



HAAST Tour (SH9)

South Island Stray Journeys Itinerary

Start: Christchurch

Finish: Christchurch

Duration: 9 days/8 nights

Day 1: Christchurch to Franz Josef

Nau mai, haere mai (welcome)! Your adventure begins with one of the world's greatest train journeys, a ride on the TranzAlpine train. Check-in at the Christchurch Railway Station at 7:45am, then sit back to watch the South Island's most stunning scenery roll by just outside your window. You'll travel across the vast Canterbury Plains, cross winding ice-fed rivers and traverse the majestic Southern Alps via Arthur's Pass. Your train journey ends on the West Coast in the historic gold mining town of Greymouth, where you will meet your driver guide and coach. From there, we carry on to our overnight stop in the quaint little town of Franz Josef, home to the mighty Franz Josef Glacier. (D)

Accommodation included: Hostel close to all attractions

Activities included: TranzAlpine train journey from Christchurch to Greymouth

Day 2: Full day in Franz Josef

Enjoy a free day to get out and explore the natural wonder of Franz Josef Glacier. We highlight recommend a guided glacier tour to navigate the maze of ice and explore the incredible glacier (own expense). There are also many excellent bush hikes available in the region if you decide not to get up on the glacier. Tonight's dinner is up to you with the opportunity to dine at one of the local cafes or restaurants in town or make use of the self-catering kitchen at our accommodation. (B)

Accommodation included: Hostel close to all attractions

Optional activities: Glacier heli-hike, scenic helicopter flight

Day 3: Franz Josef to Makarora

Today we head down the West Coast towards Mount Aspiring National Park, stopping to take in some breathtaking scenery at the amazing mirror-like Lake Matheson, NZ's most photographed lake. We'll see the region's best waterfalls as we travel through the mountainous Haast Pass towards Makarora then visit the stunning Blue Pools. On arrival in Mount Aspiring National Park we go jet boating to experience the best in shallow water boating skimming just inches from the riverbed, see pristine waterways, snow-capped peaks and native bush. (B,D)

Accommodation included: Unique mountain chalets

Activities included: Walk around Lake Matheson, walk through beech forest to the Blue Pools, jet boat in Mt Aspiring National Park

Day 4: Makarora to Doubtful Sound

Today we venture into Fiordland National Park, one of New Zealand's most beautiful and untouched locations, with stunning ice-carved fiords, valleys, lakes and mountain scenery. Within Fiordland we visit the magnificent Doubtful Sound, deepest of all the fiords, for a truly magical cruise experience

surrounded by towering peaks and unspoiled wilderness. We will board a purpose-built boat and enjoy complimentary afternoon tea while cruising past fur seals, penguins and dolphins on our way to tonight's anchorage. There are sea kayaks available if you're keen to paddle in the fiord. If it's a clear night, make sure to go up to the upper deck after dinner for exceptional stargazing. (B,D)

Accommodation included: Overnight on the boat, anchored within a secluded bay in a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Activities included: Doubtful Sound Overnight Cruise, sea kayaking, wildlife spotting

Day 5: Doubtful Sound to Queenstown

We depart Doubtful Sound around midday, leaving behind stunning Fiordland to head for the thrill and excitement of the 'adventure capital of the world' Queenstown. For your first evening here, Queenstown offers an optional big (make that huge!) night out with many excellent restaurants, pubs and live music. (B)

Accommodation included: Lodge located close to town with awesome views

Days 6 & 7: Full days in Queenstown

You have two free days in Queenstown to fully explore everything on offer. With so many fantastic activity options, it's a great place to spend a couple days, no matter what your past-time of choice is. Options include: bungy jumping, zipline tours, canyoning, Shotover River jet boating, skiing, skydiving, a walk up Ben Lomond or Queenstown hill for amazing views, or just enjoy the stunning scenery and do nothing. Optional activities and meals not indicated are at your own expense. (B)

Accommodation included: Lodge located close to town with awesome views

Optional activities: AJ Hackett Bungy, Canyon Swing, Skyline Gondola and Lugging

Day 8: Queenstown to Mt Cook

We'll jump back on the bus for a short drive to Wanaka, where we'll spend the morning biking along some of the world's most scenic lakeside trails. After lunch, we head over the Lindis Pass through the picturesque Mackenzie region to the base of the country's highest mountain, Aoraki/Mt Cook. There is time for a hike through the Hooker Valley for breathtaking views of the dramatic mountain landscape, or opt to take an alpine scenic flight (own expense). With very little manmade light interference, this is also one of the best places in New Zealand to join an evening stargazing tour. (B,D)

Accommodation included: Alpine lodge

Activities included: Mountain biking in Wanaka, scenic walk along the Hooker Valley track

Optional activities: Big Sky Stargazing or scenic heli-flight

Day 9: Mt Cook to Christchurch

Today we make our way through a landscape made famous in the 'Lord of the Rings' films. We'll take a break for a stroll on the shores of Lake Tekapo, iconic for its historic church and turquoise waters. Between Tekapo and Christchurch there is an option for thrill seekers to hop-off and join a top-notch Grade 5 white water adventure on the Rangitata River (own expense). Those not rafting will continue on to Christchurch, where your driver guide will point out the highlights of the South Island's largest city. The rafters will re-join the group back at the accommodation in Christchurch this evening. This is where your tour comes to an end – we hope you had a blast on your New Zealand

journey! (B)

Activities included: Explore Lake Tekapo area

Optional activities: Rangitata white water rafting

What's Included

- + Experienced tour guide
- + 8 nights' accommodation
- + Meals: 8 breakfasts, 4 dinners
- + Multi-share accommodation (or upgrade to twin/double/single)

Activities Included

- + TranzAlpine train journey from Christchurch to Greymouth
- + Walks around Lake Matheson and the Blue Pools, Mt Aspiring National Park
- + Jet Boat Ride in Makarora
- + Doubtful Sound overnight cruise, Fiordland National Park
- + Sea kayaking in Doubtful Sound, Fiordland National Park
- + Mountain biking in Wanaka
- + Walk on Hooker Valley track, Mt Cook National Park
- + Explore Lake Tekapo area

What to Bring

- + Camera
- + Sturdy walking shoes/boots
- + Warm clothing
- + Waterproof jacket
- + Hat & sunscreen
- + Bathers/towel
- + Water bottle
- + Toiletries
- + Motion sickness tablets
- + Insect repellent

Note:

- ^Upgrade accommodation is excluded in Doubtful Sound.
- Tours should be reconfirmed at least 48 hours in advance by calling +64 9 526 2140.
- Luggage should be restricted to 15kg in a single bag, plus a small day pack.