

Fiordland and The Snares Expedition Lyttelton to Lyttelton 7 Nights on board Le Lapérouse February 22 to March 1, 2021

Expedition Highlights:

- Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand and the Snares.
- View awe-inspiring landscapes on a breathtaking scale.
- Discover glacial fiords 100,000 years in the making.
- Witness ancient forests untouched since the dawn of time.
- Explore the Snares, home to more nesting seabirds than the entire realm of the British Isles.
- View populations of New Zealand Fur Seals and Sea Lions.
- Undertake a guided walk on the predator-free sanctuary of Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara.
- Gain an insight into the History and the diversity of flora and fauna from your expert expedition team.



Voyage Itinerary:

Day 1: Lyttelton, New Zealand – Embarkation.

Day 2: At Sea

Day 3: Dusky and Doubtful Sounds.

Day 4: Milford Sound

Day 5: The Snares

Day 6: Stewart (Ulva) Island

Day 7: Timaru

Day 8: Lyttelton, New Zealand – Disembarkation.

Day 1. Lyttelton, New Zealand. Embarkation,

Just 20 minutes from the centre of Christchurch a bohemian vibe and great cafés attract visitors to the historic port town of Lyttelton. Historically regarded as the gateway to Canterbury Christchurch's first European settlers landed here in 1850 before trekking over the Port Hills to establish their new home. Today Lyttelton is a colourful town, home to a community of nearly 3,000, brimming with bohemian artists, cafés, quirky shops and restaurants. Lyttelton's heritage buildings were badly damaged during the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. However, in the years following widespread demolition, this small town has re-invented itself as one of the most creative communities in the Christchurch region. Le Lapérouse will be alongside the wharf in Lyttelton.



Day 2. At Sea.

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.



Day 3. Dusky Sound, New Zealand.

One of the remotest fiords in the South West New Zealand World Heritage Area, Dusky Sound was named by Captain James Cook in 1773. Cook spent five weeks at Astronomer's Point where a temporary observatory was set up to fix the position of New Zealand to test the accuracy of Larcum Kendall's copy of John Harrison's chronometer H4. Dusky Sound is rich in flora and fauna, New Zealand Fur Seals and one of the world's rarest penguins – The Fiordland Crested can be seen on the small islets at the entrance to the fiord. Guests can enjoy the spectacular scenery from the Outer decks of Le Lapérouse as she sails through the fiord. If time and weather permits, we may have an opportunity to explore the fiord with our fleet of zodiacs.



Day 3. Doubtful Sound, New Zealand.

Referred to as the Sound of Silence, there is a secluded serenity that surrounds Doubtful Sound in contrast with the better-known Milford Sound. Lieutenant James Cook named 'Doubtful Harbour' in 1770 as he was uncertain if it was navigable under sail. Doubtful Sound is the deepest of the fiords with a maximum depth of 421 m. It contains three distinct 'arms' and several outstanding waterfalls in the area from Deep Cove to the open ocean. Le Lapérouse will spend time navigating around Secretary Island through both Thomson and Doubtful Sounds. Guests can enjoy the spectacular scenery from the outer decks. If time and weather permits, we may have an opportunity to explore the fiord with our fleet of zodiacs.



Day 4. Milford Sound, New Zealand.

Arguably New Zealand's best-known destination and described by Rudyard Kipling as the eighth Wonder of the World, Milford Sound is a place of dramatic beauty. Its vertiginous peaks rise from the dark waters of the sound creating a spectacular backdrop that captivates even the most seasoned of travellers. Milford Sound is breathtaking in any weather. After rain the two permanent waterfalls of Stirling and Lady Bowen multiply with magnificent effect. Guests will have the opportunity to view the spectacular scenery from the outer decks of Le Lapérouse. If time and weather permit, we may have an opportunity to explore the fiord with our fleet of zodiacs.



Day 5. The Snares, New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands.

Amongst the islands of the Southern Ocean, The Snares have the distinction of being the only forested group without introduced mammals, not even mice. Consequently, it is a remarkable haven for wildlife. The Island boasts more nesting seabirds than the entire realm of the British Isles. Over 2 million Sooty Shearwaters breed here in the summer months. Four species of Albatross are listed as breeding on the Snares along with 35,000 endemic Snares Crested Penguins. There are also approximately 1000 New Zealand fur seals and 500 New Zealand Sea Lions. Landing on the Snares is prohibited. If time and weather permit, guests will have the opportunity to explore the coastal environments and view the prolific wildlife from our fleet of zodiacs.



Day 6. Ulva Island, New Zealand.

Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara is the largest of 20 islands within Paterson Inlet, Stewart Island with an area of approx. 270 hectares. The island has never been logged and was declared pest free in 1997, becoming one of the few predator-free sanctuaries in New Zealand. The island is now a haven for many species of birds and plants that are rare, or have died out, on the mainland of New Zealand. Bird species regularly encountered include; the flightless Stewart Island Weka, South Island saddleback, yellowhead and Stewart Island robin. Ulva island is not only a bird enthusiast's paradise, it is also one of the few offshore islands with a largely undisturbed podocarp forest. Well-maintained tracks offer easy walking for most people providing a unique opportunity to see rare birds and plants at close quarters in a safe environment.



Day 7. Timaru, New Zealand.

Located at the Southern end of the Canterbury plains midway between Christchurch and Dunedin, Timaru is the second largest city in Canterbury. Archaeologists have suggested that Māori iwi (tribes) were permanently settled in the district before 1400 AD. The area includes over 500 sites with traces of Māori rock art, particularly in the rock overhangs and caves of the Opuha and Opihi river valleys, to the west of modern-day Timaru.

European settlement began with the construction of a whaling station in 1839. The town was founded in the late 1870's and is renowned for its grand Victorian and Edwardian buildings, constructed in local volcanic bluestone. The city's excellent museum has moa-hunter artefacts and an abundance of whaling relics; the art gallery holds the third largest public art collection in the South Island. Join your expedition team and local guides for a tour showcasing the history, culture and natural beauty of the region.



Day 8. Lyttelton, New Zealand. Disembarkation,

Just 20 minutes from the centre of Christchurch a bohemian vibe and great cafés attract visitors to the historic port town of Lyttelton. Historically regarded as the gateway to Canterbury Christchurch's first European settlers landed here in 1850 before trekking over the Port Hills to establish their new home. Today Lyttelton is a colourful town, home to a community of nearly 3,000, brimming with bohemian artists, cafés, quirky shops and restaurants. Lyttelton's heritage buildings were badly damaged during the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. However, in the years following widespread demolition, this small town has re-invented itself as one of the most creative communities in the Christchurch region. Le Lapérouse will be alongside the wharf and disembarkation will commence after breakfast.

