

*Kia ora*

## WELCOME TO PIOPIOTAHU MILFORD SOUND, ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND ICONIC PLACES IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

As Milford Sound's original cruise company, Southern Discoveries has been calling this place home since it was first settled. We're thrilled you've chosen us to take you on this journey of a lifetime - we can't wait to share our local knowledge with you!

### PIOPIOTAHU: PLACE OF THE SINGING THRUSH

According to Māori legend, it was the demi-god Tu-te-raki-whānoa who created the fiords. With incantations and his magic adze, Tu-te-raki-whānoa sculpted his finest work: Piopiotahi - meaning 'one single piopio', in reference to the native thrush-like bird (now extinct) said to have flown here in mourning when Māui died in his attempt to win immortality for mankind.



### MILFORD HAVEN

Milford Sound was eventually discovered in 1823 by Welsh sealer Captain John Grono after earlier European explorers, including Captain James Cook, sailed passed the narrow entrance. Grono originally named the fiord Milford Haven after his birthplace in Wales, but in 1851 another Welshman, John Lort Stokes, anchored his ship in the fiord and changed the name to Milford Sound.

### SOUTHERN DISCOVERIES

Milford Sound's first European settler, Donald Sutherland, arrived in 1877, built a hut in Freshwater Basin and called it home for the next 42 years. Sutherland and his wife, Elizabeth Samuel, were responsible for creating the 'City of Milford', which included three thatched huts and an 18-room accommodation house; Milford's first hotel. In the 1890s, Sutherland began rowing people across Milford Sound to the start of the Milford Track, an enterprise that eventually became Southern Discoveries - Milford Sound's first cruise operator.



## Milford Sound CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

#### 1 FRESHWATER BASIN

Your Southern Discoveries cruise departs from the Milford Sound Visitor Centre which is situated in Freshwater Basin. This small harbour contains more fresh water than salt water so the harbour was named accordingly.

#### 2 DEEPWATER BASIN

The end of the world famous Milford Track.

#### 3 SINBAD GULLY

An excellent example of a hanging valley. Sinbad Gully is enclosed by the steep slopes of Mt Phillips rising 1445 metres on its left. Mitre Peak on its right and the Llawrenny Peaks behind.

#### 4 MITRE PEAK

At a height of 1,692 metres, Mitre Peak is one of the highest mountains in the world to rise directly from the ocean floor. It got its name because its shape resembles that of a Bishop's mitre or headdress.

#### 5 COPPER POINT

So named because of the very high deposits of copper found in the area. This is one of the narrowest sections of the fiord where wind gusts have been recorded in excess of 140 kilometres per hour.

#### 6 FAIRY FALLS

This is one of the prettiest corners of Milford Sound and is named after the rainbows in the falls. Despite the large amount of water that cascades from these falls, they are only temporary and will dry up after a few days without rain.

#### 7 ANITA BAY

Many years ago, local Māori people frequently visited Anita Bay for its tangiwai. Tangiwai, more commonly known as greenstone, is a precious stone that was carved for both weapons and ornamental wear.

#### 8 ST ANNE'S POINT

This is where the automatic lighthouse for Milford Sound stands, 27 metres above sea level. It is visible from out at sea for 14 kilometres.

#### 9 DALE POINT

Is the entrance to Milford Sound from the Tasman Sea. It's approximately 548 metres wide and up to 70 metres deep.

#### 10 THE ELEPHANT

This mountain is in the shape of an elephant's head. The 'trunk', forming part of the hanging valley, runs up the ridge to a summit of 1,507 metres and to the top of the 'elephant's head'.

#### 11 MOUNT PEMBROKE

Is one of the highest mountains adjoining the fiord at 2,014 metres and is permanently snow-capped. The glacier on Mount Pembroke is the remnant of the original glacier that carved the fiord. Several streams from the melting snow run down the mountain forming the Harrison River.

#### 12 SEAL ROCK

Is one of the few areas in the fiord where the Southern fur seal is able to climb up out of the water onto the rocks. These seals inhabit the fiord all year round.

#### Key

- Cruise route
- Cruise route subject to weather conditions
- Milford Sound Cafe & Visitor Centre

#### 13 STIRLING FALLS

Dropping 155 metres, Stirling Falls is one of two permanent waterfalls in the fiord. They were originally named after Captain Stirling, one of the early explorers in the area.

#### 14 LION MOUNTAIN

Situated on the northern side of the fiord rising to a height of 1,301 metres. The mountain's correct name is Mt Kimberly, but because its shape so strongly resembles that of a crouching lion, this more descriptive name has been retained.

#### 15 HARRISON COVE

The only natural anchorage in the fiord used during the early 1800s by whalers and sealers.

#### 16 BOWEN FALLS

The higher of the two permanent waterfalls in Milford Sound, Bowen Falls drops 161 metres from a hanging valley in the Darren Mountain Range.

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## HELPING TO PROTECT MILFORD SOUND'S WILDLIFE

Passionate about preserving Milford Sound's wildlife for future generations, Southern Discoveries is a proud supporter of the Tawaki Project – a long-term scientific study dedicated to understanding one of New Zealand's most mysterious and rare seabirds, the Fiordland crested penguin (Tawaki).

These elusive birds nest in the remote rainforest along the coastlines of Fiordland, making them incredibly difficult to study.

Through our sponsorship, researchers are able to delve into the secret lives of these penguins, uncovering vital information about their feeding habits, breeding behaviour, and migration patterns.

By supporting this important conservation work, we're helping to protect the fragile ecosystems of Milford Sound and ensure that future visitors have the chance to glimpse these incredible birds in the wild.

## FIORD OR SOUND

Despite its name, Milford Sound is technically a fiord. The difference between a sound and a fiord lies in their formation processes:

- **Sounds** are formed when a river valley is flooded by the sea. This typically happens when the sea level rises and inundates a river valley.
- **Fiords**, on the other hand, are created by glaciers. Over millions of years, glaciers carve out deep valleys that extend to the sea. When the glaciers retreat, these valleys are filled with seawater, forming fiords.

### Did you know?

Milford Sound is the only fiord in New Zealand accessible by road: The road access to Milford Sound was made possible by the construction of the Homer Tunnel, which took 19 years to complete, from 1935 to 1954.

## RAINFALL

Milford Sound is the wettest inhabited place in New Zealand and one of the wettest places on earth, with an average of 182 rainy days per year with an average annual rainfall of 7 to 9 Metres. This is more than the amazon rainforest.

This abundant rainfall contributes to the lush, temperate rainforest that surrounds the fiord, creating stunning waterfalls that cascade down the steep cliffs.



Most famous peak  
**MITRE PEAK**  
—1,692M—

LENGTH  
**16KM**

Widest  
**POINT**  
**3KM**

Annual rainfall  
**OVER 600CM**

AVERAGE  
**DEPTH**  
**330M**

### Did you know?

Rudyard Kipling called it the "eighth wonder of the world": The famous British author visited Milford Sound in 1891 and was so captivated by its beauty that he gave it this illustrious title.



### Say hello to The **NEW ZEALAND FUR SEAL**

I live in Milford Sound all year round. You'll find me relaxing on seal rock during the day after a busy night hunting for squid and fish. I can dive up to 380 metres deep and can spend up to 15 minutes underwater.



### Kia ora from The **BOTTLENOSED DOLPHIN**

I'm one of the largest dolphins in New Zealand and can grow up to 3.8 metres in length. I love riding the bow wave of boats and our friends the Dusky dolphins sometimes join us.



### Introducing The **FIORDLAND CRESTED PENGUIN**

I'm also known as a Tawaki, which is my Māori name. I'm quite rare and special so it's always exciting to see me. I breed annually and return to the same nest site and mate from year to year. My breeding season is August–November.



### Meet The **KEA**

I'm friendly, mischievous, smart and inquisitive. You'll sometimes find me chewing on your car along the road to Milford Sound. Even though I might seem hungry, please don't feed me because it's not good for me!

## GEOLOGICAL ACTIVITY

One of the world's major plate boundary faults – the Alpine Fault – crosses the mouth of Milford Sound. The Australian plate slides sideways and is pushed beneath Fiordland at 36 millimetres per year, forcing plate rocks upwards to form the mountains.



### Did you know?

Milford Sound has two permanent waterfalls, Stirling Falls and Bowen Falls, and hundreds of temporary falls. Bowen Falls provides hydro-electric power and water supply for all of Milford Sound.

## GLACIATION

Milford Sound was carved out of the rocks by glaciers. During the most recent glaciation period, which peaked around 20,000 years ago, glaciers extended offshore beyond the fiords and only small portions of the mountains were exposed above the ice.

Global warming caused the glaciers to retreat and the sea level to rise, filling Milford Sound with water long before the first humans arrived in New Zealand.