



— 2023 —

TOP OF THE SOUTH TOUR

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TOP OF THE SOUTH TOUR

Tour Length: 13 Days

Tour Departs: 24 November 2023

Tour Ends: 06 December 2023

OVERVIEW:

Showcasing some of the best attractions found in the top of the South Island, we are excited to bring you this fantastic tour. Beginning with 2-nights in Christchurch, we travel north to world-famous Hanmer Springs before continuing to Blenheim, Nelson & the beautiful Punakaiki Beach set among the Paparoa National Park and best known for its Pancake Rocks. Then it's onto Hokitika & Christchurch, where the tour concludes.

Special highlights include a cruise on Akaroa Harbour to witness the mischievous Hector's Dolphin and the Tranz Alpine Rail Journey between Greymouth & Christchurch traversing the mighty Southern Alps, plus many more!

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2-nights Christchurch
- Akaroa Dolphin Cruise to discover NZ's Hector's Dolphins
- Hanmer Springs Famous Thermal Pools
- Kaikoura Whale Watching
- Omaka Air Museum & Upton Oaks Gardens in Blenheim
- 3-nights Nelson
- Cruise Pelorus Sound & Kenepuru Sound with visit to local Greenshell Mussell Farm
- Paparoa National Park including NZ's Pancake Rocks & Blowholes
- Hokitika's thrilling Treetop Walkway & Brunner Coal Mine Memorial
- Tranz Alpine rail journey between Greymouth & Christchurch – one of the world's great train journeys!





TOUR COSTS PER PERSON

Share Twin or Double Room
NZD \$6,950

Supplement for Single
Room NZD \$1,950

TOUR COSTS INCLUDE:

- First Class hotel accommodation for city stays
- Scenic Class on board the Tranz Alpine
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary – B= Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary
- Tips and gratuities to local guides, drivers, train staff etc.
- Deluxe air-conditioned coach transportation
- Baggage handling of one suitcase per person
- Services of a Maher Tours Leader

TOUR COSTS EXCLUDE:

- Meals and sightseeing not specifically mentioned in the itinerary
- Travel insurance (assistance and advice offered)
- Items of a personal nature such as room service, telephone calls, laundry etc.

Flights are additional – the best available airfare will be quoted at the time of reservation to combine with this land package.

BOOKING CONDITIONS: Deposit of NZD\$1,000.00 per person is due upon confirmation of the booking. Final payment date: **Friday 22 September 2023.**

To register for this tour please contact us on 0800 500 518 or tours@mahertours.co.nz.





DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

Friday 24 November

Christchurch (D)

Plenty of time today to meet with your tour group at the Christchurch Hotel.

Tonight, we dine together for the first time.

Saturday 25 November

Akaroa Full Day (B, D)

Following breakfast this morning, we take an easy drive south-east of Christchurch, to Akaroa – New Zealand’s only French settlement and sitting at the heart of an ancient volcano, stacked with sparkling bays and green hills.

On arrival at Akaroa Harbour, we board a cruise to discover the mischievous Hector’s dolphins. Easily identified by their rounded dorsal fins, the Hector’s dolphins are only

found in New Zealand waters. Sit back and relax as you enjoy the dramatic panoramic views, while playful dolphins ride the bow.

At the conclusion of the tour we return to our Christchurch accommodation. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant tonight.

Sunday 26 November

Christchurch - Hanmer (B, D)

Today we remember one of New Zealand’s most tragic events with a morning tour of the Christchurch City rebuild. It has been nine years since the earthquake occurred in Christchurch on Tuesday 22 February 2011 and since this time, over 40 billion dollars has been invested into development to rebuild the once-vibrant city.

We depart Christchurch and drive through to Hanmer Springs for an overnight stay, a picturesque alpine town best known for its natural hot pools and dazzling landscapes. There is time this afternoon to relax at the famous Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools. Every drop of thermal water is heated by Mother Nature and infused with minerals – a process that takes 173 years. Ease your aching muscles in the natural rock and Sulphur pools, while savouring the stunning backdrop.





Monday 27 November

Hanmer - Blenheim (B, D)

After a hearty breakfast, we leave Hanmer Springs and continue through to Blenheim. We travel via the coastal town of Kaikoura, well known for its abundant marine life. In the Maori language, Kaikoura means "meal of crayfish," a nod to the New Zealand township's seafood-rich origins. Here we enjoy a whale watching cruise, hoping to spot the famous Giant Sperm Whales.

We arrive in Blenheim this afternoon and transfer to our accommodation for the next 2-nights. Enjoy dinner at the hotel tonight.

Tuesday 28 November

Blenheim (B)

A relaxing start to the day before we head over the hill to Picton and enjoy the picturesque town at the start of the Marlborough Sounds. After lunch (own expense) we join our cruise for the afternoon. Cruise through Queen Charlotte Sound/Tōtaranui, sample local seafood such as Regal salmon, Cloudy Bay Clams and Greenshell mussels, with Marlborough sauvignon blanc for the definitive wine/food match.

Discover the natural beauty of Queen Charlotte Sound/Tōtaranui while relaxing aboard our well-appointed catamaran. Learn about this fascinating industry in the Marlborough Sounds from our knowledgeable crew and take in the picturesque scenery, keeping an eye out for local wildlife including seals, dolphins and birds.



DAY TO DAY ITINERARY

Wednesday 29 November

Blenheim - Nelson (B, L,D)

After breakfast, we pay a visit to Omaka Air Museum, a world-class destination for the appreciation of historic aircraft. Not just for enthusiasts, the centre retells the story of aviation during two World Wars, the time in which the most intense period of aviation development took place. Here we have a chance to explore the Dangerous Skies WWII exhibition along with the famous Sir Peter Jackson's collection of WWI aircrafts & artefacts in his Knights of The Sky exhibition. Then we head to Marlborough, the jewel of the New Zealand wine industry to enjoy a delicious lunch today at the iconic Wither Hills Cellar Door and Vineyard, overlooking the beautiful Wairau Valley.



Thursday 30 November

Nelson (B, D)

Today we enjoy a morning sightseeing tour of Nelson. See local attractions such as Queens Gardens, The Suter Art Gallery, Jens Hansen Gold and Silversmith, Founders Heritage Park and more.

We also visit the Classic Cars Museum. The Classic Car Collection displays a stunning range of cars dating from 1908, all in immaculate condition.

The afternoon is at leisure and tonight we dine together at a local restaurant.

Friday 01 December

Nelson (B, L *)

Today you have the option of having a free day in Nelson, or alternatively join a cruise along the Abel Tasman coastline. We drive to Kaiteriteri where we join our cruise, visiting Split Apple Rock, New Zealand Fur Seals and other bays of interest. The smallest and one of the most visited of New Zealand's National Parks, the Abel Tasman was named after the great Dutch explorer Abel Janszoon Tasman who anchored his ships in Wainui, Golden Bay in 1642.



Populated by Maori for over 500 years and first settled by Europeans in 1855, the golden sandy beaches and granite outcrops are now enhanced by regenerating native forest. We arrive in Awaroa and enjoy lunch at the beautiful Awaroa Lodge. Surrounded by pristine waterways and native forest, the Lodge has been constructed to make the most of its secluded location, and it is not accessible by road. Note: On arrival at Awaroa, there is a 15-minute walk from the beach to the lodge, so travellers must be capable of walking to/from the lodge from the boat. Lunch is included if you opt for the cruise / own arrangements for lunch if you opt for the free day in Nelson.

In the afternoon, we return to our accommodation in Nelson. The evening is at leisure.

Saturday 02 December

Nelson - Hokitika (B, D)

We depart Nelson and rejoin the coach for travel through to Punakaiki, bypassing Glenhope & Murchison. A lunch stop will be taken along the way.

Continuing, we stop en route to visit the Brunner Coal Mine Memorial Site to view the historic site of the 1896 disaster. When coal ruled, this was New Zealand's most important centre of industry, and to this day the Brunner Mine explosion remains New Zealand's worst workplace accident.



DAY TO DAY ITINERARY



The disaster caught the attention of the whole nation and eventually led to improved workplace safety legislation and practices. Here at the Brunner Mine Site, you can walk through the industrial ruins and see some of the last remaining beehive coke ovens.

Our accommodation is located right on the doorstep to the Tasman Sea with uninterrupted views of the beach.

Sunday 03 December

Hokitika - Punakaiki (B, D)

This morning we visit the famous Treetop Walkway, a thrilling treetop adventure among temperate rainforest giants. Experience life with the birds, high in the ancient Rimu and Kamahi tree canopy. Enjoy a leisurely walk along a steel platform 20 metres high and over 450 metres long and feel the adrenalin rush as you climb to the top of Hokitika Tower 40 metres above the forest floor.

We then visit Monteith's Brewery to enjoy a tasting of the local produce over a delicious lunch. This brewery has been family owned since 1868 and are still brewing with the same traditions they used back then.

Then on to the Hokitika Gorge, a glacial river turquoise in colour surrounded by dramatic rock formations. A short walk descending through the hardwood forest will lead you to a swing bridge which crosses the Hokitika River and provides a postcard-worthy photo opportunity.

We then head north and travel along the Great Coast Road to the world-famous Pancake Rocks and Blowholes, part of the Paparoa National Park in Punakaiki. Wander along the paved walkway through native forest and coastal scrub, leading to large cliff faces with horizontal slices resembling stacks of pancakes.

Monday 04 December

Punakaiki - Christchurch (B, D)

Leaving this morning, we travel back to Greymouth, we stop en-route for a visit to Shantytown Heritage Park, one of New Zealand's premier cultural and heritage attractions. There will be time for lunch before we join the TranzAlpine train mid-afternoon for travel through to Christchurch.



The TranzAlpine is one of the world's great train journeys covering 223 kilometres one-way, taking just under 5 hours. Along this journey you'll see epic vistas, travel the edges of the ice-fed Waimakariri River, traverse the mighty Southern Alps, and see miles of native beech forest. Arrival time in Christchurch is approx. 6.30pm.

On arrival in Christchurch, we are met and transferred to our hotel.

Tuesday 05 December

Christchurch (B, D)

Following breakfast this morning, we take a ride on the Christchurch Gondola to experience stunning 360° views of the city, Lyttelton Harbour and beyond from the summit station situated atop the Port Hills. At the conclusion of the Gondola ride, we take a short 20-minute drive east of Christchurch to Sumner Beach for lunch

(own expense); an idyllic place to spend some time in the sun away from the centre of Christchurch.

You have the afternoon free to relax or to enjoy a bit of last-minute shopping.

Tonight, we come together to enjoy our final dinner as a group.

Wednesday 06 December

Christchurch - Home (B)

Sadly, all good things must come to an end and it is time to bid your fellow tour members farewell. Travellers will be transferred to the Christchurch Airport domestic terminal, to join their return flights home.





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NEW ZEALAND

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