

DAY 15 – Dunedin, New Zealand



This morning at 7 am we docked at Dunedin – yes, for you Florida people, it is pronounced exactly the same as the Dunedin just south of our home (done-ee-din). Dunedin was settled by the Scots in the early 1800s and in fact the word Dunedin means Edinburg in Gaelic.

Here's a view from our cabin in port – wood is a major export. NZ has been deforested from 80% forest to

only 20% forest. It is a very small port; they use shipping containers to cordon off the commercial side from the passengers disembarking.

The town has a very Scottish feel to it with the architecture and having been to Scotland ourselves it even looks like the Highlands in Scotland once you get out of town. Final proof was as we departed the port at 6 PM a bagpipes band played farewell to us.



Wendy came down with a cold (I had mine in Sydney, but am better now), so our morning started with a short walk into town to find a pharmacy (or “chemist” as they are called in British Commonwealth countries).

View from the chemist – you can see the cruise ship in the background.

Dunedin is the second largest city on the South Island (next to Christchurch)

and consists of 120,000 people, 25% of which are students at the University which is one of the largest in New Zealand.

The tour we booked today took us through the city and up into the hills to view the extremely pretty countryside.



Dunedin has the claim to the steepest street in the world according to the Guinness Book of Records.

I had always thought the steepest street was Lombard Street in San Francisco, but that street is curved, so I think this is because it is straight up.

The reason for this is that Dunedin was a Gold Rush city and back in England they had to plan the city layout very quickly, which they did without regard for the topography of the area. The entire city back then was planned on a piece of paper in London.

Once out of the quaint downtown area, we moved out into the surroundings which was picture pretty and exactly what I was expecting New Zealand to

look like.



After going up in the hills to view the countryside we headed for the coast. Our first stop was at the Albatross center to see that famous seabird with a 6-8 feet wing span. Unfortunately, the New Zealand government must have missed out on paying the birds the Albatross social security, because none showed up. All we saw were seagulls, perhaps the Albatrosses were on strike???

Somewhat disappointed we moved on because the big birds were not the main event for the day – we wanted to see seals and sea lions with hopefully a penguin thrown in – we were not to be disappointed. We drove out to a private

farm on the ocean, which our chosen tour operator has exclusive rights to and after traversing some very scary roads, we arrived in sea critter heaven.



Mostly I just kept my eyes closed as we drove on mountain dirt roads (no barriers) with a straight drop down to instant death.

Here is a picture of one of the roads – in this one there is no drop to death because during those, my eyes were closed.

Here at least I could keep them open enough to take a pic!

Having said that, our driver was extremely careful and nothing like the kamikaze drivers you find in the Caribbean, Central America and especially Egypt!



I don't care WHO you are, but don't you just wanna hug him??
The "AWW" Factor!!

4 week old baby seal, it is the cutest thing you have ever seen!!!

These are New Zealand Fur seals and are currently breeding this time of the year so there were tons of babies all over.

No we did NOT download these pictures from Google, Wendy took them in real life!!!



As a larger gentleman weighing in at 250lbs and that with a bad knee I damaged in a motorcycle accident 25 years ago, the climb down and back to the beach was a little intimidating.

Especially as we had to do it twice, because one side was seals (they like rocky environments) and the other side was Penguins and Sea Lions (they like a sandy beach environment). I survived both

hikes very well by taking my time and boy was it worth it!



Wendy climbing down from the top of the cliff and avoiding stepping in sheep poop!



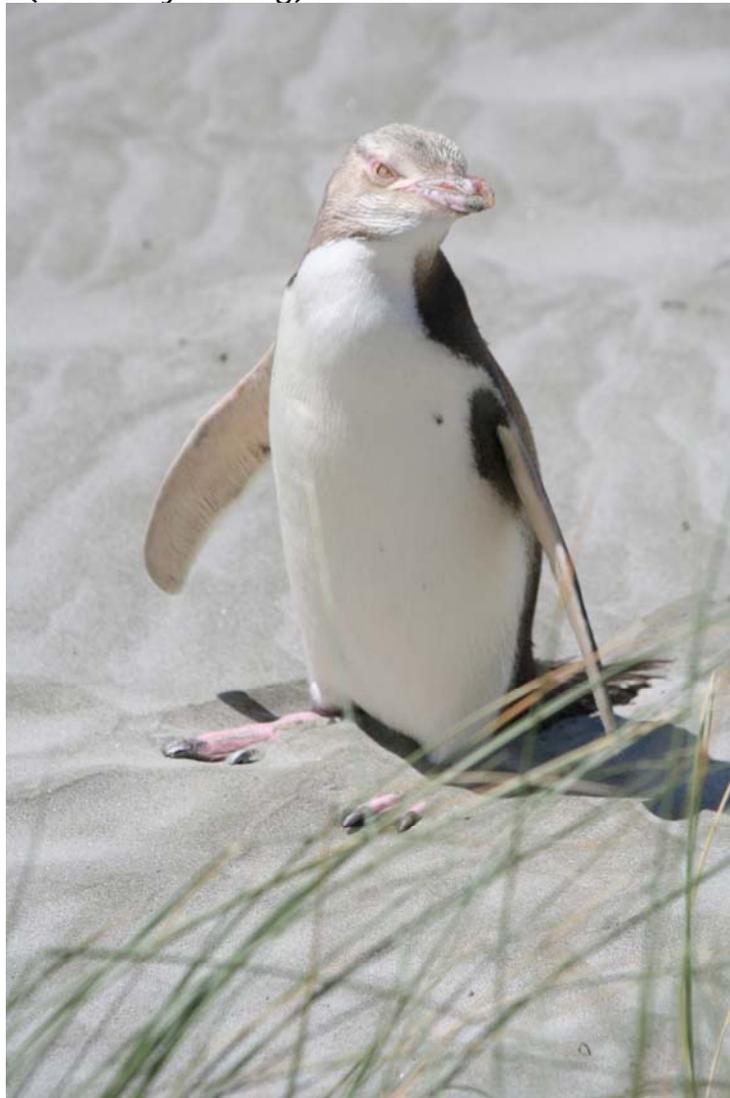
You see, this is a sheep farm at the top of the cliff, you gotta climb down to get to the wild sea critters!

We then climbed back up the cliff only to go back down again on the other side. This time to the beach to see if we could find Sea Lions and Yellow Eyed Penguins. These penguins are very rare and are only found in South New Zealand.

Even more rare are the Hooker Sea lions. There are only 180 Hooker sea lions on the mainland in New Zealand, and we just ever so happened to see two of them!! Awesome!



Hooker Sea Lion, yelling bloody murder at us – he was only 20 feet away and actually didn't care if we were there or not (he was yawning). Yellow eyed Penguin.





Leave me alone, coz I am just gonna take a short nap



And then there were babies...



Our ship front and back



Relaxing on the balcony as we leave port...