



FAMILY SOUTHERN EXPLORER

ITINERARY



Our Family Southern Explorer trip is an opportunity for children and parents/caregivers alike to discover amazing sights, set and meet physical challenges, take part in rewarding group activities and share the adventures with other families on the trip. The Family Southern Explorer trip includes two overnight hikes, hiking in the majestic Mt Cook/Aoraki National Park and optional kayaking amongst the ice bergs on the Mueller glacier terminal lake.

This trip suits children from the age of about 13 years old. Because of the adventurous nature of these trips we require a ratio of at least 1 adult per 3 children.

LENGTH	5 days
GRADE	B: No outdoor experience required, just reasonable fitness
START	Christchurch – 8:00am Christchurch Museum, corner of Worcester and Rolleston street *Queenstown - 8.00am i-SITE - corner of Camp and Shotover street
FINISH	Queenstown – 4:00pm (approx.) *Christchurch - 5.00pm *This trip can run in reverse direction
PRICE	Please contact us for pricing. Final price per person depends on group size and final accommodation
DEPARTURES	On demand (minimum of four participants required)

ITINERARY

DAY 1 JOIN TRIP IN CHRISTCHURCH (REVERSE TOURS START IN QUEENSTOWN)

6-10 km/2-4 hour hiking

Depart Christchurch and head south to mid-Canterbury. We make the most of hiking opportunities and will spend the first night of the tour away from civilisation in the Canterbury High Country. The hike into Mt Somers will go past an abandoned coal mine where we will stop and rest after the initial burst of climbing and explore some of the remaining (above ground) relics. As we continue hiking into the early afternoon we will keep an eye out for the New Zealand falcon as it is frequently seen in the area. The Woolshed Creek backcountry hut will be home for the night. After leaving our gear at the hut we will head off without our packs to spend the afternoon exploring some water caves and the Tri Falls stream. *Includes lunch and dinner.*

DAY 2 MT SOMERS TO MT COOK

9 km/3 hours hiking

After our first night in a backcountry hut we head back down to the vehicle via the Rhyolite Ridge Track. The morning will be filled with dynamic views of waterfalls, rocky outcrops and pockets of regenerating forest. We will enjoy lunch at the vehicle before driving south to Lake Pukaki. There will be time to relish the jaw-dropping view of Mt Cook at the far end of the lake. Lake Pukaki is a glacial lake; its deep waters have a mesmerising azure colour. Depending on the weather we have the option to camp at the lake and spend the later afternoon swimming or continue on to Mt Cook village and camp under the towering mountains of Mt Cook National Park. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*

DAY 3 MT COOK

6-8km/4 hours hiking

Today is a day of rewards! The hike to Sealy Tarns and onto Mueller Ridge provides more and more stunning views with every step. Just when you think you have taken the most impressive photo possible of the Hooker Valley and Mount Cook Range you will be rewarded with the mirror reflections of the peaks in the glorious Sealy Tarns. Take time to rest at the tarns and absorb the impressive peaks and valleys. This is the perfect opportunity for those that still have a spring in their step after the climb to continue with the guide onto Mueller Ridge. From here the vista encompasses the Mueller Glacier and Mt Sefton. As we return to the village by the same route those that continued on to the ridge will meet up again with those who stayed on at the tarns for the descent.

Optional Activities:

The afternoon offers families and individuals the opportunity to explore the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre (Adult \$20, Child \$10), which does a marvellous job of showcasing the region and its people. Glacier Explorers a 2.5 hours trip in the Tasman Valley. Travel by Bus, then enjoy a 30 minute alpine walk. After, board a boat to view the Tasman Glacier terminal lake and its icebergs (Adults \$155, Child \$77.50). Tonight we camp at Whitehorse Hill. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*



DAY 4 MT ASPIRING

8 km/2-3 hours hiking

This morning we continue our travels south to the majestic Lake Wanaka. We will enjoy a relaxed lunch next to the crystal clear waters of the lake. After lunch we pack our overnight backpacks before heading to the start of our walk in the walkers' paradise of Mt Aspiring National Park. The hike to the Aspiring Hut in the magnificent Matukituki Valley is a walker's paradise, with unforgettable views of high glaciated mountains and ice carved valleys. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 5 QUEENSTOWN

14 km/6-7 hours hiking

On the last day of this tour we have the opportunity to walk to the view point of Rob Roy Glacier. As we reach the tree-line the beech forest gives way to alpine vegetation. The hanging glaciers beneath Mount Rob Roy are spectacular. The glacier is active and you may be able to hear and see avalanches from this safe viewing point. The cheeky alpine kea may also join us for a little light entertainment - do not leave any gear unattended!

On the return walk to the vehicle we can meander alongside the Rob Roy Stream and take in the beautiful waterfalls dotted along the track. The final leg of the journey is a stunning drive over the Crown Range. As we reach the crest of the range we will stop, stretch our legs and take photos of the awe-inspiring Wakitipu Basin that leads into Queenstown.

This tour finishes in Queenstown, the Adventure Capital of New Zealand. There is no shortage of thrill seeking activities for any family in this resort town situated on the shores of Lake Wakitipu. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*

Notes:

This trip suits children from the age of about 13 years old (or adventurous 10 years olds).



LIFE ON THE TRAIL

GRADE D

- Average of 4-5 hours physical activity per day, more on longer days.
- Pack weights of 10-12kgs (22-26lbs) on some days (adults).
- Altitude gains of up to 800m.
- Some uneven track surfaces and river crossings.
- No multi-day hiking experience necessary.
- Agility and fitness required.
- You need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic.
- Terrain mostly tracks. Some may be slippery or rough; some off-track hiking and river crossings.



GUIDES AND SAFETY

An excellent guide can make the difference between a trip of a lifetime and just an ordinary trip. Our handpicked professionals come from a range of backgrounds. Each has extensive outdoor and hiking experience and a passion for New Zealand's wild and beautiful backcountry. The guides will ensure that your trip is truly inspiring, a huge amount of fun and safe. All guides are trained in Outdoor First Aid.



FOOD

Everybody is involved with the preparation and cooking of meals: barbecues, salads, pancakes, curries, pasta, stir-fries etc. Vegetarian meals are no problem. For all specific dietary requirements we ask that you notify us prior to departure. That way we can ensure we are catering correctly for your needs. When you are on overnight hikes the group will usually eat pasta and rice meals (gluten free is usually an option). There is always a lot of hiking food - muesli bars, chocolate, biscuits fruit and dried fruit. The vehicles carry a full range of cooking equipment including gas burners, woks, frying pans and billies. When you go on an overnight hike the group will carry portable stoves.



TRANSPORT

We travel in a 10 or 12 seat minibus, towing a trailer with camp equipment and luggage. We use a mix of 2-Wheel-Drive and 4-Wheel-Drive vehicles depending on the trip and the time of year. All vehicles have a stereo and we carry a range of natural history reference books. We average 2-3 hours driving per We travel on a range of roads, from sealed highways to dusty, windy, bouncy tracks. We can stop whenever you want to take photos or check out the strange locals! We try not to drive too much, but occasionally we might do a 4-5-hour drive.



ACCOMMODATION

The trip uses a range of accommodation from camping to basic cabins. We generally camp if the weather is fine so you get to enjoy the outdoors more. In less pleasant weather your guide will arrange accommodation for the group. Note that the accommodation and food costs are included in the price of this trip.

Camping - We camp as much as we can in Department of Conservation campsites, and in established campgrounds with showers. We provide 2-person tents for you to sleep in and closed-cell-foam sleeping mats. We frequently have a small campfire. If you require a tent to yourself please let us know in advance.

LIFE ON THE TRAIL

ADDITIONAL COSTS

Optional activities: Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre Adult (NZ\$27, Child NZ\$13.50).

Optional activities are paid for during the trip.

Prices are correct at time of publishing.

BOOKING CONDITIONS

Payment

For bookings four or more months in advance of the departure a 25% deposit can be paid with the remainder due 95 days prior to your trip. For bookings within four months of the departure, full payment is required.

Cancellations

95 days or more prior to departure – 80% refund of the deposit paid OR your full deposit is transferable to a future trip booked directly with Hiking New Zealand

94 to 21 days prior to departure – 80% refund of the full ticket price

20 to 11 days prior to departure – 50% refund of the full ticket price

10 days or less prior to departure – NO REFUND.

Travel Insurance

It is suggested that clients take out comprehensive travel insurance.



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PACKING LIST

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

- ☐ Hiking boots or shoes
- ☐ Day pack
- ☒ **Waterproof raincoat (gore-tex or similar)**
- ☐ Warm fleece/wool jersey (not cotton)
- ☐ Shorts for hiking (or lightweight hiking trousers)
- ☐ Long sleeve shirt (for sun protection)
- ☐ 3 pairs of socks
- ☐ Warm hat (optional December to February)
- ☐ Polypro/thermals – top & bottom (optional December to February)
- ☐ Sun hat, sunscreen and sunglasses
- ☐ Drink bottle (1 litre)
- ☐ Spare shoes or sandals
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Dry bag for clothes/valuables
- ☐ Casual clothing for travel and evenings
- ☐ Gloves/mittens (optional December to February)

OPTIONAL ITEMS

Walking poles, camera and rain trousers

WE SUPPLY

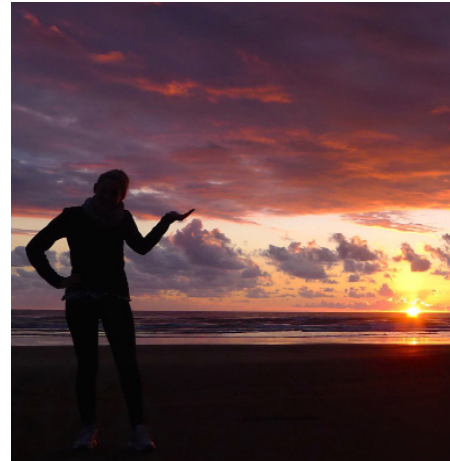
- Emergency first aid kit
- Thermarests (3/4 length)
- Plates, cutlery, mugs, pots, etc.
- Drinking water
- Safety Equipment and maps

EQUIPMENT HIRE

We have high quality hiking equipment which you can hire for our Hiking Tours. Please arrange hire gear when you book. Requests for a hire equipment must be made at least 5 days before the departure date. (limited sizes for children)

Hire gear (NZ\$)	5-7 days trip
Backpack (60 litres)	\$30
Sleeping bag	\$20
Fleece jacket	\$20
Thermal top and long-johns	\$20
Raincoat	\$20
Full set (all of above)	\$90
Gaiters	\$20
Walking pole	\$20 each

It's not always easy packing - feel free to drop us a line if



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IMPORTANT INFO

Here is a kickstart on a few things you need to know...

WHEN HIKING

- Stay together. Wait if you have not seen the group for 10 minutes.
 - Wait at all track junctions, huts, or river crossings for everyone to catch up.
 - If you get separated, stop and wait until your guide finds you.
 - Watch out for sunburn. Remember, NZ sun burns fast, wear a hat and sun block at all times until you are familiar with its strength.
 - Drink plenty of water, it is safe to drink from most of the streams in the wilderness without treating the water but do ask.
 - Help and look out for each other on river crossings, bush bashing and rock scrambling.
 - Ensure you have correct clothing - see 'packing' list.
 - Hiking tracks in NZ can be quite muddy and sometimes rough with tree roots and rocks. But this is part of the fun.
 - Snow slopes are extremely dangerous - guide leads on snow.
- No fooling around unless guide gives the OK.

CROSSING RIVERS

- River crossing accidents are a major cause of fatalities in the NZ wilderness so learning correct techniques from your guide is imperative.
- If your pack has a quick-release hip belt keep it fastened (to prevent the pack riding over your head if you end up swimming). Chest straps and other hip belts should be undone.
- Wear shorts not long pants. If wearing a rain-coat turn up and tuck under hip belt so pockets don't fill with water.
- You must wear boots when crossing rivers.
- To prevent the spread of Didymo (an invasive algae) boots, gaiters, socks etc. must be washed and dried before entering another waterway.

KAYAKING

- Always attend the safety briefing.
- Always take spare warm clothing in case the weather turns bad.
- Go to the toilet before you get into the kayak.
- Wrap valuables and cameras securely in bags or dry bags and close PROPERLY. Put adsorbent cloth/t-shirt with camera.
- Always stay together.

CYCLING & MOUNTAIN BIKING

- Always attend the safety briefing, know the meet times and 'back up' plans.
- High visibility clothes if road sections.
- Be aware if you are in the front or back of group (otherwise you might be chasing imaginary people).
- Stop to smell the roses - you might be wearing yellow, but its not the Tour de France!
- Helmets are compulsory in NZ.
- In NZ front and rear brakes are opposite to US and Europe.

CAVING

- Does your torch/headlamp have good batteries - carry spares if you need.
- If you want to take a camera, make sure that it is wrapped securely in plastic bags or dry bags.
- Go to the toilet beforehand.
- Talk to guide if you are nervous about caving beforehand.
- Cave formations take thousands of years to form - please don't touch them unless your guide okays it.

SWIMMING & BEACHES

Many NZ beaches are too dangerous for swimming, in particular the West Coast beaches.

Where conditions are suitable....

- Talk to your guide before you go swimming and don't swim alone.
- Respect the sea - never turn your back on the sea and watch out for freak waves & rips - even when beach walking.
- If you get into difficulty while swimming - raise one of your hands up above your head - stay calm.

- Be careful entering the sea. Don't run into the sea - there may be rocks below the water.
- For rescues, things that float are - sleeping mats, spare tyre, empty water bottles (jerry cans), thermarests and dry bags stuffed with clothing
- Look for Jellyfish - (check along water edge and don't swim if there are lots about) - treat with vinegar

HOT POOLS (NATURAL)

- Keep head above water at all times - water may contain amoebic meningitis.
- Watch out for boiling water/mud hazards around and in the pool
- Remove jewellery as it tends to turn green or black.

FIRES

- Observe all fire bans. Keep fires small, use only dead wood and completely put out with water before leaving and at night (includes wood burners in huts).
- Always have a bucket of water near fire to extinguish it and for burns (or stream/river nearby).
- Be careful when wearing synthetic clothing around fires. Sparks put holes in Gore-Tex and tents.
- Do not use axe without guide's okay - wear boots.

HYGIENE & TOILETS

- You'll get to a shower mostly every 1-2 days, otherwise there are rivers to have a wash in.
- Keep streams, lakes and rivers clean - when cleaning and washing, take water and wash well away from the water source (drain used water into soil to allow it to be filtered) - all soaps/detergents are harmful to water-life.
- Laundry facilities are limited while on trips (every 2-3 days).
- Always use toilets when they are provided even though long-drops may be a bit rustic!
- In situations where there is no toilet, bury toilet waste. No 1's (pee) off the track - No 2's (poop) in 5-10 cm deep hole 50-100m from any water (lake, river or stream), bury toilet paper, cover up hole with soil/leaf litter. Please do not burn toilet paper.
- Sanitary pads/tampons are treated as rubbish - carried out by user - ask guide for sanitary rubbish bags.

ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

- Correct hygiene and toilet practices are essential to keep water supplies (rivers, lakes) safe to drink.
 - Remove rubbish - pack it in, pack it out. Please help guide to separate rubbish, recycling and compost.
 - Keep to the track where there is one - protect native plants and animals
 - Respect cultural heritage.
 - Enjoy your visit - camp carefully and leave no trace of your visit.
- Will the next visitor know you have been there?

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER...

- Hypothermia - make sure you wear & carry the correct clothing!
- Fitness - hiking all day with a backpack on is hard work, get fit before you come on a kiwi-style trip. If you are fit enough you will be able to take part in all the hikes.
- Hire gear - use the supplied liner with sleeping bags, carry all hire gear in pack not tied to outside. Please tell us if any repairs are required.
- Equipment - it is so easy to lose stuff in shared huts. Help us keep an eye on gear.
- Roads - remember kiwis drive on the left, look carefully when crossing the street for an ice-cream.
- Tipping - it is not expected in NZ to tip for service, but if you feel your guide has done an excellent job, tips will be accepted graciously.

Thank you for reading. Have a wonderful trip.

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson