

summary

The following summary highlights the features included in your Black Sheep vacation.

accommodation

- Clean, comfortable modern accommodations with well-equipped, contemporary rooms.
- Double, twin, and single rooms with private baths.

dining

- Hearty cooked or continental breakfasts included each morning.
- Lunch is included on Day 4 where it is part of the kayaking trip.
- Dinners are included on Days 1, and 8. Dining is a la carte.
- Snacks, fresh fruit, and beverages are carried in the tour vehicles.

activities

- Whale-watching boat trip in Kaikoura.
- Hiking the Kaikoura Peninsula.
- Dolphin swimming excursion in Kaikoura.
- Wine tasting in Marlborough.
- Sea kayaking the Abel Tasman National Park.
- Cave-rafting or scenic-caving expedition.
- Guided ice hike on the Fox Glacier.
- Haast River jet boat excursion.
- Visit to Arrowtown and the bungy bridge.
- Free day in Queenstown to indulge in your own optional choice of activities.

Plus day hikes, bird watching, swimming, and much more!

We pride ourselves on the wide range of activities included in your tour package. We've chosen those that we feel will enhance your New Zealand experience. You can participate in as many or as few as you like. If you are unable to participate in an activity or there are weather restrictions, alternatives will be provided where possible.

transportation

- Airport transfers within New Zealand.
- All land transportation while on tour in comfortable, air-conditioned luxury tour vehicles.
- Various on-board amenities such as a reference library, binoculars, etc to enhance your enjoyment of the trip.

southern adventurer kai iti

support

- Detailed pre-trip information, including passport and visa requirements, packing tips, and arrival details.
- Professional office staff to help you plan every aspect of your trip.

guiding

- Experienced, trained Black Sheep guides who are experts in enriching your travel experience.
- Care for all of the mundane details, leaving you free to relax and have the time of your life.



southern adventurer kai iti

itinerary

Kai iti - kai is the Māori word for food. Kai iti describes a delicious taste of something to come, a small snack or light meal. The word kai can also be applied to new understanding and knowledge.

christchurch & kaikoura

Day 1: Christchurch

Your adventure begins in Christchurch, the South Island's largest city. As you step off the plane, you are greeted by your guide and taken to your hotel to freshen up after your journey. The afternoon is your own, and with your hotel located in the heart of downtown, it's easy to explore this lively, attractive city—stroll amongst the gardens and neo-Gothic architecture, visit the galleries, museums and open-air markets, hire a punt on the Avon, or enjoy a coffee while watching the tide of people flow by. Dinner this evening gives us the opportunity to socialize and to discuss our upcoming trip.

Day 2: Christchurch to Kaikoura

This morning, we head north to Kaikoura, a stunning seaside town and marine-life Mecca. A whale-watching excursion off the coast gives us the chance to view Kaikoura's resident sperm whales and other marine mammals as they feed in the nutrient-rich waters here. Back on land, we'll explore the nearby peninsula, a dominant feature in Kaikoura's landscape. A hike offers magnificent views of the surrounding sea and mountains as the trail winds past intriguing limestone formations and fur seals lounging on the rocks. Kaikoura means 'to eat crayfish' in Maori, and you're free in the evening to explore Kaikoura's atmospheric restaurants and cafes where you can sample the local specialty against the backdrop of the bay.

marlborough & nelson

Day 3: Kaikoura to the Abel Tasman National Park

This morning, we greet the day with a morning swim with the dolphins. Following this exhilarating activity and a hearty breakfast, we bid Kaikoura farewell and travel northwest through the Marlborough wine region. This is the origin of some of the world's best Sauvignon Blancs and Chardonnays, and we enjoy wine-tasting and a winery lunch here. Continuing on our way, we pause for a short hike through a thick stand of native beech forest before reaching the sun-drenched Nelson and Tasman Bay region. Here we'll settle for the next two nights at our accommodation near the Abel Tasman National Park.

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Day 4: Abel Tasman National Park

The Abel Tasman, with its temperate forest, aquamarine waters, and golden sand beaches, is arguably one of the most beautiful parks in the country. Hike through the park at your own pace this day, or join us for a special sea kayaking experience along its coast, ducking in and out of secluded bays, stopping to stroll along its beaches, and drawing in the tranquil beauty of the sea—an unforgettable day.

the west coast & glaciers

Day 5: Abel Tasman to Punakaiki

This morning, we resume our journey, passing through the spectacular Nelson Lakes region, a series of pristine alpine lakes ringed by mountains. Here, we stop for a hike through a beautiful, fern-laden beech forest before emerging onto the wild and woolly West Coast, a stunning region made only more appealing by its remoteness.

This part of the South Island is known for its limestone landscape and is honeycombed with intricate cave systems. The afternoon gives us the opportunity to explore one of these systems in a choice of two ways. Scenic Caving is available for those wishing to explore a natural cave virtually unspoiled by humans. We examine chambers filled with delicate formations and the eerie blue constellations of glowworms as we learn about the cave's creation. Those wanting a taste of the surreal can instead go on one of New Zealand's most unusual experiences, Cave Rafting. Outfitted with wetsuits and inner tubes and led by an experienced guide, we hike through the cave to a meandering underground river where we board our tubes and drift through a magnificent glow-worm grotto. Plenty of laughs are had on this memorable adventure. For those wishing to remain aboveground on this day, other enjoyable alternatives can be arranged.

From the caves, it's a short drive along spectacular coastline to our night's accommodation at Punakaiki, an area better known as the Pancake Rocks at the edge of the Paparoa National Park.

Day 6: Punakaiki to the Glaciers

This morning, it's a spectacular drive down to New Zealand's glacier region. Upon our arrival, we don hobnailed boots for a guided hike on the Franz Josef or Fox Glacier as it squeezes its way through the rainforest-clad valley. This afternoon, we arrive in the picturesque alpine village of Fox where we settle into our comfortable alpine accommodation. Fox packs a lot of character into such a small settlement and you'll be eager to explore. Nearby lies one of the prettiest walking trails in New Zealand, where you can stroll beneath a thick canopy of old-growth rainforest.

queenstown & beyond

Day 7: The Glaciers to Queenstown

We start the day with a peaceful lakeside hike, then head south towards Queenstown, New Zealand's adrenaline and scenery capital. On the way, we explore hidden rainforest trails, windswept beaches, and secluded waterfalls. After lunch, we take an exhilarating and scenic jet boat ride along the magnificent Haast River. Resuming our journey, dense rainforests give way to the stark mountains of the Mt. Aspiring National Park as we enter the Otago region, New Zealand's outback and home to its high country sheep stations. After pausing in the serene, lakefront town of Wanaka, we cross the spectacular Crown Range and descend into Queenstown. Resting on the shores of lovely Lake Wakatipu and flanked by The Remarkables, this is a stunning setting in which to base ourselves for the next few days. Our accommodation is centrally located to allow you easy access to Queenstown's many sights, walks, restaurants, and activities.

Day 8: Queenstown

Because there are so many things to do in Queenstown to cater to your diverse interests, we have left the day free for you to pick and choose whatever optional activities you desire. For those looking for a real thrill, your guide can arrange for you to try any number of adventures that make Queenstown famous, be it white water rafting, parapenting, tandem skydiving, or even Queenstown's trademark adventure, bungee jumping. For those who would prefer a more leisurely pace, there are plenty of more relaxing activities, as well; including beautiful walking tracks, horseback riding, wine and garden trails, shopping, and a gondola ride offering magnificent views of the area. Alternatively, you can take an optional daytrip to the spectacular Fiordland National Park for a scenic cruise beneath the fiords.

After a day full of adventure (or leisure), we re-gather for our farewell dinner to celebrate the friendships we've made and the memories shared.

Day 9: Homeward Bound

On your final morning, depending on your flight schedule, you'll have time to relax, make final purchases, and even reconsider that bungee jump before travelling home or to your next destination.

NOTE:

For those wanting to extend your stay, we are happy to arrange an overnight or multiple-day cruise in Fiordland or help coordinate a multiple-day tramp (hike) on one of the Great Walks in the region.