

PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR IN NEW ZEALAND

with

NZICESCAPES IMAGES - Petr Hlavacek

6 NATIONAL PARKS SOJOURN

ITINERARY - 15 DAYS

LOCATION

New Zealand has very unique location on planet. It is situated in the middle of Pacific Ocean on so called “Ring of Fire”, exposed to all wether patterns oceans can throw at it and thanks to its undisturbed seclusion for millions of years a natural, scenic wonderland had a chance to form. New Zealand has some of the most diverse and colourful landscapes on Earth. Quite possibly for this reasons, it is a dream destination – once in a lifetime experience for many people.

South Island in particular is an absolute heaven for any landscape photographer, offering such a remarkable diversity on so small piece of land, which is unparalleled in the World.

In total, New Zealand has 14 National Parks. 4 are up in the North Island, 1 is in Rakiura/Stewart Island and 9 NP are on the mainland/the South Island. Out of these 9 NP of the South Island, we are going to shoot in 6 of them, each presenting us with its specific beauty which I'm briefly outlaying below.

Kahurangi National Park – coastal, rivers, rainforest, Nikau Palms, limestone arches

Paparoa National Park – coastal, rivers, limestone, Nikau Palms

Westland National Park – coastal, rainforest, mountains, glaciers, lakes, rivers, lagoons

Mt. Aspiring National Park – rivers, streams, waterfalls, alpine, lakes, lagoons, bogs

Fiordland National Park – coastal, fiords, rainforest, alpine, lakes, rivers

Mt. Cook National Park – mountains, lakes, rivers, glaciers, alpine

There will be many other National Reserves or Reserves of other significance in which the photo shoots will take place.

Snowy mountains and glaciers, valleys filled with pristine, wild rivers and streams, prehistoric lakes, bogs and swamps, waterfalls. Wild and remote coastal scenes, limestone formations and blowholes, Nikau palms, lagoons, dense, juicy green rainforests give way to tussocky alpine heights and much more.

All these breathtaking locations awaits participants of Petr's exclusive photographic tour – 6 National Parks Sojourn.

Please see and download pdf of our full itinerary of our prime photographic tour through the spectacular New Zealand locations below:

ITINERARY

Your arrival and start of the trip in Christchurch - gateway to the South Island.

Day 01 - Christchurch - Arthur's Pass Village

L, D

Start: 8am at specified assembly point

After initial meeting, we'll leave Christchurch to our destination in Arthur's Pass, only 2 hrs drive away. We'll drive through alpine environment most of our way as we'll be heading towards the Southern Alps. There will many photographic opportunities along the way to photograph lakes, rives and mountain vistas with sunset at Waimakariri River with dramatic mountains in background.

First evening – getting to know each other – itinerary – official start.

Night in Alpine Motel



Day 02 - Arthur's Pass Village - Punakaiki

B, L, D

After sunrise shoot and breakfast, we'll carry on photographing alpine streams and rivers in Arthur's Pass before we'll head off towards famous pancake rocks in Punakaiki around lunch. Since we don't have a long distance to travel today, we can leave Arthur's Pass at leisure pace. The aim is to get to Punakaiki in the late afternoon for some magical sunset on famous Pancake Rocks. After checking in to our accommodation in Punakaiki, we'll move to our location to make some great images of the famous Pancake Rocks at sunset.



Night at Punakaiki Tavern

Day 03 - Punakaiki - Hokitika

B, L, D

Early start to capture some brilliant skies, as the sun rises on the east coast. This morning exercise will take us through for a late-ish breakfast, after which we may further explore the area. The time to move on will be after lunch in Punakaiki, as we'll head off towards Hokitika where we will spend a night. Hokitika Gorge with its turquoise coloured river awaits us for some afternoon shooting before returning back to capture sunset at Lake Kaniere or Lake Mahinapua depending on weather forecast.

Night in Bella Vista Motel



Day 04- Hokitika - Franz Josef Glacier

B, L, D

From here, and after a sunrise shoot, we venture further south on our trip, with the landscape getting more and more dramatic. Our road starts to cut through the dense rainforest at the mountains feet, we will be getting closer and closer to them, crossing wild rivers and streams and driving alongside of the pristine lakes. Should the weather be favourable, snowcapped tops of the Southern Alps will frequently tease us with its gorgeous panoramas. We'll have an early morning start for the sunrise at Lake Mahinapua. After breakfast back in Hokitika and check out, we'll head to Whataroa Valley with its beautiful, turquoise coloured waters of Whataroa River with stunning, open views of the Southern Alps. Open valley may be occupied with grazing live stock, only to add an extra and typical West Coast element to the frame. This is, one of the most beautiful valleys on the West Coast. In Whataroa, we'll also have a stop in Petr Hlavacek Gallery for viewing. After Whataroa, we'll drive to Franz Josef Glacier to check in to our accommodation and to have a dinner. For capturing colours of sunset, we'll drive to 30min distant Okarito Lagoon with an old remnants of the wharf on the lagoon edge. It's right after Whataroa, where we'll be entering UNESCO World Heritage Area, stretching on the West Coast from here all the way down to Fiordland.

Night in Bella Vista Motel



Day 05 - Franz Josef Glacier - Fox Glacier

B, L, D

This morning we'll photograph possible morning fogs and kahikatea trees at sunrise at nearby Lake Mapourika. After breakfast we'll go to explore Franz Josef Glacier valley and Sentinel Rock lookout. We'll have a lunch in Franz Josef Glacier before moving 26km further south to our next location - the Fox Glacier township. We may head straight to the Fox Glacier valley or photograph rainforest with its streams and creeks. For sunset we'll drive to Gillespies Beach and Lagoon where we'll be photographing magic views of the Southern Alps reflecting in lagoon at sunset before late return to our dinner.

Night at Mt. Cook View Motel



Day 06 - Fox Glacier

B, L, D

Today is going to be super exciting day since we have one of the highlights ahead of us. If the weather cooperates, we'll be chartering a private helicopter to take us high up into the mountains. We're going to spend the night in one of the mountaineering huts. There is several huts available in the area and the exact hut will be chosen in accordance with weather conditions and occupancy of the huts. Any of the huts we settle in for, offers us unparalleled views of the Southern Alps and either Franz Josef or Fox Glacier, with photographic opportunities like nowhere else. But that's not all - after spending the day in the mountains and sunset/sunrise shoot in the Southern Alps, the helicopter comes back to pick us up and transfer us into higher parts of the Fox Glacier itself. We'll spend about 3 hrs hiking and photographing ice caves, crevasses and blue ice. We'll be making some amazing images on one of the most unique glacier in the world. Around a lunch time the helicopter came back again to take us down from the glacier and for the lunch in Fox Glacier town. At lunch we'll discuss our next location, but we may be tired after mountain hiking so option of some down time is available if needed. This exciting mountain hut overnight is totally wether dependent so it may happen any day we'll be in the area. Could be day 5 or it could happen on day7.

Night in the mountains



Day 07 - Fox Glacier

B, L, D

Today, we have a sunrise shoot at Lake Matheson with amazing reflections of the Southern Alps. The Glacier Country region is full of magic places and we want to hang around for a bit longer. At this point we have several options which I'd like to leave open and make decisions in accordance with weather. We may photograph Fox River with majestic Southern Alps and Fox Glacier in background or we may explore densely in moss cloaked rainforest before photographing sunset at Lake Matheson. The night and dinner will be in Fox Glacier.

Night at Mt. Cook View Motel



Day 08 - Fox Glacier – Haast

B, L, D

Before we leave Fox Glacier to deeper south, we have one more option of sunrise at the most photographed lake in NZ – Lake Matheson and its mirror like reflections of NZ highest peaks – AORAKI/Mt. Cook (3,754m) and Mt. Tasman (3,497m). It takes just under 2 hrs to get to Haast from here, therefore, we can enjoy the morning in Fox Glacier, have a breakfast back at Lake Matheson Cafe and photograph some of the best, iconic NZ vistas with magic panoramas of the highest NZ mountains and farmland at your fingertip. The 2 hrs drive to Haast is all through the UNESCO World Heritage Area and is fully packed with breathtaking scenery. We'll have a couple of stops in this area; one at Lake Paringa, which is a magic, pre-historic, remote lake surrounded by native white pines – beautiful kahikateas, the tallest NZ trees. The second stop will be at remote Ship Creek with its beautiful wild beach and sand dunes covered by sand grass or with some of the best examples of the fantastic, boggy rainforest just like the one from a Jurassic Park. Sunset will be photographed at Ship Creek, from where it's only a few more minutes to the Haast, where we will spend the night.

Night at Heartland Hotel



Day 09 - Haast – Glenorchy

B, L, D

After sunrise shoot and a breakfast, we'll take off toward the Haast Pass and further to Wanaka and on to Queenstown/Glenorchy. It's going to be a long drive packed with breathtaking, ever changing scenery. About an hour drive from Haast, we will stop at one of many waterfalls along our way. It's going to be hard to resist stopping at each of them, however, we may choose Roaring Billy Falls, as this offers us two opportunities – last chance of photographing beautiful rainforest and its Ponga - Tree Fern and the waterfall itself with Haast River running in front of it. Moving on over the Haast Pass and through Makarora, our next photo stop will be at the west side of Lake Wanaka with another stop shortly after, at Lake Hawea. Both lakes are surrounded by mountains so if the weather is on our side the reflections and colours are going to be amazing. We will have a lunch stop in Wanaka by the lake before we carry on over the Cardrona road and through Arrowtown, Queenstown to Glenorchy. From Wanaka it's going to be approx. 1.5hrs to Glenorchy, which sits at the head of the Lake Wakatipu. We will be chasing light for some great sunsets here, with Dart River nearby.

Night in Glenorchy at Mt. Earnslaw Motel



Day 10 - Glenorchy – Te Anau

B, L, D

This morning we'll get up early for the sunrise at the Lake Wakatipu or Rees River. After sunrise and breakfast, we'll drive to place called Paradise where a lot of Lord of the Rings scenes were filmed. Spending the morning here, we move on to have a lunch in Queenstown. After lunch, we carry on toward the Te Anau. Arriving in Te Anau in the late afternoon and checking in, we'll capture some great images of Lake Te Anau at sunset.

Night at Anchorage Motel



Day 11 - Te Anau – Doubtful Sound or Milford Sound

B, L, D

Another exciting day ahead of us. Sunrise above Lake Te Anau before heading off to Lake Manapouri for the boat transfer for overnight boat cruise in Doubtful Sound. After boat ride across Lake Manapouri, we'll board the nature bus to travel across Fiordland's Wilmot Pass to reach our boat in Doubtful Sound for some incredible photography in remote parts of Fiordland National Park.

Night on the boat



Day 12 - Doubtful Sound – Te Anau - Milford Sound

B, L, D

The following morning we'll return to our base to Te Anau for lunch. After lunch we'll drive a scenic Milford Road with many photographic opportunities to Milford Sound for the sunset shoot. The night will be spent back in Te Anau.

Night at Anchorage Motel



Day 13 - Te Anau - Queenstown

B, L, D

Possible foggy sunrise over Lake Te Anau. After breakfast, we'll make a move to either nearby Lake Manapouri or beautiful juicy green Fiordland's rainforest. We spend some time exploring lake shores or photographing ferns before hitting the road towards Queenstown. After lunch in Te Anau, we'll arrive in Queenstown in the afternoon to check in to our hotel before heading off for the sunset shoot of the Remarkables Mountains from the lake shore. Depending on time of our arrival to Queenstown, there might be some free time available for shopping and relaxing in the streets of this mecca of adventure sports before sunset shoot.

Night at Heartland Hotel



Day 14 - Queenstown – Mt. Cook

B, L, D

Sunrise shoot of the Remarkables Mountains surrounding Queenstown and reflecting in Lake Wakatipu. After breakfast, we'll leave for Aoraki/Mt. Cook Village, the playground of mountaineers and home to the highest NZ mountain – Aoraki/Mt. Cook 3754m. AorakiMt. Cook NP is location offering a breathtaking alpine scenery so we don't want to loose much time on our transfer. This leg normally takes about 4hrs and we need to be in Mt. Cook in the early afternoon to be able to move to the Tasman Glacier Valley for a sunset shoot of its terminal lake with possible ice debris floating on its surface. Depending our our time and weather, we may be able to have a quick stop at beautiful Lake Pukaki, with Mt. Cook in the background.

Final evening – conclusion – closure.

Night at Hermitage Hotel



Day 15 - November 17 - Mt. Cook – Christchurch

B, L

Last early morning for the sunrise in the Hooker Valley with the majestic Aoraki/Mt. Cook (3754m). We'll have one more opportunity to make a last click on a great location at Lake Tekapo, which is reached in about 1.5hrs from Mt. Cook Village.



The tour finishes in Christchurch at 5pm.

LEVEL OF FITNESS & SKILLS

Petr Hlavacek's tours/workshops are designed to suit broad range of fitness levels. However, some longer walks (2-4 hrs return) over uneven, uphill and rugged terrain may be required on some of our tours/workshops.

Therefore, good level of fitness is recommended, as well as the ability to carry your own small back pack with extra clothing, snacks and camera equipment. Please, discuss this with us if you have any concerns.

Photographers of all skill levels, from beginners to professionals will benefit from our tours. Beginner needs to have a good working knowledge of their own camera system to benefit the most from the tour.

Professionals will benefit from our tours since we take care of the logistics and bring them to the best locations straight away so they can purely concentrate on shooting, rather than waisting time scouting.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU

Petr's tours are designed to make most of the locations and weather the group we'll be presented with.

You will learn variety of creative techniques in field which professionals use to capture most compelling images, including ND Gradual and polarizing filters.

We'll be pre-visualizing images, assessing light conditions, we'll learn how to find a strong composition within a scene to make a photograph speak, whether in a landscape or icescape. In the evenings, you will learn about photography RAW workflow from capture to output and how to bring the best from the image file in postproduction using Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop.

WHAT TO BRING

Due to New Zealand's location the weather can be extremely changeable. We are not going to be shooting in pouring heavy rain, but it is well possible that some rain will get us on our way to or from the location.

Below are some MUST have items for all our tours:

- camera gear
- tripod and filters
- layers of warm clothing
- warm hat and gloves
- waterproof clothing (jacket, pants)
- day backpack
- head lamp with fresh batteries
- sturdy boots (ankle high recommended)
- great spirit
- if possible, laptop with 5 of your favorite photos and loaded with latest version of Lightroom

SPECIFICATIONS

Due to the geographical location of New Zealand, the weather can be extremely changeable and will play a major role on our tour. For this reasons, this itinerary is flexible, fully subject to change.

We will continually be assessing the weather conditions on daily basis and alter the tour to the benefits of the photography. For instance, should the weather be too bright and sunny for the shoot in a bush, we may change the location and leave the bush for the overcast day if possible. These possible changes will be made by us in the mornings and during the day's development.

Many locations on our tour offer other shooting options, therefore it won't be difficult to come up with alternative location.

Some sunrises are also subject to changes, allowing clients to decide to skip should they be tired but otherwise we will be attempting to photograph during every available sunset and sunrise.

Sessions on RAW workflow, Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop will be inserted into evenings or into time windows when suitable.

For more informations and bookings, please read our Terms and Conditions before you make your reservations or contact us at:

Petr Hlavacek

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What's included in tour fees:

- 14 nights accommodation in twin share
- 15 days of photography tuition and tour guidance
- Transportation throughout the tour
- Department of Conservation concession fees
- All meals - B, L, D
- Refreshments
- Goods and Services Tax
- Doubtful or Milford Sound overnight cruise
- Optional - Mountain guide fees, hiking on Fox Glacier, overnight stay in alpine hut, 3 heli charters if the alpine trip is realised.
- Image reviews
- Session on photography RAW workflow, Lightroom and Photoshop image processing

What's NOT included in tour fees:

- All air or other travel fees to arrive in New Zealand to the tour departure point
- All associated taxes, levies and insurances including travel insurance
- Immigration, duty, passport and visa fees where applicable
- Individual alcoholic beverages during meals
- Optional activities e.g. helicopter flights, boat trips, jet boating
- Anything not listed in inclusions above

We highly recommend purchasing the travel insurance and insurance of your air ticket in case you will not be able to attend the tour and have to cancel the air ticket.