



Tui

Hike Routeburn Track • Cycle Hollyford Valley and Manapouri • Sea kayak Milford Sound Scenic mountain flight to Siberia Hut • Jet boat ride • Hike Mt. Aspiring National Park and Franz Josef Glacier

8 days: Christchurch – Queenstown

Fare: US\$2299 + tax

The Tui is our shortest South Island trip. It's an action-packed, adventure-oriented itinerary that works well if you are looking for an incredible adventure vacation but don't have a lot of time to see our country, or as part of a longer trip to New Zealand. You can fly from home on a Friday evening, sleep on the plane, and then be back at work by Monday, 10 days later. We always offer plenty of choices for activities, but remember, it's your vacation so nothing is compulsory! Anyone in reasonable shape can do the activities we offer. You'll see some great parts of New Zealand, but we won't pretend you're going to see it all. The Tui trip is about quality not quantity!

Sunday

Arrive, hike in Arthur's Pass

The Tui trip starts in Christchurch, the main city and airport of the South Island. You'll need to be in Christchurch by around 9am. We'll meet you there and head to the Southern Alps for a hike in Arthur's Pass to Devils Punchbowl where we'll see an awesome 430 foot (131 metre) waterfall. We then head down the coast to the beautiful seaside village of Okarito, one of the best kept secrets of the West Coast that's all but untouched due to it's location 10 miles down a one-way road from an obscure highway turnoff. There are no shops, no restaurants, no traffic and a population of only 31 people. Because of the action-packed nature of the Tui, we get much of the driving out of the way on the first day of the trip. As an option, you can miss out most of the first day's driving by meeting us this afternoon in the West Coast town of Hokitika, a short 30-minute flight from Christchurch, and we'll pick you up on the way through.

ACCOMMODATION: Okarito Beach House, Okarito – off-the-beaten-path, isolated and comfortable (L,D)

Monday

Hike at Franz Josef Glacier

Just south of Okarito there are two formidable glaciers descending from the mountains to the sea. In terms of scenery, this place is off the charts, and we'll spend most of the day hiking at Franz Josef Glacier. We'll hike up through the rainforest to either Alex Knob or Roberts Point, both of which give great views of the terminal face, lower reaches and lateral moraines of Franz Josef Glacier. We only do these hikes in good weather, as the rocks get very slippery in the rain. If it's raining, we'll do a shorter walk to a view of the terminal face of Fox Glacier and a hike around Lake Matheson.

Heli-hike option (add US\$249 + tax)

A less strenuous, but outrageously scenic option today is to heli-hike on Franz Josef Glacier itself. After being fitted with crampons, ice axes and so on, you'll board a modern turbine helicopter and fly towards the highest peaks of the Southern Alps, landing on the glacier at 4,000 feet (1300m) above sea level. Led by specialist glacier guides, you'll hike through the grand ice formations of the glacier, checking out its crevasses, seracs and tunnels – no previous experience required! The constant movement of the glacier means every day is different, so your guides will cut steps in the ice and make sure you make the most of the conditions. At the end of your hike on the ice, you'll take another helicopter ride out of the mountains and back to civilisation.

The heli-hike is extremely popular, so we offer advance reservations with the helicopter operators and guiding company. At the time of booking, or up until one month before your trip, you can reserve a space on the heli-hike and we'll make sure a spot is held for you. Or you can leave your decision until you're actually on your trip, and we'll get you a spot if it's available.

Heli-hikers generally return a little earlier, so we'll rendezvous at a local café, and head south. From Franz Josef, we head down the coast to Haast, an isolated West Coast hamlet, where we'll enjoy some local fare – venison pie!

ACCOMMODATION: *Heritage Park Lodge, Haast*

(B,L,D)

Andrew: "As a young guide, I used to run up Alex Knob to keep in shape, and it's my favorite 'keep-fit' spot in the country. The thick forest, occasional tantalizing glimpses of the glacier, and the unbelievable vista from the top mean this is one of my most memorable hikes – not an easy hike, necessarily, but definitely one for the top shelf."

Tuesday

Start Mt. Aspiring National Park options

This morning we'll drive to Makarora on the eastern side of Mt. Aspiring National Park. At the time of booking, you have the choice of one of two different overnight options – a backpacking trip in Mt. Aspiring National Park, or an overnight stay in the small farming village of Makarora. After lunch, we head off for our various activities:

MAKARORA ADVENTURE OPTION IN MT. ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK

Tuesday (continued) **Scenic flight, hike Mt. Shrimpton**

If you prefer comfortable accommodation with modern amenities instead of a mountain hut, then this is the option for you. You'll head out for a mind-blowing scenic flight into Mt. Aspiring National Park for a bird's eye view of the lower Southern Alps. After landing down back in Makarora, you can hike the Mt. Shrimpton track. This is a steep hike with a 2500 foot (750 metre) elevation gain, but the views from above the treeline are worth it! Or you can take the afternoon to kick back, relax and soak up the mountain views from your accommodation.

ACCOMMODATION: *Makarora Wilderness Resort, Makarora*

(B,L,D)

Wednesday

Jet boat Wilkin River

After a relaxed start, we'll take a thrilling jet boat ride up the Wilkin River, into the heart of Mt. Aspiring National Park, before hooking up with the rest of the group in Makarora and carrying on to Queenstown.

- OR -

SIBERIA VALLEY WILDERNESS OPTION IN MT. ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK

Tuesday (continued) **Scenic flight, hike Lake Crucible**

If you like the idea of staying in one of New Zealand's most isolated mountain huts, then this option is for you! We'll start with a dramatic scenic flight alongside the snowy Southern Alps to the Siberia Valley airstrip. You can hike up the trail to Lake Crucible for great views of this glacial valley while dinner is whipped up back at the hut. Tonight you'll be served a candle-lit dinner in one of the most glorious places in the world. This is also one of the few backcountry huts where you can chat with a resident hut ranger from New Zealand's Department of Conservation. Rangers are often keen for a yarn around the camp fire, and can offer further insight into the flora and fauna of Mt. Aspiring National Park.

This is the only night on the *Tui* where accommodations are a little more basic, but we'll be back in civilisation the next day. You don't have to carry a very heavy pack – our guides are pretty tough and they'll carry the lion's share of the load. You'll be carrying a backpack, sleeping bag, a few spare clothes and some food – no need for any more than that, although we'll provide tents and so on if you'd prefer to camp out under the stars.

ACCOMMODATION: *Siberia Hut, Mt. Aspiring National Park – incredible!*

(B,L,D)

Wednesday

Hike Siberia Valley, jet boat

After an early start, we spend the morning hiking to The Forks, at the head of the Wilkin River, where we will be met by a jet boat for an exhilarating ride back to Makarora to hook up with the rest of the group before carrying on to Queenstown.

Sunday

Depart for home

Well, it's almost time to go home. We'll leave after breakfast for the two-hour drive to Queenstown, and arrive by late morning in time for the flights back to Christchurch or Auckland. This will have been a very exhilarating week, and you'll be buzzing with excitement but feeling relaxed and refreshed as well! See the itinerary for the *Kauri* trip if you want to take a few more days to see the North Island. (B)

Important Information

ACCOMMODATION: The *Tui* is an activity-oriented trip around the South Island. We've chosen interesting and comfortable accommodations throughout. Some places are quite luxurious, but many of the other places we stay are off-the-beaten-track – and don't have many accommodation options – but they are really, really spectacular. Our clients often say a real highlight of the trip is meeting their New Zealand hosts. We think you'll love the places we stay! We prefer to stay in comfortable bed and breakfasts, lodges and apartments. Rooming is based on twin-share, although single rooms are available upon request. As there's such a variety of accommodations on this trip, some places will have ensuite bathrooms and some will have shared bathrooms, so we may ask you to share a bathroom with other group members on occasion.

RECOMMENDED FLIGHTS: If you're flying in on the first day of the trip, or out on the last day, we recommend arriving in Christchurch by about 8 - 9am on the first Sunday, and departing from Queenstown any time after 12 noon on the last Sunday. Other flight times may also be possible, including flying straight to Hokitika on the first day, so if you are considering alternative flight times please let us know.

TRIP START: On the first day of the trip, we can either pick you up from the Holiday Inn City Centre in Christchurch at 9.30am, or at the Christchurch airport in front of the information desk at 10am. Another option is to meet us at the Hokitika airport that afternoon.

TRIP END: On the last day of the trip, we can drop you off anywhere in central Queenstown before noon, or at the Queenstown airport in time for the flights after 12pm.

FITNESS: We incorporate plenty of adventure activities and our focus is on getting you out of the vehicle, out of stress-mode, and into the scenery! Like all our trips, you don't need to be young or really fit – but this trip is all about action and pace, and it's definitely not designed for couch potatoes. Every one of the days on the trip will be unforgettable. We manage the level of commitment to suit your experience and we have an impeccable safety record. We hold all relevant government transport and outdoor guiding licenses and our staff are highly trained and experienced.

EXPERIENCE: You don't have to have any outdoor experience at all to enjoy the *Tui*. We offer trips that allow you to make the most of New Zealand's incredible outdoor environment. Our highly trained experienced guides will look after you! You won't be carrying a heavy pack and you don't need to have ever been in a sea kayak to enjoy kayaking Milford Sound. You don't need to be a serious cyclist to enjoy some of the rides we have available either. In fact, we have so many options available that you don't need to ride at all if you'd rather hike, fish, or just laze around! All we ask is that you be energetic and in reasonable shape and you'll have an incredible time on the *Tui*.

FLEXIBILITY: Because of the off-the-beaten-path and non-commercial nature of some of our accommodations on this trip, we sometimes need to change a night stop. For instance, every now and then the Okarito Beach House is booked out. We try to make as few changes as possible, but we ask that you know we retain the flexibility to make sure your trip is as good as it can be.

INCLUDED: The trip fare is US\$2299 + 12.5% NZ government taxes. We quote all prices in US dollars, so our guests from all over the world can more easily relate prices to their own currencies. You can also join for shorter periods of time, at a pro-rated fare. The trip fare includes just about everything, specifically:

- All guiding services. We have two guides per trip, a lead guide/driver and a co-guide who is responsible for meals and accommodations. This means we can really make sure you have a great time! We operate with small groups and we don't hesitate to offer a second departure when our trips start getting full.
- Comfortable accommodation for the entire period you are with us. We can also organise accommodation for you if you want to arrive earlier or leave later.
- Transport as required, in comfortable vehicles, aircraft, jet boats, and whatever else is required.
- All your meals, except in Queenstown where we've found people prefer to check out the wide range of restaurants. Alcohol is not generally included, although we do spring for a few drinks here and there!
- All hiking, cycling and kayaking described in the itinerary, except optional extra activities. We have estimated the rates for optional extra activities operated by local activity operators in US dollars, including all required equipment, but these rates may vary according to the USD/NZD exchange rate of the day. There are many optional activities available at extra cost, particularly in Queenstown. None of these activities are compulsory, and nor will your trip seem less awesome if you do the cheap or free options.

NOT INCLUDED: This is your holiday, and we are serious about not nickel-and-diming you! You'll have a few meals and drinks to cover, extra activities if you choose them, and you'll probably feel like tipping your guides at the end of a fabulous time, but you won't be pulling out your wallet every few minutes on your ACTIVE NEW ZEALAND trip!

We'll see you soon!

Itinerary valid through April 2010