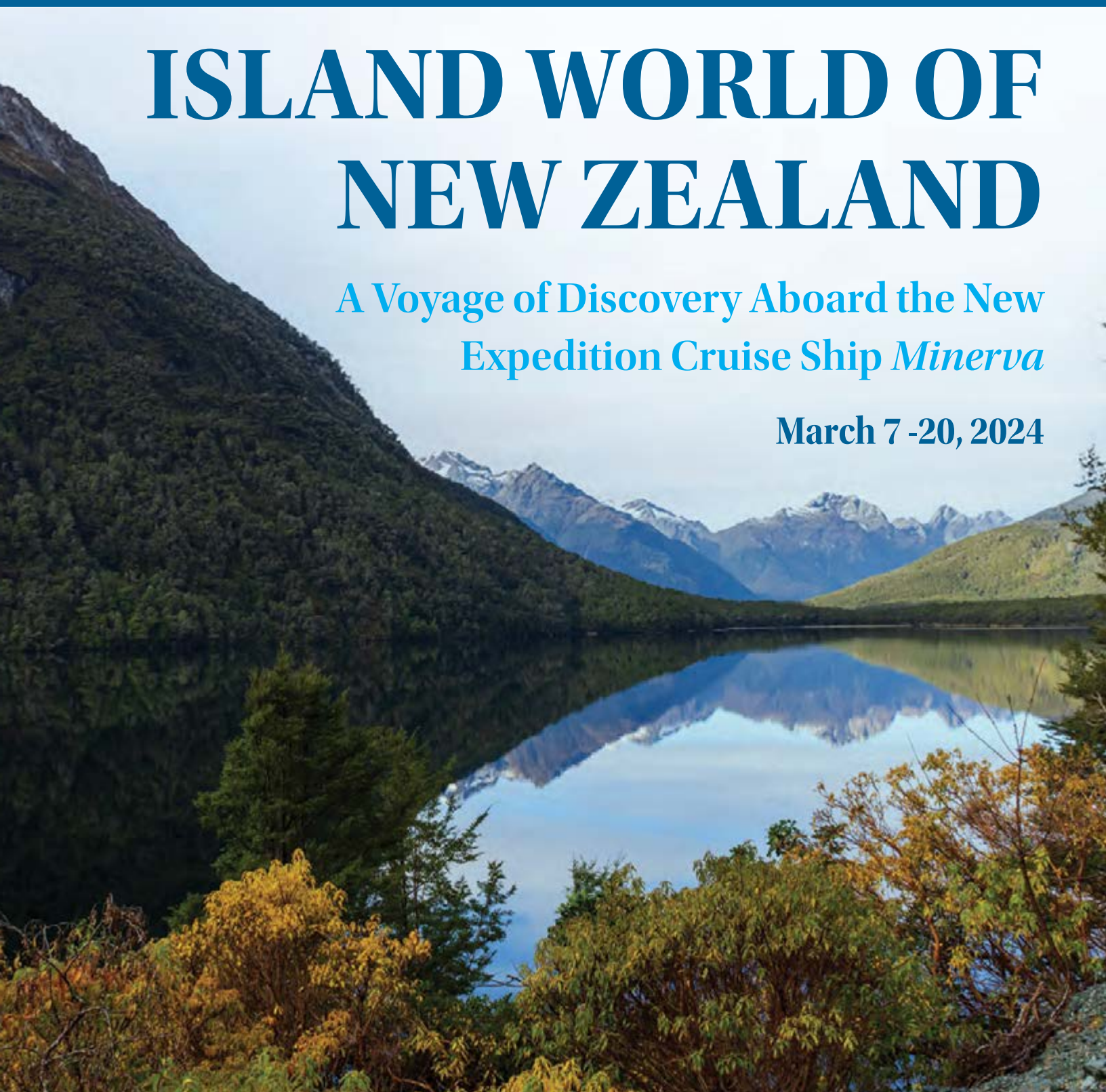




ISLAND WORLD OF NEW ZEALAND

*A Voyage of Discovery Aboard the New
Expedition Cruise Ship *Minerva**

March 7 -20, 2024



Fiordland National Park, where we will spend two days exploring this astonishing place.



ITINERARY



Marlborough Sounds



Red-billed gulls, Stewart Island



Thermal Village of Whakarewarewa, Rotorua

Day 1 - DUNEDIN, New Zealand

Arrive in Dunedin, the principal port town of South Island's Otago region. Transfer to the *Distinction Dunedin Hotel*. Welcome dinner at the hotel this evening.

Meals: D

Day 2 - DUNEDIN/EMBARKATION

Set along the shores of an attractive bay and backed by green hills, Dunedin is known as the "Edinburgh of New Zealand" on account of its Victorian and Edwardian architecture. Our morning tour will include the town's most notable landmark sites, its picturesque alleyways, the Otago Museum, and the Dunedin Garden. In the afternoon, board the *Minerva* and sail.

Meals: D

Day 3 - FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK

Spend two days exploring fantastic Fiordland National Park. Millennia of glacial activity have gifted the untamed southwest coast of New Zealand's South Island with incredible cuts into the coastline, creating an area of astonishing fjords, known locally as "sounds." Waterfalls tumble down dense rainforest-clad cliffs dramatically, some of them over 1,500 feet. Bottlenose dolphins, fur seals, penguins and whales frequent the sounds. During our exploration of this awe-inspiring area, we will call at Dusky Sound, the park's longest fjord, a designated Important Bird Area because it's a breeding site for Fiordland penguins; Doubtful Sound, so named by Captain Cook, who explored this maze of deep waterways in 1773, its three arms famed for their scenic beauty; and Milford Sound, renowned for its beauty and splendor.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 4 - OBAN, Stewart Island

Cruise to Stewart Island, and call at Oban, the island's only town. Eighty-five percent of this small, pristine island is set aside as a national park to preserve its abundant flora and fauna that include

several species of penguins, sooty shearwaters, mollymawks, kiwi birds, bellbirds, and others. Explore the island and enjoy its many hiking trails.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 5 - AKAROA

Nestled at the entrance of a deep sheltered bay on Banks Peninsula and surrounded by the remnants of a volcano, picturesque Akaroa was an early French settlement, called Port Louis-Philippe. To this day, the town retains its distinctive French character and architecture. Hector's dolphins swim in the harbor. Explore the pretty town, including the Akaroa Museum, which displays exhibits that chronicle the town's history, and the Giant's House, with its terraced gardens and sculptures. We will also visit the Akaroa Winery, an organic family-owned vineyard that produces high quality wines, which we will taste.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 6 - KAIKOURA

Built between the rugged Seaward Kaikoura Range and the Pacific, Kaikoura is known for its abundant wildlife that includes petrels, penguins and several species of albatross, but Kaikoura is also notable for the large number of sperm whales, fur seals and dolphins that live permanently in the coastal waters. Visit the award-winning Kaikoura Museum and follow the Kaikoura Peninsula Walkway from the center of the town to lookout points to observe the wildlife. Visit also the Lavendyl Lavender Farm and take a stroll through the fragrant lavender fields. A pleasant walk outside the town in an incredibly beautiful landscape is the Fyffe House dating from the 1800s.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 7 - PICTON & MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS

From attractive Picton, spend the day exploring fabulous Marlborough Sounds, an expansive area of rugged coastline, scenic sounds, isolated coves, peninsulas and islands, located at the top of South Island. Marlborough Sounds played an important role in the history of the native Maori people, as well as in the settlement of New Zealand by Europeans. Captain Cook anchored here in 1770. Described as a collection of Pacific Ocean-drowned valleys, the sheltered inlets are perfect for kayaking, forest walking, observing wildlife, viewing incredibly beautiful scenery, and exploring quaint small towns and villages. Several superb wineries make this beautiful spot their home.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 8 - WELLINGTON

The cosmopolitan capital of New Zealand, wonderful Wellington, also known as the "City of a Thousand Views," is spread between its spacious bay on the Cook Strait and bush-covered hills. Scattered throughout the city are shaded parks and gardens, while the narrow streets of the old city are lined with historic homes and elegant mansions. Explore Wellington, including the Civic Center; the extensive Botanical Gardens, with its rose beds and indigenous and exotic species; the Houses of Old Parliament; and the excellent National Museum, with its Maori Hall and other exhibits. Also, drive to the summit of Mount Victoria that provides panoramic views of the city.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 9 - NAPIER

Located on Hawke Bay, Napier is celebrated for its extensive beautifully preserved art deco architecture and vibrant art scene. Explore this lovely town, including a visit to the outstanding National Aquarium of New Zealand, which showcases the rich and varied marine life that exists in this part of the country.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 10 - GISBORNE

Gisborne is where the navigator and explorer James Cook first landed in New Zealand (1769). But long before the arrival of Europeans, Gisborne was settled by Maori people, and today, about 50% of its population are Maori. Our exploration of Gisborne will include the Tairāwhiti Museum, whose exhibits chronicle indigenous and colonial history; Te Poho-o-Rawiri, a Maori meeting house that contains ancestral carvings; and the Titirangi Reserve, with its lookouts and monument to Captain Cook. The area around Gisborne is famed for its superb wineries, some of which we will visit and sample their wines. Meals: B, L, D

Day 11 - TAURANGA & ROTORUA

From the vibrant port city of Tauranga, built along the shore of the Bay of Plenty, take an excursion to Rotorua. Set by a lake, Rotorua is renowned for its geothermal activity and Maori culture. Bubbling mineral springs, mud pools, and impressive geysers mark the landscape. In addition to exploring Rotorua's geological features, we will also visit the living Maori villages of Tamaki and Whakarewarewa, as well as the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 12 - BAY OF ISLANDS

Spend the day in the Bay of Islands, one of the most beautiful and historic areas of New Zealand, named by Captain Cook when he arrived in 1769. Until then, the area was inhabited by a large Maori population, whose dwellings lined the bay. The long coastline is fringed with beautiful coves, while 150 attractive subtropical islands are spread around the bay. Discover the wildlife and history of this magnificent region.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 13 - AUCKLAND/USA

Arrive in Auckland and transfer to the airport for the return flight home.

Meals: B



Historical Railway Station of Dunedin