



# WOMEN'S SOUTHERN WILDERNESS

## ITINERARY



Six hiking-filled days away from the hustle of mainstream tourism.

Gaze in awe at formidable glaciers and stunning mountain peaks as you enjoy day walks in Aoraki/ Mt Cook National Park. Hike up the rocky slopes of the Ohau Range and look down on turquoise glacial lakes. Take a moment to enjoy the serenity as you camp in the wilderness on this excellent overnight hike. Your second overnight hike is a majestic hike up the Matukituki Valley near Wanaka where the mountain scenery is revealed as you hike gently up the valley. Through the dips in the high peaks glimpse views of the Matterhorn-like Mt Aspiring. A side trip up a gorgeous trail through virgin beech forest emerges into a splendid alpine basin below the bulking mass of the Rob Roy Glacier.

This amazing trip ends in the adventure capital of New Zealand - Queenstown.

<b>LENGTH</b>	6 days
<b>GRADE</b>	D - Overnight hikes, some uneven terrain, you need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic
<b>START</b>	10am Christchurch
<b>FINISH</b>	Queenstown
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	Camping, Lodges, Huts
<b>INCLUDED ACTIVITIES</b>	All accommodation
<b>DEPARTURES</b>	2018 Mar: 24   Dec: 15 2019 Mar: 23
<b>PRICE</b>	NZ\$ 2,150 (May 2017 - Apr 2018)

# ITINERARY

## DAY 1 CHRISTCHURCH - AORAKI/MT COOK

### 2 km/1 hour hiking

Our mid-morning departure allows time to discover some city cafes and see one of the parks in the 'Garden City', or a bit of a sleep in if you flew in late the previous evening. Our drive south takes us to Lake Tekapo, famous for its stunning turquoise waters and the quaint Church of the Good Shepherd, perched daintily by the lake. Hike up through wilding conifers and tussock grasslands to the summit of Mt John. Revel in the 360-degree views of the Patagonia-like landscape. 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. We arrive at Aoraki/Mount Cook in the late afternoon where we can relax and enjoy breath-taking views of New Zealand's highest mountain (3,724 metres).

*Accommodation: Aoraki / Mount Cook Alpine Lodge. Includes lunch and dinner.*

## DAY 2 AORAKI/MT COOK

### 5-8 km/4 hours hiking

Today we hike up to Sealy Tarns and enjoy the awesome views of Mt Sefton, Mueller Glacier and across the Hooker Valley to Aoraki/Mount Cook. If you're feeling energetic, join the guide for a further climb from the tarns up to the crest of Mueller Ridge for even wider views of this impressive alpine landscape. Those not wanting to climb to Sealy Tarns or Mueller Ridge can take the flatter option and walk up the Hooker Valley (unguided), enjoying close up views of the Mueller and Hooker Glaciers on the way.

*Accommodation: Aoraki / Mount Cook Alpine Lodge. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

## DAY 3 AORAKI/MT COOK - OHAU

### 7 km/3 hours kayaking

Before leaving the Mount Cook area we travel up the Tasman Valley towards the longest glacier in New Zealand, the Tasman Glacier. Like most glaciers in the world the Tasman Glacier is retreating and the terminal lake increases in size every year. This dynamic environment is dotted with icebergs of all shapes and sizes from the collapsing terminal wall of the glacier. We will be able to see all of this as we take a short walk through the glacial moraine to the shores of the terminal lake. We drive to secluded Lake Ohau, stopping to have lunch and a swim if the sun is shining. This is also where we ditch the van and head into the hills for an overnight adventure. It normally takes a couple of hours to hike up through beech forest beside the mountain stream of Freehold Creek, to a quiet campsite just below the tree line. Pitch a tent and take a seat around the campfire as you listen to the creeks waters rush past.

*Accommodation: Camping at Freehold Creek. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

## DAY 4 OHAU RANGE

### 14 km/7 hours hiking

Leaving most of our gear at the campsite, we ascend above the treeline this morning into a brilliant alpine basin, home to a variety of native alpine plants including the Mt. Cook Lily (*Ranunculus lyalli*), the world's largest buttercup. If you're feeling energetic, join the guide for a dash up to the ridgeline above the basin and onto the Ohau range (1915 metres), where you get a superb vista of the surrounding Southern Alps, Aoraki/Mt Cook and the Mackenzie Basin. In the afternoon we wander back down the valley and hike straight to our accommodation for the night - Ohau Lodge or hop in the van and drive the final 3kms.

*Accommodation: Ohau Lodge. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

## DAY 5 OHAU - MT ASPIRING

10 km/4 hours hiking

After savouring the buffet breakfast and morning coffee we head to Wanaka. The drive follows the Mackenzie Country south before climbing over the tussock lands of the Lindis Pass into the southern lakes district. We will enjoy a picnic lunch on the shores of Lake Wanaka before skirting around the lake to Aspiring National Park. We hike up the Matukituki Valley beneath some fine peaks enjoying the views from the trail as it meanders up the river flats.

*Accommodation: Mt Aspiring Hut. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

## DAY 6 ASPIRING HUT - QUEENSTOWN

2 km/1 hour hiking

We return back down the valley, before turning up the Rob Roy side stream and climbing abruptly to the bushline. This gorgeous trail through virgin beech forest emerges into a splendid alpine basin below the bulking mass of the Rob Roy Glacier. Keep an eye out for cheeky kea (alpine parrot).

We will have a picnic lunch before we begin the remarkable drive over the Crown Range. From the summit there are breath-taking views across the Wakatipu Valley and lakes. The Wakatipu Basin is home to world-renowned wineries. To celebrate the conclusion of our trip we will stop at one of the wineries for a wine tasting where we can toast our success and begin retelling the trip stories! *Includes breakfast and lunch.*



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# LIFE ON THE TRAIL

## GRADE D

- Average of 3-4 hours physical activity per day; up to 7 hours on the longest day.
- 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.
- Terrain mostly tracks. Some may be slippery or rough; some off-track hiking and river crossings.



## GUIDES AND SAFETY

An excellent guide can make the difference between a trip of a lifetime and just an ordinary trip. Our handpicked professionals come from a range of backgrounds. Each has extensive outdoor and hiking experience and a passion for New Zealand's wild and beautiful backcountry. The guides will ensure that your trip is truly inspiring, a huge amount of fun and safe. All guides are trained in 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 participates in the preparation and cooking of meals on the "wild nights." There is always a lot of hiking food - chocolate, nuts, raisins, biscuits. When you go on an overnight hike the group will carry a portable stove.

## ACCOMMODATION

**'Wild nights' vs nights in civilisation** - This trip is a combination of "wild nights", which is 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 lodges.

**Huts** - New Zealand has an excellent network of backcountry huts and you will stay in Mt Aspiring Hut. This is 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.

**Camping** - You will camp at Freehold Creek on the "wild night."

**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.

## 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.

## 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**

## 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 stowage 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're out hiking
- Emergency first aid kit
- Thermarests (3/4 length)
- Plates, cutlery, mugs, pots, etc

## 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 (not 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
- Wind or waterproof over-trousers
- Socks (we suggest 3 pairs)
- Warm hat or balaclava
- Sunhat and sunglasses
- 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.

Hire gear (NZ\$)	5-7 days trip	8-11 days trip	12+ days trip
Backpack (60 litres)	\$30	\$50	\$75
Sleeping bag	\$20	\$50	\$75
Fleece jacket	\$20	\$20	\$25
Thermal top and long-johns	\$20	\$20	\$25
Raincoat	\$20	\$40	\$65
<b>Full set (all of above)</b>	<b>\$90</b>	<b>\$140</b>	<b>\$245</b>
Gaiters	\$20	\$20	\$25
Walking pole	\$20 each	\$20 each	\$25 each

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

## CROSSING RIVERS

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

## KAYAKING

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

## CYCLING & MOUNTAIN BIKING

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

## CAVING

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

## SWIMMING & BEACHES

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

Where conditions are suitable....

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

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

## HOT POOLS (NATURAL)

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

## FIRES

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

## HYGIENE & TOILETS

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

## ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

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

## OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER...

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

**Thank you for reading. Have a wonderful trip.**

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

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