



ULTIMATE TRAVERSE

ITINERARY



This remarkable journey of contrasts through the top of the South Island begins with a boat ride along the Abel Tasman National Park coastline to Awaroa. Hike the coastal trail that winds around the coast before camping in peaceful campsites a stone's throw from the beach.

Depart the park two days later by a modern-day waka (Māori canoe), joining forces with a local waka guide to paddle the coastline and search for seals and dolphins around the wildlife refuge of Adele Island. Travel south to the lush rainforests of Paparoa National Park on the West Coast to hike up deep canyons, sleep under a massive overhang and cycle on the West Coast Wilderness Trail.

Head into the Southern Alps at Arthur's Pass and hike into a remote backcountry hut for a night in the alpine Edwards Valley to round out an active and adventurous trip.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| LENGTH | 8 days |
| GRADE | D - River crossings, some uneven terrain, you need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic |
| START | Nelson iSITE 09.30am |
| FINISH | Christchurch |
| ACCOMMODATION | Cabins, camping and backcountry huts |
| INCLUDED ACTIVITIES | Abel Tasman waka experience and cycling the West Coast Wilderness Trail |
| DEPARTURES | 2021 Dec: 10 2022 Feb: 18 Mar: 4, 18 Apr: 1 Nov: 11, 25 Dec: 9 2023 Jan: 6, 20 Feb: 3, 17 Mar: 3, 17, 31 |
| PRICE | NZ\$2,900.00 |

ITINERARY



DAY 1 NELSON - ABEL TASMAN

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 a 2-night 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 Coastal 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 BARK BAY - ANCHORAGE

8.5 - 12 km/3-5 hours hiking

After a relaxed breakfast we continue our hike on the Coastal Track to Anchorage. 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 refreshing swim, and if you are feeling nimble you can join the guide for a boulder hop further up the valley exploring idyllic pools and waterfalls. Your guide may also talk you into taking another side trip up to the Falls River cascades, another stunning swimming spot. We camp tonight at the bush-fringed and bright blue inlet of Anchorage. Relax, read a book and go for a swim – before we meet in the evening to cook and eat together. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

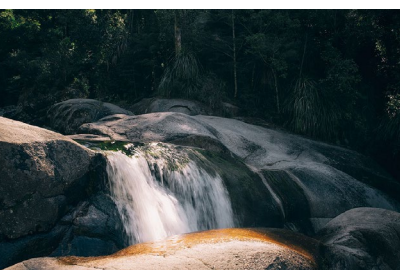
DAY 3 ANCHORAGE - MURCHISON

15 km/3 hours paddling

It's time to hit the water and explore the Abel Tasman's magical coastline by waka (Māori canoe).^{*} After a traditional karakia (blessing) we learn the etiquette associated with joining a waka team. Then it's time to climb aboard and paddle!

Depending on conditions, we explore several coves on the mainland and the wildlife refuge of Adele Island, where we observe a breeding colony of New Zealand fur seals – beautiful animals that were almost hunted to extinction in the 1800s. Along the way our waka guide enlightens us with stories of local Māori history and customs. We paddle into the beautiful Kaiteriteri beach at around midday, where our Hiking New Zealand guide awaits with our backpacks. After a picnic lunch and a restock on supplies in Motueka we drive south to our private campsite near Murchison, overlooking the confluence of the Buller and Maruia rivers. We enjoy an organic meal that is home-cooked by our hosts. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

^{*}Note: The waka experience requires a minimum of 6 people. With smaller groups we return to Kaiteriteri via water taxi.



DAY 4 MURCHISON - BALLROOM OVERHANG

8 km/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 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 5 BALLROOM OVERHANG - HOKITIKA

6 km/3 hours hiking

After a relaxed breakfast we hike back out the same way and head to the West Coast town of Punakaiki to check out the famous Pancake Rocks and seawater blowholes. Then it's down the coast to tonight's accommodation in Hokitika. A thriving gold rush town in the 1870s, Hokitika is now a great place to buy pounamu (greenstone), which was highly valued by early Māori for tools, jewellery and weapons.

Tonight's lodge accommodation is centrally located and just a short distance from the beach. Tuck in to traditional Kiwi fish and chips on the beach or eat at one of the many cafés in this bustling little seaside town. On arrival in Hokitika, we get fitted out with bikes for tomorrow's ride. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*

DAY 6 HOKITIKA - ARTHUR'S PASS

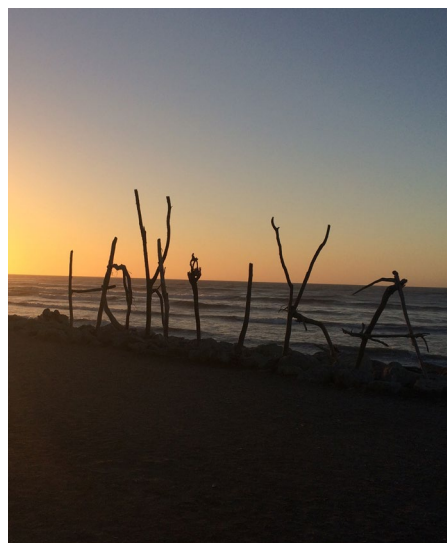
39 km/4-5 hours biking

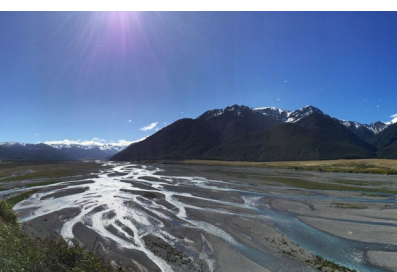
Before meeting the group grab breakfast at one of the great cafés in town. Today we get to cycle the stunning West Coast Wilderness Trail between the Arahura River bridge and the historic township of Kumara.

We will pedal our way through majestic native forest, cross crystal-clear rivers, and pass old reservoirs and water races. Today's ride is unguided, but the trail is very well marked, and our local partners will give you a very thorough briefing on riding the trail. The thoughtfully restored Theatre Royal Hotel in Kumara is the perfect place to celebrate our ride with a drink.

After the ride sit back and enjoy the mountain and rainforest landscapes as we turn east to drive into the Southern Alps and stay in the quaint mountain village of Arthurs Pass. Lodgings tonight are at a private hut with showers and electricity. We prepare dinner together and get ready for tomorrow's hiking adventure into Edwards Valley. *Includes lunch and dinner.*

**Ultimate World Heritage Adventure hikers join us tonight for the hike into Edwards Valley tomorrow.*





DAY 7 ARTHUR'S PASS - EDWARDS HUT

7 km/5-6 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 overnight 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.

We either camp or stay in the hut depending on how many other hikers are there.

At nightfall we listen out for the distinct call of our national bird, the kiwi. Roroa or great spotted kiwi are known to inhabit this sub-alpine area. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

*Most departures will have two guides for this hike.

DAY 8 EDWARDS VALLEY - CHRISTCHURCH

7 km/5-6 hours hiking

We retrace our steps this morning as we hike back out the Edwards valley. Back at the vehicle we unpack and refuel with a picnic lunch.

The scenery changes dramatically as we continue our drive 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 for a quick ramble as this landscape is too good to drive past without stopping! Say our goodbyes to our new hiking friends continuing south as our tour draws to a close. One of our team will transfer you on to Christchurch where you will arrive before 5pm.

Includes breakfast and lunch.

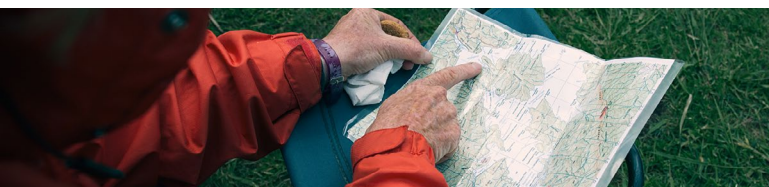
LIFE ON THE TRAIL

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)
- 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!

*Accommodation is subject to availability, and an equivalent style of property could be used if the advertised property is no longer available.



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

Not Applicable.

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.

COVID-19

Please see our website or contact us for the latest COVID-19 booking assurance.

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)
- ☐ 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