

# The Otago Rail Trail



*A Journey Into The Past Through Spectacular Central Otago!*

## **tour highlights**

- Historical gold works
- Vast wide open expanses
  - Rich in history
  - Easy trail riding
  - Great company
- Experienced attentive guide

## **official partner**

Tuatara Tours is proud to be in an official partnership with The New Zealand Cycle Trail. The objective of the partnership is to create a nationwide network of cycle trails that connect the Great Rides with the rest of New Zealand.



## **the tour**

The Otago Central Rail Trail is ideal for cyclists who wish to see some spectacular Central Otago scenery, at an easy pace, on flat gravelled terrain. Trains typically travel through hills, around hills but (if it can be avoided) not uphill (the maximum gradient is 2%).

The Rail Trail runs for 150kms between Clyde and Middlemarch (close to Dunedin), passing through the towns of Clyde, Alexandra, Chatto Creek, Omakau, Lauder, Otarehua, Wedderburn, Ranfurly, Waipiata and Hyde.

## **tours run**

Tours run: November - April

## **tour cost**

2018/ 2019

Starting in Christchurch: NZD\$1750

## **options & supplements**

Single Supplement: NZD\$475  
 Bike Hire: NZD\$190  
 Electric Bike Hire: NZD\$450

## **fast facts**

Custom Groups: Options are available for this tour\*

Tuatara Tours does not require single travellers pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share, a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

## **about your guide**

Our guides are very experienced, friendly walkers and bikers who love to share their knowledge of New Zealand's flora and fauna and local history. They all hold current first aid certificates, passenger driving licences and are the very best people to ensure your experience will be one to remember.

## **at a glance**

DAY 1 CHRISTCHURCH TO CLYDE

DAY 2 CLYDE TO LAUDER

DAY 3 LAUDER TO RANFURLY

DAY 4 RANFURLY TO HYDE

DAY 5 HYDE TO MIDDLEMARCH TO CHRISTCHURCH

Activities: Cycling  
 Accommodation: Historic Hotel, Motel

Trip Duration: 5 Days, 4 Nights  
 Grade: Easy



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## **what's included**

*Central Otago!*



We suggest flying in the night before the tour departs, however if you plan to fly into Christchurch on the morning of the tour then you need to have landed and be in arrivals by 8:30am. Your guide will then come and collect you as the tour is leaving town. We don't recommend catching flights on the same day as the tour departs or finishes.

\*Please enquire for further information

## **frequently asked questions**

### **What do I carry while on my tour and what happens to the rest of my luggage?**

On a walking, cycling or kayak tour your extra luggage will be transported for you each day to your accommodation that night. All you need to have with you is your daypack with your lunch, clothing requirements, camera and incidentals. For cyclists, this can be left in the support vehicle while you are cycling as this is always close by for ready access. Please ensure the luggage you are sending on ahead is limited to one item and is packed in an easily transported overnight bag or suitcase.

On a hiking tour where huts and lodges are less accessible by vehicle, you may be asked to carry your own luggage for some or all of the days of the tour, please refer to your itinerary for details. For this reason we recommend you pack as lightly as possible and carry only the items suggested on your gear check list. For any of our tours, we recommend the use of a waterproof pack liner to keep your personal items as dry as possible.

### **Do I really need thermals and a fleece, even in summer?**

Yes, as some of the areas visited can be exposed, and New Zealand weather can be notoriously changeable, you must be prepared for all weather conditions.

- Accommodation
  - Based on double / twin share
  - Night 1: A charming turn of the century hotel converted into bed and breakfast accommodation in either ensuite or shared facility rooms. Guest lounge and dining room.
  - Night 2 : The original local store, renovated to provide modern bed and breakfast accommodation. Private rooms with shared bathrooms, communal kitchen and lounge area.
  - Night 3: An historic stage coach inn, rooms are simply furnished, with ensuite bathrooms. Hotel has guest lounge with large open fire, bar and restaurant.
  - Night 4: Modern Motel . Ensuite bathroom.
- Food
  - You will enjoy great local cuisine; continental breakfasts and hearty packed lunches during the day, and either restaurant meals or wholesome home-cooked fare prepared by your host/hostess in the evenings. If you have any dietary issues or food allergies, we are happy to cater for these, please advise the office of details when you make your booking. Alcohol is not included in the tour cost, but is available for purchase.
- Luggage
  - Tuatara Tours transports all your luggage for the duration of the tour. All you carry is a small day pack with your personal gear, drink and lunch. We do the rest
- Tour Kit Bag - Exclusive to Tuatara Tours
  - To ensure you get the very best out of your journey with the least of fuss, we provide you with a calico kit bag full of useful goodies. This will be given to you at the start of your tour.
- An experienced guide
- All transport - support vehicle for the duration of the tour
- Access and Concession fees paid to the Department of Conservation
- Entrance fees for Hayes Engineering, Curling and visit to the Real Dog Company
- NZ Goods and Service Tax (GST)
- Safety and Risk Management
  - To ensure maximum safety for all, our guides are certified first aiders and fully qualified drivers. Tuatara Tours operate under a Safety and Risk Management Plan which is regularly audited and approved by a qualified and independent auditor.





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## frequently asked questions

### How many people are in each group?

Typically, we take a maximum of twelve people on each tour. We feel this gives you the best opportunity to gain as much from your experience as possible and keeps the feel of each tour relaxed and friendly. We are happy to discuss options for groups of more than twelve with you.

### How fit do I need to be?

The main purpose of a guided tour is to enjoy your surroundings and learn from your local guide, it's not a race, however the more you can prepare for a tour, the better the experience will be for you. As a general guideline we suggest the following activity level guide for our tours.

**Easy:** An average level of fitness, Walk 7km, Bike 15km on well-formed tracks and roads with very little incline.

**Mild:** An average level of fitness, Walk 12km, Bike 25km on well-formed tracks and roads with average incline.

**Moderate:** An above average level of fitness, Walk 20km, Bike 45km on formed tracks and roads with some average to steep inclines at times.

**Challenging:** An above average level of fitness, Walk 20+ km, Bike 50+km on partially formed tracks and roads, some off-road, some steep inclines, some easy river and creek crossings.

### Do you have bikes I can hire?

We have cycles for hire and recommend you use them as they are tried and true in the areas we operate. All of our cycles are fully maintained and serviced before they leave. We also supply you with a cycle helmet and safety vest in the cost of your cycle hire. You may use your own cycle, but please ensure it is well maintained and fully serviced before your tour starts.



## itinerary

### Day 1 Christchurch to Clyde

We depart from Christchurch for the drive south, via the inland route through to Lake Tekapo and on to Twizel where we stop for lunch and then have a relaxing ride to ensure that our bikes are the correct fit.

We then board the bus to drive through the Mackenzie Country, cross the Lindis Pass, then descend down past Cromwell and travel alongside the scenic river gorge to Clyde.

This is a fantastic day, as you enjoy the huge scenery that makes the area so famous. It is majestic country that the artist Grahame Sydney loves to paint. We eat out at a restaurant in Clyde, and stay in the beautifully restored historic Dunstan House that night.

### Day 2 Clyde to Lauder - 44km

The actual Rail Trail ride starts today. We leave Clyde, crossing the flat rural countryside until Chatto Creek..... where we stop for lunch. The trail then starts to rise before levelling off at Omakau, where we briefly leave the trail and take a short ride around the quaint township of Ophir.

In the afternoon we make a side trip in the bus to the historic gold-mining town of St Bathans, and walk around the beautiful Blue Lake..... with a mandatory stop at the Vulcan Hotel!

The highlights of today are the wooden trestle Muttonville Viaduct; the Old Tucker Hill gold diggings; views of the Dunstan Mountains and Raggedy Range; and (hopefully) sighting brown trout in the Manuherikia River.

At the end of the day we drive back to Lauder, for a relaxing drink at the pub before dinner.

Our accommodation tonight is at the charming (converted) historic Lauder Store.

### Day 3 Lauder to Ranfurly - 35km

On the third day we cycle through two tunnels and over two rail bridges. Below us at the time are a willow tree edged gorge and welcoming river pools. We finally emerge into the scenic Idaburn valley, and then have a last easy climb up to the summit of the trail. We then enjoy the descent down to the art deco township of Ranfurly



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## frequently asked questions

### **Some tips for training:**

Undertake your training using the clothing and footwear you intend to complete the tour in, this will give you the opportunity to make sure they will be suitable for the purpose and to break in your foot wear so as to avoid any discomfort. Train with your pack or day pack on so you get used to bearing the weight and include a variety of terrain in your training including hills and off road. As much as we'd like to we can't guarantee fine weather on your tour so don't hesitate to get outdoors and train on the rainy days as well.

### **What will the weather be like?**

New Zealand is known to have four seasons in a day so you should always be prepared for sudden changes in weather or temperature and have the appropriate gear with you at all times. Rain can be expected at any time throughout the year.

Spring (September-November) and Autumn (March-May) are generally cooler months for experiencing the outdoors with temperatures averaging 15-25 degrees during the day.

Summer (December-February) is usually warmer with averages of 20-30 degrees and longer sunshine hours due to daylight saving. As New Zealand has very little air pollution, UV rays are strong during the summer months and a good sunscreen and a hat are recommended for outdoor activities during the heat of the day.

The highlights of today include the engineering marvel of the Poolburn Gorge Viaduct and tunnels; the vast wide open Ida Valley (made famous by the artist Grahame Sydney); the Idaburn dam (known for its winter curling); and a trip to Hayes Engineering Works (Hayes invented the wire strainer, pulley block and cattle stop at the beginning of the 20th century); and visiting the town of Wedderburn.

We also drive to Naseby, which is a small forestry township, and play a game of curling (if you can imagine bowls on ice then you are on the right track....they have the only dedicated curling rink in the Southern Hemisphere). We continue on to the famous Kyeburn gold diggings and the historic Dansy's Pass Inn..... where we dine and stay at the end of the day.

## **Day 4 Ranfurly to Hyde - 46km**

We head off from the Dansey's Pass Inn to the Real Dog Equipment Company, to see the famous Antarctic huskies and Alaskan malamutes in action..... before starting the ride for the day (which has some of the best riding of the trip). We follow the trail from Waipiata to the edge of an old lake, before entering the Taieri Gorge. The trail then crosses through further tunnels and bridges..... before a fast downhill to the end of today's cycling at Hyde.

The highlights of today's cycle include crossing the vast Maniototo Plains; following the Taieri River as it snakes around the Rock and Pillar Range; crossing the stone bridge over Cap Burn; and experiencing the 32 metre high Price's Creek Viaduct, and the 152 metre long tunnel.

Tonight we return to Ranfurly where we stay for the night.

## **Day 5 Hyde to Middlemarch - 27km (all downhill)**

The highlight of the final day's ride includes views of the Rock and Pillar and Taieri Ranges; the Hyde Railway Disaster memorial; and dropping down into the Strath Taieri Plain.

We end at Middlemarch – which is a small farming town that is well known for the Easter singles Ball. Girls travel there to meet eligible rugged young Southern Men who come down to the ball from their hill country stations. In the afternoon we make our way back to Christchurch, arriving at around 6pm. Alternatively you can catch a shuttle back to Clyde or Queenstown, or extend your holiday with a ride on the historic Taieri Gorge Railway (additional cost) and finish in Dunedin.

This is a fantastic trip, particularly for novice cyclists who want to experience the wonderful scenery and pioneering history of Central Otago.





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## **responsible travel**

None of us could deny the benefits of travel in broadening our horizons and our way of thinking about the world we all share; travel breaks down barriers and provides valuable insights into other ways of life, it challenges us to step outside our comfort zone and to learn from those around us.

Our responsibility as participants in this journey is to acknowledge our impact on the environment and the communities in which we travel and to consider our individual contribution now and for the benefit of future generations.

We are Qualmark endorsed; New Zealand tourism's official benchmark for environmental standards and quality control. Wherever possible our company utilises local products and services, we support conservation efforts to preserve our natural and cultural heritage and we respect and care for the unique environment we travel in. Make your commitment to responsible travel with us.

## **trip grading**

To determine the grade of a particular adventure we consider a number of factors.

These include the condition of the terrain, the altitude, the number of pass crossings and the length of the trip.

The Otago Rail Trail is graded Easy: An average level of fitness, Walk 7km, Bike 15km on well-formed tracks and roads with very little incline.

## **adventure travel**

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are mentally flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise.

If you are uncertain about your suitability for this tour, speak with us and we can help guide you in the right direction

## **pre and post tour accommodation**

If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation we can help

### **Contact us at**

- ▶ New Zealand: 0800 377 378
- ▶ Australia: 1 800 044 633
- ▶ World: +64 3 962 3280
- ▶ Email: [info@tuataratours.co.nz](mailto:info@tuataratours.co.nz)
- ▶ Web: [www.tuataratours.co.nz](http://www.tuataratours.co.nz)

## **what's not included**

- pre and post tour accommodation
- alcoholic drinks with meals
- personal expenses
- gratuities, tipping is not expected in NZ but gratefully received. It is at your discretion whether or not to reward for excellent service

## **custom tours**

### **▶ We Can Customise Existing Tours To Suit.**

You may want to spend an extra day or you may want to add another element to your tour!

### **▶ We Can Design A New Tour Just For You.**

We have years of experience in creating custom-made tours for groups, so if you are planning a tour for your friends, family, club, corporate workplace.... contact us now.



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## **have you considered?**

### **New Zealand Walking Tours**

The Akaroa Walk  
The Franz Josef Trail  
The Mesopotamia High Country Walk  
The Queen Charlotte Walk  
The West Coast Trail  
The Hump Ridge Track Walk  
The Coromandel Explorer Walk  
The Tongariro Crossing Walk  
The Lake Waikaremoana Walk  
The Abel Tasman Walk - 3 Days  
The Abel Tasman Walk - 5 Days  
The Abel Tasman Walk/Kayak - 3 Days  
The Abel Tasman Walk/Kayak - 5 Days

### **New Zealand Hiking Tours**

The Heaphy Track  
The Lake Waikaremoana Great Walk  
The Stewart Island Track  
The Tongariro Crossing Walk

### **New Zealand Cycling Tours**

The Tekapo Canal Trail  
The Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail  
The Westland Wilderness Cycle Trail  
The Otago Rail Trail  
The Queenstown Cycle Trail  
Around The Mountains Cycle Trail  
The Clutha Gold Cycle Trail  
The Roxburgh Gorge Cycle Trail

### **Japan Walking Tours**

All of these tours and more available at  
[www.tuataratours.co.nz](http://www.tuataratours.co.nz)

## **pre tour checklist**

**Please ensure you have the following compulsory items for your cycle tour:**

Medium size day pack (this can be transported for you in the support vehicle while you are cycling)

- Waterproof rain jacket with hood
- Comfortable walking/riding shoes, we suggest lightweight walking shoes suitable for cycling and for any extra short walks you may choose to do.
- Woollen (merino) or polypro thermals (top and bottom)
- Polar fleece jacket or top or woollen jumper
- Gloves-fleece or woollen or cycle gloves if you have them
- Pair of shorts (preferably quick-dry fabric, no jeans) or cycle shorts if you have them.
- Personal first aid items and any essential medications

**The following are highly recommended but not compulsory:**

- Swimsuit and small towel
- Sun hat , sun glasses, sun block
- Pair of light shoes or sandals for the evenings
- Casual attire for the evenings
- Personal toiletries include toilet roll or tissues as none are provided in the trackside toilets
- Insect repellent
- Camera
- Drink bottle (we supply you with one bottle, but you may wish to bring another)
- Head torch or small torch for the tunnels

If you are bringing along your own bike, you must ensure your bike has been fully serviced and is in a roadworthy and safe condition to ride. You must also ensure you bring spare tyres or tubes as we only carry a basic stock for the bikes we hire out.

All our hire bikes come with helmet, hi-vis safety vest and have a standard "gel-tech" seat however you are welcome to bring your own helmet or gel seat cover if you prefer.





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## **Tuatara Tours - experienced and innovative!**

Tuatara Tours is an experienced and innovative walking and cycling adventure company, based in the South Island of New Zealand. The vision at Tuatara Tours is to encourage as many people as possible to be involved in fun, adventure and the outdoors. We ourselves walk, run, mountain bike, road bike and occasionally participate in multi-sport adventure races... to the best of our ability. We are not champions – but we are out there! We understand the outdoors and we revel in the country, people and climate that we work with

## **our team is here to provide the best experience**

We only have one world and we have to share it with each other. Much of the attraction for our clients is to experience unspoiled and un-crowded landscapes. It is our challenge to ensure that in this sharing of the experience, we minimise where possible, the impact of our business.

Through the introduction of strict environmental guidelines, we minimise our impact on the environment we live and work in.

## **subscribe to our newsletter**

Our newsletter will be emailed to you monthly on the first working day of every month.

- latest trips
- travel advice
- events & attractions
- and more!

Go to [www.tuataratours.co.nz](http://www.tuataratours.co.nz) and click the free subscription button.

## **how to book**

Go to [www.tuataratours.co.nz](http://www.tuataratours.co.nz), click the enquiry button and submit your booking request using the form provided.

We enjoy talking to people about their travel interests. So feel free to contact us directly if you'd rather not fill out a form.

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## **Tuatara Conservation**

Tuatara Tours are proud to be actively involved in Tuatara Conservation.

Tuatara Tours has formally adopted "BP" a male juvenile tuatara who resides at Orana Park in Christchurch and is part of the conservation programme to ensure the safe future of these amazing reptiles.



## **country information**

### **Culture**

New Zealand has a diverse multi-cultural population, the majority of whom are of British descent. New Zealand's indigenous Maori make up around 14 percent of the population. The culture of its indigenous Maori people affects the language, the arts, and even the accents of all New Zealanders. New Zealanders embrace new technology and culture, but they also have a background of quiet but rugged individualism, self-reliance and a passion for invention. Many New Zealanders travel extensively and thrive on learning and experiencing other cultures. They are renowned for their openness, ingenuity and "easy-going" nature.

### **Environment**

Fourteen spectacular national parks preserve New Zealand's natural heritage enshrining a huge variety of landscapes, vegetation and wildlife, New Zealand encompasses rich farmland, mountains, rivers and unsurpassed scenery. The country is slightly bigger than the UK in size. Three-quarters of the population live in the North Island with more than a third of New Zealand's population living in the largest city, Auckland.

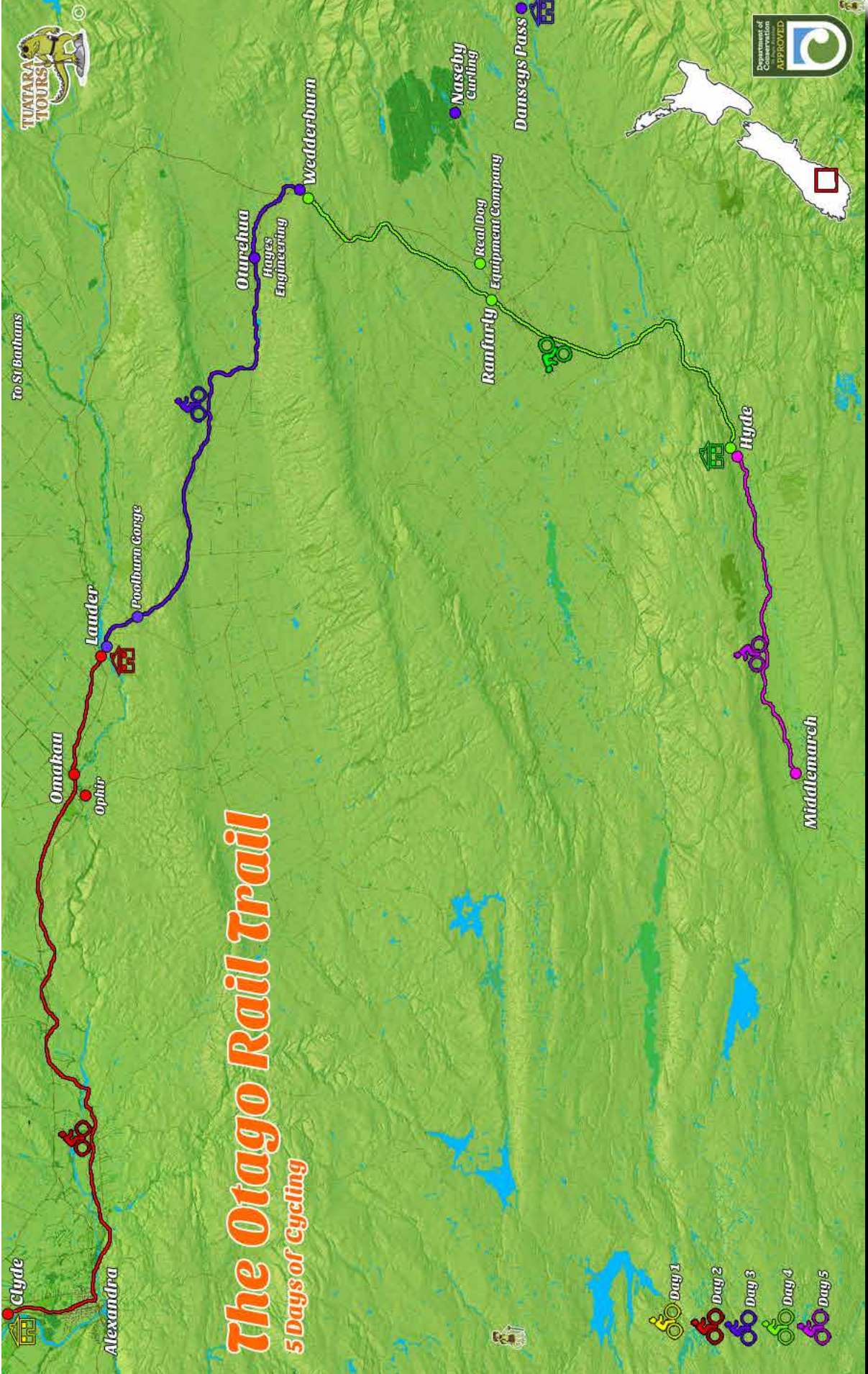
The South Island - with its lakes, fiords and spectacular outdoor scenery is the most popular destination for tourists. The gateway to the South Island is Christchurch - a city of approximately 340,000 people.

### **Recreation**

New Zealand's stunning landscapes, lush forests, amazing wildlife and pleasant climate make it a haven for many outdoor activities, and a great place to relax and enjoy life. New Zealanders love the outdoors, especially tramping, camping, skiing and snowboarding. Sailing, surfing and swimming are also favourite pursuits. New Zealand's sports and recreation facilities are inexpensive, abundant and very accessible.







# The Otago Rail Trail

5 Days of Cycling

- Day 1
- Day 2
- Day 3
- Day 4
- Day 5



To St Bathans

Clyde  
Alexandra

Omakau  
Ophir

Lauder

Poofburn Gorge

Oturehua  
Hayes Engineering

Wedderburn

Naseby  
Curling

Ranfurly  
Real Dog Equipment Company

Danseys Pass

Hyde

Middlemarch