How is the trip organized and where will we go?

We will visit tourist destinations on the South Island which include Mt Cook/Glacier and Milford Sound. There will be visits to the large cities of Christchurch, Dunedin, Nelson, and Auckland on the North Island. Hokitika, Wanaka, Owaka, and Motueka will be our 2016 small towns. Wiapara will host a dance weekend while we are there.

Most years the tour is four weeks. It is the month of February, maybe a bit of January or March depending on local dance events. We usually stay in one place for two or three days. During this time you are on your own. The bus is available to take groups to different venues, and often there are shuttles and public transportation. There are some optional day trips on our bus. The only things planned are travel days, evening meals, and the dancing activities. Some things require advanced booking, such as train excursions, kayaking, and bird watching outings with outfitters. Look at the Facebook Group and New Zealand travel books to check out what is available.

In country we will travel by bus(coach). We have a 45-passenger, air-conditioned coach and our own driver Kelvin Bradley. It is important to be on time when the bus is loading and moving out on travel days. We have a couple of long travel days. Our bus driver Kelvin must have regular breaks and is only allowed to drive so many hours a day. His day starts when he touches the bus, not when he starts driving. We don’t want to have to stop the bus for 10 hours for required rest time. We want to be able to stop at lots of interesting places along the route, so BE ON TIME. We have one travel day with a dance that evening, the Dunedin dance community will feed us before the dance ☺

For the dancing part of the trip, we dance with the local dance communities in the larger cities. We schedule dances in smaller town halls and invite locals to dance with us. Folks from New Zealand, Australia, and UK will be following our tour and joining our musicians, callers and dancers. There will be a dance weekend at Wiapara Boys Brigade. We often dance in the Holiday Parks and hostels where we stay.

What will it cost?

Current estimate is $4200 per person for couples and $4050 for singles plus/minus $100. This includes RT flight from LAX, bus transportation, all food and lodging, dancing/dance weekend. The actual cost will depend on what the exchange rate is during the next year. If it goes down you will pay less; up, pay more. If it goes too high, you can cancel. Once $100 had to be collected afterwards. Payment can only be made by check. As of Jun 1 2015, the budget looks good, tickets are not booked yet.

The flight from Los Angeles will be on Air New Zealand. They are not the cheapest, they are the best. They allow an extension for about $100US and allow a free unlimited layover in Auckland. This is all subject to change when we get the actual quote and current policies from AirNZ.

If you choose to go to NZ on your own, you may do so and join us in country. You will only pay for the in-country expenses. For the best group rate we need to have between 20 and 25 paying travelers, so this can affect the group ticket price.

Where do we stay?

We stay in Holiday Parks and hostels. NZ cabins and rooms are usually set up to hold four people in various combinations of single, bunk and double beds. Couples almost always have a double bed to themselves, sometimes a separate room of a suite. Singles share in groups of three to eight. Because we have a large group and visit small towns, the accommodations may be somewhat limited and we will need to make adjustments in how people are grouped. Couples, singles, sexes may have to share. Each place is different and there is usually a lot of shifting around, which results in getting to know each other quite well.

Showers and toilets are shared facilities, which are down the hall or across the yard. They are VERY clean and luxurious by American campground/hostel standards. Every place has laundry facilities, we have the clothes pins and laundry soap.

You need to bring sheets or a sleep sack/sleeping bag. A pillow and extra blanket for bus and room use are optional. The rooms have pillows and usually a duvet. Christchurch is our first stop and there is a mall with a Target type store within walking distance for those items you don’t want to pack. At the end of the tour we leave a mountain of items in front of a thrift store.

Bring EAR PLUGS, be prepared for snoring.

What will meals be like?

Most evening meals will be family style, cooked by a team of people in the group. The places we will be staying will all have excellent kitchen facilities. One-three folks will be in charge of each meal, from making the grocery list, shopping, food prep, and cleaning up. There will be a lot of volunteers to help. Bring along your favorite recipe that can feed 32. There are usually vegetarians to consider in meal planning. It will be summer, with an abundance of fresh fruit and veggies

Breakfast and lunch are fix-it-yourself with cereal, toast, eggs, NZ bacon, oatmeal, yogurt, fruit and so on. Lunch supplies are put out at breakfast so each person can make a lunch to carry along on the day's outings. There will be bread, cheese, lunch meat, salad fixings, fruit, yogurt, and other things. Bring a reusable container /lunch box. A work alternative for anyone who would rather not cook a meal is to be in charge of breakfast and lunch for a week. Someone needs to make sure foods are purchased, put out and put away again. Another way to help out is to go along on the buying trips to the grocery store.

Group funds are used to pay for all the food which we use for regular meals. Our plates, bowls, utensils, and pots/ pans are stored in NZ.

Larger cities have New Zealand and ethnic restaurants. Some have chosen to go out to eat in these places. We are often in a town at lunch time. You can plan to buy your own lunch there if you wish. Hot pies and fish 'n chips are typical NZ lunch selections. When you eat out, it is at your own expense. You will be responsible for the purchase of your own snacks, beer, wine, and…..ice cream.

How many dances will there be and what will they be like?

In 2016 there are 10 scheduled dances, including the dance weekend. We usually stay in one place for two or three days and have one or two dances.

Some of the dances will be just our group with maybe a few local community people, depending on how much publicity we can get out. These dances can be just for us to have fun dancing in our group. We have a broad range of dancing skills and styles represented in our group. At these dances we will also be able to teach each other new dances.

In the cities we expect quite a few New Zealanders because we have been to these communities before and know people there who can organize things ahead of time. Some dancers will be from other dance groups, western square or Scottish/Irish. Other small town dances will be for community people most of whom have never done contra dancing before.

Who will play music and do the calling?

All the music and calling will come from members of our group. We have had as many as twelve musicians and as few as four. Once we only had one caller and on another we had four callers. All of these people pay their full expenses, just like everyone on the trip. It is their contribution to this do-it-yourself dance trip and to sharing our joy in music and dance with others.

Will the group be gender balanced?

Generally, we have more women than men, and we will be taking people out in different combinations to play music and call.

Itinerary and Lodging

Allemande Joy Dance Tour **2016**

For International calls use 011+649+number (Auckland); 011+ 643+number (South Island); 011+644+number (Wellington)

An itinerary with phone numbers and email addresses will be given to participants.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Day | 2016 Itinerary | BUS RT=Round Trip | Km | Address |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2/1 | Mon | Allemande Joy leaves LAX | (empty bus Dunedin to CHC Airport) | 360 | CHC Airport, arrival time unknown |
| 2/3 | Wed | arrive CHC | bus CHC Airport to Top 10 Holiday Park | 10 | 39 Meadow Street,Papanui |
| 2/4 | Thur | Bill & Liz House Dance | bus to Bill's RT | 44 | 7:30-9:30 Greenberry Tree, 94 Governors Bay Rd, Cass Bay, RD1 Lyttlelton 8971 |
| 2/5 | Fri | to Nelson, via picnic lunch Kaikoura | bus to Nelson YHA  | 418 | 59 Rutherford St, Nelson |
| 2/6 | Sat | Nelson Contra Dance  | bus to dance RT | 4 | ? 214 Vanguard St, Nelson |
| 2/7 | Sun | day trip to Motueka | bus to Motueka RT | 100 | Motueka sights |
| 2/8 | Mon | in Nelson  |  | 0 |  |
| 2/9 | Tue | to Hokitika | bus to Hokitika, Mountain Jade Hostel | 325 | 41 Weld St, Hokitika 7811 |
| 2/9 | Tue | Hokitika Line Dancing |  |  | 5-6pm St Andrews Hall, walk 550m |
| 2/10 | Wed | Hokitika Contra Dance  |  | 0 | move chairs 6pm, Dance 7-9:30 St Andrews Hall, walk 550m Key:Olivers Shoe Store  |
| 2/11 | Th | Hokitika  |  |  |  |
| 2/12 | Fri | to Waipara Dance Weekend | bus to Waipara | 260 | Boys Brigade Camp, 143 Darnley Rd, Waipara, RD3 Amberley |
| 2/13 | Sat | Waipara Dance Weekend |  | 0 |  |
| 2/14 | Sun | to Mt Cook YHA, via Salmon Farm | bus to Mt Cook | 352 | 1 Bowen Drive, Mount Cook National Park 7999  |
| 2/15 | Mon | Mt Cook Contra Dance |  | 0 | 7-10pm dance by Hostel building, POC Jason at hostel |
| 2/16 | Tue | Mt Cook |  | 0 |  |
| 2/17 | Wed | to Wanaka Holiday Park | bus to Wanaka | 208 | 212 Brown St, Wanaka |
| 2/18 | Th | Wanaka Contra Dance |  | 10 | Mt Aspiring College |
| 2/19 | Fri | to Milford Sound | bus to Milford Sound | 342 | Must arrive 4pm, Milford Wanderer  |
| 2/20 | Sat | to Dunedin | bus to Dunedin Holiday Park | 407 | 41 Victoria Road, St Kilda 6:30 dinner served at dance  |
| 2/20 | Sat | Dunedin Community Contra Dance  | bus to dance RT | 20 | dinner served to us 6:30, where? |
| 2/21 | Sun | Dunedin |  | 0 |  |
| 2/22 | Mn | Dunedin Advanced Contra Dance  | bus to dance RT | 20 | 7:30 North East Valley Baptist Church Hall, North Rd, North East Valley |
| 2/23 | Tue | Dunedin Irish Dance ?? | bus to dance RT ???? | 15 | ?? 4-7pm, King Edward Court, Room 214, Stuart Street  |
| 2/24 | Wed | to Owaka via Tunnel Beach | bus to Owaka Thomas Catlins Hostel | 111 | Thomas Catlins Hostel, 8 Clark Street, Owaka  |
| 2/24 | Wed | Owaka Contra Dance | bus to dance RT  | 10 | Owaka Community Hall |
| 2/25 | Th | Owaka Day trip:Lost Gypsy Gallery/Papatowai Beach and Tautuku Beach | bus to Tautuku Beach, via Lost Gypsy Gallery and Papatowai Beach, RT | 70 | Papatowai, Tautuku |
| 2/26 | Fri | to Dunedin/fly to Auckland | bus to Dunedin Airport | 95 | Dunedin Airport, departure time unknown |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2/26 | Fri | to YHA Auckland | shuttle to YHA International Hostel |  | 5 Turner St, Auckland |
| 2/27 | Sat | Auckland Contra Dance | Shuttle or Public Transportation to dance |  | St Lukes Anglican Church Hall, corner New N. Rd and St Lukes Rd - 704 New North Rd |
| 2/28 | Sun | Auckland  |  |  |  |
| 29 Feb | Mon | to LAX  | Shuttle to Airport |  |  |
|  |  |  | Total Km | 3181 |  |

For information, contact Julie Anspach 2016NZContra@gmail.com