

Autumn Colours of Central Otago - itinerary

DAY ONE

D

We fly today from Tauranga, over the Southern Alps, and into the spectacular Alpine Resort of Queenstown. Once we've settled into our hotel in the spectacular alpine resort of Queenstown, we head down to the pier on the shores of Lake Wakatipu. The 105-year-old steamship TSS Earnslaw is ready to take us on a magical round-trip lake cruise disembarking at the famous Walter Peak High Country Farm. We'll be stopping here for a tasty gourmet buffet dinner at the Colonel's Homestead Restaurant, where their top chefs prepare an expansive array of local produce. After dinner, there's an entertaining talk and demonstration about the unique experiences of life on a high-country station. As we steam our way back, Queenstown's lights will sparkle in the night air. Our accommodation at Queenstown Heritage Hotel awaits.

DAY TWO

B, MT, L, D

Central Otago is famous for its world-class pinot noir wines and its autumn colours. This morning we will start with the latter in the township of Cromwell. Viewing the pristine waters of Lake Dunstan is followed up with morning tea at The Black Rabbit Kitchen. A scenic drive takes in the local vineyards, Bannockburn's autumn display and the Clutha River to finish in Clyde for lunch at iconic Oliver's Restaurant. Here is your chance to sample the local pinot noir. Post-lunch, we are split into two groups for a two-hour Clutha River Cruise, exploring examples of historical gold mining sites and viewing the Clyde dam. We will take a scenic drive through the magnificent scenery of Roxburgh via Alexandra before we return to our hotel tonight.

DAY THREE

B, MT, D

We're off on an adventure today so have a good breakfast! Our 4WD tour of

Skippers Canyon follows the deep meandering course of the Shotover River, rich in history and featuring spectacular geological formations. Awe-inspiring vistas of the high southern country provide ample opportunity for photos, so be sure to capture the memories. Free time and lunch are at your leisure in the quaint and quirky village of Arrowtown today, featuring delightful cafes, boutiques and historic stone buildings. The autumnal show will be in full bloom, so a chance to appreciate further the bright leafy displays of golds, yellows and reds of this region. Tonight's dinner will be at a higher altitude as we head up in the gondolas to Bobs Peak for a fabulous meal at the Skyline's Stratosfare Restaurant.

DAY FOUR

B, MT, L

For our final day, we are taking a drive out to Glenorchy. Described as a fabulous paradise, this small settlement at the northern end of Lake Wakatipu is the gateway to some of the world's best walking tracks, including the Routeburn Track. Situated within the borders of Mt Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks, it's here that many visitors the world over make the pilgrimage to stand and marvel at the astonishingly beautiful location of the Lord of the Rings Trilogy movies. Our afternoon activities may vary depending on flight departures today.