



SPLENDOURS OF THE SOUTH

ITINERARY



Experience a 10-day journey through the stunning landscapes of the South Island, from vibrant and charming Nelson to the adventure capital of Queenstown. The journey begins with a scenic boat ride into the heart of the Abel Tasman National Park, where you will camp in peaceful campsites and drift off to sleep listening to the sound of waves lapping the beach. Hike the coastal trail, take a refreshing dip in the Tasman Sea or enjoy sea kayaking amongst the bays while viewing unique wildlife (optional activity).

Travel south to the lush rainforests of the West Coast to hike up deep canyons and sleep under a rock overhang, before venturing inland to Arthur's Pass to experience a remote backcountry hut in the Edwards Valley. Further south, cycle a section of the Alps to Ocean cycle trail alongside a pristine blue glacial lake, take a short walk to appreciate the surreal views on offer or simply relax at the Lodge overlooking the lake. The choice is yours.

A final multi-day hike takes you amongst the soaring peaks and glaciers of the Mount Aspiring National Park, before your journey ends in Queenstown.

With its great mix of multi-day hikes, camping and boutique accommodation, this tour will allow you to relax and enjoy some well-earned luxury after time spent in the outdoors.

LENGTH	10 days
GRADE	D - River crossings, some uneven terrain, you need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic
START	Nelson iSITE 1:00pm, Nelson Airport 1:30pm
FINISH	Queenstown, Airport drop off at 4pm
ACCOMMODATION	Lodges, guesthouses, camping and backcountry huts
OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Abel Tasman sea kayaking - \$175.00 Cycling on the Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail - \$70.00
DEPARTURES	2019 Nov: 18
PRICE	NZ\$5700.00 per person

ITINERARY

DAY 1 JOIN THE TOUR IN NELSON

5 km/2 hours hiking

Our trip starts in Nelson in the early afternoon, giving you time in the morning to wander around this vibrant and charming city. From Nelson it is a picturesque drive around Tasman Bay to Kaiteriteri, the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park. Here you can pack your gear for a 2-night stay in the park and then board the water taxi. A relaxing cruise around the coast takes us to the beautiful Bark Bay. Pitch your tent and enjoy dinner together. Fall asleep to the sound of waves lapping the shore. *Includes lunch and dinner. Accommodation: camping*

DAY 2 BARK BAY TO ANCHORAGE

8.5 - 12 km/3-5 hours hiking

Today offers the opportunity to hike in this magical National Park and wander along the sheltered coastline marvelling at the crystal-clear waters and stunning scenery of this marine reserve. The hike from Bark Bay takes us through glades of Manuka, over a low saddle and across a 47 metre suspension bridge at Falls River. The optional side trip to Cleopatra's Pool is a must and a perfect place for a swim on a warm summer's day. Tonight's campsite is at Anchorage, a stunning bush-fringed bright blue inlet. Time to take another swim, read a book or have a snooze, before preparing and enjoying another evening meal together. Sea kayaking can be arranged for this day (4-5 hours) if requested at the time of booking (\$175). The kayaking starts and finishes in the same place so you will hike as well as kayak if you take this option at the time of booking. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Accommodation: camping*

DAY 3 ANCHORAGE TO MURCHISON

14 km/5 hours hiking

Have a sleep in or join the guide for a stroll out to Te Pukatea Bay and Pitt Head – the site of an old Maori Pa. Then back to camp and maybe a swim before leaving behind the beautiful Anchorage Bay for a gentle ramble over a saddle and through lush beech forest with large Kanuka trees. The guide will take all of the group gear and tents by water taxi so you can enjoy the hike along the well-marked trail with a lighter pack. We'll pass through several picturesque bays before eventually emerging out into the estuary. Finish walking the track by crossing the Marahau causeway where your guide will meet you with the vehicle. Time to rest the legs on the drive to tonight's accommodation in Murchison. *Includes breakfast and lunch. Accommodation: Murchison Lodge (max 9 clients so will need address this if more than 9 clients).*

DAY 4 MURCHISON TO BALLROOM OVERHANG

8 km/4 hours hiking

After driving down the Buller Gorge to the West Coast, the first stop this morning is Cape Foulwind. Here is an opportunity to observe a breeding colony of New Zealand fur seals – almost hunted to extinction in the 1800s. After lunch, hike up a spectacular limestone river canyon in Paparoa National Park. Established in 1987, the park covers over 30,000 hectares. It has natural attractions including mountains, limestone cliffs, caves, rivers and wilderness areas. The hike involves several river crossings (your boots will get wet). Collect firewood along the way and set up camp under the massive Ballroom Overhang. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Accommodation: camping*



DAY 5 BALLROOM OVERHANG TO KUMARA

8 km/4 hours hiking

Heading out from the Ballroom, we wander along quaint rivers channelled through towering limestone cliffs covered in lush native rainforest. The scenery in this area is truly breath-taking and unparalleled in the South Island. Take the opportunity to explore a nearby canyon where the river disappears into a cave. Leaving the rivers behind, walk along an old inland pack-track that winds its way through tranquil native forest before emerging at the road end where our vehicle awaits. A short drive gets us to the small tourist town of Punakaiki. We have lunch at the local cafe and wander through the geologic phenomenon that is the Pancake Rocks – scientists still cannot agree on how they formed. If the tide is right, you will get to witness the magnificent blowholes in action. Tonight we step back in time and stay in the West Coast's only restored miners' hotel, once world-renowned theatre. *Includes breakfast. Accommodation: Theatre Royal Hotel, Kumara*

DAY 6 KUMARA TO ARTHUR'S PASS

4-5 hours hiking

Today we travel along a remarkable highway which travels up from the lush green rainforests of the West Coast and into the glaciated Southern Alps. This is one of the most cleverly engineered roads in New Zealand. We will stop in Arthur's Pass Village for a stroll around this alpine settlement. This is an ideal opportunity to see our cheeky alpine parrot, the kea. Just east of the village we start our overnight hike into Edwards Hut. We are now experts at crossing rivers and get our boots wet as soon as we start the hike as we cross the Bealey River. The track rises and falls several times avoiding the gullies below. We will emerge onto the upper river flats among the red tussocks and make away amongst the grasses before a short final hike through the forest where the hut comes into view. This remote alpine valley is the domain of our national bird, the kiwi, so we keep our ears tuned tonight for their distinctive call. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Accommodation: Edwards Hut*

DAY 7 ARTHUR'S PASS TO METHVEN

4-5 hours hiking

We soak up the serenity and solitude some more with a wander up to the head of the valley and the aptly named Falling Mountain. Named so after the 1929 Arthur's Pass earthquake caused a 900m high section of the mountain to crumble into the valley below. After morning tea back at the hut, we head back out via the same track, a little easier in this direction as it is mostly downhill. Arriving back at the vehicle we drive through the stunning Craigieburn basin with its sweeping mountain vistas and limestone crags and escarpments. Leaving the main highway, a backroad takes us around Lake Lyndon and through the Rakaia Gorge to Methven. *Includes breakfast and lunch. Accommodation: Methven Lodge B&B*

DAY 8 METHVEN TO OHAU

38 km/3-4 hours cycling

We drive south following the edge of the Canterbury plains to Lake Tekapo, famous for its stunning turquoise waters and the quaint Church of the Good Shepherd, perched daintily by the lake. The sweeping Mackenzie basin is a sparsely populated region in the rain shadow of the Southern Alps; tawny-brown drylands, braided riverbeds and startling glacial lakes extend to the horizon.

From Twizel, those wishing to cycle get fitted out with bikes (\$70) to ride a section of the impressive Alps to Ocean cycle trail. The cyclists will cycle along the quiet canal roads before crossing the Lake Ohau weir and weaving their way around the lake on a purpose-built cycle track. The views are amazing and there will be plenty of time to





stop, take photos and admire the mountains and the amazing blue of the glacially fed Lake Ohau before arriving at the lodge. Those people not wishing to cycle will travel by vehicles with the guide to the lodge and choose between relaxing on the decks overlooking the lake or going for a short self-guided walk on the Alps to Ocean trail. Tonight we enjoy a delicious meal at the lodge and admire the beautiful, yet stark landscape of the Mackenzie High Country. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Accommodation: Ohau Lodge*

DAY 9 OHAU TO MT ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK

8 km/3 hours hiking

Our drive to Wanaka follows the Mackenzie country south before climbing over the tussock lands of the Lindis Pass into the southern lakes district. We continue through the township and drive around Lake Wanaka and up the Matukituki Valley to the start of our hike in the walkers' paradise of Mt Aspiring National Park. The hike to Aspiring Hut is unforgettable with views of high glaciated mountains and ice carved valleys. Depending on the weather, we may make the side hike up to Rob Roy Glacier today. From the hut we enjoy stunning alpine views as we hike the valley to Aspiring Hut. Between high peaks we catch glimpses of the Matterhorn-like Mt Aspiring (3033m). *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. Accommodation: Aspiring Hut*



DAY 10 MT ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK TO QUEENSTOWN

14km/6 hours hiking

On the last day of this tour we can walk to the view point of Rob Roy Glacier if this was not done yesterday. As we reach the treeline the beech forest gives way to alpine vegetation. The hanging glaciers beneath Mt Rob Roy are spectacular. The glacier is active and you may be able to hear and see avalanches from this safe viewing point. On the return walk to the vehicle we will meander alongside the Rob Roy Stream and take in the beautiful waterfalls dotted along the track. We stop in Wanaka for a look around this lakeside alpine resort and a chance to enjoy a café lunch at our leisure. The final leg of the journey is a remarkable drive over the Crown Range. From the summit there are breath-taking views across the Wakatipu Basin and lakes. We continue the drive into Queenstown - New Zealand's Adventure Capital. *Includes breakfast.*



LIFE ON THE TRAIL

This is a facilitated adventure - we believe great trips/ adventures are a team effort. So we will need your help from time to time when it comes to cooking meals, sharing the load on hikes, and washing up - many hands make light work.

GRADE D

- Average of 4-5 hours physical activity per day, up to 8-9 hours on longer days.
- Pack weights of 10-12kgs* on some days (4, 5, 7, 8, 11 and 12)
- Altitude gains of up to 800m.
- Some uneven track surfaces and river crossings.
- No multi-day hiking experience necessary.
- You need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic and have good agility.
- Some tracks may be slippery or rough and there will be some off-track hiking and river crossings.

*Will vary depending on the weight of personal discretionary items.



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 Mountain Safety First Aid.

FOOD

As well as being the time to rest, refuel and recharge, meal times are also a great time to get to know your fellow travellers better, sit back and enjoy the amazing surroundings and enjoy some great food! Everybody has a turn with the preparation and cooking of meals: barbecues, salads, pancakes, curries, pasta, stir-fries, hangi... Vegetarian meals are no problem. On the "wild nights" the group will usually eat pasta and rice meals (special "secret" recipes used). There is always a lot of hiking food - chocolate, nuts, raisins, biscuits. The vehicles carry a full range of cooking equipment including gas burners, woks, frying pans and billies (cooking pot). When you go on an overnight hike the group will carry a portable stove.



TRANSPORT

The average driving time per day varies, some times you are in the wilderness and won't see the vehicle for 2 or 3 days! On other days you might be in the vehicle for 2-3 hours or occasionally more. The driving time is a chance to rest and enjoy the fantastic scenery which is forever changing. You will travel in a 12 seat minibus towing a custom-built trailer with camp equipment and your luggage. They are also equipped with a range of natural history reference books. There will be a range of roads - sealed and unsealed. The guide will often stop the vehicle if there is a great photo opportunity or primo ice cream shop!

ACCOMMODATION

"Wild nights" vs nights in civilization: Wild nights are the nights where you are truly in the wilderness, staying in backcountry huts or camping in locations that may be several hours walk from the nearest road or populated area, versus nights in civilisation where you may stay in cabins, lodges or camp by the vehicle at Department of Conservation campsites. Some of these locations may still be relatively remote and in the wilderness but they can be reached by the vehicle.



Camping - You will camp in a range of campsites. On the "wild nights" you may camp under natural rock shelters, on remote beaches or even sleep out under the stars! On the non-"wild nights" you will occasionally camp near the vehicle in Department of Conservation or private campsites. If the weather is not great for camping, eg very wet, stormy or very cold conditions, your guide will seek out alternative accommodation, eg lodge, cabin or crib.

LIFE ON THE TRAIL

Huts - New Zealand has an excellent network of backcountry huts and you will stay in huts on several nights. They are equipped with mattresses, running water and an outside toilet. Cooking is done on a portable stove. Huts are only accessible on foot and shared with other hikers. You also have the option of camping near the hut if that is your preference.



Lodges - You will stay in lodge type accommodation on some of the nights. The lodges are often conveniently located near the start or end of a hike and have multi-share and sometimes twin/double rooms.



Cabins/Cribs - some nights may be spent in private cribs (summer house) or cabins at a campground. Staying in the cribs is a real authentic New Zealand experience and you may even start to feel like a kiwi on holiday!



Bathroom facilities - on the wild nights there will be long drop (pit) toilets. There will be rivers or lakes nearby for a swim, and sometimes there are even natural hot pools! The Kiwi-style Hiking trips are set up so after a couple of nights of "roughing it" in the wilderness, you will stay somewhere where you can enjoy a shower and a few home comforts (including laundry facilities) before the next foray into the wild!

A very outdoor toilet - don't worry, just an actor!



ADDITIONAL COSTS

Meals

Meals that are not included in the trip price are detailed at the bottom of each day's itinerary.

Optional activities

Abel Tasman sea kayaking (NZ\$175*), Cycling on the Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail (NZ\$70*)

*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 65 days prior to your trip. For bookings within four months of the departure, full payment is required.

Cancellations

More than 20 days prior to departure - 80% refund of full ticket price.
20 to 10 days prior to departure - 50% refund of full ticket price.
Less than 10 days prior to departure - NO REFUND.

Travel Insurance

It is suggested that clients take out comprehensive travel insurance.

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PACKING LIST

Items shown in bold can be hired from us (see the rate table below).
Please arrange hire at least one week prior to your departure date.

CLOTHING - one set for walking, one set for evenings

WALKING CLOTHES: Several layers of wool, polypropylene and/or polar fleece will ensure you remain a comfortable temperature regardless of the weather. **No cotton shirts hiking/kayaking in the wet please!** Cotton gets cold when wet and is difficult to dry.

- ☐ **Raincoat** (goretex or similar)
- ☐ **Thermal underwear** (top and bottom, wool or polypropylene)
- ☐ Hiking boots or good hiking shoes
- ☐ Spare lightweight shoes or sandals
- ☐ Shorts or lightweight trousers (preferably quick-dry)
- ☐ Short-sleeved shirt x 2 (quick-dry, polypropylene or wool)
- ☐ **Warm fleece/wool jersey** (not cotton) x 2
- ☐ Socks (we suggest 3 pairs)
- ☐ Warm hat or balaclava
- ☐ Sunhat
- ☐ Gloves or mittens (wool or fleece)
- ☐ Togs (swimming costume)
- ☐ Towel (lightweight travel towels are great)

SPARE CLOTHING: Extra socks and polypropylene layers are always handy - ensure you have enough warm items. Comfortable clothes for non hiking days. Spare clothing can be left in the secure trailer when we are away on the hikes, so don't worry about the extra weight - ensure you have enough warm items. Note: there are only limited opportunities to do laundry during a tour, so quick drying clothing is an advantage. Weather can change rapidly in the locations we hike so layers of clothing is ideal.

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Backpack** (minimum 60 litres)
- ☐ **Sleeping bag** (minimum 3 season, preferably down, lightweight, between 1-2 kg)
- ☐ Flashlight/headlamp
- ☐ Drink bottle or camel back - 1 litre
- ☐ Small Day pack
- ☐ Sunscreen and sunglasses
- ☐ Insect repellent (sandflies like foreign blood)
- ☐ Personal toiletries, medication and first aid
- ☐ **Walking Poles** (optional)
- ☐ Gaiters (optional)

HOW TO PACK

We recommend that you bring two bags on your trip, a hiking backpack with an internal frame (at least 60 litres in capacity) for the overnight hikes, and a smaller day pack for the day hikes. We supply kit bags for the storage of your gear in the trailer when you are away on a multi day hike.

WE SUPPLY

- Pack-liner to keep things dry inside your backpack
- Kit bag to hold your spare gear when you are out hiking
- Emergency first aid kit
- Thermarests
- Plates, cutlery, mugs, pots, etc.
- Tents

Hire gear (NZ\$)	5-7 days trip	8-11 days trip	12+ days trip
Backpack (60 litres)	\$35	\$50	\$70
Sleeping bag and liner	\$40	\$60	\$80
2 x Fleece	\$30	\$30	\$30
Thermal top and bottom	\$20	\$20	\$30
Raincoat	\$30	\$50	\$65
Walking pole (one pole)	\$15	\$15	\$15
Full set (all of above)	\$130	\$190	\$250

It's not always easy packing - feel free to drop us a line if you have any questions.

IMPORTANT INFO

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

WHEN HIKING

- Stay together. If you get separated, stop and wait until your guide finds you.
- Wait at all track junctions, huts and hazards, as well as river crossings, for the rest of the group to catch up.
- Tell someone if you are heading off the track to use "the bathroom" in case you get lost! It happens! If lost - shout or whistle!
- 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 rivers and 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.
- Snow slopes are extremely dangerous - guide leads on snow. No fooling around unless guide gives the OK.
- Wasps - be observant (especially in beech forests). If you see a nest back off SLOWLY, unless they start to sting you - then move like greased lightning.

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 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 treated 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 absorbent cloth/t-shirt with camera.
- Always stay together.
- Sun protection - the reflection off water doubles the intensity!

CYCLING & MOUNTAIN BIKING

- Always attend the safety briefing, know the meet times and 'back up' plans.
- High visibility clothes if there are 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 it's not the Tour de France!
- Helmets are compulsory in NZ.
- In NZ front and rear brakes are opposite to US and Europe.

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.
- If you get into difficulty while swimming - raise one of your hands up above your head - stay calm.
- Be careful entering the sea or body surfing, 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 and stingrays (check along water edge and don't swim if there are lots about).

HOT POOLS (NATURAL)

- Keep head above water at all times - water may contain amoebic meningitis.
- Watch out for boiling water/mud 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 generally every 1-2 days, otherwise there are rivers to swim in and freshwater to wash with.
- 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.
- 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

- 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...

- Laundry facilities are limited while on trips (every 2-3 days).
- Hypothermia - make sure you have the correct clothing! Be prepared for any weather!
- Hire gear - use the supplied liner with sleeping bags, carry all hire gear in pack not tied to outside. Please don't overextend walking poles - they will snap! 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, thanks.
- 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.
- Wild food & berries - always ask before you eat, many are poisonous to us.

Thank you for reading. Have a wonderful trip.

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