



# NORTHERN FIORDS EXPLORER

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EXPEDITION CRUISING  
FIORDLAND'S NORTHERN FIORDS

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EXPEDITION DOSSIER  
JULY – SEPTEMBER 2021



**E**xperience the primordial majesty of Fiordland's Northern Fiords where clouds scud the ragged peaks of glacier-cleaved mountains streaked with waterfalls as we explore Milford Sound and the more remote Bligh, George, Caswell, Nancy, George, Breaksea and Doubtful Sounds, accessible only by expedition ship, on this 7-day authentic expedition cruise.

Established in 1952, Fiordland National Park is now over 1.2 million hectares in size and rightly famous for its epic, grand scale scenery, untamed wilderness and unique wildlife including Bottlenose Dolphins, Fiordland Crested Penguins and New Zealand Fur Seals. However, Fiordland is also rich in natural history, geology and the location of some historical firsts and important restoration and conservation projects. As we explore these remote ice-carved mountains, verdant rainforests and winding fiords it is easy to see how this incredible region inspired our dream for responsible travel.

Captain Cook and his crew were the first Europeans to visit landing here aboard *HMS Resolution* in 1773 and subsequently spending five weeks in Dusky Sound. Cook's records of his discovery and maps would attract sealers and whalers not long after, who would go on to form the first European settlements of New Zealand and from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century this Fiordland's interior coastline would attract the attention of those in search of hidden greenstone or New Zealand jade. Historically this region is very important in New Zealand history as it shaped the future of the country.

The isolation of the Northern Fiords has been beneficial in ensuring their epic beauty remains unspoiled and historic sites undisturbed. Join us as we sail the calm waters of Fiordland in solitude exploring some of the most unique and wild parts of Fiordland on this unforgettable adventure.



## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Te Anau/Milford Sound

Make your way to the designated meeting point in Te Anau then enjoy the scenic drive through the Eglington Valley to Milford Sound and join *Heritage Explorer* (times and meeting point will be confirmed with your voyage documents). The captain and expedition leader will be waiting to welcome you aboard *Heritage Explorer* and show you to your cabin. Settle into life aboard before and prepare for the adventure ahead while revelling in the spellbinding scenery of Milford Sound.

### Day 2: Bligh Sound

Join your onboard expedition naturalists to spot albatross and seabirds as we sail the rich waters of the Fiordland Coast before arriving in the seldom visited yet spectacular waters of Bligh Sound. With its crooked 'Z' shape you feel at the heart of the Fiordland wilderness when venturing to the head of the fiord at Bounty Haven where the Wild Natives River flows from the mountains above. Of particular interest here is one of Fiordland's several 'China Shops', special zones containing a fragile environment where deep sea life can be viewed closer to the surface than normal due to the darkness created by the brackish water.

### Day 3: George Sound

After a night enjoying the tranquility of Bligh Sound we navigate to the largest of the Northern Fiords,

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George Sound. Stretching 26-scenic-kilometres, George Sound is the longest of the Northern Fiords and with several arms branching from the fiord we have multiple options but the spectacular sight of Alice Falls flanked by dense forest and tumbling over boulders as it thunders out of Lake Alice at the head of fiord is always a strong draw. It was at the head of George Sound that Wapiti/elk were introduced to New Zealand in 1905, part of the herd being gifted by American president Theodore Roosevelt.

## Day 4: Caswell Sound

Another rarely explored fiord, Caswell Sound is home to the last physical remains of the 1949 New Zealand–American Fiordland scientific expedition, a primitive hut standing on the banks of the Stillwater River used while studying the Wapiti/elk herd introduced earlier in the century. Tiny Styles Island guards the fiord's entrance to the Tasman Sea while walks include a nature-filled stroll along Stillwater River towards Lake Marchant. Fishing here is good for those interested in joining the chefs in securing tonight's dinner.

## Day 5: Charles & Nancy Sounds

Today we have the exploration of the southern-most of the northern fiords on our agenda. Flanked by steep mountains including Mount Napier and Command Peak, Nancy Sound was likely named after the vessel *Nancy* by Captain John Grono one of the early sealing captains to explore Fiordland. Nancy Sound's unusual leg shape was not lost on those who named it bestowing the section it turns at right angles to the north Foot Arm, which dutifully moves into Heel Cove and Toe Cove. Leg Head and Bend Point were similarly literally named. At nearby Charles Sound, the fiord branches into Emelius and Gold Arms at its head with Gold Arm being home to one of the most extensive marine reserves in the inner fiords (Kahukura Marine Reserve) while other sections are included in the Taumoana Marine Reserve. Your captain and expedition leader will find

a suitably sheltered anchorage for *Heritage Explorer* where activities could include kayaking or joining your expedition guides in a coastal exploration by Zodiac.

## Day 6: Breaksea & Doubtful Sounds

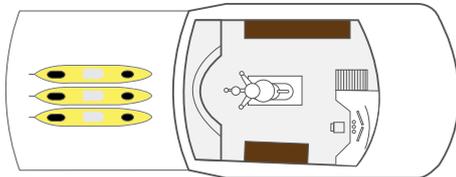
A short sail southwards brings us to the extensive sheltered waters of Breaksea Sound, initially scouted for sheep farming suitability by early settlers in the 1850s and location Breaksea Island, an iconic site in New Zealand conservation history as one of the first large islands declared rat free in 1988. We then explore some of the most spectacular scenery in all of Fiordland – Doubtful Sound, or the sound of silence as it's also known. Spanning some staggering 40-kilometres and holding the title as New Zealand's deepest fiord, Doubtful Sound with its cloud-scraping wilderness cloaked mountains, sheer stone cliffs, waterfalls, inlets, quiet coves and wildlife presents nature on a scale so grand it's off the chart. Photographic opportunities abound and our time spent here could include ship cruising Blanket Bay, the Shelter Islands, Pandora River, Deas Cove and Open Bay. Enjoy a farewell dinner with the team aboard *Heritage Explorer* tonight.

## Day 7: Doubtful Sound/Te Anau

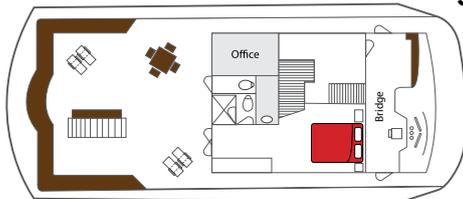
This morning we navigate to the very head of Doubtful Sound in Deep Cove home to several waterfalls including Helena and Lady Alice Falls. After a final breakfast and farewells, head ashore where a transfer to Te Anau, via the picturesque Wilmot Pass, the road constructed as part of the Manapouri hydro scheme, awaits. In case of unexpected delays, we ask you not to book any onward travel from Te Anau until after 3pm this afternoon.

**During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include weather and opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed. Voyages are planned and scheduled pending final regulatory approval.**

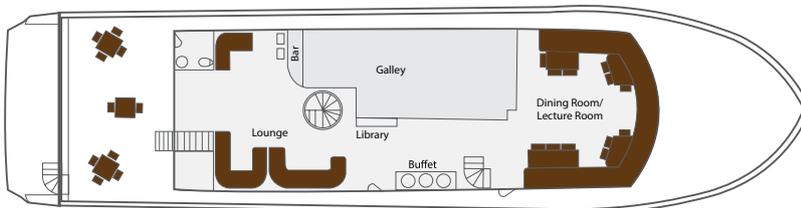
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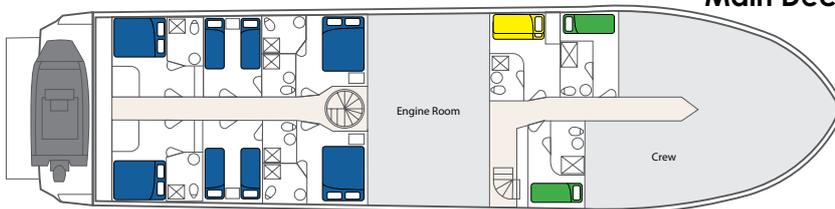
Sun Deck



Bridge Deck



Main Deck



Lower Deck

- Royal
- Wandering
- Salvin's
- Buller's

## DATES

24 – 30 July 2021  
5 – 11 September 2021

## PRICES

**Royal** **NZ\$6,650 pp\***  
Located on the Bridge Deck, our Master Suite features a spacious bedroom with a queen-sized bed, ample storage with wardrobe and drawers, mirror and washbasin, private en suite, personal climate control, TV, PABX satellite telephone, window and French doors opening out on to the covered Bridge Deck.

**Salvin's** **NZ\$5,450 pp\***  
Located on the Lower Deck, Salvin's cabins have the option of either a double bed or two lower berths. Both feature ample storage with wardrobe and drawers, TV, PABX satellite telephone, private en suite and a picture porthole.

**Wandering** **NZ\$6,050 pp\***  
Located on the Lower Deck, Wandering cabins feature one lower single berth, ample storage with wardrobe and drawers, TV, PABX satellite telephone, private en suite and a porthole.

**Buller's** **NZ\$4,250 pp\***  
Located on the Lower Deck, the Buller's cabin features one bunk (one upper and one lower berth), ample storage with wardrobe and drawers, TV, PABX satellite telephone, private en suite and a porthole.

\* All prices are per person in NZ\$

## PRICE INCLUDES

Landing fees, pre and post cruise coach transfer, all on board ship accommodation with meals and all shore excursions and activities. GST, house drinks (beer, wine, soft drinks and spirits, expert on board naturalist guides.

## PRICE EXCLUDES

All items of a personal nature, laundry, domestic flights, extensions and travel insurance.

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