

23 Days | New Zealand & Tasmania | Cruise & Rail Adventure

Sydney - Melbourne - Burnie - Milford Sound - Dunedin - Kaikoura - Wellington - Napier - Auckland - Picton - Christchurch

From **\$4,999** Typically \$5,999 pp Twin Share



Enjoy 14 nights of premium cruising with Holland America with meals & entertainment

Experience New Zealand's iconic train journeys: the TranzAlpine, Northern Explorer & Coastal Pacific

Enjoy a trip on the InterIslander Ferry through the Marlborough Sounds

Plus a range of premium accommodation across NZ & more!

Description



THIS DEAL IS SOLD OUT/NO LONGER AVAILABLE

This fantastic itinerary has it all! Sail down Australia's stunning East Coast before heading across the ditch to our favourite neighbour... New Zealand!

Cruise from Sydney to Christchurch (or in reverse) with Holland America, stopping along the way at some of the South Pacific's most beautiful and exciting ports. Milford Sound's movie-star waterfalls and Napier's wines are two of many highlights.

Enjoy all on-board meals and entertainment, beautifully appointed staterooms and a huge range of amazing shore excursions to choose from.

Read our latest Travel Blogs at ['Wake Up Here'](#)

Then, once you disembark, experience three of New Zealand's greatest rail journeys in one package, with ample free time to enjoy the urban delights of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, this is the trip you've been waiting for. Journey through Tongariro National Park aboard the Northern Explorer train, skirt the Pacific Coast between Christchurch and Picton aboard the Coastal Pacific, feel like you've arrived in Middle Earth on the TranzAlpine train through the Canterbury Plains - and more! A scenic crossing aboard the Interislander Ferry is sure to be another highlight.

Experience it all with this cruise, rail and stay adventure! Limited spots



available - get in touch with us today.

Itinerary

Day 1

Depart Sydney (6:30pm)

If you want a snapshot of Australia's appeal, look no further than Sydney: The idyllic lifestyle, friendly locals and drop-dead natural beauty of this approachable metropolis and its attractions explain why the country tops so many travelers' wish lists. But Sydney is more than just the embodiment of classic antipodean cool—the city is in a constant state of evolution. A list of what to do in Sydney might start with the white-hot nightlife, with its new cocktail bars and idiosyncratic mixology dens. Inventive restaurants helmed by high-caliber chefs are dishing up everything from posh pan-Asian to Argentine street food, while the famous dining temples that put Sydney on the gastronomic map are still going strong too.

The famed harbor is among the top sights—home to twin icons the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge, it is the stepping-off point for some of the city's best cultural attractions and sightseeing. In one day you can sail around the harbor, get a behind-the-scenes tour of the opera house and climb the bridge, with time to spare for people-watching over a flat white at a waterfront café.

Speaking of water, when you plan what to do in Sydney, you will want to include the iconic beaches, where surfers, office workers and tourists alike converge on some of the most gorgeous shoreline scenery anywhere. Bondi, Bronte and Clovelly are all within easy reach of the Central Business District, as is Manly, a charming seaside town located a short ferry ride from Circular Quay. Beyond the city you'll discover UNESCO World Heritage Sites and the chance to encounter Australia's cuddliest wildlife—a perfect way to round out your envy-inducing Sydney photo collection.

Meals: on board

Day 2

At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea, exploring your beautiful ship, *Noordam*. Experience some of the amazing entertainment options, dine at one of the many restaurants and cafes, spoil yourself at the spa or just take a minute to relax on deck, in the pool or even at the bar.

Meals: on board

Day 3

Melbourne, Victoria (arrives 8:00am, departs 5:00pm)

Melbourne is consistently voted one of the world's most livable cities—and for good reason. This is Australia's cosmopolitan heart with cutting-edge art and architecture, historic galleries, attractions and museums, plus a dizzying range of restaurants, bistros, markets and bars. It's renowned for its sporting culture, home to the esteemed Melbourne Cricket Ground and Australian rules football teams.

The famous laneways of Melbourne bustle with hidden bars and eateries, while myriad beaches and parks allow for the ultimate outdoor lifestyle and active things to do. It's a melting pot of cultures and a city of gourmands who demand excellent food and find it everywhere—from modern Australian cuisine and delicious Asian fusion fare to low-key cafés serving the best coffee you've ever tasted.

If you want to leave the city, Melbourne is the gateway to Victoria's world-class wineries and spectacular coastline sights. Visit the famous penguins at nearby Phillip Island or feast on local produce in the picture-perfect Yarra Valley. Wherever you go in and around Melbourne, you'll be sure to understand why so many choose to call this beautiful corner of the world home.

Meals: on board

Day 4

Burnie, Tasmania (arrives 7:30am, departs 7:00pm)

Burnie's long-running logging industry is just one hint at the amazing forests that surround the town, from the UNESCO World Heritage area that contains Tasmania's most famous crag—Cradle Mountain—to the lesser-known rain forests of the Tarkine wilderness. Woodworkers, papermakers and print artists thrive in this misty land of trees, as does rare wildlife, ranging from wedge-tailed eagles to echidnas and the fabled Tasmanian devils. There's pristine beachfront, too, where little penguins march and well-to-do locals dine on seafood platters as they gaze off into Bass Strait.

Tasmania's separation from mainland Australia has created a resourceful, self-reliant and sometimes rebellious community that cooks and farms as well as it crafts and explores. Burnie's bounty includes award-winning single-malt whiskeys, hard apple cider, trout and salmon, hormone-free milk and cheeses and beef from Cape Grim in the far northwest. Known for having the world's cleanest air, Burnie is an exciting base for a taste tour as well as a rugged or refined adventure.

Meals: on board

Day 5

At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea, exploring your beautiful ship, *Noordam*. Experience some of the amazing entertainment options, dine at one of the many restaurants and cafes, spoil yourself at the spa or just take a minute to relax on deck, in the pool or even at the bar.

Meals: on board

Day 6

At Sea

Enjoy a day at sea, exploring your beautiful ship, *Noordam*. Experience some of the amazing entertainment options, dine at one of the many restaurants and cafes, spoil yourself at the spa or just take a minute to relax on deck, in the pool or even at the bar.

Meals: on board

Day 7

Milford Sound, New Zealand (arrives 7:00am, departs 8:00am)

Milford Sound, or Piopiotahi (its name in Maori), sits on the west coast of New Zealand's South Island and was first called the Eighth Wonder of the World by none other than Rudyard Kipling, who had seen some pretty wonderful places. As you sail up the 15-kilometer-long (nine-mile-long) sound, with soaring snow-topped peaks looming above—the tallest reaches an altitude of 1,517 meters (4,977 feet)—you'll understand Kipling's enthusiasm.

Although it is called a sound, it is technically a fjord—a narrow inlet created by glacial erosion over thousands of years. While its geological history is long, its human history is not. It is believed that the Maori first explored the sound, and the rest of the area that is now part of Fiordland National Park, around 1,000 years ago; Captain Cook followed in 1770. But neither Maori nor Europeans created permanent settlements of any significance, and the land was pristine when Fiordland National Park, New Zealand's largest national park, was established in 1952. While many walking trails cross the park, the most breathtaking views are arguably those from the water, with the sheer rock faces looming above your ship as you sail through this majestic landscape.

Cruising Fiordland National Park

Every year, visitors flock to New Zealand in search of landscapes straight out of Middle Earth. They find what they're looking for in Fiordland National Park, on the southwestern coast of the South Island. This stunning 12,000-square-kilometer (4,633-square-mile) park encompasses mountains, lakes, fjords and rain forests. The area was once the home of Maori hunters; later, European whalers established small settlements here. But mostly, this region has seen a notable lack of human activity—the steep peaks and wet landscape deterred all but the hardiest people. That changed around the end of the 19th century, when travelers discovered the beautiful scenery of Fiordland. The national park was formally established in 1952.

Countless plant and animal species find a haven here. Among the park's rare birds is the flightless takahe, thought for decades to be extinct until it was spotted in the area in 1948. The natural wonders continue offshore: Seals, dolphins and whales frequent these waters.

Meals: on board

Day 8

Port Chalmers (Dunedin) New Zealand (arrives 8:00am, departs 6:00pm)

Much of New Zealand feels like England, by way of Polynesia. There are a few exceptions, though, such as the town of Akaroa, a former French settlement, and the distinctly Scottish city of Dunedin, named after the Scottish Gaelic name for Edinburgh. After Dunedin was founded in 1848, city surveyor Charles Kettle attempted to impose Edinburgh's New Town grid plan on the growing city. But the Otago Peninsula's hilly landscape proved challenging—for evidence, note that Dunedin has one of the world's steepest streets (Baldwin Street). The volcanic remnants around the harbor make for a dramatic backdrop.

Dunedin's prominence during the gold rush in the late 19th century resulted in many grand Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Thanks to the beautiful University of Otago (the country's oldest), there's a large student population to keep the city vibrant and modern. But Dunedin's heritage is always proudly on display: The magnificent Dunedin Railway Station and Larnach Castle have been restored to their full glory, and the fascinating Toitu Otago Settlers Museum provides a glimpse into the lives of early residents. Outside the city, the Otago Peninsula is lined with scenic beaches and home to rare birdlife like the royal albatross and yellow-eyed penguin.

Meals: on board

Day 9

Timaru, New Zealand (arrives 7:00am, departs 5:00pm)

Strolling along the city's hilly streets and past its Edwardian and Victorian buildings and green spaces, you might not guess that Timaru was built on the lava flows of a now-extinct but vividly named volcano, Mount Horrible. Timaru's own name comes from the Maori Te Maru, which means \"place of shelter.\" Chief among Timaru's charms are its parks and gardens. As if the backdrop of the Southern Alps wasn't enough, a rose garden, boardwalk and beach also enliven the already beautiful waterfront of Caroline Bay, named for a 19th-century whaling ship. Up the hill, the scenic reserve of Centennial Park offers picturesque picnic spots and walking and biking trails. Timaru showcases New Zealand and Maori culture at the stellar Aigantighe Art Gallery and South Canterbury Museum. (If you have time to venture beyond Timaru and are interested in learning about the area's truly ancient history, the fascinating Te Ana Maori Rock Art Centre, about half an hour outside the city, exhibits rock art made by early Maori settlers more than 700 years ago).

Meals: on board

Day 10

Kaikoura, New Zealand (arrives 8:00am, departs 5:00pm)

Kaikoura is a picturesque town whose name is Maori for “meal of crayfish,” which is one of many things you can do here, in addition to whale watching, birding and hiking in the surrounding mountains.

Meals: on board

Day 11

Wellington, New Zealand (arrives 7:00am, departs 4:00pm)

New Zealand's cool little capital is located at the southern tip of the North Island, meaning it's blessed with a beautiful waterfront, fresh seafood and unpredictable weather. So famously tempestuous is Windy Welly that visitors quickly learn not to go outside without an umbrella and will spend more time than usual talking about the weather. Politics is a hot topic too, with government workers buzzing about the Beehive, as the distinctive Parliament building is colloquially known.

Wellington is also known for culture and cuisine. Learn about Maori history and Kiwiana at Te Papa, the national museum; go behind the scenes of the Lord of the Rings movies made in Wellywood; and wash down a plate of chilled bluff oysters with a crisp sauvignon blanc at a Cuba Street restaurant.

Gourmands are spoiled for choice with the city's many coffee microroasteries, craft breweries, innovative chefs and artisanal markets. Fortunately for your waistline, it's also a terrific city for walking, hiking and cycling, with a compact historic core hugged by green hills and dotted with impossibly perched houses. They say you can't beat Wellington on a good day—but visitors will soon discover that even if it's wet and windy, it's always a good day to be in Wellington.

Meals: on board

Day 12

Napier, New Zealand (arrives 8:00am, departs 2:00pm)

The Southern Hemisphere's answer to Miami Beach—at least when it comes to Art Deco architecture—Napier has a perfect mix of natural and manmade beauty. The historic district, which was mostly constructed in the 1930s after a massive earthquake and subsequent fires destroyed the city in 1931, was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2007. As a delicious bonus, there's a thriving food and wine scene, too. Surrounded by the rolling vineyards of the Hawke's Bay wine region and edged by pristine waters, Napier has attracted a host of culinary innovators that has put it on the foodie map over the past two decades. Nature lovers, too, are drawn by this North Island city's scenic splendor and abundant wildlife. Down the coast, colonies of Australasian gannets thrive at Cape Kidnappers. Within the city, Norfolk Island pines line the seafront Marine Parade, a half dozen parks and gardens bloom from September to March (spring and summer Down Under), there are forested hiking trails and active pursuits range from cycling to golf. It's easy to enjoy yourself while soaking up Hawke's Bay's spectacular landscape.

Meals: on board

Day 13

Tauranga (Rotorua), New Zealand (arrives 8:00am, departs 8:00pm)

The curved shoreline of the Bay of Plenty—known in Maori as Te Moana-a-Toi—is home to incredible surfing, white-sand beaches and New Zealand's only active marine volcano. Tauranga, with 130,000 residents, is the largest city on the Bay of Plenty and fifth largest in New Zealand. The city offers visitors a number of water-focused activities, like sailing and kayaking, as well as drier alternatives such as shopping and people-watching at a café in the Historic Village.

Tauranga is also a great jumping-off point for exploring nearby beaches and Te Puke, the kiwifruit capital of the world, as well as a wealth of Maori cultural sites. The world-famous geothermal wonderland of Rotorua, nicknamed Sulfur City, has been a major Polynesian spa resort town since visitors first arrived in the late 1800s. In Maori, roto means lake and rua means two, but Rotorua actually comprises 18 lakes—plus an incredible redwood forest.

For the best views, take the gondola up to Skyline Rotorua, a recreation complex atop Mount Ngongotaha. Other day trips you should consider are a boat ride through the incomparable glowworm caves of Waitomo or an unforgettable tour of the Hobbiton Movie Set in Matamata—a must for all Tolkien fans.

Meals: on board

Day 14

Bay of Plenty, New Zealand (cruising)

There's plenty to marvel at around New Zealand's Bay of Plenty: dramatic volcanic and geothermal formations, sweeping white-sand beaches and an abundance of birdlife and marine animals. Whakaari (White Island), which lies some 50 kilometers (30 miles) off the coast, has been New Zealand's most active volcano since Captain James Cook circumnavigated the country in 1769. The region's ongoing volcanic activity produces natural hot springs and thermal pools galore. Thousands of dolphins call the Bay of Plenty home, so they're easily spotted off the coast, along with orcas, pilot whales, giant sunfish and manta rays—not to mention many native birds.

The area's wealth of resources isn't limited to the coastline. Most of New Zealand's famed kiwifruit comes from the agricultural interior of the Bay of Plenty, along with half the country's avocados and many of the summer berry crops. When you sail into Tauranga Harbour, you'll find yourself with plenty of appealing options to explore: the beaches of Mount Maunganui, Tauranga's art galleries and Maori cultural sites. If you want to venture farther afield, take an excursion to a mineral spa in Rotorua.

Coromandel Peninsula (cruising)

Certain landscapes take on a whole new perspective when they're seen from the deck of a cruise ship, and the Coromandel Peninsula is one of them. This rugged finger of volcanic rock, lush rain forest and golden sand lies on New Zealand's North Island, just 55 kilometers (34 miles) across the Hauraki Gulf from Auckland. The Coromandel lures visitors with its misty hiking trails and wide array of beaches—most notably Hot Water Beach, where people gather at low tide to dig hot tubs in the sand and immerse themselves in the geothermal waters. Among the peninsula's dramatic rock formations is Cathedral Cove, reached via boat or by a spectacular coastal walk.

Just east of the Coromandel is the Bay of Plenty region—a wide indentation along the coast that's popular for boating and fishing. As with much of New Zealand, the area's geological origins are apparent in not-so-subtle ways: The cones of long-extinct volcanoes, such as coastal Mount Maunganui (Mauao), are distinctive landmarks, while the actively volcanic White Island still steams and hisses midsea. A large Maori population lives on the East Cape, New Zealand's easternmost point. And the region's waters are full of exuberant sea life: acrobatic dolphins, seals and several species of whales. Grab your binoculars, keep your camera handy and get ready to enjoy the show.

Meals: on board

Day 15

Arrive Auckland (arrives 7:00am)

New Zealand's biggest city deserves more than a layover. Auckland is multicultural and cosmopolitan, with sizeable Polynesian, Asian and Maori populations enriching its history and broadening the palate. Internationally known chefs and fashion designers have made neighborhoods like Ponsonby, Newmarket and Parnell world-class destinations for shopping and dining.

You're never far from water attractions in New Zealand—and this is especially true in Auckland where it's not unheard of for downtown workers to go kayaking on their lunch break. The once-gritty port has been transformed into inviting public spaces and buzzing nightclubs, with sailboat charters and regular ferry connections waiting to whisk visitors around the harbor for sightseeing.

Start your day sipping a flat white while you plan your explorations: art gallery crawl, winery tour or volcano hike? It's possible to do all three without losing sight of the Sky Tower, one of Auckland's top tourist attractions, from which you can get a bird's-eye view of the gateway to Aotearoa.

Once you have disembarked, get a taxi to your hotel to check in, and the rest of the day is yours to explore this vibrant city.

Accommodation: VR Auckland Hotel (or similar)

Meals: breakfast on board

Day 16

Auckland (day at leisure)

The next few days are at leisure to explore Auckland. Auckland, based around 2 large harbours, is a major city in the north of New Zealand's North Island. In the centre, the iconic Sky Tower has views of Viaduct Harbour, which is full of superyachts and lined with bars and cafes. Auckland Domain, the city's oldest park, is based around an extinct volcano and home to the formal Wintergardens.

Near Downtown, Mission Bay Beach has a seaside promenade.

Accommodation: VR Auckland Hotel (or similar)

Day 17

Auckland (day at leisure)

Accommodation: VR Auckland Hotel (or similar)

Day 18

Auckland (day at leisure)

Accommodation: VR Auckland Hotel (or similar)

Day 19

Auckland Northern Explorer Train Journey Wellington

Today make your own way to Auckland Train Station for a 7.45am departure onboard the famous Northern Explorer train. New Zealand's longest running passenger service, the Northern Explorer is a long distance scenic train service running between Auckland and Wellington, stopping at Palmerston North, Ohakune, National Park and Hamilton.

The journey through Tongariro National Park, with its three spectacular volcanic mountains – Tongariro, Ngāuruhoe and Ruapehu – is a highlight, a place of extremes and surprises, where snow-blanketed fields, ancient lava flows and dense beech forests can be seen side by side. Arrive in Wellington this evening and make your own way to your centrally located Wellington accommodation.

Accommodation: Mercure Hotel (or similar)

Day 20

Wellington Interislander Ferry to Picton Coastal Pacific Train Journey to Christchurch

This morning check out of your hotel and make your way to the ferry terminal for your 9am departure on the Kaitaki Interislander Ferry. Connecting our North Island and South Island together since 1962, the Interislander ferry service is New Zealand's original Cook Strait ferry. Sailing between Wellington and Picton several times a day, the Interislander journey is considered one of the most beautiful ferry journeys in the world and one of New Zealand's most iconic experiences. Arrive in Picton on the north of the South Island at approximately 12.30pm where you will disembark and make your own way to the Picton Station for a 1.40pm departure on the Coastal Pacific Train Journey. The station is very close to the ferry terminal, approximately 5 minutes walk.

Climb aboard one of the most picturesque journeys on New Zealand railways, meandering along the Pacific coast between Picton and Christchurch. Upon arrival in Christchurch make your own way to your centrally located accommodation. The Coastal Pacific train takes you along rugged coastlines, across remote beaches, between mountains and sea, on a timeless journey of breathtaking beauty. Explore the stunning Kaikōura Coastline, famous for its marine life and whale watching. Voyage through the vineyards of Blenheim, dripping with New Zealand's premium crop. Canter amidst the idyllic Canterbury countryside to the Garden City of Christchurch.

Travelling between Christchurch and Picton, the Coastal Pacific meanders breathtakingly close to the sea, where the roaring Pacific Ocean meets the rising Kaikōura mountains. The Coastal Pacific isn't just a scenic activity, combined with the Interislander Ferry it is the perfect way to connect between Wellington, Blenheim, Kaikoura and Christchurch.

Accommodation: Ibis Christchurch (or similar)

Day 21

Christchurch (day at leisure)

Today is a free day to explore Christchurch. Christchurch, known for its English heritage, is located on the east coast of New Zealand's South Island. Flat-bottomed punts glide on the Avon River, which meanders through the city centre. On its banks are cycling paths, the green expanse of Hagley Park and Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

Accommodation: Ibis Christchurch (or similar)

Day 22

Christchurch TranzAlpine Rail Journey

Today make your own way to Christchurch Train Station for an 8.15am departure onboard the famous TranzAlpine train. This will be a return journey finishing back in Christchurch. Experience the South Island's striking natural landscape by taking a train between Christchurch and Greymouth. Along this journey you'll see epic vistas, travel the edges of the ice-fed Waimakariri River, traverse the Southern Alps, and see miles of native beech forest.

The TranzAlpine is one of the world's great train journeys covering 223 kilometres (139 miles) each way. You'll traverse the majestic Canterbury Plains, to the backdrop of the mighty Southern Alps – the journey of a lifetime.

Return to Christchurch station in the evening and make your own way back to your hotel.

Accommodation: Ibis Christchurch (or similar)

Day 23

Christchurch home

This morning, check out of your hotel and make your way to the airport for your flight home, or elsewhere for your onward travel.

Want to extend your trip, or need help with flights? Get in touch with us today!

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions

- 14 Night cruise on-board *Westerdam*, with Holland America, in an interior stateroom (upgrades to oceanview or balcony available at checkout)
- All meals and non-chargeable entertainment on-board
- Three iconic NZ rail experiences: the TranzAlpine, the Northern Explorer & Coastal Pacific
- 8 Nights of accommodation in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington
- A trip on the InterIslander ferry through the Marlborough Sound

About your ship: *Holland America Westerdam*

A fascinating destination in her own right, *Westerdam* has won multiple Best Cruise Ship awards and features superb bar, entertainment and dining venues. During the day, rejuvenate with a spa treatment at the heavenly Greenhouse Spa & Salon®. Head to the upper decks for a friendly game of Pickleball at Sea with top-deck views. Catch a performance at the World Stage or spend your evening on the dance floor at Rolling Stone Lounge.

Hotels in New Zealand:

- 4 nights Auckland – VR Auckland Hotel or Parnell Hotel
- 1 night Wellington – Mercure Hotel or Astelia Hotel
- 3 nights Christchurch – ibis Christchurch or Carnmore Hotel

Dates & Departures: Please note that departures on 12th November, 13th January and 09th March run from Sydney to Christchurch. Departures on the 18th November, 19th January and 15th March depart from Christchurch, ending in Sydney.

Exclusions

- Flights: As many guests opt to extend their trip, the flight from (or to) New Zealand is not included. Let our team know if you wish to add extra nights or flights and we will help organise that for you!
- Drinks on-board cruise
- Gratuities and tipping (optional)
- Extra services (such as laundry)
- Transfers
- Personal items such as souvenirs

Important Information:

Child Policy: want to bring the family? Get in touch with us for a quote!

Solo supplement: travelling solo? Get in touch with us for an accurate price.

Health & Fitness: currently there are no COVID-19 vaccination or testing requirements for this itinerary. Please ensure that if you do experience symptoms or test positive, take the required measures to ensure no spread of infection. This itinerary is not fast paced, though New Zealand is a country with many hills, stairs and active experiences.

Visa: Australian passport holders do not need a Visa to visit New Zealand. For those travelling on alternative passports, please understand your entry requirements by visiting your embassy or



government website prior to departure.

Travel Insurance: We highly suggest that all guests on this itinerary have full comprehensive travel insurance. We recommend Covermore travel insurance. To get a quote and book, please click [HERE](#).