



active earth
Adventures

HIKING
New Zealand

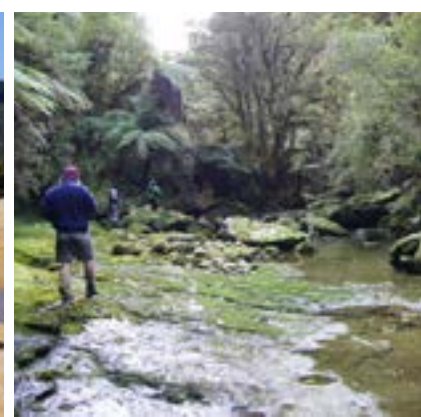
SPRING WANDERER

ITINERARY



This early spring trip will be a one-off departure for this season. It includes some of the highlights of our Ultimate South tour and guarantees to be 9 days of adventure – including stunning overnight and day hikes in five national parks. We make our way down the West Coast from Abel Tasman in the north before crossing the Southern Alps at Arthurs Pass. A great time of the year to be in the mountains of the South Island; spring is in the air, the mountains are still crisp with their winter snows and there are less tourists to photo bomb all those amazing photos you will take! On this tour you may be joined by some of our new guides for the season (as well as a senior guide) and be prepared - we may even check out a few secret hikes and places not mentioned in the itinerary! Be in quick as we have limited places available.

LENGTH	9 days
GRADE	D: River crossings, some uneven terrain, you need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic
START	Nelson iSITE - 9:00am
FINISH	Queenstown – 6:00pm (approx.)
DEPARTURES	2019 September: 15
PRICE	NZ\$2500



ITINERARY



DAY 1 NELSON – ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

13.5 km/4 hours hiking

After meeting at the Nelson i-Site we drive out of town around Tasman Bay to Kaiteriteri, the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park. Here we pack our gear for an overnight stay in the park and then board the water taxi. A boat cruise around the coast takes us to the beautiful and less visited part of the park at Awaroa. We enjoy a picnic on this idyllic beach before starting our hike following the Abel Tasman Coast Track south to Bark Bay, where our tents and some gear have been dropped by boat. We pitch our tents and enjoy a delicious meal together. Fall asleep to the sound of waves lapping the shore. *Includes lunch and dinner.*

DAY 2 ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK – MURCHISON

11.5 km/4 hours hiking

This morning we have a quick breakfast and pack up camp, then shoulder our backpacks and hike the Coast Track from Bark Bay to Anchorage to catch an early afternoon water taxi back to Kaiteriteri. There is time to rest the legs on the drive to tonight's private campsite and accommodation near Murchison, overlooking the confluence of the Buller and Maruia Rivers. We enjoy a scrumptious organic dinner tonight, kindly prepared by our hosts. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 3 MURCHISON – BALLROOM OVERHANG

8km/3-4 hours hiking

After driving through the Buller Gorge our first stop and experience of the wild west coast is at Charleston. We take a short hike through lush West Coast bush checking out the dramatic headlands, wild waves and secluded bays. After the hike we enjoy a picnic lunch and pack up for our next hike that takes us up a spectacular limestone river canyon in Paparoa National Park. Established in 1987, this park covers more than 30,000 hectares. Its attractions include mountains, limestone cliffs, caves, rivers, wilderness areas and coastlines. The first half of the trail is on a reasonably well-formed track and is relatively flat, while the second half involves multiple river crossings and sections where the riverbed itself is our route. Some boulders here can be slippery, and good hiking shoes or boots are essential. Our guide teaches us how to cross rivers by linking arms with our companions. We collect firewood along the way, and set up camp under the massive Ballroom Overhang, a fluvial river cave. For those that are keen on more hiking you can join the guide and explore up a beautiful side canyon, following the stream until it disappears into a cave. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 4 BALLROOM OVERHANG – ARTHUR'S PASS

8km/3-4 hours hiking

Following the hike back down the canyon to the vehicle there is a stop in Punakaiki and a chance to check out the famous Pancake Rocks and blowholes before continuing our drive to tonight's accommodation in the quaint mountain village of Arthurs Pass. On arrival in Arthurs Pass we take a short hike up to the Devils Punchbowl Falls before settling into our cosy lodgings for the evening. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 5 ARTHUR'S PASS - EDWARDS HUT

14km/8 hours hiking

While not as well-known as some of the other National Parks visited on the tour, Arthur's Pass will awe you with its rugged alpine peaks, wild rivers and adventurous hiking trails. Our hike takes us up the Edwards Valley to the Edwards hut which sits just above the treeline with a great view up and down this beautiful valley. It is a challenging hike on a real 'kiwi-style' track. There are several river crossings and parts where you will need to use your hands for extra grip as the trail is rugged with steep slippery sections.

This valley is home to our national bird the kiwi. Roroa or great spotted kiwi are known to inhabit this area; this species of Kiwi is known as the 'Mountain Kiwi' and prefers to live in sub-alpine areas. We return via the same track, enjoying a different aspect on the views experienced on the way in. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 6 ARTHUR'S PASS – AORAKI/MT COOK

4km/2 hours hiking

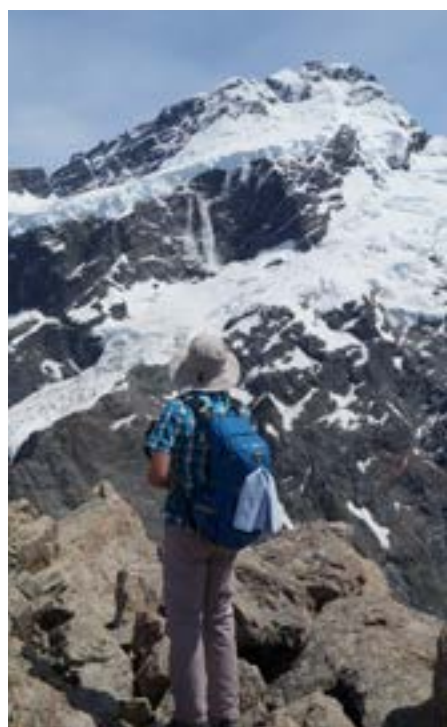
Departing Arthur's Pass this morning, the scenery changes dramatically on the eastern side of the divide. The steep forested slopes of the west are replaced with wide braided rivers, scree slopes and the surreal limestone formations of Castle Hill, where we stop to explore. We then drive out of the mountains to follow the western boundary of the Canterbury Plains before ascending again into the stunningly beautiful Mackenzie Country, an intermontane basin of huge glacial lakes and snow-capped mountains. On arrival at Aoraki/Mount Cook we climb up to the Red Tarns and take in the views of New Zealand's highest mountain. We're in the heart of the Southern Alps, surrounded by huge mountains of commanding presence. From our accommodation with luck, we can watch the summit of Aoraki/Mount Cook turn from white to pink with the sun's last rays. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*



DAY 7 AORAKI/MT COOK

8 km/5 hours hiking

Today we hike with day-packs up to Sealy Tarns and possibly as far as Mueller Hut. Enjoy views across two glaciers to the ice falls on Mount Sefton and Aoraki/Mount Cook. Towering moraine walls, glacial lakes and the frequent rumbling of distant avalanches are reminders of nature's sheer power in this dynamic landscape. We return via the same track to our accommodation. There is the option today of joining a local operator for a guided heli-hike on the Tasman Glacier (NZ \$599) *. A helicopter flight will take us onto the upper glacier where we attach crampons to our boots and marvel at the jagged landscape while exploring ice formations and ice caves. Those wanting to rest the legs today can either relax at the hut or visit the information centre and learn more about the park's natural history and the feats of pioneering mountaineers.*Price correct at time of publishing. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner*



DAY 8 AORAKI/MT COOK - ASPIRING HUT

8 km/3 hours hiking

We depart Aoraki/Mount Cook to continue our journey south through the Mackenzie Country and over Lindis Pass into the Central Otago region. We stop in at Wanaka township this morning, grab a coffee and take a wander around this vibrant lakeside resort town before we drive along Matukituki Valley to the end of the road. We grab our packs and hike along the valley enjoying stunning alpine views as we hike the easy trail to Aspiring Hut. Between high peaks we catch glimpses of the Matterhorn-like Mt Aspiring (3033m). *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 9 ASPIRING HUT - ROB ROY - QUEENSTOWN

14 km/6 hours hiking

We begin our return hike early this morning enjoying the pretty views and easy hiking along the floor of this wide glacially formed valley. We make a side trip up the impressive Rob Roy valley to view the glacier. Cheeky and inquisitive kea (alpine parrots) often mingle with our group at lunchtime, so we might need to keep an eye on our gear (kea love shiny zips)! Once back at the vehicle we drive back through Wanaka, over the Crown Range and down into Queenstown. Queenstown is dubbed the adventure capital of New Zealand so you may want to plan a few extra days here to go on further adventures or just enjoy the amazing landscapes. We head into town tonight and celebrate nine days of excellent hiking and exploring in some of the South Islands most iconic wilderness areas. *Includes breakfast and lunch. Please let us know if you would like to book a return shuttle to Christchurch for the following day (\$60 – arrives Christchurch airport at 4pm).*



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 (3, 4, 8, and 9)
- 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 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 at least one night. 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

*Prices are correct at time of publishing.

Nelson accommodation if travelling with the guide the day before.

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.

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