

*A Custom Designed Itinerary to
New Zealand*

By

IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS

Day 1: AUCKLAND. Arrive at Auckland airport this morning, where you will be met by an IQOTC representative and transferred to **The Langham Hotel** for an overnight stay in club level rooms with butler service. This luxury hotel is located near the University of Auckland and upper Queen Street. The hotel's Partington's Restaurant is one of the best fine dining experiences in Auckland City. A regular courtesy shuttle for guests operates to the wharf area.

Day 2: AUCKLAND / ROTORUA / TAUPO. After breakfast this morning, a Mitsubishi Outlander or similar 4WD will be delivered to you at the hotel. Drive across the Bombay Hills, through the lush green dairy farmlands of the Waikato Valley, and over the bush clad Mamaku Ranges to Rotorua. Upon arrival, visit Te Puia Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve and Maori Arts & Crafts Institute to attend a concert of Maori song and dance in the magnificently carved Maori Meeting House on the Marae (Maori Village) at Whakarewarewa. This will be followed by a guided tour of Te Puia – the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve to see the geysers and other weird thermal activity and the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, where young Maori are being taught traditional carving and weaving skills.



This afternoon continue south through forests and farmlands to Wairakei and Taupo. Take the Huka Falls Loop Road and the lodge is located on the left hand side. Your accommodations are in one of the world's best hideaway luxury lodges, **Huka Lodge**, situated on the banks of the Waikato River, a short distance upstream from Huka Falls. The lodge is consistently ranked as one of the top lodges in the world. Situated in seven hectares of park-like grounds, Huka Lodge has only 20 guest suites, all just 20 meters from the river, amongst mature trees. The suites are very secluded, offering every comfort - from mini-bar to walk-in dressing room. The suites are spacious, light and very peaceful, with slatted wooden, outdoor terraces. The bathrooms all have under-floor heating. A sunken bath is complemented by a separate shower and double hand basins. Spend two nights here in a lodge room. A five course gourmet dinner, preceded by pre-dinner cocktails, is included.

Day 3: TAUPO. The day is free to relax at Huka Lodge and explore nearby Wairakei and Taupo. We suggest viewing the spectacular Huka Falls. There are also jet boat rides on the Waikato River, and a great golf course nearby - the Wairakei International; lake cruises at Taupo, more hot pools, scenic flights and the trout fishing on Lake Taupo is world class (fishing guides – ghillies - can be arranged at extra cost). Dinner is included this evening at the lodge.

Day 4: WELLINGTON / WHAREKAUHAU. After breakfast this morning return your rental car at Taupo Airport and check in for your flight to Wellington (flight not included). Upon arrival in Wellington, you will collect another Mitsubishi Outlander 4WD or similar, then head to Wharekauhau, a 75 mile drive from Wellington Airport.

Wharekauhau is a luxury lodge set on 2,200 hectares of farmland overlooking the rugged coastline of Palliser Bay on the southern tip of the North Island. This modern Edwardian style lodge has just 12 cottage suites, each with a king/twin bedroom and separate lounge featuring an open fireplace. All meals are served in the main lodge. For recreation there is an all-weather tennis court, croquet lawn, indoor heated pool, outdoor spa pool, gym, mountain biking, hiking, farm tours, horse riding and massages available. Spend two nights here in a cottage suite. Dinner at the lodge is included each evening.



Day 5: WHAREKAUHAU. A free day to relax and enjoy the lodge facilities and the rural environment. There are farm tours available and numerous activities possible through the lodge. Dinner included this evening at the lodge.

Day 6: WELLINGTON / QUEENSTOWN. This morning depart from Wharekauhau and return to Wellington, where you'll drop off your rental car, then check in for your flight to Queenstown (flight not included). Upon arrival, pick up a similar rental, a Mitsubishi Outlander 4WD or similar. Make your way to the **Sofitel Queenstown Hotel and Spa**, where you will check in for a three night stay in a deluxe lake-view room with spa. The Sofitel is Queenstown's newest five-star hotel with a central location in the downtown shopping area. The décor is modern and all 82 en suite guest rooms are delightfully appointed and decorated. There is a spa, cozy bar and restaurant on site. The balance of the day is free to relax and enjoy this wonderful alpine resort.

Day 7: RIVER RAFTING IN QUEENSTOWN. After breakfast you will be collected and taken on a white water rafting adventure on the famous Shotover River. This river was the site of a major 1860s gold rush. The afternoon is at leisure for your own choice of tours and activities. Perhaps take the Skyline Gondola to Bob's Peak, where there are spectacular panoramic views across Queenstown to the surrounding mountains.

Day 8: MILFORD SOUND. This morning depart Queenstown by private car and driver and travel around Lake Wakatipu in the lee of the Remarkables Ranges to Kingston and across the picturesque Southland countryside to Te Anau and into Fiordland National Park to Milford Sound. The scenery is stunning with high mountains and deep valleys carved out by ice age glaciers. There are clear rushing streams and leaping waterfalls set in magnificent native rainforest. See the Mirror Lakes and The Chasm. This afternoon depart on a nature cruise down Milford Sound past Mitre Peak to the open sea. Your onboard guide will point out the geographic features and sea and birdlife. Seals, penguins and dolphins are often seen. A boxed picnic lunch will be served on board. Upon returning, you will be transferred to the airfield for your return to Queenstown on a wonderful scenic flight, which will provide you with panoramic views over Milford Sound, high mountains, glaciers, lakes, rivers and lush rain forest. Upon arrival in Queenstown, you will be privately transferred to the hotel.



Day 9: QUEENSTOWN / WANAKA / FRANZ JOSEF. Today drive through the Kawarau Gorge to Cromwell. If you are interested in wines, we suggest a stop at The Big Picture at Cromwell, where many of the best Central Otago wines can be tasted in their unique Aroma Room. Pass through Wanaka, a very popular resort town, and drive around glacial Lakes Wanaka and Hawea and cross the Haast Pass through the Southern Alps - the scenery is stunning with high snow-topped mountains all around. Descend following the Haast River towards the coast and drive north through magnificent native rainforests and past pretty bush-fringed lakes, then pass through the Fox township and 30 minutes later arrive at Franz Josef. The Franz Josef Glacier is a massive river of glacial ice flowing from snowfields high in the Southern Alps almost to sea level – quite an unusual feature in a temperate climatic zone. The lodge is located just north of Franz Josef town centre on the right hand side of the main highway. Two nights in the Grand Suite at **Westwood Lodge**.



Day 10: FRANZ JOSEF. After breakfast this morning, make your way to Franz Josef Heliservices Office in the village for a 40 minute scenic flight by helicopter over the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers and across the main divide in the Southern Alps to Mt Cook National Park for views of Mt Cook (12,349 ft) – New Zealand’s tallest peak and the mighty Tasman Glacier. A landing is included on one of the glaciers. The rest of the day is at leisure for bush walking and exploring the area around the village.

Day 11: FRANZ JOSEF / HAAST PASS / CHRISTCHURCH. Drive north through forests and farmlands with the Southern Alps rising sharply to the east and vistas of the Tasman Sea to the west. Perhaps stop for a visit at the greenstone factory at Hokitika, where a local jade stone is crafted into jewelry and ornaments of both modern and traditional design, before reaching Greymouth. Return your rental car at Greymouth Railway Station and catch the afternoon Transalpine Train to Christchurch. Enjoy the train journey through the Southern Alps via Arthur’s Pass National Park and across the Canterbury Plains. You will arrive in Christchurch early this evening and be met by a local driver who will privately transfer you to your hotel. Check into the **George Hotel** for your overnight stay in an executive room. This luxury boutique hotel, embodying Christchurch’s cultural style and heritage, has just 57 spacious guest rooms, which enjoy park or river views. The hotel is renowned for its ambience and high service standards. It is fully air-conditioned, has a tennis court, and a gym and a choice of two award winning restaurants.

Day 12: DEPARTURE. A private transfer this morning to Christchurch airport, where our services will end.