

# NEW ZEALAND'S SCENIC HIGHWAY



**Duration**  
6 Days



**Distance**  
594 km

Aquamarine lakes...spectacular stargazing...glacial icebergs and hot pools where you soak in breathtaking views – the Scenic Highway is epic. Its instant beauty needs no filters – your holiday snaps will be the envy of many.

## NAU MAI, HAERE MAI

WELCOME TO THE SOUTH



### DAY 1

#### ARRIVE IN CHRISTCHURCH AND TRAVEL TO TEKAPO (225KM)

If you haven't been to Ōtautahi Christchurch for a while, zip into the CBD after you land in the city – it's changed a lot in the past decade and it's buzzing.

Hit **Riverside Market** for a taste of 'new Christchurch'. Treat yourself to fancy **Flash Browns** or find out why the locals are always queuing outside **Dimitris**. Cruise through the cool boutiques in the laneways surrounding the market.

When you're ready, head south on State Highway One. Once you've turned onto State Highway 79, you'll see why the South Island's renowned for its beauty.

The pretty town of **Geraldine** is worth a look – relish the tasting table at **Barkers Foodstore**...you'll struggle to leave without buying something.

Stop off at the famous **Fairlie Bakehouse** for one of their incredible Kiwi pies (aka love wrapped in pastry).

The most popular? Pork Belly and Apple hands down (probably due to the crunchy crackling baked into its lid).

Another 45 minutes down the road and you'll be wowed by the aquamarine waters of **Lake Tekapo**. No need to rush to grab photos – you're here for a two-night stay.

Come nighttime, you'll be dazzled – literally. This is the heart of the **Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve** and the stargazing here is mind-blowing.

Immerse yourself in one of the world's best astro-tourism experiences at the **Dark Sky Project** accompanied by dinner at the **Dark Sky Diner**.

### DAY 2

#### TEKAPO

Wake up to the sun rising above the iconic **Church of the Good Shepherd**. Take a stunning lakefront walk and enjoy a coffee and a bite of breakfast from the **Greedy Cow**.



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## TOP TIP

Pack a picnic lunch and stop along the way. It's a great way to experience New Zealand.



If you're up for the extraordinary, book an epic adventure with **Helicopter Line** or head off the beaten track in a 4WD with **Tekapo Adventures**.

Unwind with an afternoon soak and massage at **Tekapo Springs** – it has some of the best views in town.

Come dinner time, you're spoiled for choice...**Ramen Tekapo** and **Kohan** offer great Japanese, dine with a view at the waterfront's **TLV Restaurant** or head to **Blue Lake Eatery and Bar** for some great Kiwi kai (food).

At night, sit back with a glass of Central Otago Pinot Noir for some self-guided stargazing.

## DAY 3

### TEKAPO TO AORAKI MT COOK (103KM)

Before you leave Tekapo, be blown away by the **Dark Sky Experience**. This indoor, daytime tour combines Māori astronomy and science using incredible and immersive visual displays.

En route to **Aoraki Mt Cook**, stop at the Lake Pūkaki Visitor Centre and grab that iconic shot of Aoraki's peak with the lake that is so turquoise it looks surreal.

Pop into **Mt Cook Alpine Salmon** and sample the salmon which the Mackenzie region is so well-known for.

Arrive at Aoraki Mt Cook village and it's time to explore the National Park. We recommend the stunning

**Hooker Valley Track** walk (3 hours return) or the easier **Kea Point Track** (1 hour return).

If you fancy a relaxing dinner and evening head to **The Hermitage** where we recommend the **Big Sky Stargazing experience** if you're up for more stars – otherwise just chill out in front of the fireplace in the bar.

## DAY 4

### AORAKI TO TWIZEL (66KM)

After breakfast, head to New Zealand's largest glacier – the Tasman Glacier.

Cruise to it by boat via **Glacier Explorers** and you'll be amazed as icebergs float past you. If you'd rather see it from the air, **Mt Cook Ski Planes and Helicopters** can get you there. Afterwards, hit the road south.

Twizel's **Mint Folk and Co** offers the perfect stop off for lunch. After you've grabbed a bite see if you can get a salmon to do the same and go fishing at **High Country Salmon** where they'll smoke what you catch for your dinner.

Tonight's a night for relaxing and there's no better place to do it than in the outdoor baths at **SkyScape**.

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## DAY 5

### TWIZEL TO QUEENSTOWN (200KM)

Wave goodbye to the Mackenzie (sniff) but as you head out of Twizel make sure you stop at the **Waitaki Clay Cliffs**...it's like walking into a western movie!

Relax and recharge at **Omarama Hot Tubs** and you'll be ready for the drive ahead.

Wait until you reach Cromwell for lunch so you can make the most of **The Stoaker Room and Bistro**. They steam, bake, grill and smoke food in French Oak Pinot Noir Barrel Cookers – it's sublime and you'll love its laid back atmosphere.

While you're in Cromwell, head to **Pinot Junction, Wine Store & Eatery** in the Cromwell Heritage Precinct or for fabulous views and yummy reising, head up the Bannockburn hills to **Mt Difficulty Wines**.

If you arrive in Queenstown with time to spare before your flight, head to **Steamer Wharf** for a stroll and maybe a bite to eat before you head back to Frankton to farewell New Zealand a little sad that a truly remarkable holiday has come to an end.

