

# AGHS Tour of New Zealand's South Island

14 Day Escorted Tour from 31 October to 14 November 2017



## Tour Highlights

Join Lynne Walker, on a personal tour to New Zealand to visit her favourite gardens. Visiting the best of the South Island's gardens ranging from grand and historic gardens to special private gardens not normally open to the public, Lynne will introduce you to her fabulous selection of private and well-known gardens and some passionate gardeners as well. See spectacular and dramatic scenery, castles and wineries, visit artisans and galleries and, along the way, enjoy delicious regional food and wine.

### TOUR LEADER: Lynne Walker



Originally from N.Z., Lynne has lived in the New England region for nearly thirty years and has been a member of AGHS for over twenty years. She has served on the National Management Committee for two terms, was Convenor of the AGHS Northern NSW National Conference in 2013, and took a garden tour to the U.K. in 2012. She writes for several magazines both national and international,

while continuing to farm on a property between Guyra and Armidale with her husband Richard Bird. AGHS members may remember her as the Old Mole's Moll.

- The grandeur and history of some of New Zealand's oldest gardens
- Gardens of national and international significance, mixed with a few younger gardens
- The garden city of Christchurch and the historic French settlement of Akaroa
- Luxuriant woodland gardens tucked under the Southern Alps
- Garden tours, interior tours and unforgettable meals at both of New Zealand's only two castles
- Special access to private gardens
- The heritage university city of Dunedin, Larnach Castle and a flourishing South Sea Island garden
- The turquoise lakes of Wanaka and Queenstown



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For more details call  
(02) 6775 0208

## Itinerary

The AGHS Tour of New Zealand's South Island follows immediately after the 2017 AGHS Conference in Melbourne. The tour commences in Christchurch and as direct flights from Melbourne and Sydney to Christchurch are limited, it is recommended you book either the Qantas flight from Melbourne departing at 8.45am or the Air NZ/Virgin flight departing Melbourne at 9.10am to arrive in Christchurch mid-afternoon on Tuesday 31 October. There is also a Qantas flight from Sydney departing at 8.45am. Your Tour Leader, Lynne Walker, will be travelling to Christchurch from Melbourne on the 8.45am flight.

### Day 1 Arrive Christchurch

Tues 31 Oct

Book your own flights to arrive mid-afternoon into Christchurch International Airport. Make your own way to the hotel and meet up with your Tour Leader, Lynne Walker. Christchurch is a city in the process of rebuilding itself and there will be a conducted walking tour of the CBD to view the progress, if time allows, with time to freshen up before Welcome Drinks and Dinner and overview of the program. *Overnight: Rydges, Latimer Square, Christchurch Meals: -D*

### Day 2 Christchurch - Akaroa

Wed 1 Nov

Leave Christchurch for Banks Peninsula and the charming early French settlement of Akaroa. En route, visit three very memorable and very different gardens, beginning with a distinctively New Zealand garden with extraordinary combinations of natives and exotic plant varieties that have originated in NZ. Originality is a priority and this garden delivers in spades.

Next visit a spectacular English-style country garden stylishly designed by its owner; one New Zealand's foremost plantswomen who will give us a guided tour. Structured formal areas around the homestead, give way to glorious borders packed with masses of roses and some wonderful and rare perennials. Beyond that is an informal woodland area containing magnificent trees and shrubs.

After lunch continue to Banks Peninsula to a large garden located in a sheltered harbourside valley. Here dramatic herbaceous borders form a natural colourful amphitheatre above a stream. The intention of the planting is to tie the ornamental garden into the wider landscape with its magnificent backdrop of native bush and surrounding hills. Later continue on to the beautiful historic village of Akaroa to accommodation located on the harbour front.

*Overnight: Akaroa Village Inn*

*Meals: BL-*



### Day 3 Akaroa

Thurs 2 Nov

Own arrangements for breakfast. Start the day with an optional harbour cruise, dolphin watching and admiring pristine Akaroa Harbour, which is host to amazing bird and marine life. Today's first garden surrounds an historic Akaroa two storeyed house and is sure to make you smile! In this exuberant and quirky garden, colourful mosaics and stunning plant combinations complement each other. The owner/artist responsible is a trained horticulturist which is one of the reasons this garden works so well. The second garden is a stunning haven with breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean on the rugged and dramatic coastline of Banks Peninsula. Native plants, including 150 hebes) are combined with a diverse array of non-native plants to create a truly New Zealand ambience. This is truly gardening on the edge.

*Overnight: Akaroa Village Inn*

*Meals: -L -*



### Day 4 Akaroa – Christchurch – Methven

Fri 3 Nov

Leaving beautiful Akaroa travel across Banks Peninsula to a garden of international significance on the slopes of Governors Bay. With stunning views across Lyttleton Harbour, the garden features a number of formal rooms of differing style and character, including a rose garden enclosed in box hedges, traditional herbaceous borders leading to a gazebo, a walled, red garden and a walk of pleached hornbeams. A woodland garden, bush walk and sculpture park also feature. Travel back into Christchurch, known as 'The Garden City' to take a guided tour of the world-class Botanic Gardens taking in the flora, fauna and history of the gardens, before lunch in the stylish new cafe. The first oak tree was planted in 1863, and the gardens now boast an extensive collection of exotic and native trees and plants.

After lunch travel to one of the South Island's oldest homes and gardens, formerly the home of one of New Zealand's significant democratic reformers and still in his family. View parts of the homestead dating back to the mid-1850s. There is also archival history of the garden and tree planting. The garden has magnificent ancient trees, some over 150 years old, and the extensive woodland underneath has mass planting of bulbs, perennials and herbaceous plants. Afterwards travel to Methven to check in to the Ski Time Lodge which has magnificent views of Mt Hutt.

*Overnight: Ski Time Hotel, Methven*

*Meals: -LD*

## Itinerary

### Day 5 Methven - Hororata

Sat 4 Nov

Spend the day exploring three historic high country gardens, all with a backdrop of the spectacular Southern Alp. These gardens have been in their respective families for generations, their age reflected by the size of the magnificent trees and rhododendrons. Escorted walks will be provided and, time permitting, may include a farm tour of one of the properties. Alpine plantings are a feature. Teas and lunches provided. Optional jet boat ride on the Rakaia River late afternoon.

Overnight: *Ski Time Hotel, Methven*

Meals: BLD

### Day 6 Methven – Mt Somers - Ashburton

Sun 5 Nov

Travel to the base of the Southern Alps to a beautiful garden featuring a tranquil lake, rhododendrons, dogwoods, lush perennial borders, sweeping lawns and an exceptional tree and shrub collection. After a lunch stop in Ashburton, visit one of the most renowned gardens in New Zealand, planned from the start, unlike most gardens. The woodland area was developed around a series of gently curving paths; later the water gardens were added and finally the English inspired formal gardens. The layout is such that the garden areas are integrated, yet contain elements of surprise as the visitor explores. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: *Mainstay Hotel, Ashburton*

Meals: B-D



### Day 7 Ashburton - Dunedin

Mon 6 Nov

Travel south from Ashburton to the coast to visit two elegant and historic stations. The first one has been in the same family for generations and recently celebrated its 150th anniversary. Original farm buildings and an old wooden church are complemented by seven hectares of sweeping lawns, old trees, woodland planting, and boxed borders adding colour and interest. Continue to another historic house and garden nearby for a stroll before lunch. Originally designed by Alfred Buxton, the garden was established over 100 years ago and sits comfortably around an imposing century-old, double-brick homestead. The garden includes magnificent old trees (both native and exotic) and a series of small lakes surrounded by a wide variety of recently planted

native species. Later head south to Oamaru for afternoon tea at one of NZ's two castles and enjoy a stroll around the extraordinary kitchen gardens before continuing on to Dunedin, "The Edinburgh of the South" for three nights.

Overnight: *Distinction Hotel, Dunedin*

Meals: BLD

### Day 8 Dunedin

Tues 7 Nov

Begin the day with a guided tour of historic Olveston. Surrounded by spacious gardens, this grand Jacobean-style home showcases the exquisite skills of 19th century craftsmen. Later visit the stunning Dunedin Botanic Gardens which have just celebrated their 150th anniversary. After time for lunch at the distinctive kiosk restaurant, travel to the outskirts of Dunedin to a large country garden where Heritage roses are just one of the special features. Inviting pathways follow a picturesque creek through a woodland featuring masses of rhododendrons, maples, viburnums, magnolias and cornus, underplanted with shade-loving perennials. The hundred-year-old willows, which give the garden its name, stand guard filtering the sunlight. Return to Dunedin where the evening is free to dine as you please.

Overnight: *Distinction, Dunedin*

Meals: B - -

### Day 9 Dunedin

Wed 8 Nov

According to Sir David Attenborough...*"Otago Peninsula and Taiaroa Head is a unique and very special place. It is a place that every visitor to Dunedin should see."*

Taking Sir David's advice, a day is planned on the Peninsula starting with a cruise around Taiaroa Head on the Monarch Harbour Cruise to see the best of the area's wildlife, including albatross, penguins, ocean birds and fur seals.

Further along the Peninsula is the expansive woodland garden of Glenfalloch which showcases over 140 years of botanical history reflected in the trees and shrubs. Rhododendrons, azaleas and magnolias are particularly outstanding. After a boxed lunch in the garden travel to the top of the Peninsula to renowned Larnach Castle, which has a garden of international significance. Margaret Barker, the owner, is a dedicated plantswoman and longtime member of the Dendrology Society. She has created a haven for garden types from all over the world, including a spectacular South Seas garden. Margaret and her staff will conduct castle and garden tours with High Tea served in between tours.

Overnight: *Distinction, Dunedin*

Meals: BL -



## Itinerary

### Day 10 Dunedin – Patearoa – Wanaka

Depart Dunedin and head inland through Lord of the Rings country to the arid Maniototo plain where it is startling to find a very large garden flourishing, despite the climate. Featuring a natural creek and an extensive range of plants set amongst mature trees, the lawns and borders roll gracefully away from the house to two large ponds with rugged hills to one side and the distant mountains beyond, giving an impression of a lush oasis in the heat and dry of Central Otago. Truly a garden for all seasons with roses and perennials a special feature in Summer. After lunch in the garden continue on through the stunning Central Otago landscape to Lake Wanaka. Dinner at hotel.

*Overnight: Edgewater Hotel*

### Day 11 Wanaka – Tarras - Wanaka

Breakfast at hotel. Today visit gardens which thrive in their high country surroundings. The first garden is planted around a creek and features hellebores, primulas, fritillarias, peonies, trilliums and rhododendrons. The second garden is large and beautifully landscaped, featuring a wide range of trees and shrubs and is a delight to roam in. End the day with afternoon tea at a stunning lavender farm. Dinner at own expense. A nearby Mexican restaurant is highly recommended.

*Overnight: The Edgewater Hotel*

### Day 12 Wanaka - Queenstown

Depart for Queenstown via two stunning high country farm gardens on the shores of Lake Wanaka owned by two generations of the same family. With one very old garden and one much younger, this is succession garden planning at its very best. Lunch stop at the rustic Cardrona Pub, one of the oldest hotels in the country. Optional visit to the nearby Cardrona Whisky Distillery, the world's southernmost whisky distillery with a guided tour by the architect.

### Thurs 9 Nov

Continue on to Queenstown with its magnificent backdrop of the snow-capped Southern Alps. Free afternoon to relax, shop, take a Shotover jetboat ride (optional) or visit the Queenstown Botanic Gardens on the shores of Lake Wakatipu. This evening take a trip on the historic steamship - TSS Earnslaw, affectionately known as the 'Lady of the Lake' – across the lake to Walter Peak Station for a barbecue meal on one of NZ's premiere high country runs.

*Overnight: Queenstown*

### Day 13 Queenstown

Two large and very different gardens on the outskirts of Queenstown will provide highlights on the final day of the tour. The first has many different rooms; formal and English garden areas, a lavender-dominated French-themed garden, Tuscan-inspired plantings around the pool, an Asian garden, a large orchard and a New Zealand native garden with 5000 plants, water features and sculptures. Rhododendrons and azaleas are a special feature with over 700 plants and 200 varieties. Afterwards travel to nearby Arrowtown's historic 1860s gold-mining village for some last-minute retail therapy and lunch. Conclude the garden tour with a visit to an imaginative and beautifully presented garden where impressive vistas to the surrounding picturesque mountainous landscape can be found from many vantage points. A large colour-themed bed borders the old shed and there are large drifts of old roses, together with herbaceous plants, bulbs, shrubs and trees. Simple plantings around the cottage are entirely appropriate. Farewell Dinner this evening in the Skyline Restaurant, a short gondola ride away, high above Queenstown.

*Overnight: Queenstown*

### Day 14 Depart Queenstown

The tour ends today after breakfast. Make your own way to Queenstown Airport for the return flight to Australia or onward private travel.

*Meals: B - D*

### Sun 12 Nov

*Meals: B - D*

### Mon 13 Nov

*Meals: B*



## Inclusions / Exclusions and Tour Costs

### What's Included

- All land travel in the private use of modern Mercedes Benz coach
- Accommodation in 3 to 4 star hotels
- Entry to all gardens and historic homes plus sightseeing as listed
- Professional multi-lingual (Enzed/English ) speaking tour guide
- Meals shown as BLD - 10 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 11 dinners.

### What's Not Included:

- Flights, airline taxes and surcharges
- All items of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls and alcoholic beverages
- Travel insurance, and cancellation fees
- Passport fees and visa charges
- Optional excursions

### Tour Costs: (Per person excluding airfares)

**Twin share/double room      AUD 6,750**

**Single with single Supplement    AUD 8,180**

### Bookings and Deposits

To confirm your place on this program please complete the details on the Melbourne Conference booking form and send with your payment to: AGHS. Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, 3004

OR

Online through AGHS Melbourne Conference site:  
<https://www.trybooking.com/NTNT>

### Exchange Rates

Prices quoted in Australian dollars with AUD \$1.00 = NZ \$ 1.07

### Minimum Numbers

The minimum number of passengers for this tour is 15 and the maximum number is 45.