Lakes, Fiords & Mountains

Your optional activities in Fiordland

In Te Anau, we are dwarfed by the mountains looming all around us and are right on the edge of the wonderfully rugged and remote Fiordland National Park. On Day 3 of your tour you have a day off to do whatever you might still have on your bucket list – how about exploring either the world-famous Milford Sound or the serene Doubtful Sound on a day tour? Or maybe you would like to enjoy a wilderness experience by jet boat or visit the Te Anau Glowworm Caves? We can help you pre-arrange any of those tours if you wish.

Maybe you feel like stretching your legs a bit after two days of cycling? If wandering along lake shores is not quite enough, how about walking part of one of Southlands' Great Walks? The Kepler Track to Luxmore hut or summit is well worth considering.

Your guide can help with plenty of other suggestions and make any bookings from this plethora of optional activities.

Now international tourism is in full swing again, it pays to plan and book longer in advance. To make sure you don't miss out, we would like to book your optional activities as early as possible, so have included them in our tour booking form.

These are your options that require pre-booking:

- **Doubtful Sound Day Trip ex Manapouri**
- **Milford Sound Day Trip ex Te Anau**
- **Pure Wilderness Jet Boat Experience ex Te Anau**
- **Glowworm Caves ex Te Anau**
- **Water taxi to go on Kepler Track Day Walk ex Te Anau**

Doubtful Sound Day Trip

Experience the spectacular, remote wilderness of Doubtful Sound on our guided day trip. Journey across Lake Manapouri, over the breathtaking Wilmot Pass and into the heart of Fiordland National Park. This is a must-do for nature lovers and explorers alike.

- Duration: 8+ hours
- Start with a cruise across Lake Manapouri, followed by a coach trip over the epic Wilmot Pass through Fiordland's rainforest and into the Sound
- A 3-hour cruise through the waterways of Doubtful Sound
- Cruise onboard the Patea Explorer (or similar ship)
- Commentary by a knowledgeable Skipper and Nature Guide
- Wildlife viewing, including dolphins, fur seals and even occasionally penguins
- Picnic lunches available for purchase from Manapouri Café
- Snacks and drinks available for purchase (cash only onboard)

  Departure from Te Anau 9:45 am, return to Te Anau ~ 6 pm

  Operated by RealNZ

  Price per person: $ 423

Milford Sound Day Trip

Travelling along Milford Road is one of the finest alpine drives in the world. The scenery is exceptional, ranging from broad grassy flats, dense rainforests, and towering mountains to glacial lakes and alpine herb fields.

About the trip:

RealNZ drivers have been selected for their knowledge of the Fiordland region and driving experience on Milford Road. They'll provide insightful and entertaining commentary along the way.

1. The schedule allows plenty of time for all the best photo stops
2. They have glass-roof coaches so you can be sure to see the magnitude of the mountains at all times!
3. When you get to Milford Sound itself, you'll take to the water and cruise in style on board the Milford Mariner or Milford Haven, a cruising bar and Café

Departure from Te Anau 10:10 am, return to Te Anau 4:55 pm

Operated by RealNZ

Price per person: $ 269

Pure Wilderness Jet Boat Experience

Not just another jet boat ride – this one tells a story.

Follow the historic Waiau River to Lake Manapouri, once travelled by early settlers and made famous in Lord of the Rings. Along the way, learn about the area's rich natural and cultural history while gliding through crystal-clear waters surrounded by native bush.

Yes, we do 'spins', but we'll start slow and gain your confidence, as they are surprisingly smooth and fun, not scary!

When the engine quiets, listen to the birds and the river's gentle flow before stepping ashore for a short walk in Fiordland National Park. Discover the ancient beech forest and its unique flora and fauna in one of the world's largest protected areas. We'll go ashore in lush beech forest for a very easy stroll and you'll learn about the local flora & fauna of Fiordland National Park.

A wonderful way to experience Fiordland's beauty, history, and peaceful isolation. Highly recommended!

Includes a 7 mins bus ride to/from the river and a forest walk

Duration 2 hrs (approx.)

Departure from Te Anau 10 am, return to Te Anau ~12:00 pm

Operated by Fiordland Jet

Price per person: $ 195

Te Anau Glowworm Caves

Experience a mysterious underground world with a guided cave tour past the rushing water of an underground stream before drifting in silent darkness beneath the luminous shimmer of hundreds of glowworms.

Your trip to the Te Anau Glowworm Caves begins with a cruise to the western shores of Lake Te Anau on a purpose-built scenic cruise vessel.

At the entry to the caves at Cavern House, view the informative displays and learn about this geological wonder before you join your guide underground. On the tour of the caves, the friendly guides will point out the highlights and share their knowledge of the caves and its history.

This underground world is astonishingly beautiful. By geological standards, the caves are very young (12,000 years) and are still being carved out by the force of the river that flows through them. The result is a twisting network of limestone passages filled with sculpted rock, whirlpools and a roaring underground waterfall.

Deep inside the caves, beyond the roar of the water, you will be taken by small boat into a silent hidden grotto inhabited by hundreds of glowworms, unique to New Zealand. In the subterranean darkness, they produce a glittering display that is nothing short of extraordinary.

Includes return lake cruise and forest walk

Duration 2 hrs 15 mins

Departure from Te Anau 9 am, return to Te Anau 11:15 am

Operated by RealNZ

Price per person: $ 154

Water taxi to go on Kepler Track Day Walk

Access Te Anau's best day walk: Luxmore Summit Challenge
7-8 hrs / 26 km return / 928 m elevation change

The Water Taxi departs the Te Anau Lakefront to Brod Bay at 8:30am and returns from Brod Bay at 4:30pm

Price per person for return trip: $ 70

Please note:
Even though you could start and end your day walk on the Kepler Track from the shores of Lake Te Anau, please be aware this adds an extra 1.5 hour to/from Brod Bay each way.
If you choose to take the 15 mins water taxi trip each way - which we highly recommend - you will start and end your day's hike at Brod Bay, ie save about 3 hours.
The Mt Luxmore Walk on the Kepler Track is not 'a walk in the park'.
The return walk from Brod Bay to Luxmore Hut takes about 5-6 hours (16.5km), from Brod Bay to the summit about 7-8 hours return (26 km). It is a steep and steady climb and good fitness is required. Be prepared for wind and rain in an open alpine environment. On good days there are fabulous views from the top at 1472m over the South Fiord that make it definitely worthwhile.

Other options at no cost and with no need to pre-book:

- take your bike and cycle around Te Anau, or to Manapouri and back

- take your bike and cycle to the Manapouri end of the Kepler Track and enjoy a two to three-hour easy walk

Your tour guide can give you more info about your options.

Of course, you can also use the day to just relax and recharge!