

## New Year 2027 – New Zealand, wild south

28 December 2026 – 09 January 2027

Special and exclusive departure for our group, 15 people maximum. Expedition at the discovery of the uncontaminated nature of the southern island of New Zealand that will take us to the most remote and wild corners of this fantastic land, outside the normal tourist circuits, with a particular attention to comfort choosing high-level hotel facilities located in exclusive and panoramic places. An experience that goes beyond the ordinary, where every day will be a new discovery, a unique journey in which we will explore the territory from the sky, the sea and the land. We will have extraordinary experiences such as visiting a Glowworm cave, observing the stars from the Mt. John Observatory, reaching the Tasman Glacier by helicopter for a walk, sailing in search of Whales, Fur Seals, Hooker's Sea Lions and Albatrosses, visiting colonies of Australian Gannets, Yellow-eyed Penguins and Little Blue Penguins.

### PROGRAM

#### 28 December

Once in **Queenstown** we will immediately head north passing **picturesque lake Hayes**. We will then come across **Arrowtown**, a town rich in history that dates back to the gold mining era. Along the way we can **visit a winery** near **Gibbston** or **Bannockburn**, where there are several wineries. We will then go up towards **Lindis pass** and **past lake Pukaki** we will finally reach **Tekapo**.

Surrounded by the spectacular landscapes of the **Southern Alps**, lake Tekapo is the largest and highest glacial lake in New Zealand. On the shores of the lake we will find the luxury resort where we will spend the night.

Overnight at Hotel Peppers Bluewater Lake Tekapo\*\*\*\*\* lake view suite.

#### 29 December

Today we have a day full of strong emotions. **Onboard helicopter will reach one of the natural wonders of New Zealand, the Tasman Glacier, the longest in the country.** After an exciting flight through the mountains **we will land at about 1200 meters above sea level where we will spend a couple of hours on the ice to enjoy**

the extraordinary landscape made of crevasses, rivulets and winding streams. We will be able to walk on gently undulating terrain under the highest peaks of the Southern Alps, the **Aoraki and Tasman mountains**.

In the evening we will live the **unique experience of stargazing from the top of Mount John, home to the southernmost permanent optical astronomical observatory in the world**. With the help of an expert it will be possible to scrutinize the sky through powerful telescopes and discover the constellations of the southern hemisphere sky.

Overnight at Hotel Peppers Bluewater Lake Tekapo\*\*\*\*\* lake view suite.

### 30 December

After breakfast we return to Queenstown and from there we head south along **lake Wakatipu** before continuing west to **lake Te Anau, the gateway to Fiordland**. Here we **embark on a cruise** along the western shores of the picturesque lake that will take us to the entrance of the **Cavern House caves** where we will enjoy a voyage into a world made of a tortuous network of limestone passages that feature sculpted rocks, whirlpools and a thunderous underground waterfall. Deep in the caves, leaving the roar of the water, we will find an extraordinary spectacle awaiting us. **A multitude of Glow Worms, animals endemic to New Zealand, cover the walls of a silent cave reachable only aboard a small boat**.

Overnight at Hotel Te Anau Hotel & Villas\*\*\*\* lake view room.

### 31 December

Full day exploring Milford Sound, one of the most picturesque and wild fjords to reach the **Tasmanian sea**. Starting from **Te Anau**, we will travel along the **spectacular Milford road** and once we reach the fjord we will **embark on a cruise of the entire fjord** during which, in addition to admiring a primeval nature, we will have the opportunity to meet the **Fur Seals**. A very relaxed program that will continue by land and will guarantee us numerous opportunities to enjoy the trails, photo stops and the magnificent landscape. We will take short walks among a **variety of different natural environments**.

Overnight at Hotel Te Anau Hotel & Villas\*\*\*\* lake view room.

### 01 January

With Fiordland behind us, we head west towards **Dunedin and the Otago Peninsula** on the east coast. But first we take a detour south to visit **the Catlins**. Here the long, **wild sandy beaches** beaten by the ocean waves are home to an **abundance of wildlife** consisting of **Fur Seals, Hooker's Sea Lions, Yellow-eyed Penguins** and

**Hector's Dolphins, and the occasional rare Southern Elephant Seal.** Often overlooked by travellers, this area is worth exploring via the **Southern Scenic Route.** The road is winding and sometime unpaved, but it passes through the only areas of **primary forest** on the east coast of the South Island.

Overnight at Hotel Fable Dunedin\*\*\*\*\* superior king room.

## 02 January

After breakfast we will drive along the main road of the **Otago Peninsula** with picture-postcard views of the harbour and coastline, passing through quaint communities and farms, spotting wading birds as our minibus explores the inlets and wetland ecosystems. We will **stop at a remote beach** which will give us spectacular views of rugged cliffs, offshore islands and if we are lucky even huge Hooker's Sea Lions. We will then continue to **Taiaroa Head**, home of the **Royal Albatross Centre**, from where a trail will take us to the **Northern Royal Albatross colony**. Here we can watch these majestic birds with wingspans of over three metres glide or feed their chicks in the nest. Our last stop today is a **nature reserve for the Yellow-eyed Penguin**. Before entering the reserve, we will **visit the rehabilitation center**. We will **then have the opportunity to observe the birds in the wild from various observation points around the reserve.**

Overnight at Hotel Fable Dunedin\*\*\*\*\* superior king room.

## 03 January

Free morning in Dunedin, a city with an important **Edwardian and Victorian architectural heritage.**

In the early afternoon we will embark on a **short cruise to discover the beautiful and rugged coastline near the Otago Harbour.** We will skirt the **beautiful sandy beach of Aramoana** where **Sea Lions** are often spotted while on the other side of the harbour channel you can see the remains of artillery positions. We will also **return to the Royal Albatross colony to observe it from the sea**, which will allow us to see the birds as they fly low over the ocean. We will then sail near the **picturesque lighthouse** perched above the **volcanic cliffs of Taiaroa Head** and the rocky outcrops that are home to a **large colony of Fur Seals**. Finally we will exit the bay to briefly enter the Pacific Ocean where we can spot other birds including **other species of smaller Albatross, Cormorants and Petrels**. More rarely **sightings of Little Blue Penguin and Dolphins** are possible.

At the end of the excursion we will head north along the coast towards **Oamaru**. On the way we will **stop at Shag Point**, known for the presence of **Fur Seals and Shags**, for the **characteristic Moeraki Boulders** and for the **magnificent Katiki Beach**.

In the evening a **colony of Little Blue Penguin**, the smallest penguin in the world,

awaits us. **We will be able to observe the birds returning from their day of fishing in the sea from a few meters away.**

We will then reach our hotel located along the ocean coast.

Overnight at Hotel Mariner Suites\*\*\*\*\* premier studio room.

#### **04 January**

We will continue our journey along the coast to **Christchurch** and from there we will **cross the Kaikoura mountain ranges**. North of Christchurch is the **Waipara Valley**, home to some excellent wineries with cafes and a restaurant where we can make a **gourmet stop**.

We will then reach our hotel located along the ocean coast.

Overnight at Hotel Sudima Kaikoura\*\*\*\*\* ocean view king room.

#### **05 January**

The whole day will be dedicated to the exploration of the ocean.

In the morning we will embark on a **private and exclusive cruise for our group** focusing in the **Albatrosses**. **Kaikoura is one of the best places in the world for bird watching as a large number and variety of marine and pelagic birds are concentrated in a small area**. The navigation will allow us to enjoy the spectacular panorama that the coast of Kaikoura offers. We will bring on board pieces of fish that we will use to attract the animals that can be observed and photographed up close. The list of sea birds sighted off the coast of Kaikoura includes **five species of great albatrosses, up to ten species of lesser albatrosses, ten species of shearwaters, fifteen species of petrels and several other species of seabirds such as shags, prions, penguins, gulls and terns**.

In the afternoon we will **return to the sea** in search of large mammals. **Sperm Whales are resident in these waters and can be found here all year round, as well as Fur Seals, pods of Brown Dolphins and Albatrosses**. If we are lucky we might also spot **Humpback Whales, Pilot Whales, Blue Whales, Southern Right Whales and Orcas**.

Overnight at Hotel Sudima Kaikoura\*\*\*\*\* ocean view king room.

#### **06 January**

Today we will continue our journey north, along the **rugged Kaikoura coast to Blenheim, in the heart of the Marlborough wine district**. Depending on the time available, from here we will have two options for our itinerary. We could pass through **Havelock**, a small harbour town that gives access to the **Pelorus Sound and Kenepuru Sound**, full of arts and crafts, cafes and restaurants, it is known as the green-lipped mussel capital, which we will definitely be able to try.

Alternatively, we could head south-west through the **Nelson Lake National Park** area, admiring the beautiful **lakes of Rotoiti and Rotoroa**, surrounded by a beech forest they offer great opportunities for walking and short hikes.

Later we will reach our destination for today, the city of **Nelson**.

Overnight at Hotel The Sails Nelson\*\*\*\*\* studio suite.

### **07 January**

Today we continue our journey to **Stephen's Bay** where we will **board the catamaran chartered for our group** to spend the day in the waters of the beautiful **Abel Tasman National Park**. We will sail along the coast of the park passing **Split Apple Rock, Kaiteriteri, Marahau, Adele Island and Fisherman Island**. We will explore the **golden sandy beaches as we head towards the Tonga Fur Seal colony**. At **Split Apple Rock**, we will be able to admire the views and **observe the Shags** drying their wings on the warm rocks after their morning fishing trips and the **Dolphins**. The itinerary of your cruise is flexible and the boat is at our complete disposal so we can decide based on our interests which places to focus on. There will also be the opportunity to **swim, kayak or go ashore for a nature walk**. Snorkeling equipment is available on board. In the late afternoon, after a wonderful day at sea, we will return to Stephen's Bay and from there we will reach our apartments on the beach.

Overnight at Kaiteriteri Reserve Apartments\*\*\*\*.

### **08 January**

**Farewell Spit Nature Reserve** is an internationally important bird sanctuary and wetland, more strictly protected than a national park. The spit is about 35 kilometres long and public access is limited to the first four kilometres. Our tour will start from **Collingwood** and take us to **Farewell Cape**, the northernmost point of the South Island, and **Fossil Point**. Around **9,000 Australian Gannets choose this site to nest each summer**. We will walk to the colony from the beautiful sandy beach after visiting the picturesque lighthouse.

Overnight at Kaiteriteri Reserve Apartments\*\*\*\*.

### **09 January**

After breakfast is time to fly home.

\* FOR THOSE WHO ARE ALSO JOINING THE VOYAGE: NEW ZEALAND, PRIMORDIAL NORTH, SEE THE PROGRAM.

## VOYAGE MAP



Included in the price:

- All excursions and activities indicated in the program.
- Double room accommodation breakfast included (8 and 9 January not included).
- English speaking guide.
- Dinners from 28 to 31 December and December 31 and January 7 picnic lunch.

Not included:

- Flights.
- Not mentioned meals.
- Any unexpected additional costs due to delays and/or forced stops due to flight connections, including flight changes, hotels and additional meals.

**PRICE PER PERSON Euro 9800,00**  
**(Single supplement on request)**  
**WILD SOUTH + PRIMORDIAL NORTH REDUCTION Euro 1000,00**