

# Marlborough Sounds - Planes, Trains and Automobiles - itinerary

## DAY ONE

D

Today we shall pick you up from home and drive you over to Otorohanga to catch the Northern Explorer travelling all the way down the North Island. This takes you into the heart of the North Island, through lush green farmland, native forests, over stunning river gorges and across New Zealand's Volcanic plateau. Highlights include Tongariro National Park and the Raurimu Spiral, an amazing feat of railway engineering. The trip down is wonderfully relaxing; enjoy spectacular views through huge windows and the wonderful commentary through the GPS headphone system. There is a well-stocked café and easy use facilities on board, prior to our arrival we will enjoy our dinner on the train journey. Upon arrival in Wellington, we'll be shuttled to the esteemed Copthorne Hotel Wellington Oriental Bay, our home for this leg of the journey. Nestled in a prime location with breathtaking views of Oriental Bay, the hotel provides a comfortable sanctuary for a relaxing evening.

## DAY TWO

B, L,D

Remember to Dress Warmly. Today we'll have breakfast on the Inter Islander Ferry to cross Cook Strait. The 92 km, three-hour journey between Wellington and Picton, is one of New Zealand's most iconic tourist experiences and acknowledged as one of the most spectacular cruises in the world. Inter Islander's modern fleet of ferries offers a range of seating options to cater to every passenger's comfort. The bars, cafés and food courts are all designed to let you enjoy your meal in comfort. Lounges offer reclining chairs from which to enjoy a quiet, relaxing environment. Take the time to enjoy the ship and explore it at your own pace. Upon our arrival in Picton we'll depart the Ferry and continue through to Blenheim. Once here we'll have a lunch in The Vines Village, which hosts an eclectic variety of specialty shops. We can do a little retail therapy or just soak up the atmosphere. From here we'll make our way to our nights' accommodation, however prior to arrival and

depending on time we'll stop at Makana Confections to indulge your sweet tooth. Once checked in to our accommodation for the next few nights, we'll have some to settle in before regrouping for our dinner onsite at the hotel.

## DAY THREE

B, MT, L, D

Holy smoke, it's time to deliver the mail! Delivering the mail by sea in the Marlborough Sounds is a truly unique experience. This full-day cruise is a chance to see an authentic, fascinating slice of daily life in our remote part of the world. Today we will be exploring the Marlborough Sounds on the Pelorus Mail Run Boat today. Along the way, we visit isolated homesteads in secluded bays, mussel farms and meeting the people of Marlborough Sounds and stopping at the gannet colony to watch parent birds tending to their chicks. On this trip, we often see dolphins, seals and the many blue penguins in the area. You have to be quick to spot the penguins as they tend to dive down under the water when they see us coming. This will be another great day out, viewing a pristine part of our beautiful country.

## DAY FOUR

B, L, D

We'll enjoy a more leisurely start today, after breakfast you'll have around an hour of free time to yourself so you may choose for a sleep in or quick stroll around Seymour Square, as we are found right in the heart of Blenheim, or you may want to wander into the shops the choice is yours. From here we will make our way out together exploring some well-known and hidden treasures of the region. Our first stop will be Omaka Aviation Centre, where we were transported back in time through two incredible exhibitions: WW1 Dangerous Skies and WW2. We'll have a guided tour of the WW1 exhibit which is both informative and entertaining. You may want to grab a coffee at the cafe before taking your own time to explore the WW2 exhibition afterwards. After working up an appetite, we'll then head to Wither Hills for lunch. The food is delicious, and the views of the surrounding vineyards are breathtaking. Next, we visit the picturesque Welton House for a Garden Tour, where we are surrounded by natural beauty and tranquillity. As the day draws to a close, we will then head back to our accommodation at Scenic Hotel Marlborough, where we'll enjoy dinner and reflect on the many wonderful experiences of the

day.

## DAY FIVE

B, MT

As we sit down for breakfast at the hotel restaurant, it's hard to believe our trip is ending. Our final day is set to be a special one, with a visit to the stunning Paripuma Garden for a tour and morning tea. You'll be delighted by the vibrant colours and lush foliage of the garden, a lovely spot to relax and soak in the beauty of the surroundings. From there, we will make our way to the pretty seaside village of Havelock, where you can pick of the town's charming cafes for a delicious lunch. After refuelling, we'll set off on a scenic drive to Nelson, taking in the breathtaking waterfront views. Sadly, it's time to say goodbye to the stunning landscapes and warm hospitality of Marlborough as we catch our flights back home.