



# ULTIMATE WORLD HERITAGE ADVENTURE

## ITINERARY



Hike into the alpine Edwards Valley to a remote Southern Alps backcountry hut for a night as prelude to a journey into Te Wāhi-pounamu ("the place of greenstone") - South West New Zealand World Heritage Area, one of the great natural areas of the world.

Explore the hiking trails beneath hanging glaciers in the majestic Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park, before heading south to Mount Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks to hike among the untouched beauty of soaring peaks, ice carved fiords, lakes and valleys, and camp for a second backcountry overnight.

The World Heritage Adventure includes optional extras such as glacier heli-hiking at Aoraki/Mount Cook and sea kayaking in Milford Sound , making this the ideal tour for the intrepid.

LENGTH	10 days
GRADE	D - River crossings, some uneven terrain, you need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic
START	Christchurch, Canterbury Museum, 1.00pm, Rolleston Ave
FINISH	Queenstown
ACCOMMODATION	Lodges, cabins, camping and backcountry huts
INCLUDED ACTIVITIES	Milford Sound cruise
OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Milford Sound Kayaking - \$139*, Mt Cook Heli-hiking - \$619*
DEPARTURES	2021 Dec: 15 2022 Jan: 12   Feb: 23   Mar: 9, 23   Apr: 6   Nov: 16, 30   Dec: 14 2023 Jan: 11, 25   Feb: 8, 22   Mar: 8, 22   Apr: 5
PRICE	NZ\$3,300.00

# ITINERARY

## DAY 1 CHRISTCHURCH TO ARTHUR'S PASS

A 1pm meeting time in Christchurch leaves your morning free for travel or an opportunity to explore Christchurch. It's a relaxed start to the trip with a drive across the Canterbury Plains towards the beckoning mountains of the Southern Alps. Our lodgings tonight are at a private hut (with showers and electricity) in the quaint mountain village of Arthur's Pass. Get to know your fellow hikers while preparing dinner together and getting ready for tomorrow's hike into the Edwards Valley. *Includes lunch and dinner.*

\*This tour joins the Ultimate South/Ultimate Traverse hikers from the afternoon of Day 6 of their tours.

## DAY 2 ARTHUR'S PASS TO EDWARDS HUT

7 km/5-6 hours hiking

While Arthur's Pass is not as well-known as some of the other National Parks visited on the tour, you will be awestruck by 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. For those with energy still to burn, there will be the opportunity to join the guide for another hike from the hut this afternoon.

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.*

## DAY 3 EDWARDS VALLEY TO MT SOMERS

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.

Heading eastward our drive backtracks through the eastern high country at first. 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 finishing their tour as we turn south, leaving the main highway to follow an inland route past Lake Lyndon, through the Rakaia gorge and on to the tiny village of Mt Somers where we stay overnight. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

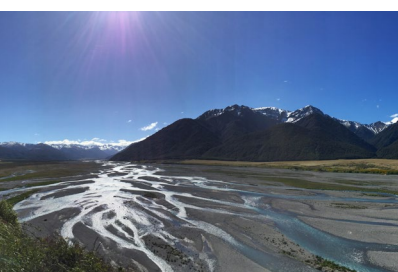
## DAY 4 MT SOMERS TO AORAKI/MT COOK

8 km/5 hours hiking

We spend the morning driving along the western boundary of the Canterbury plains and into the stunningly beautiful Mackenzie Country, an intermontane basin of huge glacial lakes and snow-capped mountains.

By late morning we arrive at Aoraki/Mt Cook village ready to maximise our afternoon with a hike with day-packs up to Sealy Tarns and possibly as far as Mueller Hut. Enjoy views across two valley glaciers to the Mount Sefton icefalls and Aoraki/Mt 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 at a private hut/camp.





We're in the heart of the Southern Alps, surrounded by huge mountains of commanding presence. With luck, we can watch the summit of Aoraki/Mt Cook turn from white to pink with the sun's last rays. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

## DAY 5 AORAKI/MT COOK TO LAKE HAWEA

### 4km/2 hours hiking

We enjoy a relaxing breakfast together with a postcard view of Aoraki/Mt Cook from our dining room window.

There is the option today of joining a local operator for a guided heli-hike on the Tasman Glacier (NZ \$619\*). 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.

For those not heli-hiking, join the guide for a hike up the steep glacial moraines to Red Tarns. More stunning views from here!

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. By mid-afternoon we have re-united with the heli-hikers and depart Aoraki/Mt Cook to continue our journey south through the Mackenzie Country and over Lindis Pass into the Central Otago region. We stay tonight near the shores of Lake Hawea, a glacially formed lake over 35kms in length ringed by mountains. We take the night off cooking tonight and dine at a local restaurant. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*

## DAY 6 LAKE HAWEA TO ASPIRING HUT

### 14km/6 hours hiking

We drive to 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 shoulder our packs and hike along the valley, perhaps opting to climb up for a view of Rob Roy 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)!

In the afternoon, 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.*

## DAY 7 ASPIRING HUT TO KNOBS FLAT

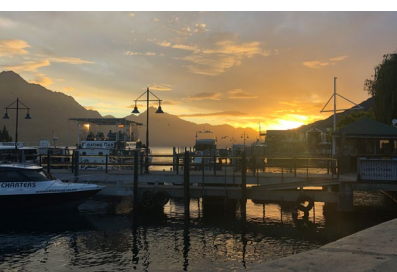
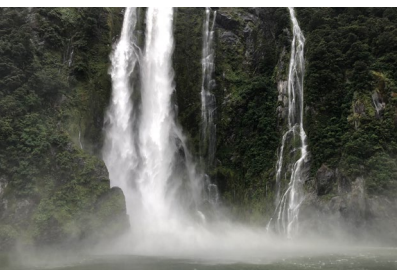
### 8km/3 hours hiking

We return down the valley early this morning enjoying the pretty views and easy hiking along the floor of this wide glacially formed valley. Once we are back in Wanaka we have a lakeside picnic and you may want to dive into the lake for a swim.

Next up is a remarkable drive over the Crown Range, offering breath-taking summit views of the Wakitipu Basin and lakes. By late afternoon, we're past Te Anau and well on our way to Milford Sound.

We camp for the next two nights at the beautiful Knobs Flat campsite, relaxing and making the most of the welcome hot showers. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*





## DAY 8 KNOBS FLAT TO MILFORD

2-hour cruise (or Milford kayaking option\*), 5 km/3 hours hiking

This morning we drive beneath imposing granite cliffs and hanging valleys into the heart of Fiordland National Park. This amazing World Heritage Site is one of the largest national parks in the world, with its huge glacial lakes of Te Anau and Manapouri and spectacular fjords.

By mid-morning, we are at Milford and ready to join one of the world's great day-cruises. Our vessel takes us out to Anita Bay and the entrance to Milford Sound. We enjoy stunning views of cascading waterfalls and the iconic Mitre Peak, which soars 1722 metres above the sea. We keep our eyes peeled for dolphins, Fiordland crested penguins and New Zealand fur seals, which often play near our boat.

Before returning to Knobs Flat, we enjoy a hike up to Key Summit. This is the final section of the famous Routeburn Track, which is another of New Zealand's Great Walks. We enjoy an informative nature walk and views of the Darran Mountains and Hollyford Valley. *Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

\* If you have chosen the kayaking option you will be picked up at 6.30am by the kayak company to travel to Milford Sound. Paddle for 3 to 3.5 hours in double kayaks to waterfalls, spotting rare wildlife, and generally feeling dwarfed by the enormity of the fjords. Returning to land, you will be reunited with the group after their cruise.

*Please advise us at the time of booking if interested in the kayaking option, as space is limited.*  
Cost: NZ\$125\*

## DAY 9 KNOBS FLAT TO QUEENSTOWN

2 km/45 minutes hiking

After breakfast we take a short hike to check out a beautiful waterfall near our campsite, where you may want to soak up one last little bit of Fiordland by jumping under for a shower! We then make our final drive to Queenstown arriving in the early afternoon.

The afternoon is free for you to use as you wish. Our lodge is within easy walking distance to town. We meet up in the early evening and head out to celebrate the great hikes and adventures we have had together over the last two weeks. *Includes breakfast and lunch.*

## DAY 10 QUEENSTOWN – TOUR ENDS

Today is the end of the tour. Our guide departs early for Christchurch. For those staying on in Queenstown you will be spoilt for choice of adventure activities to try.

Queenstown is the adventure capital of New Zealand and is surrounded by stunning landscapes with superb hiking and cycling tracks. Don't hesitate to ask one of our helpful team for tips of great hikes to do in the area at the conclusion of your trip.

Please let us know if you would like to book a return shuttle to Christchurch (\$60 – arrives Christchurch airport at 4pm).

### “LOVELY 2 WEEKS”

*I just finished two great weeks traveling with Hiking New Zealand across the south island on their “Ultimate South” trip. Our guide Kathryn was a wealth of knowledge and kept our unruly bunch on focus. The trip was an incredibly efficient way to see most of the top sites of the island, get in some great hikes and overnight trips without any of planning or driving you would need to do on your own.*

~ Mospicy - Portland, Oregon, February 2018

### “ULTIMATE SOUTH YOU WERE AWESOME”

*What an awesome experience, professional and knowledgeable guides, great food and the best of company. The scenery was so special and the memory of our time in the South Island of New Zealand will stay with me forever.*

~ happytramper2018 - Sydney, Australia, April 2018



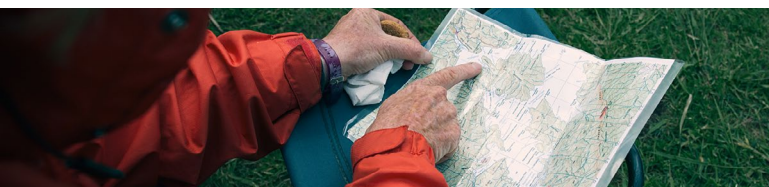
# LIFE ON THE TRAIL

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 (2, 3, 6 and 7)
- 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.

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



**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

Milford sea kayaking (NZ\$139\*), Heli-hike (NZ\$619\*)

\*Prices are correct at time of publishing.

Activities that are included in the price: Milford Sound Cruise.

## 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
<b>Full set (all of above)</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$190</b>	<b>\$250</b>

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*