

AGHS Tour of New Zealand's South Island

14 Day Escorted Tour from 29 October to 11 November 2019



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



New Zealand born, Lynne Walker has been a passionate gardener all her life, making gardens wherever she has lived around the world. Formerly Coordinator for Australia's Open Garden Scheme, Northern New South Wales, Lynne has continued her love of gardening as a freelance writer with *Country Style*, *NZ House and Garden* and other magazines and is an

active member of the Australian Garden History Society and Guyra Garden Club. Lynne and her husband, Richard Bird, run a sheep and cattle farm near Armidale, NSW.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- The grandeur and history of some of NZ's oldest gardens, including 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 turquoise lakes of Wanaka and Queenstown



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DAY 1 AUSTRALIA - CHRISTCHURCH**TUE 29 OCT**

The AGHS tour of New Zealand's South Island follows immediately after the 2019 AGHS Conference in Wellington, NZ. The tour commences in Christchurch and there are several flights from Wellington to Christchurch daily - flight time one hour and you should aim to arrive mid-afternoon. If travelling from Australia (note flights are limited), it is recommended you book flights departing between 9am and 9.30am to enable you to arrive mid-afternoon into Christchurch.

On arrival, meet your Tour Leader, Lynne Walker at Christchurch International Airport and depart for Christchurch, gateway to the South Island. This 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 & Dinner and an overview of the program.

Overnight: *Rydgas, Latimer Square, Christchurch*
Meals: *D*

DAY 2 CHRISTCHURCH - AKAROA**WED 30 OCT**

Leave Christchurch for the Banks Peninsula and the charming early French settlement of Akaroa. En route visit three very memorable and 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 of New Zealand's foremost plants women 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 rare perennials.. Beyond is an informal woodland area containing magnificent trees and shrubs.

After lunch, continue to Banks Peninsula to a large garden in a sheltered harbour-side valley. It contains dramatic herbaceous borders forming a natural colourful amphitheatre above the stream featuring tulips, irises, daylilies and dahlias depending on the season. 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. Continue on to the beautiful historic village of Akaroa to accommodation on the harbour front.

Overnight: *Akaroa Village Inn*

Meals: *B L*

**DAY 3 AKAROA****THU 31 OCT**

Breakfast at hotel. Start the day with a visit to a stunning cliff side garden on the rugged and dramatic coastline of Banks Peninsula with breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean. 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.



Enjoy a lunchtime harbor cruise, dolphin watching and admiring pristine Akaroa harbour, which is host to amazing bird and marine life, including the world's rarest and smallest dolphin, the Hector dolphin. This afternoon's garden is an historic Akaroa two storeyed house surrounded by an exuberant and quirky sculpture mosaic garden and gallery, where the mosaics and the stunning plant combinations complement each other. The owner/ artist responsible is also a trained horticulturist which is one of the reasons this garden works so well. This is a garden certain to make you smile. Dinner, at own expense will be at a charming French restaurant a short walk from the inn.

Overnight: *Akaroa Village Inn*

Meals: *B L*

DAY 4 AKAROA – METHVEN**FRI 1 NOV**

Breakfast at hotel. Leaving beautiful Akaroa travel across Banks Peninsula to a garden of international significance located on the slopes of Governors Bay. A number of formal rooms, of differing style and character, include a rose garden enclosed in box hedges, traditional herbaceous borders leading to a gazebo, a square, walled, red garden and a walk of pleached hornbeams on stilts leading to an oval lawn. A woodland garden, and a shaded bush walk also feature. A new area of the garden is being developed as a sculpture

park with magnificent views across Lyttleton Harbour. 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 having lunch in the stylish new cafe. Developed since the first oak tree was planted in 1863, the Botanic Gardens boast an extensive collection of exotic and native trees and plants.

The formal rose garden is popular in summer and the Avon River makes a wonderful focus. After lunch we 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. We will be able to view parts of the homestead which date 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.

Travel to Methven to check in to the Ski Time Lodge which has magnificent views of towering Mt Hutt.

Overnight: Ski Time Hotel, Methven

Meals: B L D

DAY 5 METHVEN - WINDWHISTLE

SAT 2 NOV

Spend the day exploring three historic high-country gardens, all with a backdrop of the spectacular Southern Alps including mighty Mt Hutt. 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 may include a farm tour of one of the properties, time permitting. 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: B L D



DAY 6 METHVEN – HINDS- OAMARU

SUN 3 NOV

Travel south east from Methven 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, boxed borders adding colour and interest and a small hand-dug lake.

Continue on to an historic house and garden 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 both native and exotic old trees including plantings around a series of small lakes. Later head south to visit one of NZ's two castles and enjoy a stroll around the extraordinary kitchen gardens before enjoying refreshments at one of the country's most renowned restaurants. Continue on to Oamaru for the night. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Heritage Motor Court Lodge, Oamaru

Meals: B L D

DAY 7 OAMARU - DUNEDIN

MON 4 NOV

Breakfast at hotel. Enjoy a tour around the historic port of Oamaru and catch a glimpse of life as it used to be, including a series of old crafts on display. Continue south to a lovely coastal garden just north of Dunedin. Essentially native but with significant exotic elements a sequence of three gardens descends beside the house to an entertaining area. A boardwalk planted with natives meanders down the hillside to the beach. Continue on to Dunedin, "The Edinburgh of the South" for two nights.

Overnight: Distinction Hotel, Dunedin

Meals: B - D

DAY 8 DUNEDIN

TUE 5 NOV

Begin the day with a guided tour of historic Olveston, a grand Jacobean-style home that showcases the exquisite skills of 19th century craftsmen and enjoy the spacious surrounding gardens.



Later have a guided tour of the stunning 150-year-old Dunedin Botanic Gardens, the oldest in New Zealand. Lunch will be available at the distinctive kiosk restaurant. After lunch 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 and choose a dinner venue from the many in the heart of Dunedin's CBD

Overnight: Distinction Hotel, Dunedin

Meals: B



DAY 9 DUNEDIN

WED 6 NOV

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

"Taking Sir David's advice, a day is planned on the Peninsula starting with a garden on the shores of a secluded inlet off the Pacific Ocean. The young garden is set on a gently sloping hillside under the prominent feature of Harbour Cone and is planted with a wide selection of rhododendrons and other trees and shrubs along with wide borders of perennials and roses. A fascinating collection of plants with a Gondwana theme including palms, cordylines and tree ferns is being developed in a valley. This is followed by a visit to the Taiaeroa Heads Albatross Sanctuary for an introduction to the Royal Albatross narrated by Natural History New Zealand when your guide will take you through the bird's fascinating story. Enjoy lunch at the café high above the harbour and see the birds soaring above before taking a boat cruise to see the best of the area's wildlife, including albatross, penguins, other sea birds and fur seals.



Then travel up to the top of the Peninsula to renowned Larnach Castle, which has a garden of international significance. The owner, Margaret Barker, a dedicated

plantswoman and dendrologist has created a haven for garden types from all over the world, including a spectacular South Seas garden. Margaret's staff will conduct castle and garden tours with High Tea served in between the tours.

Overnight: Distinction, Dunedin

Meals: B



DAY 10 DUNEDIN – PATEAROA – WANAKA **THU 7 NOV**

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. The garden features 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. Lunch will be served and there is a gift shop. Continue on through the stunning Central Otago landscape to Lake Wanaka.

Overnight: Oakridge Hotel, Wanaka

Meals: B L D

DAY 11 WANAKA – HAWEA

FRI 8 NOV

Today's two gardens are beside two of New Zealand's most memorable lakes and both have been tended by generations of the same families. The first garden, 5ha in area is renowned for both its design and features which include two ponds, dry stone walls and the plants selected for the garden. The garden flows right down to the lakefront and fits naturally into the landscape. The second garden, our lunch venue, also shelters under magnificent trees and a stream runs through the garden ending in a tranquil pond. The edges of both are planted with ferns, primulas and other shade lovers. Large shrubberies are set out to entice the garden visitor around yet another corner. A thriving vegetable garden and orchard reflect the fact that this is a much loved and lived in family garden.

End the day with a range of optional activities including a visit to a spectacular lavender farm, a jet boat ride or retail therapy in the excellent shopping precinct. Dinner at own expense. A Mexican restaurant is highly recommended.

Overnight: Oakridge Hotel, Wanaka

Meals: B L

DAY 12 WANAKA - QUEENSTOWN**SAT 9 NOV**

Before leaving Wanaka visit a gem of an Alpine garden, with hellebores, primulas fritillaries, peonies, trilliums and Himalayan lilies planted along a creek by two of the country's foremost plants people. Then travel towards Queenstown and have a guided tour of the world's southernmost Whisky & Rose Distillery in the Cardrona Valley, before enjoying lunch at the nearby historic Cardrona Pub, one of the oldest in the country.



Continue on to Queenstown with its magnificent backdrop of the snow-covered Southern Alps Free afternoon to relax, shop or visit the nearby Queenstown Botanic Gardens which is right on the shores of Lake Wakatipu.

Overnight: Queenstown**Meals: B - D****DAY 13 QUEENSTOWN****SUN 10 NOV**

Two large and very different gardens on the outskirts of Queenstown will provide highlights on the final day of the tour. The first one has many different rooms. There are formal and English garden areas, a lavender-dominated French-themed garden, Tuscan-inspired plantings around the swimming pool, an Asian garden above, 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.

Then travel to nearby Arrowtown's old 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**Meals: B - D****DAY 14 QUEENSTOWN TO AUSTRALIA****MON 11 NOV**

The tour ends today after breakfast.

Meals: B

Tour Costs and Inclusions/Exclusions

TOUR COSTS: Per person, excluding airfares

Twin share/double room **AUD \$ 7,195** / Single Supplement Add **AUD \$ 1,675**

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All land travel in the private use of modern Mercedes Benz coach
- Accommodation in 3 to 4 star hotels and motels
- Entry to all gardens and historic homes, plus sightseeing as listed
- Professional multi-lingual (Enzed/English) speaking tour guide
- Meals shown as B = Breakfast, L= Lunch and D=Dinner.

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

METHOD OF PAYMENT & BOOKING

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

Direct EFT Transfer: Australian Garden History Society
BSB: 012 006
Acc. No. 216672228

Cheque payable to AGHS

Credit Card (Visa/Mastercard)

EXCHANGE RATE

Prices in Australian dollars with AU \$1.00 = NZ \$1.07

MINIMUM NUMBERS

The minimum number of passengers for this tour is 15 and the maximum is 30.