

**EXPLORE
NEW ZEALAND**

THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH

New Zealand's South Island offers luxury experiences in stunning settings, whether it's a flying visit or you have a little more time to spare, says Shane Boocock

Queenstown, in the south-western corner of the South Island is known globally for its adrenaline-based adventures, but it delivers far more when you factor in food and wine, spa and wellness retreats, art, culture, heritage, nature and eco-tourism, as well as breathtaking National Park hiking trails. Fifteen minutes north of Queenstown are celebrated vineyards – serving fine, cold-climate wines – and two championship-class golf courses. Take an extra day's travel further north again and explore the awe-inspiring Aoraki-Mount Cook glacier region, before flying onto the north-east coastal city of Christchurch. In nearby Akaroa, charter a yacht to view local marine life, or take a helicopter up the coastline to indulge in aerial whale watching, before ending your trip in the stunning Abel Tasman region in the upper far north. Throughout your journey you'll encounter award-winning chefs serving regional and international cuisine, while lodging in chic rural hideaways, opulent five-star hotels and boutique lodges of distinction – where privacy prevails in secluded, luxurious isolation.



Weekend Queenstown

Seasonal changes arrive quickly in the enchanting alpine village of Queenstown situated at the tail-end of the Southern Alps, so it's worth considering in what season you should visit. During Fall the town's trees dress in yellow buttercup and apple cider hues reflected in the depths of Lake Wakatipu. The lake is New Zealand's third largest and beyond its shores you're encircled by craggy mountain ranges.

A weekend represents the minimum time to explore Queenstown no matter which season you are there, so being centrally placed is advantageous. Most of Queenstown's activities can be experienced year-round except for the June to early October winter skiing season. Visitors who appreciate the great outdoors, superb food and wine, and more relaxed pastimes won't be disappointed either. Must-do activities

include a thrilling jetboat ride, cruising on Milford Sound, a flight over the Southern Alps and Fiordland and chartering a luxury motorboat on Lake Wakatipu. For shopping there are big brand international retailers such as Louis Vuitton and local boutiques such as BONZ selling luxurious New Zealand-made fashion and Angel Divine, which has a cult following.

With a premium lakefront position at the head of Queenstown's restaurant and shopping precinct, Eichardt's Private Hotel in the historic district beckons those looking for sumptuous accommodation where guest options include five 125 sq ft suites with separate lounges or four stylish apartments. Also centrally located, Sofitel Queenstown Hotel & Spa luxuriates in five-star French antique interiors and exceptional concierge



Splendid isolation

Main pic: Scrubby Bay, one of the luxury villas at Annandale.
 Left: Dine on your private terrace overlooking Wakatipu Lake at Matakauri Lodge



"Dine like royalty from the 'Trust the Chef' signature menu at the Bistro at Amisfield Vineyard, which hosted the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge"

service. If you are seeking privacy and exclusivity you'll find it at Matakauri Lodge, perched on a bluff above Lake Wakatipu with stunning lake and mountain views and only a seven-minute drive from Queenstown. Unwind in one of 11 luxurious 269 sq ft suites each with private terraces or reside in the 5,000 sq ft Owner's Cottage, which includes your own chef.

Queenstown's eclectic dining scene embraces the town's most famous local institution, The Cow, a pizza and spaghetti house with communal tables,

and Blue Kanu, a "Polynasia" influenced restaurant. Otherwise dine like royalty from the "Trust the Chef" signature menu at the Bistro at Amisfield Vineyard, a Central Otago-based wine producer - Amisfield hosted the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in April 2014. In nearby Arrowtown, 12 miles north of Queenstown, order brunch at local favorite, The Chop Shop or for dinner savor a confit of Bendigo rabbit at the village's best restaurant, Saffron. For dessert don't hold back on the divine chocolate at Queenstown's Koko Black.



Drink in the view
Left: A patio suite at the Matakauri Lodge is the perfect place to relax with a drink. Above, right: Oysters from Saffron Restaurant

**THE DETAILS
THE WEEKEND**

STAY

EICHARDT'S PRIVATE HOTEL
Marine Parade. James Cavanagh, general manager, +64 3 441 0450
eichardts.com

MATAKAURI LODGE
Joanne Tickner, concierge
+64 3 441 1008, joannet@matakaurilodge.com
matakauri.co.nz

**SOFITEL QUEENSTOWN
HOTEL & SPA**
+64 3 450 0045
sofitelqueenstown.com

EAT

SAFFRON RESTAURANT
+64 3 442 0131
saffronrestaurant.co.nz



BISTRO AT AMISFIELD
+64 3 445 4901
amisfield.co.nz

BLUE KANU
+64 3 442 6060
bluekanu.co.nz

**THE CHOP SHOP FOOD
MERCHANTS**
+64 3 442 1116
Arrowtown

**THE COW PIZZA AND
SPAGHETTI HOUSE**
+64 3 442 8588
thecowrestaurant.co.nz

SHOP

ANGEL DIVINE
+64 3 442 8988
angeldivine.co.nz

BONZ
+64 3 442 5398
bonz.com.au

LOUIS VUITTON
+64 3 441 8002

One Week Queenstown, Fiordland, Central Otago

Queenstown's global reputation has ensured a record number of visitors throng its quaint streets. Voted 10th in the world's top 10 Scenic Airport Approaches 2014 by private jet booking company PrivateFly, Queenstown's International Airport offers a seamless transition between the bustling resort town and the vast spectacular wilderness of Fiordland National Park. One great escape is Air Fiordland's flight over Milford Sound with unparalleled views of the fiords. However, for an incomparable chopper ride try an extreme golf excursion as Over The Top helicopter you into the Remarkables mountains, 4,500 ft above Queenstown, to a unique par three golf range. For complete tranquility, sail on Lake Wakitipu in the 80-ft Pacific Jemm, the only luxury motorboat on the lake operating bespoke cruises.

A hiking trip will get you closest to Fiordland National Park, a 1.2 million hectare World Heritage site. A Hollyford Track one-day guided heli-discovery trip allows you to fly over spine-tingling alpine scenery, then walk through a beech forest and thrill in a wilderness jetboat ride before your chopper whisks you to a remote mountaintop for a gourmet lunch. Another way to explore the region is to charter Fiordland Expeditions' 67-ft boat, Tutoko II. With a heli-pad and four private cabins, two

with ensembles it is ideal for discerning travelers who want to cruise the Fiords.

For golf enthusiasts, The Hills Golf Course built by New Zealand's jewelry magnate Michael Hill, 15 minutes drive north of Queenstown, provides a world-class 18-hole championship layout. Play then stay at The Lodge at the Hills. This extravagant, but elegant lodge with its own putting green takes up to 12 guests. Set in 500 acres in a spectacular glacial valley surrounded by snow-capped mountains, the property features six individual suites, each with ensuite and lounge from between 600 sq ft to 1,036 sq ft.

Classic Car Journeys offers a Queenstown-based fleet of Rolls-Royce and 1951 Daimler cars to chauffeur you on a tour of local vineyards before driving you 44 miles over the twisting Crown Range Road from Arrowtown to Wanaka. Topping out at 3,530 ft, this is New Zealand's highest paved road. End up at the elegant Whare Kea Lodge on the shores of Lake Wanaka. It's a private haven with two stylish master suites and four deluxe suites. The lodge is for exclusive hire with a minimum five-night stay. Chef James Stapley will create superb meals on request. Also book a table at Bistro Gentil in Wanaka to appreciate the best New Zealand produce cooked à la française and served with exceptional Gallic wines.

Par for the course

Above: Extreme golf up in the Remarkables mountains. Below: Be chauffeured through history in Classic Car Journeys' stylish vintage vehicles



THE DETAILS ONE WEEK

STAY

THE LODGE AT HILLS

Fiona Stevens, General Manager
+64 3 274 458 555
fiona@thehillslodge.co.nz
thehillslodge.co.nz

WHARE KEA LODGE

Gillian Lonie, Lodge manager
+64 3 443 1400, admin@
wharekealodge.com
wharekealodge.com

DO

AIR FIORDLAND

+64 3 442 3404
airfiordland.com

CLASSIC CAR JOURNEYS

Lizzie and Kevan Christopher,
owners +64 3 442 4482,
info@classiccarjourneys.co.nz
classiccarjourneys.co.nz

FIORDLAND EXPEDITIONS

Mandy and Richard Abernethy,
owner/operators +64 3 249 9005,
info@fiordlandexpeditions.co.nz
fiordlandexpeditions.co.nz

HOLLYFORD TRACK

Nigel Kerr, marketing manager
+64 3 442 3000
nigel.kerr@nttourism.co.nz
hollyfordtrack.com

OVER THE TOP HELICOPTERS

Louise 'Choppy' Patterson, CEO
and Chief Pilot +64 3 442 2233
choppy@flynz.co.nz flynz.co.nz

PACIFIC JEMM

Blair Payne, Skipper/Manager
info@pacificjemm.com
pacificjemm.co.nz

PRIVATEFLY

UK +44 1747 642777,
USA 1 866 726 1222,
NZ +64 0800 882 015
privatefly.com/us

THE HILLS GOLF COURSE

Craig Palmer, director of golf,
+64 3 409 8290, cpalmer@
thehills.co.nz thehills.co.nz

EAT

BISTRO GENTIL

+64 3 442 0556,
info@bistrogentil.co.nz
bistrogentil.co.nz



Longer Queenstown, Fiordland, Central Otago, Christchurch Region, Abel Tasman

During your Wanaka stay, charter an Aspiring Helicopter to fly you north over Aoraki-Mount Cook National Park, which has five major glaciers and 17 peaks higher than 9,842 ft including New Zealand's highest mountain, Mount Cook at 12,217 ft. It's also possible to land on Tasman Glacier – New Zealand's longest at 17 miles. On the glacier's terminal lake charter a glacial-ice rafting trip with Glacier Explorers – one of only three such tours in the world. If fly fishing is your thing then you're in for a treat as some of the best salmon and trout heli-fishing is in the MacKenzie High Country. Otherwise take a spellbinding journey

to an alpine chalet, set at 5,740 ft among the peaks and accessible only by helicopter. Whether you go just for a champagne picnic or spend a few nights in seclusion, a mountain guide and chalet host will attend to your needs.

Canterbury Guiding Co can help you organize a private harbor cruise from the historic port town of French Akaroa on Banks Peninsula near Christchurch to see rare Hector's dolphins as well as yellow and blue-eyed penguins and fur seals. They also arrange a helicopter trip to the small coastal town of Kaikoura to search for leviathan sperm whales. Returning via the Waipara Valley will allow time for lunch at

Natural good

Top: Enjoy a pampering spa treatment and gourmet food at Split Apple retreat. Below: View from the Seascape villa at Annandale

Canterbury's finest vineyard and multi-award-winning restaurant, Pegasus Bay, to dine on Muscovy duck or a North Canterbury Angus tender hung beef fillet. To get there, take a 40-minute jet ride into Christchurch from either Wanaka or Queenstown and a 15-minute Pacific Helicopter ride to Annandale. This historic farm set amid rolling hills on the Banks Peninsula features a restored five-bedroom homestead and magnificent gardens with accommodation in one of four custom-designed villas where private gate-to-plate dinners are arranged by award-winning chef, Paul Jobin.

Journey's end is in the far north of the South Island. Here, located between Golden Bay and Tasman Bay, a 20-minute heli-flight from the town of Nelson, is the stunningly beautiful Abel Tasman National Park, named after the first European explorer to sight New Zealand in 1642. Within its 55,699 acres, the park's famed walking tracks traverse towering granite cliffs, secluded beaches and serene bays perfect for kayaking. A helicopter can also be hired to explore even more isolated spots. Only a few minutes away from Abel Tasman National Park, Split Apple Retreat is built into the cliff-face overlooking the Tasman Sea and with a spa and gourmet food for post-activity pampering. Sipping a Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc on a small pristine sandy beach with private access from the retreat sums up the sophisticated, but laid-back, outdoorsy vibe of the South Island way of life.

EXPLORE NEW ZEALAND

THE DETAILS LONGER

STAY

ANNANDALE COASTAL FARM ESCAPE

Jasmine Palmer, marketing director, +64 3 304 6841, jasmine@annandale.com
annandale.com

CHRISTCHURCH GUIDING COMPANY

David Hiatt, general manager, +64 21 734 431, david@canterburyguides.com
canterburyguides.com

GLACIER EXPLORERS

Mount Cook Village (mid-Sept to late May only): +64 3 435 1641 info@glacierexplorers.co.nz
glacierexplorers.com

SPLIT APPLE RETREAT

Lee and Pen Nelson, owners +64 3 527 8377, info@splitapple.com
splitapple.com



ASPIRING HELICOPTERS

James Ford, chief pilot +64 3 443 7152, james@aspiringhelicopters.co.nz
aspiringhelicopters.co.nz

PACIFIC HELICOPTERS

Christchurch International Airport Rob Hunt, operations manager +64 27 316 8444, info@pacificaircraft.co.nz
pacifichelicopterservices.co.nz

EAT

PEGASUS BAY WINERY

Waipara Valley +64 3 314 6869 info@pegasusbay.com
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