

Pedaltours

VACATIONS FOR CYCLISTS SINCE 1985

SOUTHERN ALPS

South Island New Zealand

10 Days/ 9 Nights Christchurch to Queenstown

Pedaltours – Since 1985.

The original New Zealand guided bike tour company.

We specialise in wonderful fully supported cycling vacations for cyclists of all levels. Our tours highlight the stunning scenery and fabulous lodges of our country. We have the best rental bikes in New Zealand. Our tours are great value and are the easiest way to have a relaxed cycle vacation.

Our knowledgeable, friendly local guides take pride in showcasing their country for you, while you cycle as little or as much as you want.

Enjoy friendly Kiwi hospitality, a superb scenic mix of mountain passes and easier coastal terrain that will delight cycle enthusiasts –knowing that each evening, there is a comfortable lodge and excellent cuisine awaiting you.

Unspoiled New Zealand - glaciers, rainforests, lakes and snowy peaks; the Southern Alps tour takes you on a breathtaking loop through some of the world's finest scenery. New Zealand was one of the last places in the world to be settled by man and it still retains a rugged, incomparable pristine beauty. "The Lord of the Rings" was filmed here on the West Coast (or Te Wahi Pounamu to give it its Maori name) and is rightly recognized as a World Heritage Area.



The South Island is known for friendly Kiwi hospitality, excellent local cuisine and includes interesting history from the region's gold mining days. The vibrant towns of Wanaka and Queenstown- both on the shores of beautiful lakes with an alpine backdrop – make for a wonderful experience.

Watch a sheep dog demonstration on a real high country sheep station and experience New Zealand at a cyclist's pace.



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Please bring this information with you to the tour start.

Cas.= casual, int.= intermediate, adv = advanced.

Should you need to contact Pedaltours please call the Auckland office: +64 9 585 1338

Cycling distances given are entirely optional; cycle as little or as much as you wish each day, the minibus will always be available.

ITINERARY

The tour starts in New Zealand's second-largest city CHRISTCHURCH, (pop. 350,000); New Zealand's cycling capital and gateway to the South Island. It is an attractive city with the river Avon winding its way through the centre bordered by weeping willows, and has an excellent botanical garden at Hagley Park.

MEETING DAY / DAY ONE:

Christchurch

Meet your guide at 12pm

Chateau on the Park

189 Deans Ave, Riccarton, Christchurch

Phone: +64 3 348 8999 res@chateau-park.co.nz

The hotel is located opposite the green oasis of Hagley Park and about 15 minutes drive from Christchurch International Airport.

Your tour leader will hold a trip orientation meeting prior to lunch. Time will be set aside to fit you to your Pedaltours rental bike or unpack your own. We'll then take a short ride around Hagley Park to try the bikes, or, weather dependent, the Summit Road for a panoramic view over the city.

Day Two:

Christchurch to Arthur's Pass (pop. 300)

Porter's Pass to Arthur's Pass: cas./int. 51 km./ 32 mi

Springfield to Arthur's Pass W.Lodge: adv.68 km /42.5mi

The Pedaltours minibus takes us through the suburbs and across the Canterbury Plains to the Torlesse Range and views of the Southern Alps which stretch for 450 kilometres along the spine of the South Island. Serious cyclists may wish to tackle Porters Pass (929m) but for those that want an easier first day we unload the bikes at the top before descending into an alpine valley. The terrain is rolling as we pass Lakes Pearson, Grasmere and Sarah on our way to the Waimakariri River and the gentle climb through dense beech forest to Arthur's Pass National Park.

Watch the highly skilled sheep dogs at work on this working merino sheep station or go for a bush walk on the property.

Day Three:

Arthur's Pass to Hokitika (pop. 3,400).

Wilderness Lodge to Jackson's cas.50 km / 31 mi

Wilderness Lodge to Kumara: int. 89 km / 56 mi

Arthur's Pass to Hokitika: adv 119 km / 74 mi

We ride through beech forest to Arthur's Pass village and then climb to the top of the pass, dominated by Mt Rolleston (2270 m.)

Highlights and Points of Interest

Arthur's Pass National Park - Magnificent mountain scenery, lakes the dramatic viaduct and descent through the Otira Gorge.

It is a park of contrasts, with dry beech/tawhai forest in the east, luxuriant rainforest on western slopes, and a historic highway and railway running through the middle. The park was established in 1929 and was New Zealand's third national park and the first one in the South Island.



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The descent through Oтира Gorge is very spectacular and initially steep. From Jacksons (a quaint old pub) the terrain is gentle as we ride alongside the Taramakau River. Through stands of native forest, we reach Kumara (tavern) where you can decide to continue to cycle or to drive the last few miles to our lodging overlooking the beach.

Like most towns on the West Coast, Hokitika started as a mining town. Now it depends on tourism and is especially noted for jade or 'greenstone' jewellery. Greenstone (pounamu) is collected from local river beds and can be seen worked in a shop factory.

Day Four:

Hokitika to Franz Josef Glacier (pop.330)
 Mt Hercules summit to Franz Josef cas. 51km / 32 mi
 Lake lanthe to Franz Josef: int. 80 km / 50 mi
 Hokitika to Franz Josef Glacier: adv. 135 km / 84.4 mi

Crossing the Hokitika River we head south through native bush of rimu and kahikatea (white pine). Our route takes us through an agricultural valley and forest. The country is rolling with one climb up Mt Hercules after the town of Harihari (nowhere near as daunting as the name suggests!) and a final flat run from Whataroa. Entering Westland National Park as we pass beautiful Lake Mapourika, we have superb views of snow-capped peaks.

Highlights and Points of Interest

This section of the West Coast road was only completed in 1964. See glow-worms, try whitebait fritters and look out for kea (a cheeky native parrot); they are known to chew bike saddles.

Westland National Park and Franz Josef Glacier: dramatic glacier flowing down to rainforest, with a backdrop of New Zealand's highest snow capped peaks.

Day Five:

Franz Josef: Rest Day

Franz Josef is one of two similar small villages perched near the endpoints of glaciers that come down from the highest mountains of the Southern Alps (the highest peak in New Zealand is Mount Cook, 3,754 m/12,316 ft) to the coastal rainforest. Franz Josef Glacier is named after the 19th century Austrian emperor because the area was surveyed in the 1860's by an Austrian geologist, Julius von Haast.

A walk up the glacier valley gives spectacular views of the terminal ice, while the Westland National Park Visitors Centres house a wealth of information.(Also highly recommended are ski-plane or helicopter flights over snowfields, forests and glaciers. Neighbouring Okarito Beach, site of Abel Tasman's landfall and once a thriving town, is a further option for those who want some more cycling or to visit the large lagoon, renowned for native birds, especially the lovely white heron or "kotuku".

Day Six:

Franz Josef to Lake Moeraki
 Bruce Bay to Lake Moeraki cas. 43 km/ 27 mi
 Fox to Lake Moeraki: int. 89 km / 56 mi
 Franz Josef to Lake Moeraki: adv.114 km / 71 mi

From Franz Josef to Fox Glacier is just 24 km, but includes three quite severe climbs (and descents); it is through beautiful native forest. The remaining terrain is very gently undulating. From Fox to Lake Paringa the road passes through lush rain forest of rimu and rata, flax filled swamps and past rugged hills. The many rivers become raging torrents after rain. With fine weather there will be superb views of Mt. Cook and the Southern Alps.

Take a paddle in canoes on the lake which is stocked with trout or hike to Monro's beach to spot fur seals and (in season) penguins. There is also a complimentary daily guided programme including glow-worm walks and giant eel feeding.



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Day Seven:

Lake Moeraki to Makarora (pop.80)

Haast to Pleasant Flat: cas. 49 km / 31 mi

Lake Moeraki to Pleasant Flat: int. 78 km / 49 mi

Lake Moeraki to Makarora: adv.112 km / 70 mi

Just south of Lake Moeraki, Knights Point affords excellent views of the rugged coastline where seals can often be seen basking in the sun. From Haast we head inland, following the Haast River towards the snowcapped peaks. We pass innumerable waterfalls and much bird life, notably keas, fantails and bellbirds. After lunch the stiff climb through the Gates of Haast is negotiated before the gentle descent to tiny, isolated Makarora, a base for trampers (hikers) and the renowned Siberia Experience.

Day Eight:

Makarora to Wanaka (pop. 7,000) int/adv 66km / 41 mi

Makarora to Hawea: cas. 50 km / 30 mi

The country is now dramatically drier, dense bush giving way to open sheep paddocks. The road closely follows Lake Wanaka, crosses the Neck to Lake Hawea and then recrosses to Lake Wanaka. There are dramatic views of jagged, rocky mountains across the lake. Wanaka is the gateway to Mt Aspiring National park and several winter ski regions.

Highlights and Points of Interest

Lake Wanaka's spectacular location at the foot of the Southern Alps with the wilderness of the Mt Aspiring National Park nearby makes it a magnet for outdoor lovers the world over.

Queenstown: Around 1.9 million visitors are drawn to Queenstown each year to enjoy their own unforgettable travel experience. Visitors come to experience our awe-inspiring scenery, to search for adventure, to seek out relaxation and rejuvenation, or just to breathe our pure mountain air. Queenstown is known as the adventure capital of the world.

Those with energy to spare may like to hike up Mt Iron for more panoramic views or visit Rippon Vineyard (Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling wines) for a more leisurely afternoon.

Day Nine:

Wanaka to Queenstown (pop.35,000)

Wanaka to Cardrona Hotel: cas. 27 km / 17 mi

Wanaka to Q'town via Crown Range: int. 78 km / 49 mi

Our route today takes us up the Crown Range, over the Cardrona Road. We climb through tussocky hills past the historic Cardrona Hotel; on reaching the top there will be amazing views of The Remarkables mountain range and Queenstown. The adjacent Pisa Range (1963m) features New Zealand's only Nordic ski-touring and snow-shoe trails.

We descend the exhilarating hairpin bends down to Arrowtown, an attractive, well-preserved gold-mining village with quaint old cottages and avenues of elms.

An easy flat ride beneath Coronet Peak, a winter ski field, takes us to Arthur's Point where we cross the Shotover River on our way to Queenstown. Look out for jet boats speeding through the narrow gorge. Surrounded by mountain peaks (including the famous Remarkables), and set on Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown has much to offer.

Day Ten:

Queenstown

Options today include a jet boat or rafting trip on the Kawarau or Shotover Rivers, the steamer "Earnslaw" to visit a high country sheep station across Lake Wakatipu, the gondola cableway, Skippers canyon, a flight to Milford Sound (fiord), and much more. Queenstown also has an excellent botanical garden and a very good shopping centre.

It is here that we must say farewell, a safe journey home and hope to see you again.



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Southern Alps 10 days / 9 nights

What's included

Mostly 3 and 4 star accommodation
 9 breakfasts, 5 lunches & 7 dinners
 Full minibus support
 Experienced guide/ cycle mechanic
 Pedaltours souvenir cycle jersey
 Daily route directions and coloured maps with profiles
 Thirty years of experience in offering guided cycle tours in New Zealand

Route rating

Moderate with 2 challenging days. The support vehicle is always available. Cycle as much or as little as you wish.

Accommodation Meal Details

B = Breakfast L = Lunch D = Dinner

Key

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Bar |  Gym |
|  Guest Laundry |  Swimming Pool |
|  Internet Access |  Spa Pool |
|  Restaurant |  Sauna |

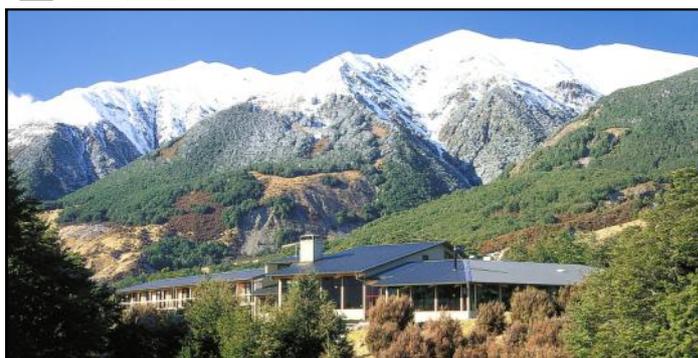
Day 1 (L, D)

Chateau on the Park ★★★★★
 189 Deans Ave, Riccarton, Christchurch
 03 348 8999 www.chateau-park.co.nz
 Nestled in 5 acres of beautiful, tranquil gardens.



Day 2 (B, L, D)

Wilderness Lodge, Arthur's Pass ★★★★★
 03 318 9246 www.wildernesslodge.co.nz
 Nestled in mountain beech forest, at the base of the Southern Alps. Walk from your room into a natural paradise of tussock clearings, moss-lined streams and superb scenery.



Day 3 (B, L, D)

Beachfront Hotel ★★★
 111 Revell Street, Hokitika
 03 755 8344 www.beachfronthotel.co.nz
 Only a stone's throw away from a stunning West Coast Beach and is close to the town's restaurants, cafés, shops and charming craft galleries.



Day 4 (B, L, D)

Punga Grove ★★★★★
 40 Cron Street, Franz Josef
 03 751 0084 www.pungagrove.co.nz
 Stylish boutique accommodation in the heart of Franz Josef Glacier Village. Nestled in a lush native rainforest 5 minutes walk to shops, cafes, bars and tour operators



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Day 5 (B)
Punga Grove Motor Lodge

Day 6 (B, D)
Lake Moeraki Wilderness Lodge ★★★★★
03 750 0881 www.wildernesslodge.co.nz

Boutique luxury eco-lodge sits beside the Moeraki River, surrounded by towering rainforest near the pristine Tasman sea-coast



Day 7 (B, L, D)
Makarora Tourist Centre, Makarora
03 443 8372 www.makarora.co.nz

A "back to nature" experience. Tucked in under Mt Shrimpton, with it's 'A' frame accommodation borders the Mt Aspring World Heritage National park.



Day 8 (B)
Te Wanaka Lodge ★★★★★

23 Brownston St, Wanaka.
03 443 9224 www.tewanaka.co.nz
Te Wanaka Lodge is a contemporary European-style 13-room Bed & Breakfast lodge, located in the heart of Wanaka Village.



Day 9 (B, D)
Millennium Hotel ★★★★★

32 Frankton Road, Queenstown
03 450 0150 www.millenniumhotels.co.nz
A year round resort near the shores of Lake Wakatipu and within walking distance of Queenstown's central shopping area.



Day 10 (B)
Depart. We look forward to seeing you on another Pedaltours adventure one day.