



MACKINNON Tour: 14 Day Full South Island (ASI14)

South Island Stray Journeys Itinerary

Start location / day: Christchurch / Saturdays
Finish location / day: Christchurch / Fridays
Duration: 14 days / 13 nights

Day 1: Christchurch to Hanmer Springs

Nau mai, haere mai (welcome)! Your journey kicks off this morning when we depart from the city centre to the historic French settlement of Akaroa on the Banks Peninsula. After exploring the delights of the village, we'll have time for lunch – make sure you sample one of the wonderful French pastries on offer in the charming cafes. Next, we head to the peaceful alpine town of Hanmer Springs, where you can spend the evening surrounded by mountains and forest as you relax in the thermal hot pools. Tonight is a group dinner. (D)

Accommodation included: Cozy alpine chalets

Activities included: Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools and Spa

Day 2: Hanmer Springs to Kaikoura

We start today with an invigorating walk up Conical Hill for the best views in Hanmer Springs. Then, we'll make our way to the East Coast and the coastal village of Kaikoura, famous for a huge array of natural wonders from land to sea. We arrive in Kaikoura so you have free time to experience all this location has to offer. Why not go out on the water and experience one of Kaikoura's famous dolphin and whale spotting tours (own expense), see seals sitting right beside the road at Goose Bay or wander around the peninsula and check out the breathtaking views from the lookout. (B)

Accommodation included: Warm modern hostel

Activities included: Conical Hill walk, peninsula walk and seal colony visit

Optional activities: Whale watching, swim with dolphins

Day 3: Kaikoura to Picton

Today we'll travel north on a scenic drive along rugged coastal roads to the seaside port town of Picton. You have free time this afternoon to go for a walk to get your bearings in this charming town, stroll along the waterfront or relax in the spa pool at your accommodation.

Accommodation included: Cozy villa

Day 4: Picton to Abel Tasman

Spend the morning soaking up the views of the stunning Marlborough Sounds by foot or bicycle on one of the nearby tracks. You'll meet your group at midday to drive through the famous Marlborough wine region. We visit the cellar door shop at a local vineyard to sample New Zealand's world famous Sauvignon Blanc before heading to the spectacular Abel Tasman National Park.

Tonight we enjoy some delicious seafood and a BBQ dinner at our exclusive campsite accommodation on the edge of the national park. (D)

Accommodation included: Beach accommodation on the edge of the national park

Activities included: Winery cellar door visit

Day 5: Full day in Abel Tasman

Today is a free day to experience the incredible Abel Tasman National Park. Explore this stunning, coastal area famous for being one of the sunniest spots in New Zealand. Walk the coastal track and discover some of New Zealand's best natural golden beaches or choose an optional activity like sailing or sea kayaking (own expense). Tonight you can self-cater and use the BBQ facilities at our accommodation from dinner. (B)

Accommodation included: Beach accommodation on the edge of the national park

Activities included: Abel Tasman Track and Aqua Taxi or stand-up paddle board hire (SUP)

Day 6: Abel Tasman to Franz Josef

We start early to head south along the 'wild' West Coast, travelling on the rugged rocky coastline that makes this stretch of road one of the country's top drives. We'll stop at Cape Foulwind to view a wild seal colony that's active year round, and then make our way further down the coast to visit the spectacular limestone Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and blowholes. From there, we carry on to our next overnight stop in the quaint little West Coast town of Franz Josef, home to the mighty Franz Josef Glacier. (D)

Accommodation included: Hostel close to all attractions

Activities included: Cape Foulwind seal colony, Punakaiki Pancake Rocks walk

Day 7: 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 8: 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 9: 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 10: 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 11 & 12: 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: bungee 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 Bungee, Canyon Swing, Skyline Gondola and Lugging

Day 13: 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 14: 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
- + 13 nights' accommodation
- + Meals: 11 breakfasts, 6 dinners
- + Multi-share accommodation (or upgrade to twin/double/single)

Activities Included

- + Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools and Spa
- + Conical Hill walk, Hanmer Springs
- + Seal spotting in Kaikoura
- + Winery cellar door visit, Marlborough
- + Walk in Abel Tasman National Park, Abel Tasman
- + Aqua Taxi ride or stand-up paddle board hire (SUP), Abel Tasman
- + Visit Cape Foulwind seal colony, West Coast
- + Punakaiki Pancake Rocks walk, West Coast
- + 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.