

# Mackenzie Country & Central Otago - itinerary

30% Deposit Required on Booking.

## DAY ONE

D

Our adventure begins in the morning as we gather for pickups and head to the airport for our flight to Christchurch. We'll enjoy lunch upon arrival at one of the many eateries at Christchurch Airport. After lunch, we'll embark on our journey to Lake Tekapo. The stunning beauty of the surroundings takes our breath away, and we can't help but feel grateful for the opportunity to experience it all. As we arrive at Peppers Blue Water Resort Tekapo, we're eager to unwind during the social hour, enjoying drinks and conversation while taking in the awe-inspiring views. Our day ends with a dinner at the on-site restaurant, where we can soak up the ambiance of this lovely property.

## DAY TWO

B, L, D

This morning, we will head out of town a few kilometres and drive up Godley Peaks Road to a couple of hotspots for Lupin spotting great opportunities for photos amongst the vibrant colours and the turquoise Lake Tekapo and whitecapped mountains as possible backgrounds. We will visit the hidden lake of Alexandria with its variety of lakeside character cribs. Then continue our scenic drive up the valley, taking in the splendid scenery until we reach the Cass River. From here we then make our way to Twizel for lunch. Next, we will drive out of town to Burkes Pass to check out the vintage shops. We'll take our time to visit a few of the "Mackenzie Country" icons, including the lakeside Church of the Good Shepherd, the Sheep Dog Statue and Lake Tekapo Canals. We'll then return to Peppers Hotel where we'll enjoy our dinner on-site at the restaurant.

## DAY THREE

B, L, D

On our journey to Mount Cook Alpine Village, we'll stop at Lake Pukaki for photos by the Bronze Himalayan Thar statue before heading to Glentanner Station Park

Centre. Enjoy morning tea and browse the Merino Retail shop, featuring wool from the station's 9,000 merinos, suppliers to the Ice Breaker brand. The scenic drive offers stunning views of Lake Pukaki and the braided Tasman River as we ascend into the mountains. At Mount Cook, we'll visit the Visitor Centre for an insightful talk about the National Park. Lunch follows at the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre café in the Hermitage Hotel, celebrating the legendary explorer and showcasing the region with films and a planetarium display. After a day of discovery, we'll travel through the Hooker Valley to the Heritage Gateway Hotel in Omarama. Relax in country-style comfort, surrounded by beautiful landscapes and starry skies, and enjoy dinner.

## DAY FOUR

B, L, AT, D

Remember to bring a warm jacket and gloves as our day begins with a journey over the stunning Lindis Pass, with a stop for photos to capture the breath-taking views. We then head to the newly established Cromwell Heritage Precinct, Melmore Terrace, where we'll explore the area. Afterwards, we'll enjoy a lunch and a glass of wine in Bannockburn, which is in the heart of Central Otago. This area is renowned for its world-class wineries, rugged landscapes, and historic gold-mining sites. Our next destination is Wanaka a picturesque town situated on the edge of Lake Wanaka. The town itself boasts an eclectic mix of boutique shops, galleries, and cafes. We'll take a leisurely stroll around the shops and soak up the local culture before embarking on a Lake Cruise to Stevenson's Island, where we'll take in the beauty of the lake and its surroundings. Tonight, we will be staying at the Oakridge Resort where we'll enjoy sharing conversations with our fellow travellers while indulging in a dinner at the on-site restaurant.

## DAY FIVE

B, L, D

We begin our day with breakfast before visiting the impressive Benmore Power Station. Next, we'll enjoy morning tea at the Wrinkly Rams before pausing at Lake Benmore Picnic Area to take in its serene beauty. Our journey continues to Lake Aviemore Power Station for awe-inspiring views of the mountains and lakes. From there, we'll marvel at the Elephant Rocks, towering limestone formations millions

of years in the making, resembling elephants in a fossil-rich boulder field. Lunch will be at the acclaimed Riverstone Kitchen, followed by a guided tour of the dramatic Riverstone Castle, built from local Oamaru stone and surrounded by a picturesque lake on Dot and Neil Smith's dairy farm. Finally, we'll head to the seaside town of Timaru for our stay at the Comfort Hotel Benvenue. The evening concludes with dinner at the on-site restaurant, where we'll enjoy warm southern hospitality before retiring for a restful night.

## DAY SIX

B, MT, L

On our final morning, we'll have breakfast at our accommodation before checking out and heading to Hemsworth Estate. This is a picturesque property situated in the serene surroundings of Hampstead, Ashburton. The estate boasts an exquisite garden, which is home to a plethora of exotic plants, trees, and wildlife. Visitors can explore the stunning gardens while gaining insights into the history and lives of the estate's owners through a guided tour. A morning tea adds to the indulgent experience, making Hemsworth Estate a must-visit for anyone seeking a tranquil escape and an opportunity to connect with nature. From here we'll continue our journey to the Aviation Museum for a tour of their impressive collection of aircraft. Then off to Trott's garden where we'll enjoy lunch and a garden tour before heading onto Christchurch Airport to check in for our flights back home. As we reflect on our experiences, we'll cherish the memories of this wonderful journey.