

SCENIC SOUTH HIKE AND BIKE





ITINERARY

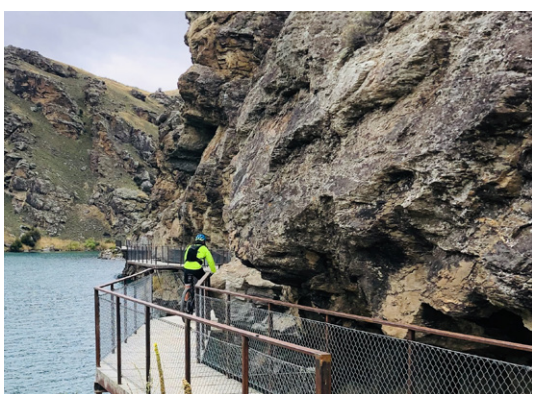
Explore the remarkable landscapes of New Zealand's South Island at a relaxed pace, combining stunning hikes and scenic cycling with plenty of time to soak it all in. Over eight unforgettable days, you'll discover glacial lakes, towering alpine peaks, and lush beech forests - all while enjoying the comforts of well-appointed accommodation and delicious local meals.

Enjoy the Hooker Valley and Routeburn Tracks, and cycle along well-formed sections of the Alps 2 Ocean and Lake Dunstan Trails, with plenty of time to savour beautiful views. From the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo to the majesty of Aoraki Mt Cook and the serene beauty of Milford Sound, each day is filled with variety and connection to nature.

With expert guides to lead the way and a small group of like-minded travellers, this trip is perfect for those wanting an active holiday that balances adventure with comfort and plenty of fresh air.

LENGTH	8 days	
GRADE	B (you need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic)	
START	8:00am, Distinction Hotel Christchurch, Cathedral Square	
FINISH	2:00pm (approx.) Queenstown	
ACCOMMODATION	Hotels and Lodges	
DEPARTURE	2026: 7 Nov | 6 Dec 2027: 24 Jan | 21 Feb | 04 Apr	2027: 7 Nov | 6 Dec 2028: 23 Jan | 21 Feb | 26 Mar
PRICE	NZ$8,800 per person NZ$1,700 (optional) single supplement	









ITINERARY



DAY 1 CHRISTCHURCH - AORAKI MT COOK NATIONAL PARK

10.2 km (6.3 miles) / 3 hours hiking / elevation +/-270 m (890 ft)
Departing Christchurch, we travel across the scenic Canterbury Plains into the breathtaking Mackenzie Country. Along the way, we'll stop at Lake Tekapo to admire its vivid turquoise waters and visit the iconic Church of the Good Shepherd - perfect for a photo or two.

Our journey continues to Aoraki Mt Cook National Park, where we'll stretch our legs on a relaxed walk along the stunning Hooker Valley Track. This rewarding hike offers sweeping views of glaciers on Mt Sefton and The Footstool, as well as the awe-inspiring south face of Aoraki Mt Cook - the tallest peak in New Zealand. *Accommodation: Hermitage Hotel. Includes lunch and dinner.*



DAY 2 AORAKI MT COOK NATIONAL PARK

Up to 9.2 km (5.7 miles), 6 hours hiking, elevation +/-1,180 m (3,870 ft)
Today's adventure takes us up the legendary 2,200 steps to Sealy Tarns, where we'll pause to soak in sweeping views of the Hooker and Mueller Glaciers and along with the ice-carved peaks of Aoraki Mt Cook.

If conditions allow, we'll continue higher onto the Sealy Range and along the ridge to Mueller Hut. Before descending, we'll rest and enjoy the incredible reward - breathtaking 360-degree views of glaciers, ice cliffs, and the towering rock faces of New Zealand's highest mountains.

For those seeking a different kind of thrill, this afternoon offers the option to join the Glacier Explorers boat tour on Tasman Glacier Lake - a remarkable experience that brings you up close to New Zealand's longest glacier. If you'd like to add this option to your tour, please let us know at the time of booking. *Accommodation: Hermitage Hotel. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*



DAY 3 AORAKI MT COOK - LAKE ŌHAU

38 km (23.6 miles), 3 hours cycling, elevation +/-70 m (230 ft)
Today, we head further south to make the most of the outdoor adventures this region has to offer. Our first stop is nearby Twizel, where you'll be fitted with your e-bike for a ride along a scenic section of the renowned Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail. Pedal along peaceful canal roads, cross the Lake Ōhau weir, and follow a purpose-built track that winds around the shoreline of this stunning glacial lake. With breathtaking views at every turn, there will be plenty of time to stop, take photos, and soak up the turquoise waters and surrounding mountains.



We'll arrive at our Lake Ōhau accommodation by bike and have time in the afternoon to relax, wander down to the lake for a swim or soak in the spa pool. Tonight, we'll relax and enjoy dinner and accommodation at the welcoming Lake Ōhau Lodge. *Accomodation: Lake Ōhau Lodge. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 4 LAKE ŌHAU - WĀNAKA

Up to 7.2 km (4.5 miles), 3 hours hiking, elevation +/-650 m (2,130 ft)
Today we leave the Mackenzie Country behind and journey into the stunning Central Otago region. Our route takes us over the scenic Lindis Pass, offering sweeping views of tussock-clad mountains. Arriving in Wānaka, we follow the lakeshore road towards the dramatic peaks of Mount Aspiring National Park.

This afternoon's hike takes us into the lower Matukituki Valley, where we explore Diamond Lake and ascend Rocky Mountain - a striking glacially carved formation known as a roche moutonnée (or "rock sheep"). From the summit, we'll be treated to panoramic views over Lake Wānaka and out to the Southern Alps, including the majestic Tititea/Mount Aspiring. There are several trail options here, ranging from the gentle loop around Diamond Lake to the more challenging climb to Rocky Mountain's summit - something to suit every energy level.

We'll spend the next two nights in Wānaka, a charming alpine town with a vibrant lake-front atmosphere. *Accommodation: Oakridge Resort. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*



DAY 5 LAKE DUNSTAN CYCLE TRAIL

46 km (28 miles), 3-5 hours cycling, elevation +/-580 m (1900 ft)
Today's adventure takes us trail cycling on e-bikes through one of Central Otago's most striking landscapes.

We begin in "new" Cromwell, a town reborn after the original settlement was partially submerged in the early 1990s by the creation of Lake Dunstan - formed when construction of the Clyde Dam backed up the Clutha and Kawarau Rivers. From here, we follow the scenic Lake Dunstan Trail which winds around the Kawarau Arm to Bannockburn, a former gold mining area now celebrated for its vineyards and world-class pinot noir.

The adventure ramps up as we enter the dramatic Cromwell Gorge. The trail clings to rocky bluffs, crossing impressive boardwalks, cantilevered over the water from sheer rock faces, and a high suspension bridge - truly a cycling experience to remember.
Our ride ends in the charming historic town of Clyde, where there's time to explore restored stone buildings now home to boutique shops and cafés. We return to Wānaka for a second night, full of fresh air and good cheer. *Accommodation: Oakridge Resort. Includes breakfast and lunch.*





DAY 6 KEPLER TRACK - TE ANAU

9.8 km (6.1 miles), 3 hours hiking, elevation +/-180 m (430 ft)
Today we travel to the lakeside town of Te Anau, the gateway to Fiordland National Park.

Our hike takes us through lush beech forest to the shores of Lake Manapouri, often described as the "loveliest of all lakes." With its scattered islands, bush-fringed beaches, hidden coves, and a dramatic mountain backdrop, it's easy to see why this lake captures the hearts of so many visitors. This walk offers the perfect introduction to the grandeur and serenity of Fiordland. We'll take our time along the track, soaking up the natural beauty and stopping for photos.

We settle into our accommodation in Te Anau, where we'll stay for the next two nights activities. *Accommodation: Distinction Te Anau. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*



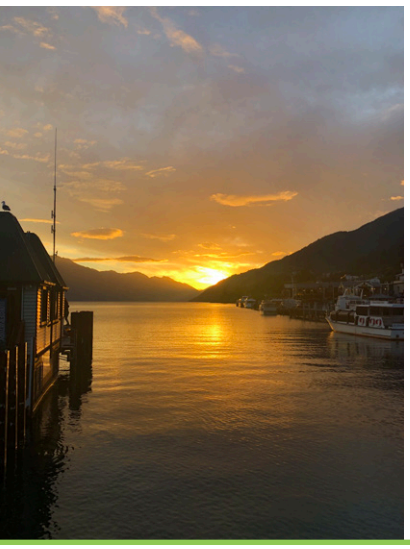












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DAY 7 ROUTEBURN TRACK - MILFORD SOUND - TE ANAU

7.2 km (4.5 miles), 3 hours hiking, elevation +/-490 m (1,610 ft)

Today is all about experiencing the breathtaking beauty of Fiordland. We begin with a stop at The Divide for a hike on the famous Routeburn Track. Climbing to Key Summit, we'll be rewarded with panoramic views of ice capped peaks, alpine lakes, and deep glacially carved valleys.

We then continue to Milford where we'll board a two-hour cruise through this awe-inspiring fiord, surrounded by towering cliffs that rise dramatically from the water's edge. As we glide through the pristine waters, keep an eye out for playful dolphins, curious fur seals, and, if we're lucky, the elusive Fiordland crested penguin. The serenity and scale of Milford Sound will leave you speechless.

On our return to Te Anau, we'll stop at scenic lookouts for photos and to reflect on a truly awe-inspiring day. *Accommodation: Distinction Te Anau. Includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.*

DAY 8 QUEENSTOWN

We say goodbye to Fiordland and travel to Queenstown, where we'll enjoy a celebratory final meal. A chance to reflect, share stories, and toast to the incredible adventure we've had together. Our journey concludes in Queenstown after our brunch. *Includes brunch*

**Drop off locations at the end of our trip are limited, as many Queenstown accommodations are inaccessible to our touring vehicle. Available drop-off locations are Queenstown Airport, or in central Queenstown at the Copthorne Hotel Lakefront, or iSite Visitor Centre.*

"A TRIP OF A LIFETIME"

Martin and Nicole were very knowledgable and made us feel like we were all just a big family. We always knew what was happening and it was reassuring to know we were in such capable hands. I really liked it when we did the tracks that weren't so busy. I will be convincing everyone to do a tour with Hiking New Zealand. Thank you Nic and Martin for making this a trip of a lifetime that I will treasure in my memories and be talking about for years to come.

~ Belinda – January 2025, Southern Alps Hike and Bike

LIFE ON THE TRAIL

GRADE B

- Up to 4-5 hours of physical activity per day
- At times carrying a backpack of 4-5kgs (8-10 lbs)
- Tracks generally in good condition
- Altitude gains of up to 600m (2000ft) on harder days
- You need to be reasonably fit and enthusiastic

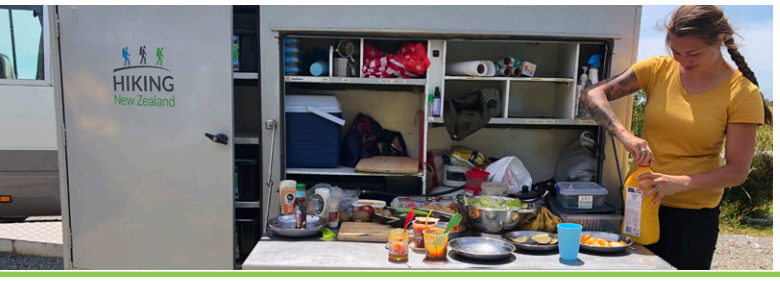


GUIDES AND SAFETY

An excellent guide can make the difference between a trip of a lifetime and just an ordinary trip. That is why we work hard to make sure we hire the best guides. 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. Our guides' energy and dedication will ensure that your time with us is truly inspiring, a huge amount of fun and safe. Structuring breaks for the guide to rest is important to keep them fresh, focused and ready to give their best. Occasionally we engage local experts to add value to experiences which your guide may or may not join. Also, there may be nights your guide stays in alternate nearby accommodation but rest assured you will be able to reach them if needed. Please be gentle with your guide - good guides are hard to find.

FOOD

Energy snacks and nutritious meals are an essential ingredient in helping you perform to your highest standard. Good wholesome meals are provided and plenty of it. Dinner on night 5 is not included. Specific dietary requirements can be catered for. Please advise us at the time of booking if you have any special requirements.



TRANSPORT

The average driving time per day varies; we have some days where we hardly drive at all. On a typical day we might be in the vehicle for 2-3 hours. But some days we will drive for longer. The driving time is a chance to rest and enjoy the fantastic scenery that is forever changing. We travel in a luxury minibus towing a lockable trailer with food, equipment and your luggage. There will be a range of roads - sealed and unsealed. The guides are easily convinced to stop the vehicle if there is a great photo opportunity, vineyard or notable ice cream shop!

ACCOMMODATION

The Scenic South Hike and Bike uses a range of hotels and lodges chosen for their wonderful locations. Accommodation is queen or twin share with ensuite bathrooms. Please note accommodation is subject to availability, and an equivalent style of property could be used if the advertised property is no longer available.



TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is highly recommended that clients take out comprehensive travel insurance.

ActiveEarthAdventures.com HikingNewZealand.com
PO Box 331, Rangiora 7440, New Zealand Email: info@hikingnewzealand.com
NZ: 0800 697 232 - Australia: 1800 141 242 - USA: 1 844 681 4351
Rest of World: +64 3 310 8188

active earth Adventures

HIKING New Zealand

PACKING LIST

What to take

New Zealand's weather is very changeable and cold weather can be experienced at any time of year, especially in the mountains. We recommend wearing lightweight and breathable fabrics while hiking. Merino or polypropylene underwear is great in cold weather and will still keep you warm when it gets wet, unlike cotton. Jeans are not suitable for hiking.

WALKING

- ☐ Hiking boots or shoes
- ☐ Daypack (25-30 litres)
- ☐ Water bottle – 1L
- ☐ Waterproof raincoat
- ☐ Warm fleece/wool jersey (not cotton)
- ☐ Thermal underwear (top and bottom, wool or polypropylene)
- ☐ Socks (we suggest 3 pairs)
- ☐ Warm hat or balaclava
- ☐ Long sleeve shirt (for sun protection)
- ☐ Shorts for hiking (or lightweight hiking trousers)
- ☐ Gloves or mittens (wool or fleece)

GENERAL

- ☐ Spare lightweight shoes or sandals
- ☐ Bike shorts (if you have them)
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Casual clothing for travel and evenings
- ☐ Dry bag for clothes/valuables

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

- ☐ Sunscreen, sunhat and sunglasses
- ☐ Rain trousers
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Togs (swimming costume)
- ☐ Towel (lightweight travel towels are great)
- ☐ Walking poles

SUPPLIED

- ☐ Emergency First Aid kit
- ☐ Drinking water
- ☐ Safety equipment
- ☐ Maps

ADDITIONAL COSTS

Meals

Meals that are included in the trip price are detailed above.

Optional activities

Glacier Explorers, in Aoraki Mt Cook National Park.

DIRECT BOOKING CONDITIONS

Payment

For bookings made four or more months prior to the departure date, a 25% deposit is required, with the remainder due 95 days before your trip. For bookings made within four months of the departure date, full payment is required at the time of booking.

Cancellations

95 days or more prior to departure date: Full refund less a $500 transferable deposit per person to a future departure.
94 to 35 days: 50% of tour price forfeited.
34 days or less: 100% of tour price forfeited.

The tour price is all-inclusive. There will be no partial refunds or credits for unused services within a tour. Any unpaid forfeited amount may be pursued as a debt.

Travel Insurance

It is suggested that clients take out comprehensive travel insurance.

