Exploring Australia & New Zealand

22 days for $9,784 total price from San Francisco
($9,395 air & land inclusive plus $389 airline taxes and fees)

Small group touring and the Lands Down Under – they add up to a perfect combination as we travel from Australia’s spectacular Great Barrier Reef and the storied Outback to sophisticated Sydney; from New Zealand’s towering Mt. Cook and breathtaking Milford Sound to high-spirited Queenstown and nautical Auckland.

On Day 16, we see for ourselves why serene Milford Sound ranks as New Zealand’s most popular destination.

Days 1 & 2: Depart U.S. for Cairns, Australia

Day 3: Arrive Cairns This afternoon we arrive in Cairns, gateway to Australia’s Far North and the Great Barrier Reef. We transfer to our hotel where tonight we enjoy a briefing and dinner. B

Day 4: Cairns/Kuranda We take an orientation tour of Cairns then board an historic railway to the mountain village of Kuranda. After time to explore here, we descend via the gondolas of Skyrail. We return to our hotel and the remainder of the day is at leisure to explore Cairns independently. B

Day 5: Great Barrier Reef This morning we board a boat for a day-long excursion to the Great Barrier Reef, at 1,200 miles long the world’s largest living organism and richest marine resource. We pull up at Michaelmas Cay where we can swim, snorkel, or view the reef from a semi-submersible vessel. B,L

Day 6: Cairns/Alice Springs We take a morning flight to Alice Springs, where we see the Anzac Hill Monument to Australian and New Zealand soldiers, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and School of the Air, which provides schooling to widely scattered Outback children. Tonight we enjoy a traditional dinner in the “bush.” B,D

Day 7: Alice Springs This morning we embark on an Aboriginal “dreamtime” tour, to meet Walpiri tribespeople and learn about their ancient culture. Then we visit Simpsons Gap and Standley Chasm, where we enjoy a picnic lunch and see the sheer rock walls aglow in reflected sunlight. B,L

Day 8: Alice Springs/Ayers Rock We reach our Ayers Rock hotel early afternoon. After lunch on our own, we visit Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site that is the traditional land of the Anangu Aboriginal peoples and home to the Olgas rock formations and Uluru (Ayers Rock). We watch the sun set over this fabled sandstone monolith that rises to a height of 1,114 feet. B,D

Day 9: Ayers Rock/Sydney This morning we visit the base of Uluru and the interesting museum here. Mid-day we fly to Sydney, arriving late afternoon. B,D

Day 10: Sydney Today’s tour features The Rocks historic neighborhood, Darling Harbour and Mrs. Macquarie’s Point, Rose and Watson’s bays, and popular Bondi Beach. Then we board a catamaran for a lunch cruise around Sydney Harbour. B,L

Day 11: Sydney This morning we tour Featherdale Wildlife Park, where wombats, dingos, and koalas
reside. Then the afternoon is at leisure; tonight we enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.  

**Day 12: Sydney/Christchurch, New Zealand**

After a late morning tour of the iconic Sydney Opera House, this afternoon is free for independent exploration. This evening we board a flight to Christchurch, New Zealand’s “Garden City.”  

**Day 13: Christchurch/Mt. Cook National Park**

This morning’s orientation tour features the acclaimed Botanic Gardens and Cathedral Square, the beating heart of Christchurch and site of Christchurch Cathedral. Then we board our motorcoach for the journey south to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, in the Southern Alps. We dine tonight at our hotel.  

**Day 14: Mount Cook**

This morning’s tour of alpine Mount Cook Village includes a visit to the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Center, where we see a 3D planetarium movie about the region. We also visit the Hillary Gallery, commemorating Sir Edmund’s achievements, including the first ascent of Mount Cook’s difficult South Ridge in 1948 (at 12,316 feet, Mount Cook is New Zealand’s tallest mountain). After time in the village for lunch on our own, this afternoon is at leisure.  

**Day 15: Mount Cook/Queenstown**

We depart this morning for Queenstown, stopping en route in historic Arrowtown for lunch on our own followed by a visit to Kawarau Bridge Bungy, the world’s first bungy jump operation open to the public. Mid-afternoon we reach Queenstown, New Zealand’s “adventure capital.” We dine tonight at our hotel.  

**Day 16: Milford Sound**

Our day-long excursion to Milford Sound includes a nature cruise through the breathtaking fjords. We have lunch on board then later have the opportunity to return to Queenstown on an optional scenic flight (weather permitting).  

**Day 17: Queenstown**

We board the Spirit of Queenstown this morning for a scenic cruise to Mt. Nicholas High Country Farm. At this working ranch, we watch a sheepdog demonstration and learn about the wool industry then explore on foot and on a four-wheel drive excursion into the breathtaking high country.  

**Day 18: Queenstown/Rotorua**

We depart today for the Maori center of Rotorua, with its geysers, bubbling mud pools, and hot thermal springs. Upon arrival, we take a panoramic tour of this city on the shores of Lake Rotorua. This evening we visit Te Puia Thermal Reserve and Cultural Centre for a traditional bungy dinner and Maori performance.  

**Day 19: Rotorua**

This morning we visit Rainbow Springs Nature Park, a popular showcase of native flora, fauna, and birdlife, and where we also tour the National Kiwi Trust, which rehabilitates injured kiwis, the national bird.  

**Day 20: Rotorua/Auckland**

En route to Auckland, we stop this morning at Ruakuri Caves to see the unique glowworms that illuminate the underground grottoes and caves. We reach Auckland late this afternoon, we’re on our own for dinner tonight.  

**Day 21: Auckland**

Our half-day tour of this city set atop 48 volcanic hills features glittering Auckland Harbour and the America’s Cup Village. We also visit the War Memorial Museum, with its prized Maori and Pacific Islander collections. Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner at our hotel.  

**Day 22: Depart for U.S.**

Very early this morning we depart for the airport for the flight to Los Angeles (via Sydney) and our return flights home.  

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**Post-Tour Extension**

**AUCKLAND – ON YOUR OWN**

**3 days/2 nights for $325 total price**

Enjoy additional time in the sparkling “City of Sails,” at your own pace.

**Your Tour Price Includes**

- 2 nights’ accommodations at Grand Millennium Auckland (Superior First Class)
- 2 meals: 2 breakfasts
- Transfer to airport

**Tour Departs: February 24, 2020**

Prices include international airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees

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**Land Only (transfers not included)**

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Please call if your city is not listed. Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include airline taxes, surcharges, and fees of $389, which are subject to change until final payment is made.

Single travelers please add $2,295. All 2020 tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed.

Airline upgrades on round-trip Trans-Pacific flight: Business Class—$6,495 per person; Premium Economy—$2,995 per person in addition to the above costs (upgrades are subject to availability and pricing is subject to change).

Please note: This trip involves full days of sightseeing and significant amounts of walking on stairs and uneven surfaces. You should be in good physical condition to enjoy the tour to its fullest.