



The Grand Passage

Journey starts in Christchurch – Ends in Auckland

Tour length: 10 days – 9 nights

For dates, prices and booking [click here](#) or email us at info@southof34.com

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Journey Overview

Discover the stunning beauty of New Zealand on this slow, immersive adventure across both its unique islands. Explore stunning vistas and experience extremes of New Zealand's jaw-dropping scenery from fertile plains to the dramatic Alps to rugged coastlines to volcanic peaks as you travel on three iconic and contrasting scenic train journeys from Christchurch all the way to Auckland on this immersive slow travel. In between the train journeys, you will go an exclusive wine experience, and get up close to the largest fur seal colony on North Island, all this while you spend the night in urban modern & luxurious rooms.

South of 34° Advantages

- *Explore the stunning Southern Alps, the serene Pacific Coast, the rugged Kapiti Coast, rolling farmland, dramatic volcanoes and landscapes as you travel by scenic rail*
- *Visit a brewery pub for a beer taster lunch on the West Coast of South Island*
- *Savour a South of 34° exclusive behind the scenes wine experience in the heart of the oldest wine country in New Zealand*
- *Be awed by a private tour of rare air warfare scenes of WWI & WWII at a heritage museum*
- *Encounter fur seals and immerse yourself on this private guided tour to the wild coast of the southernmost tip of North Island*

Day wise Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrive Christchurch, New Zealand

Nau Mai Haere Mai Ki Aotearoa. It means welcome to New Zealand. Today is the first day of your journey in the land of the Long White Cloud. You will be met by your concierge/drive guide on arrival, who will bring you to your STAY.

This evening, we gather for a welcome dinner & drinks and to get to know each other, as you will be travelling companions for the next 9 days.



Welcome Dinner & Drinks



The Observatory Hotel

Day 2 – Christchurch | Spectacular Alps



Walk among the limestone formations of Kura Tāwhiti (Castel Hill), a major conservation area with natural limestone boulders littered around the landscape. Later, enjoy a wonderful Microbrewery lunch with Beer Tasters in Greymouth, before boarding the TranzAlpine for your trip back to Christchurch, which takes you over the spectacular Southern Alps, descending down gorges, deep river valleys and finally the Canterbury Plains.

This evening, as part of your concierge driver service, your driver/guide who will have discussed your dinner plans earlier, will bring you to the restaurant of your choice. It is not

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required that all guests choose the same kind of cuisine or restaurant.

 Breakfast, Lunch with Beer Tasters
 The Observatory Hotel

Day 3 – Picton | Spiritual Beauty

Connect spiritually with the simply stunning Pacific Coast as you meander unhurriedly along rugged coastlines, remote beaches, mountains and sea, on this picturesque South Pacific coastal scenic train, that takes you from Christchurch to Picton, the charming little town in Queen Charlotte Sound.

Picton is a charming idyllic seaside town with lovely views of the surrounding hills. Simply relax and enjoy this quaint town with a walkabout on the waterfront or head to Shelly Beach for some quiet time. And if you like, you can walk to Bob's Bay, which is about a pleasant thirty-minute walk from Shelly Beach.



 Breakfast
 Picton Yacht Club

Day 4 – Picton | Sun & Vines

Set out on a day of exploration on this Sun & Vines experience in the heart of Marlborough, the largest wine region in New Zealand, with Chris your expert wine guide. Your first stop is at the Bourgeois family's vineyard, where the winemaker will take you on a tour among the vines, and the winery and taste directly from the barrels. You will then visit a private and closed-door vineyard, tasting a number of their wines with discussions about all the wines and the way they are made by one of

the family members. From here you will continue to a wine-paired lunch at another award-winning vineyard, St.Clair's, where you will enjoy a 2-course lunch amidst a beautiful setting by the vines. Finally, finish your day at the historic site of the first winery in Marlborough dating back to 1873 and taste a glass of Methode Ancestrale Muscat in the historic block from where it came.

Later, in the evening, enjoy dinner at any of the local Picton restaurants at your leisure.

 Breakfast, Lunch with Wine
 Picton Yacht Club

Day 5 – Wellington | Knights of the Sky



This morning you will travel to a time when the harshness and cruelty of the war in the trenches contrasted with the chivalry and bravado of the war in the air. You will relive and walk among rare real scenes of WWI and WWII as you are privately guided on this wonderful tour of the internationally famous Omaka Aviation Heritage Center. With a mixture of original, flyable, and static replica aircraft, the rarity and beauty of these machines come to life, in larger-than-life dioramas, capturing specific snapshots in history. You don't have to be an aviation enthusiast to appreciate such rich history.

Later in the afternoon, you will continue your Grand Passage journey on the ferry to Wellington. Onboard, sit in the comfort of the Plus lounge seating that includes an onboard meal accompanied by local beers and wines.

Upon reaching Wellington, your North Island concierge driver/guide will meet you at the ferry terminal and bring you to your STAY.

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 Breakfast, Lunch with Beer & Wine
 QT Wellington

Day 6 – Wellington | A Day of Leisure

You are in the Coolest Capital in the world and it's your day to do what you please. A few things that we think you will enjoy and recommend you must do are visiting the Te Papa Museum, taking a ride on the cable car up to Kelburn and then walking back down through the botanic garden. Wellington has a vibrant culture and is also known as the creative and cultural capital.



Remember, you have your concierge driver/guide with you and you can make use of his services.

 Breakfast
 QT Wellington

Day 7 – Wellington | Timeless Experience

Today you will go on a timeless experience that can change your relationship with nature. You will visit Cape Palliser, the lowest point of the North Island and is southeast of Wellington. This far-flung and craggy landscape is home to the largest fur seal colony on this island. The rocky and rough landscape is littered with seals of all ages, lying peacefully amidst this dramatic landscape. You can get up close to these cute sea mammals, so long as you are watchful and do not interfere with the natural order of living. The steps leading to the unmanned lighthouse, albeit a bit steep, are well worth the walk up, and you can on a clear day see as far as the Southern Alps on the South Island.

Once you are back in Wellington, your concierge driver will help bring you to your choice of restaurant or bar.



 Breakfast, Lunch somewhere on route
 QT Wellington

Day 8 – Auckland | Volcanoes & Farmlands

Today you will board the Northern Explorer on your final leg of this three-part scenic rail journey. Travel through the spine of the North Island on the day-long trip as you immerse in the changing landscape from the often turbulent Tasman Sea on the Kapiti Coast, to the country's fertile heartland, through lush forests, rugged mountains, and steep gorges to the Central Plateau dominated by volcanic cones and finally pulling into cosmopolitan Auckland for your penultimate night.

The Britomart is a vibrant nine-block precinct at the centre of waterfront Auckland, and you will be staying bang in the middle of this very trendy, arty and built green precinct in New Zealand's first and only 5 Green Star rated luxury STAY.

Later step out and have dinner at one of the many fine establishments in and around the Britomart precinct.



 Breakfast
 Hotel Britomart

Day 9 – Auckland | A Day of Leisure

The City of Sails has the best of both worlds, where an urban oasis meets with beautiful rainforest, parks and beaches all so close to the city centre. You can choose to discover

the cityscapes or you can visit Muriwai black sand beach, home to migrating Gannets or maybe you can visit Waiheke Island, just 40 minutes by ferry one way, and spend some time here or perhaps you might like to walk along the east coast over cliffs and beaches and build an appetite for your farewell dinner.


Today's dinner is at one of the fine establishments, of your choice, in Auckland, as you bid farewell to your newfound friends, promising to keep in touch with each other.

 Breakfast, Farewell Dinner & Drinks
 Hotel Britomart

Day 10 – Depart Auckland

Your awe-inspiring holiday ends today as you make your way to the airport for your flight back home. Hope you loved what we designed for you, and we look forward to your feedback on your journey.

Happy & Safe Travels.

 Breakfast

Inclusions for this Journey

STAY – 9 nights

- Handpicked 4* Plus and 5* STAYS in higher category rooms, for example premier view rooms, where applicable

Travel Style

- Full time, concierge driver/ general guide for the duration of the tour within the permissible daily working hours as prescribed by New Zealand labour laws
- 17 seat Mercedes Sprinter luxury coach for 8 or 10 guests OR
- 12 seat Mercedes Sprinter luxury van for 6 guests

Experiences & Activities – a total of 8

- Day 2 – Day trip to Greymouth with stops at Castle Hill & Otira Valley
- Day 2 – TranzAlpine Scenic Rail Journey from Greymouth to Christchurch
- Day 3 – Coastal Pacific Scenic Rail Journey from Christchurch to Picton
- Day 4 – South of 34° exclusive, private guided Wine experience
- Day 5 – Private guided tour of Omaka Aviation Heritage Museum
- Day 5 – Interislander Ferry from Picton to Wellington
- Day 7 – South of 34° exclusive private guided visit to Cape Palliser
- Day 8 – Northern Explorer Scenic Rail from Wellington to Auckland

Dining – total 9 BF, 4 L, 2 D

- Breakfast – 9 mornings at your STAY
- Lunch with beer tasters at a brewery in Greymouth
- Paired Wine lunch in the Wine experience
- Lunch with domestic wine or beers on the Interislander ferry
- Picnic or Café lunch on Cape Palliser trip
- Welcome dinner with drinks at a restaurant of choice (selected by guests' majority choice, 30 days prior to arrival)
- Farewell dinner with drinks at a restaurant of choice (selected by guests' majority choice, during welcome dinner)