

ultimatecruising.co.nz or call us on 0800 485 846

FROM

\$15,499_{pp}

Package #432

Enjoy a very different kind of Christmas celebration this year. Leaving Sydney's iconic landscape, set sail for a sea day, followed by two days in Tasmania (or Tassie as it is known to locals). Enjoy fun and festivities on board Silver Muse for Christmas day while boxing day and the 27th will be spent cruising the ethereal Milford and Doubtful Sounds. Continue sailing from the South Island to the North, for disembarkation in lovely Auckland.

Package Inclusions:

- Private Transfers from your home to airport and return*
- Special air credit included
- 15 night luxury cruise with Silver Muse from Sydney to Auckland
- All meals on board
- Beverages in-suite and throughout the ship, including champagne, select wines and spirits
- 1 Shore excursion per port, per day
- Butler service in every suite
- Onboard entertainment
- Complimentary transport into town in most ports
- Unlimited Wifi
- Onboard gratuities

Cruise Highlights

SYDNEY

With its glorious harbour, lavish golden beaches and iconic landmarks, Sydney is Australia's showpiece city. Creative and curious, discover the world-class cuisine, indigenous culture, and irresistible beach life that make Sydney one of the world's most dynamic, exciting destinations. Sydney's sparkling harbour is the heart of a richly cultural city. Overlooked by the metallic curves of the masterpiece of an Opera House, and that grand arched harbour bridge. Take it all in from the water, and admire the iconic landmarks, which are set before the city's gleaming skyline backdrop. If you're feeling adventurous, take the legendary climb up the smooth curve of the bridge – nicknamed the Coathanger - to soak in the shining city's spread from a unique perspective. Spread out to tan on one of the world's most famous stretches of sand - Bondi Beach. Restaurants and bars burble away in the background, while the sun beams down, and surfers curl and leap over pure rollers. Swim in spectacular salty ocean pools, or wander the beautiful Bondi to Coogee coastal walk for more of this sun-gorged stretch of prime coastline. Leaving the thrills of Australia's largest city behind is surprisingly simple – take to the skies to be flown above skyscrapers and rippling ribbons of waves, out to majestic peaks, sheer cliffs and iconic rock formations - like the Three Sisters of the Blue Mountains. Or, drop in on wildlife sanctuaries caring for the country's animals – from hopping kangaroos to adorably cute, cuddly koalas.

HOBART

Mount Wellington's looming, cloud-wisped form is an ever-present sight as you explore booming Hobart, the cosmopolitan capital of Australia's most southerly state. A former British penal colony, nowadays Australia's second-oldest city is a place to live the free and easy life. Encircled by dramatic cliffs, landscaped gardens and rolling vineyards, Hobart is also well stacked with cultural pursuits including museums, and respected - if controversial - galleries plastering new and old art to their walls. With fresh sea breezes and a fabulous location, Hobart is a creative place, where you can browse the produce of local artisans in Saturday's massive Salamanca Market - which draws visitors from all across Tasmania and beyond. Eat at waterfront restaurants, or rise up Mount Wellington's slopes to appreciate the remoteness of Hobart's location. From this elevated platform, you can look down across views of flowing forests, undulating mountains and endless ocean swallowing up the city. Further away, animal sanctuaries introduce you to the island's famous inhabitants, including the famous Tasmanian devil. Thirsty? Hobart has a long brewing tradition - so enjoy a refreshing ale poured from the country's oldest brewery. The climate's blend of generous sunshine and cool Antarctic breezes helps Hobart to produce its acclaimed wines, and thick clumps of pinot noir grapes hang from vineyards dotted along the valleys nearby. Taste the wines, accompanied by a platter of artisan cheese and sausage. Whiskey aficionados aren't left in the cold either, with international award-winning distilleries close by.

MILFORD SOUND

Named after Milford Haven in Wales, Milford Sound is not a sound but a fjord, yet the name has stuck. In 1998 the Maori name Piopiotahi has been added and officially it should be written as Milford Sound/Piopiotahi. The local name refers to the extinct New Zealand Thrush (the piopio). Milford Sound sits within South Island's Fiordland National Park, one of the four national parks forming the UNESCO World Heritage site "Te Wahipounamu" –pounamu being the local greenstone highly estimated for carvings by the Maori. The fjord has a length of approximately 16 kilometers and a depth of more than 290 meters. Steep cliffs, several impressive waterfalls and dense rainforest characterize the fjord. Halfway down the fjord is Stirling Falls, the second tallest. Near the end of the

sound the U-shaped Sinbad Gully and the famous Mitre Peak which rises to a height of 1,692 meters can be seen, while on the eastern side is Lady Bowen Falls, at 162 meters the tallest of the falls. The Piopiotahi Marine Reserve protects the flora and fauna in the water. Apart from bottlenose dolphins in the fjord, New Zealand fur seals can be seen resting on Seal Rock on the northern shore, while on the opposite side is a Fiordland Crested Penguin site.

DOUBTFUL SOUND

As with all of New Zealand's fiords, Doubtful Sound is a masterpiece of nature. The only way to reach it is by boat, crossing Lake Manapouri, so of the three Sounds (Dusky and Milford being the other two), Doubtful is the least touristy. Thus those who are lucky enough to experience Doubtful Sound deserve it. Because of the Sound's inaccessibility, you'll encounter very few people as you float through the silent waterways. Animals, however, are a different matter. Because of the lack of human interaction, Mother Nature has been given a free rein here. The dense forest is rife with wildlife and birdsong is a constant soundtrack (otherwise it is the sound of silence). In the water, you can expect to get up close and personal with fur seals, pods of bottlenose dolphins and some lucky souls have even sighted the occasional whale and albatross. Ornithologists will no doubt already know that Doubtful Sound is home to the rare Fiordland Crested Penguin, so be sure to keep your binoculars ready as it would be a shame to miss the once in a lifetime sighting. The region is famous for its seven meter annual rainfall, so do not be surprised if the sun isn't shining. Yet despite the potential mist, Doubtful Sound remains majestic. The waterfalls are more mesmerising, the glassy water more mysterious, and the mountains rising into the clouds more impressive. As the Fiordlands website puts it, Doubtful Sound offers its visitors "cloistered serenity". Expect to be both humbled and uplifted.

DUNEDIN

The south-easterly coast of New Zealand's wild southern island is a haven for outdoor adventures, with masses of raw scenic beauty and thrilling coastline. Heading the Otago Harbour, Dunedin is a cosmopolitan city of culture and architectural splendour, with a distinctly tartan flare. Settled by the Scots in 1848, the romantically misty valleys and moody landscapes, continue to capture the hearts of visitors to these distant shores. Searing bagpipes echo down the streets in the Edinburgh of the South, which wears its Scottish origins proudly. Gothic revival architecture is scattered liberally, including the magnificent university - with its glorious clocktower - and the city's grand cathedral. Head to the elegant Octagon to see the statue to Robert Burns, whose nephew was a city founder. The railway station is perhaps the pick of this city's many artistic structures. Its glowing gardens and pretty mosaics add extra detail to the elegant, gingerbread building. It's also the perfect jumping-off point for romantic rail adventures along the coastline. The melodramatic coastline of the Otago Peninsula boasts dramatic cliffs and sea-sprayed beaches, as well as an abundance of animals. Explore cliffs laced with tunnels and hidden walkways, to get you up close and personal with Yellow-eyed penguins. Sea lions and seals also sprawl out on windswept beaches, drifting in and out of indulgent dozes. The south island's second-largest city regularly receives a top-up of youthful energy thanks to its healthy student population. Not that Dunedin is lacking a distinctly quirky personality of its own, as showcased by the event where locals race thousands of chocolate orbs down the world's steepest street - Baldwin Street. Museums in the city tell of Chinese influences, as well as the stories of early Maori settlers. Round off an active day sampling a South Island institution - an icy beer from Speight's Brewery.

AKAROA

With pretty painted cottages, overflowing verdant balconies and street names such as Rue Lavaud and Fleur Lane, you could be forgiven for thinking that you have stepped onto the streets of Provence upon arrival in Akaroa. And yet, here you are, in New Zealand's South Island, less than 50 kilometres from Christchurch. The French connection stems from 1838, when Captain Jean Francois Langlois acquired the land for six British pounds (and questionable circumstances) from the Maoris. He then travelled home to France in order to bring back anyone who might want to join him in his new life. However, during his travels, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed (signatories included two Akaroa Maori chiefs) and New Zealand's first Governor, Hobson, declared sovereignty over the whole of New Zealand. Thus when Langlois and his settlers arrived back, they were faced with a choice: either return home to France or stay on. They chose the latter, and their legacy prevails. There are many stunning places on the coast of New Zealand, but none of them can quite hold a candle to Akaroa. Visually, it is stunning. Surrounded by natural wonders, the town (Maori for "Long Harbour") stands on a peninsula formed by two volcanic cones, and is self-styled as nature's playground. Such a moniker might seem superlative for other destinations, but not here: sheep graze almost right to the water's edge, dolphins are regularly spotted in the many small, secluded bays and Lord of the Rings grandeur stretches as far as the eye can see.

WELLINGTON

Sprawling around a hook-shaped peninsula, Wellington is a vibrant and energetic seaside capital. A compact, well-stocked city of buzzing bars and chatting cafes, New Zealand's capital is a bright and breezy place with an infectious, easy-going atmosphere. Known as the creative hub of the South Pacific, there are shows to see, art installations to enjoy, and rich flavours to savour here. The sounds of rare and beautiful birdlife fill the hills around the city, and the bush of the green belt provides easy-to-access sanctuary, strolls and cycle rides. The Botanical Gardens break up the buildings, even more, while an iconic, cherry-red cable car rumbles up Wellington's slope to the city's best viewpoint, looking out over the city's scenic harbour from above. Zealandia has provided an urban home for rare and endangered birdlife, bringing many species back from the brink. Varied museums cover everything from Maori traditions to earthquake simulations and even the real-life Kraken - a displayed colossal squid. Wellington is only New Zealand's third-biggest city, but spend some time here and you'll realise that's a blessing. Eminently strollable, you can stop in at countless cool cafes to top up your caffeine levels whenever your energy is flagging - the smell of a fresh artisan espresso is never far away. The wines grown nearby are revered, and the city's craft beers are also making waves. Wander the breezy waterfront, and admire the surfers riding the wind-whipped rollers of the self-proclaimed 'coolest little capital in the world'.

PICTON

The gateway to New Zealand's South Island waits just across the Cook Strait from Wellington. Pretty Picton is a beautiful harbour town, lying on the cusp of the mighty scenery of the Marlborough Sounds Maritime Park, and providing an attractive link between New Zealand's two main islands. The journey into the scenic Queen Charlotte Sound is a vista that only New Zealand can provide, as you sail through crumpled green peaks and folding hills, towards Picton's little flotillas of yachts and endearing waterfront appeal. You could easily spend days here browsing art studios and galleries, nursing freshly ground coffees, and watching the undulations of the bay's waters from Picton's waterfront eateries. Or enjoying the coastal location and sea views while wandering Picton Memorial Park, among palm trees, bright flowers and benches that sit before sweeping views of the Sound. There's a lot to explore beyond Picton's

limits, too, with mighty flayed inlets and glorious sweeping bays enticing you out into the sumptuous panoramas. The Marlborough Sounds are 1,500 km of eye-rubbingly beautiful scenery, formed by submerged valleys cascading down to the sea's waters. With its multitude of bays, coves and islands, you'll find no shortage of walks, as well as plenty of opportunities to get out onto the calm water and push through the gentle waves in kayaks. Or sit back and enjoy weaving through the scenery from the comfort of a sailboat, looking out for abundant wildlife like penguins, dolphins and seals. Vineyards coat the sheltered land between the mountains and ocean – generating the perfect climate for cultivation. Sample a glass of the renowned Sauvignon Blanc, from the Blenheim wine region nearby for a taste of the fruitful produce.

GISBORNE

With a population of around 35,000 and located on the north island, Gisborne exudes history at every turn. Maori for “Great standing place of Kiwa”, Kiwa was a leading figure aboard the Maori ancestral canoe, Takitimu, which ran aground in Gisborne around 1450 AD. After landing, Kiwa became a coastal guardian, eventually marrying Parawhenuamea, the keeper of the streams. The union point of three rivers and the first place to see the sun, the city is filled with light and laughter and gracefully squeezes surfer's beaches with the district's colonial past. Captain Cook made his first landfall here, John Harris set up his first trading station in the then village and today, Gisborne is the major centre of Maori cultural life. Suffice to say then that the city is a watery wonderland. With its picture perfect beaches, what savvy traveller does not want to add being among the first people in the world to say they have watched the sky change colour as the sun bursts from out of the sea. A place of nature, spectacular beach cliff views are all just part and parcel of everyday life here, and easy walks from the centre of town to the Titirangi Reserve will award you with yet more unbelievable 180° vistas from Poverty Bay to Gisborne City; stretch your eyes with the panorama, while stretching your legs on one of the many enjoyable walks. A perfect place to stroll, amble and wander, like much of New Zealand Gisborne keeps a healthy respect for history and nature and enjoys a very laid back feel.

TAURANGA

Tauranga is New Zealand's sunny capital – with wide sweeping beaches and surfers curling across cresting waves. Climb to the top for spectacular views of the natural harbour, or take winding coastal footpaths to explore the unfolding scenery. An entry point to the vast indent of the Bay of Plenty, the volcanic peak of Mount Maunganui is a fittingly dramatic welcome. Brooding, geothermal energy creates spectacular natural attractions across this region, while plunging waterfalls, and fascinating Maori culture ensures that the Bay of Plenty has a lot to offer visitors. Said to receive New Zealand's highest amount of sunshine, the hanging kiwi, citrus fruit and avocados add an exotic touch to the area's landscape - especially around Te Puke. Vibrant teal and orange colours await at the stunning geothermal area of Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve, where mud pools bubble and steam rises from the earth. There are more hot pools, and some of the country's best scenery, at Lake Rotoiti - where you can kayak across the smooth surface and enter a cave that glows gentle blue, with its darkened roof illuminated by glittering glow worms. Enter New Zealand's fantasy world, with a visit to some of the country's celebrated filming spots - which have featured as doubles for JRR Tolkien's Middle Earth's fantasy settings. Offshore, the wonderful White Island's volcanic cone peeks from the waves, and New Zealand's most active volcano certainly knows how to put on a show, belching out smoke across the water.

AUCKLAND

Blending beachy recreation with all the delights of a modern, diverse and thoroughly multicultural city, Auckland sits on the lucid blue-green waters of New Zealand's north island. Known as the 'City of Sails', its two harbours will tempt you with waterfront walks, and the chance to breathe fresh sea air deep into your lungs while absorbing spectacular views of Auckland's grand harbour bridge's span. Take in the true scale of Auckland's magnificent cityscape by ascending 192 metres to the Sky Tower, and looking out over the city's gleaming silver towers, which reflect on the abundant waters below. Views over the bay and adjacent islands await, and you can share elegant cocktails at this dizzying height, above the mingling yachts of Viaduct Harbour. Immerse yourself in the rich history and culture of the area at Auckland Art Gallery, Toi o Tāmaki. Set beside tranquil fountains and handsomely landscaped flowerbeds of Albert Park, the French-Renaissance building houses New Zealand's most extensive art collection, and exhibits works from Māori and Pacific artists. New Zealand is world-renowned for its captivating natural scenery, and day trips across the sparkling bays, to nearby islands like Waiheke, Tiritiri Matangi, and Rangitoto, are always tempting. Discover lava caves, grape-laden vineyards and flourishing wildlife in the Hauraki Gulf's islands. You'll also find an exceptional 360-degree panorama over the city, to the horizon beyond, from the heights of ancient Mount Eden. The spectacular dormant volcano rises improbably from a city suburb, and also lends its name to Eden Park – the unusual, translucent stadium of New Zealand's mighty All Blacks.

Departure Dates & Pricing

Cruise departs Sydney on 20 December 2022.

Pricing starts from NZ\$15,499 including Early Booking Bonus and Air Credit. All pricing is subject to availability and to change at any time. Please ask us for best available pricing.

* Terms and conditions apply.

Cruise Category

- Luxury Expedition

Onboard Features

- 24 Hr Room Service
- All meals
- Boutique &/or Salon

- Drinks All Day
 - Gratuities
 - Pool &/or Spa
 - Shore Excursions
-

trip itinerary

Day 1

Sydney, Australia

Day 2

At Sea

Day 3-4

Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Day 5-6

At Sea

Day 7

Cruising Milford & Doubtful Sounds, New Zealand

Day 8

At Sea

Day 9

Dunedin, New Zealand

Day 10

Akaroa, New Zealand

Day 11

Wellington, New Zealand

Day 12

Picton, New Zealand

Day 13

At Sea

Day 14

Gisborne, New Zealand

Day 15

Tauranga, New Zealand

Day 16

Auckland, New Zealand

□ The Vessel

Technical Details

Cruise Category

- Luxury Expeditions

Silver Muse

Silversea Cruises is happy to present, Silver Muse. The new ultra-luxury ship was built by Fincantieri and at 40,700 grt accommodates 596 guests. Representing an exciting evolution of Silver Spirit, Silver Muse redefines ultra-luxury ocean travel – enhancing the small-ship intimacy and spacious all-suite accommodations that are the hallmarks of the Silversea experience. The addition of Silver Muse expands Silversea’s fleet to nine ships, and once again significantly raises the bar in the ultra-luxury cruise market with a wealth of enhancements to the onboard experience, while satisfying the uncompromising requirements for comfort, service, and quality of the world’s most discerning travellers.

Vessel Features

- **24 Hr Room Service**
- **All meals**
- **Boutique &/or Salon**
- **Drinks All Day**
- **Pool &/or Spa**
- **Speciality Restaurants**

□□□□□

ultimatecruising.co.nz or call us on 0800 485 846