



# Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

28 days departing 10th December 2019 only £5,495pp

Distant Journeys gives you the opportunity to have a truly memorable Christmas period by spending it exploring the fascinating country of New Zealand.

Our Very Best of New Zealand tour takes in all the sights that would top anyone's wish list with the addition of some less well known gems that many itineraries just wouldn't have time to visit. For instance, we discover the Art Deco city of Napier; as well as arty, bohemian Nelson.

You will still enjoy all of the experiences in the usual Very Best of New Zealand tour, but with additional Christmas cheer!



## Your holiday includes

### Flights with leading scheduled airlines

- ◆ Return economy class flights
- ◆ Fly with Qantas/Emirates from London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow
- ◆ Alternatively fly with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow or Manchester
- ◆ All airport charges, security charges and any applicable fuel surcharges
- ◆ UK Air Passenger Duty

### Choice of outbound stopover

- ◆ Two-night outbound stopover; choose from Singapore, Bangkok or Dubai (dependent on choice of airline)

### Carefully selected hotels

- ◆ Superior hotels in great locations
- ◆ All hotel portage
- ◆ Applicable hotel taxes

### Many meals

- ◆ Daily breakfast, worth £367 per person
- ◆ Dinner in Rotorua

### Christmas and New Year

- ◆ Christmas Dinner Nelson
- ◆ New Year's Eve Dinner Bay of Islands

### Unforgettable experiences

- ◆ Sightseeing tours in Singapore (or Bangkok or Dubai), Christchurch, Dunedin, Queenstown, Wellington, Rotorua, Auckland
- ◆ Morning cruise on Milford Sound
- ◆ Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve
- ◆ Maori concert
- ◆ 'Hole in the Rock' cruise in the Bay of Islands

### On the ground

- ◆ Services of an experienced local Tour Manager
- ◆ All overseas transfers
- ◆ Modern, air-conditioned coaches throughout

### 100% confidence

- ◆ Your holiday is covered by our Price Promise\*
- ◆ Your holiday is fully ATOL protected

\* For more information on our Price Promise, please refer to our website [www.distantjourneys.co.uk](http://www.distantjourneys.co.uk)



② = Number of nights





# Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

10 Dec to 15 Dec: UK - Singapore - Christchurch

## 10 Dec: Depart UK

Depart from the UK airport most convenient for you with Qantas/Emirates. Choose from London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow. Alternatively, fly direct to Singapore with Singapore Airlines from London Heathrow or Manchester. No matter which airline or airport you choose, there will be no additional cost. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

## 11 Dec: Singapore, 2 nights

Flights from London Heathrow may travel direct to Singapore. All UK regional flights will travel via Dubai. Arrive into the wonderful city of Singapore and transfer to the four star Copthorne Kings Hotel, situated in an enviable position close to the banks of the Singapore River. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

### Alternative stopover: Dubai or Bangkok

We have based 11 Dec - 13 Dec of this itinerary on a stopover in Singapore. If you are flying with Qantas / Emirates, you may choose to stop in Bangkok or Dubai for the same price. Your stopover includes transfers, accommodation, daily breakfast and a city sightseeing tour. Flight timings will vary. Please speak with one of our personal travel experts for more detail

## 12 Dec: Singapore

Known as 'the crossroads of Asia', Singapore is a city where east meets west; a cosmopolitan melting pot with an inspirational identity. This morning, enjoy a tour of this wonderful city. Included is a stop at Merlion Park with impressive views of Marina Bay. See the historic Civic District, Thian Hock Keng Temple and the fabulous orchid gardens set within Singapore's botanical gardens. Return to the hotel where the rest of our day is free to spend as we please. **Breakfast included**

## 13 Dec: Depart Singapore

A day at leisure in Singapore until it's time to leave for our evening flight to Auckland. Perhaps explore the impressive Gardens by the Bay or enjoy high tea at Raffles. **Breakfast, in-flight meals and drinks included**

## 14 Dec: Christchurch, 2 nights

We change aircraft in Australia (Singapore Airlines passengers will fly direct to Christchurch). On arrival into Christchurch we meet our local Coach Captain, who will be our driver and guide during our time in New Zealand. Transfer to the centrally located Grand Millennium Auckland, where we spend our first two nights in New Zealand. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

## 15 Dec: Christchurch

Considered the most English of New Zealand's cities, today in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake, Christchurch is in the midst of an epic rebuild that has completely reconstructed the city centre. This morning we take a tour to see what this exciting developing city has to offer. We start our day with a visit to the Sign of the Takahe, an historical building on the edge of the city before continuing to view the key landmarks of the city centre, including the transitional 'Cardboard Cathedral'. From here we take a visit to the Botanic Gardens. Founded in 1863 with the planting of an English oak tree, the Christchurch Botanic Gardens contain an impressive array of flora and fauna. Our afternoon is at leisure to continue exploring this delightful city. **Breakfast included**





## Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

16 Dec to 20 Dec: Dunedin - Te Anau - Milford Sound - Queenstown

### 16 Dec: Dunedin, 2 nights

This morning following breakfast we begin our journey south towards Dunedin. We stop at Hampden Beach to witness the geological curiosities known as the Moeraki Boulders, huge spherical boulders which are scattered along the beach, whilst others can be seen emerging from the sandstone cliffs. Each boulder weighs several tonnes and is up to two metres in diameter. According to Maori legend, the boulders are gourds washed ashore from the great voyaging canoe Araiteuru when it was wrecked upon landfall in New Zealand hundreds of years ago. Scientists explain the boulders as calcite concretions formed about 65 million years ago. The soft mudstone containing the boulders was raised from the seabed around 15 million years ago and waves, wind and rain are excavating them one by one. Known as the 'Edinburgh of the South', Dunedin is South Island's second largest city and is considered New Zealand's architectural heritage capital, with its lovingly restored Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Our next two nights are spent at the Distinction Hotel Dunedin, conveniently located close to the Octagon. **Breakfast included**

### 17 Dec: Dunedin

Enjoy a city sightseeing tour this morning travelling past Otago University, New Zealand's first. Our sightseeing also takes in the city's neo-Gothic churches, town hall, opulent theatres, and other 19th century buildings. We have time to admire the beautifully landscaped trees and plants of Dunedin Botanical Gardens and the spectacular views of the Otago Peninsula and Harbour before we return to our hotel. Our afternoon is at leisure to spend as we please. **Breakfast included**

### 18 Dec: Te Anau, 2 nights

This morning we say goodbye to Dunedin and begin our journey to Te Anau. Our journey takes us via Milton and Balclutha, with its distinctive arched concrete bridge before continuing through fresh, green farm scenery into Gore. We travel via Lumsden and Mossburn before arriving in Fiordland and the shores of Lake Te Anau, the biggest of South Island's many lakes. We stay the next two nights at either the Distinction Luxmore Hotel or Distinction Te Anau Hotel and Villas. **Breakfast included**

### 19 Dec: Milford Sound Cruise

#### Tour Highlight

An early start this morning as we embark on a stunning scenic drive into the heart of Fiordland National Park to join our morning cruise on spectacular Milford Sound. By choosing to cruise early in the morning, we will experience a quieter environment in which to enjoy all the wonders this beautiful fiord has to offer. See towering cliffs and peaks, including the iconic and much photographed Mitre Peak, that rises more than a kilometre straight out of the sea. Waterfalls cascade into the fiord and luxuriant rain forest clings to sheer rock faces. Later we return to Te Anau where there is time to enjoy the delights of this quaint township. **Breakfast included**

### 20 Dec: Queenstown, 2 nights

This morning, we depart through trout fishing rivers and high country landscapes and trout fishing rivers as we travel to the historic mining town of Arrowtown. The heart of its history is Buckingham Street, a procession of small town heritage buildings that stretch into a tree-lined avenue of tiny miners' cottages. Be sure to try a cream tea in one of the quaint tea rooms. We journey on to nearby Queenstown, and our home for the next two nights, the four star Millennium Hotel, situated only a short walk from the centre of town. **Breakfast included**





## Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

21 Dec to 24 Dec: Queenstown - Franz Josef - Nelson

### 21 Dec: Queenstown Freedom Day

Today has been left free to take advantage of the incredible variety of activities available in and around New Zealand's most glamorous alpine resort. For a fabulous view across the lake to the Remarkables, why not take a gondola ride to the top of Bob's Peak? There is also an opportunity to take an optional leisurely cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the vintage steamboat TSS Earnslaw. The cruise includes a visit to Walter Peak Homestead and a sheep shearing show, before returning to Queenstown aboard Earnslaw.

Breakfast included

### We recommend

#### Queenstown TSS Earnslaw

Enjoy a cruise across Lake Wakatipu aboard the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw, including a sheep shearing show at Walter Peak homestead.



### 22 Dec: Franz Josef, 2 nights

Incredible scenery today as we travel via Lake Dunstan, created by the mighty Clyde hydro dam in 1994. We make our way through New Zealand's Central Otago region, along the shores of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea. We will also travel along one of the most exciting scenic roads ever built – crossing the Haast River Bridge and via Clark Bluff. Later in the afternoon we reach Franz Josef in the Westland National Park. Our next two nights are at the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel. Breakfast included

### 23 Dec: Franz Josef Freedom Day

Today is left completely free to absorb the beauty of Franz Josef. For those that so wish, we shall drive to the Franz Josef Glacier terminal where we will have the opportunity to walk to view the glacier. Weather permitting, we may also take an optional scenic flight, which is at an additional cost, over the glacier and the awe-inspiring Alpine region.

Breakfast included

### We recommend

#### Scenic flight over Franz Josef Glacier

Enjoy an optional helicopter flight over awe-inspiring Franz Josef Glacier.



### 24 Dec: Nelson, 2 nights

Journey north this morning along the Heritage Highway, passing Lakes Lanthe and Mapourika as we leave Westland National Park. Our travels continue northbound taking us via Hokitika and Hari Hari travelling alongside striking wild scree-scarred terrain with forests of Crimson Rata and Kahikatea. We also visit Punakaki (Pancake Rocks), an incredible maze of limestone rocks with booming blowholes stacked high above the sea; before arriving in Nelson where our next two nights are at the Nelson Rutherford Hotel. Breakfast included





## Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

25 Dec to 29 Dec: Wellington - Napier - Rotorua

### 25 Dec: Christmas Day

Merry Christmas! You'll find no snow here, only sunshine and crystal clear waters. Today has been left for you to spend as you choose. Open some presents, take a stroll through Nelson or just relax and enjoy some Christmas cheer. Later in the day we join together to celebrate Christmas Day with a celebratory Christmas dinner. **Breakfast and Christmas Dinner included**

### 26 Dec: Wellington, 2 nights

This morning we leave South Island in our wake as we board the ferry for our inter-island cruise to New Zealand's North Island. During the cruise, enjoy spectacular views as we depart Queen Charlotte Sound. With the possibility of birds and dolphins following, we make our way across the Cook Strait to Wellington. Upon arrival we re-join our coach and make our way to Wellington, where the remainder of our day is at leisure. Our next two nights are spent at the Copthorne Hotel Oriental Bay. **Breakfast included**

### 27 Dec: Wellington

Wellington is compact, cultured and full of character. Its interesting and varied architecture provides the ideal starting point for our orientation tour this morning. We visit Wellington's administrative area, taking in Parliament House, 'the Beehive' – you'll understand the name when you see it – and the government buildings. We then continue to the top of Mount Victoria for the finest view of the city and its picturesque harbour. Your afternoon is at leisure – a visit to Te Papa museum is highly recommended, as it offers a fascinating insight into New Zealand's rich history and cultural heritage. Alternatively, ride a cable car to Wellington's beautiful botanical gardens. **Breakfast included**

### 28 Dec: Napier, Overnight

This morning our journey continues north via Hastings and the Kapiti coast as we make our way to our final destination, the Art Deco city of Napier, located in an area dominated by orchards and vineyards. Napier's city centre has the feeling of a time capsule - the seamless line of 1930s architecture is quite extraordinary. One of the ways to enjoy the streetscape is on a self-guided tour. Our evening is spent at the delightful Scenic Hotel Te Pania, superbly situated on Napier's sea front. **Breakfast included**

### 29 Dec: Rotorua, 2 nights

Today we make our way along the Thermal Explorer Highway to Lake Taupo, New Zealand's largest lake. Visit the impressive Huka Falls where the Waikato River suddenly narrows to a chasm less than 15 metres across and heaves its vast bulk over an 11-metre ledge to boil furiously in a deep semi-circular basin below. We continue to Wairakei Terraces, where we visit a Maori village. Our Maori guides walk with us through the geothermal and Maori cultural walkway, recounting stories of their history and guiding us around the varied art forms found in the village. Rotorua is the heart of New Zealand's rich Maori culture and this evening, at our hotel, we attend a concert featuring traditional song and dance, including the world famous war dance – The Haka. Also included is a Hangi buffet dinner, cooked using traditional Maori methods. **Breakfast and dinner included**





## Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

30 Dec to 02 Jan: Rotorua - Bay of Islands

### 30 Dec: Rotorua

Sightseeing this morning takes us via Rotorua's famous Bath House, a Tudor style building within the Government Gardens. We continue to Te Puia, home to the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve, with its spurting geysers and boiling mud pools. Our afternoon is at leisure to relax. For those that so wish, optional activities include a float plane flight over Mount Tarawera, or perhaps an afternoon enjoying the healing properties of the thermal pools at the nearby Polynesian Spa may be more appealing?

**Breakfast included**

### 31 Dec: New Year's Eve, Bay of Islands, 3 nights

We travel north this morning via Auckland as we make our way to the pale sands and turquoise waters of the Bay of Islands, and the pretty seaside town of Paihia where the Scenic Hotel Bay of Islands will be our home for the next three nights. New Zealand is one of the first places on earth to see in the New Year and tonight we enjoy a celebratory dinner in our hotel. **Breakfast and New Year's Eve dinner included**

### 01 Jan: Bay of Islands cruise

#### Tour Highlight

Hello 2020! And what a way to start the beginning of the new year. Undoubtedly one of the highlights of this tour is a cruise around the Bay of Islands, as in our opinion, there's no better way to see this picturesque part of New Zealand. You'll cruise via Red Head Passage to Cape Brett and Piery Island and on to the famous 'Hole in the Rock'. In these world-famous deep-fishing spots it's not uncommon to see schools of fish and dolphins. The return trip includes a visit to historic Russell. It's hard to believe that this quaint township was once known as the 'Hell Hole of the Pacific'. As the afternoon has been left free, you have an excellent opportunity to take an optional visit to the grounds of the Waitangi National Reserve. It was here in 1840 that the British and Maori chiefs signed the Waitangi Treaty. **Breakfast included**

### 02 Jan: Bay of Islands Freedom Day

Today you'll have a full day at leisure, allowing you to do the things that really interest you. For example, there is the opportunity to join a fantastic optional trip to Cape Reinga. It's a full-day excursion which visits the northern tip of New Zealand. Not only is this area the place where the Tasman Sea meets the Pacific Ocean, but it holds a special significance in Maori tradition as the place where Maori spirits return to their traditional homeland, Hawaiki-A-Nui, via the roots of a lone – and still standing – 800 year old pohutukawa tree. Other standout locations during the tour include the Te Pahi sand dunes and a drive along Ninety Mile Beach, passing some magnificent scenery along the coast.

**Breakfast included**





## Very Best of New Zealand Christmas & New Year

03 Jan to 06 Jan: Auckland - UK

### 03 Jan: Auckland, 2 nights

After breakfast this morning, we leave The Bay of Islands. On the drive to the Waipoua Kauri Forest Reserve, we pass rolling hills dotted with dairy farms which give way to lush forest the closer we get to the reserve. There's chance to marvel at the gigantic kauri tree Tane Mahuta, or 'Lord of the Forest.' From here, we cross the impressive Waitemata Harbour Bridge and head in to Auckland, and the Grand Millennium Auckland, where our last two nights of this guided tour of New Zealand will be spent. **Breakfast included**

### 04 Jan: Auckland

Start the morning with an orientation tour of the city. Auckland has a beautiful waterside setting, with a modern skyline standing out against a backdrop of volcanic hills. As part of the tour, we'll drive along the famous Waitemata Harbour. You'll be able to see Rangitoto Island, an extinct volcano, which although it's in the distance, dominates the horizon. The stylish Viaduct Harbour is another stop on the tour, which has played host to many America's Cup celebrations. As the afternoon has been left free for you to enjoy however you'd like, why not take in the panoramic views from the top of the Sky Tower? As you'd expect from the tallest building in the southern hemisphere, the views truly are breathtaking. **Breakfast included**

### 05 Jan: Depart Auckland

All good things must come to an end, and this morning we transfer to Auckland Airport. Our flights to our chosen UK airport operate via Australia and Dubai if travelling with Qantas/Emirates, or via Singapore if travelling with Singapore Airlines. **Breakfast and in-flight meals and drinks included**

### 06 Jan: Arrive UK

This morning we arrive into our chosen airport; London Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow, bringing to an end our incredible adventure. **In-flight meals and drinks included**

For further information on departure dates and prices for this itinerary, please refer to our Australia and New Zealand brochure 2019 / 2020

or call and speak to one of our friendly travel experts on

**01695 577 961**

[www.distantjourneys.co.uk](http://www.distantjourneys.co.uk)