wakatipu. For many years, painters have been attracted to the landscape of warm browns tinged with shades of gold, ochre, white, and sienna.

Queenstown has been called “the jewel in the tourist crown”. Its beautiful setting, combined with a broad range of adventure activities, makes this destination a favorite with all visitors. Gondolas take you from central Queenstown, 2,500 feet above sea level, to Bob’s Peak for a glorious panorama of the lake and forested mountains. Later this afternoon, check into the **Rydgers Lakeland Hotel** – right on the lake, surrounded by well-landscaped grounds. Dine this evening with your travel companions in the award-winning restaurant, **Clancy’s**. After dinner, have an espresso or cordial in the bar, which replicates an old frontier village. (B,L,D)

Day 10 (Thursday)

QUEENSTOWN – ARROWTOWN – QUEENSTOWN

Your excursion today takes you north to a picturesque, and well-preserved, gold mining settlement in Central Otago. Arrowtown was once the center for an estimated 80 gold fields that mushroomed, and then faded, all in one wild decade. At the historic Kawarau Bridge you can watch bungee jumpers leap off for the longest “ride” in the area.

This afternoon, you take an exhilarating ride aboard a jet boat – New Zealand’s “home-grown” style of running rivers. The typical jet boat can skim over shallows no more than 4 inches in depth.

Returning to Queenstown, relax before your à la carte dinner at the hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 11 (Friday)

QUEENSTOWN – CHRISTCHURCH

Today, you fly to the very English “garden city” of



Milford Sound

ACCOMMODATIONS

Auckland – Stamford Plaza (1 night), Condé Nast Traveler Gold List '99

In the heart of Auckland, voted the world’s friendliest city, The Stamford Plaza Auckland is New Zealand’s leading hotel, just a block from famous Waitemata Harbor. Elegant warm guest rooms and suites are enhanced with native timbers, sumptuous fabrics, and beautiful objets d’art.

Rotorua – Millennium Rotorua (2)

Ideally situated on the edge of the city center, the Millennium Rotorua is only a five- minute walk to the shops and theatres.

Mt. Cook – Hermitage (1)

Nestled beneath the towering peaks of the mighty Southern Alps, The Hermitage Hotel is a gateway to an extraordinary alpine wonderland, the Mount Cook (Aoraki) National Park, a world Heritage Park.

Te Anau – Centra Te Anau (2)

Stay at the gateway to the Fiordland National Park and the Milford Track.

Queenstown – Rydges Lakeland Hotel (2), Supreme Award & Accommodation Award 1997

The Rydges Lakeland’s prime position on Lake Wakatipu in beautiful Queenstown affords unmatched views across the water and to rugged mountains.

Christchurch – Parkroyal Hotel (1), Resorts and Great Hotels '99

Ideally situated in the heart of Victoria Square and beside the Avon River, Parkroyal Christchurch has the city at its doorstep. Japanese and International cuisine, as well as local specialties are served in the hotel’s gourmet restaurants where dishes are prepared from the very freshest local produce.

Christchurch, with the Avon River winding like a ribbon through it. There are acres and acres of gardens (gardening is the biggest leisure time activity here), which makes for some extremely pleasant drives and walks as you explore the city.

Few people have the opportunity to experience the awesome beauty of Antarctica first hand, but in Christchurch, at the International Antarctic Center, you see and participate in a unique exhibit. The Center uses advanced technology to create the feel, the sound, and the sight of the “Great White South”. Many of the staff here have lived and worked in Antarctica and speak from first-hand experience.

Tonight you stay at the sleek and sophisticated **Parkroyal Hotel**, considered to be one of the finest in the country. The formal dining room dazzles with its

regional dishes and tapestries depicting scenes from The Canterbury Tales. Later, the copper doors of the bar swing open for live jazz and popular music. (B,L,D)

Day 12 (Saturday)

CHRISTCHURCH – USA

After breakfast, you are escorted to the airport for your return flight to the States. (B)

OR (JOURNEY EXTENSION) CHRISTCHURCH – PAPEETE

You have this morning at leisure in Christchurch. You might care to stroll down to the pedestrian area called City Mall, to shop at Ballantynes (this city’s equivalent of Harrod’s). Continuing another two blocks toward the Avon River and the Bridge of Remembrance, you come to some of best shopping of the city. There is another pleasant walk a few blocks to the west, to the Christchurch Arts Center, once the site of the University and now home to arts and crafts studios.

Later, you leave New Zealand and fly to the tropical paradise of French Polynesia.

DATES

Depart-TUE (from USA)	Return-SAT
May 09	May 20
2001 Dates:	
Feb 13	Feb 24

COST PER PERSON

Land Portion (Double occupancy)	\$ 3,590
Single supplement	\$ 1,100
International Airfare (West Coast)	\$ 1,460

All airfares are subject to availability and to change by the airlines. Cancellation penalties and surcharges may apply. Fares from other U.S. cities, as well as First and Business Class rates, are also available.