

The Tekapo Canal Trail



Soaring Landscapes & Turquoise Waters under the watchful eye of the mighty Mount Cook (New Zealand's highest mountain).

tour highlights

- Picturesque glacial lakes
 - Aqua canals
 - Rich in history
- Birdwatchers paradise
 - 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

Tuatara Tours will take you from Christchurch right into the heart of the South Island of New Zealand for **The Tekapo Canal Trail**. You will soak up the magical views and discover the history of the Mackenzie Country in four leisurely paced days of pedalling. Join us for an unforgettable guided bike tour alongside the picturesque glacial lakes and canals, under the watchful eye of the mighty Mount Cook (New Zealand's highest mountain).

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 LAKE TEKAPO

DAY 2 LAKE TEKAPO TO MT COOK & TWIZEL

DAY 3 TWIZEL TO LAKE OHAU

DAY 4 LAKE OHAU TO CHRISTCHURCH

tours run
Tours run: November - April

tour cost
2019/ 2020
Starting in Christchurch: NZD\$1895

options & supplements
Single Supplement: NZD\$475
Bike Hire: NZD\$180
Electric Bike Hire: NZD\$400

fast facts

Activities: Cycling
Accommodation: Resort & Lodge

Trip Duration: 4 Days, 3 Nights
Grade: Easy



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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. 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

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.



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what's included

- Accommodation
 - Double or twin share. If single room accommodation is requested, an additional fee per person is payable to cover this requirement for the duration of your tour.
 - Night 1 : Hotel villas, each with private bedrooms, shared bathroom, and open plan lounge area with views of Lake Tekapo.
 - Night 2 : Comfortable Country Hotel, large private rooms with ensuite bathrooms and tea/ coffee making facilities.
 - Night 3 : Lakeside Alpine Lodge. Private rooms with queen and single bed, ensuite bathrooms.
- 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
- 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 Lake Tekapo

You depart from Christchurch and enjoy a scenic and informative drive through to Lake Tekapo, the centre of the South Island. At Tekapo the astounding panoramic views from the top of Mt John Observatory will take your breath away! It is reputedly an area that enjoys the world's clearest night sky.

As your cycle experience unfolds you are immersed in the incredibly scenic landscape of turquoise coloured glacial lakes and tussock-clad hills, with the stunning backdrop of snow-capped mountains.

You pedal past the world famous Church of the Good Shepherd (which offers awe-inspiring views of Lake Tekapo and the Southern Alps through its altar window). You then ride alongside Lake Tekapo, taking in the views of the magnificent lake and mountains, and in early summer hectares of Russell Lupins in attractive shades of pinks and purples.

This evening you relax at a resort hotel that has unbelievable panoramic views across the turquoise waters of the lake. Optional extra's include a soak in the hot pools close by, or an evening excursion to the Mt John observatory.

Day 2 Lake Tekapo to Mt Cook & Twizel

After breakfast, you cycle along the emerald blue canals towards Lake Pukaki, with a brief visit to the Mount Cook Salmon Farm. **(Due to maintenance on the Tekapo Canal Road we take a detour directly to Lake Pukaki and ride along the lake and then onto Mt Cook - as below)** Travel around the end of Lake Pukaki and (depending on how long you want to cycle) up to the Mt Cook Village at the base of Mount Cook itself. You then pass Irishman Creek, an area also well known as the farm station where the world's first jet boat was built and tested.

While travelling up the rambling road towards Mount Cook you can enjoy stops at Peter's Lookout, Boundary Stream and Glentanner. The Mount Cook National Park carries World Heritage status and contains almost all of New Zealand's major mountain peaks - stretching approximately 70kms along the Southern Alps.

On your arrival at Mt Cook there will be time for a look around the Village before heading off by coach to your lodge for the evening.



The evening is spent in a quality lodge, right in the heart of the Mackenzie Country.

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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.

itinerary cont'd

Day 3 Twizel to Lake Ohau

You wake up with a wonderful view of the snow capped mountains, and after breakfast you will cycle leisurely along the canal road to Lake Ruataniwha. This is an interesting man-made lake and you will enjoy the local tale of how it was created. A project engineer spent millions of dollars supposedly getting the 'shoreline redeveloped'.....but instead built a world class rowing course. You join the Twizel River Trail between Twizel and Lake Benmore. This trail runs for 12km, parallel to the Twizel River, and offers wonderful views of the Mackenzie Basin. The trail ends overlooking the beautiful Lake Benmore, which is New Zealand's largest man-made lake – famous for its fishing. Your next experience is to travel a short distance to the start of the Lake Ohau road. From there you will enjoy a relaxed cycle along gradually sloping downhill roads to the magnificent Lake Ohau. A leisurely pedal along the south side of the lake also offers you another opportunity to experience the wonderful views of the snow-capped mountains in the background.

You overnight at the beautiful Lake Ohau Lodge, which provides stunning panoramic views of the lake, mountains and surrounding countryside.

Day 4 Lake Ohau to Christchurch

On the final day, you enjoy a ride to the head of Lake Ohau and into the Ruataniwha Conservation Park. This park consists of over 36,800 hectares of rugged mountain landscapes, encompassing beech (Tawhai) forest, sparkling clear rivers, and the Ohau and Ben Ohau ranges.

Your final group lunch is alongside the shoreline of the lake where you celebrate the conclusion of your four day biking experience - before departing by coach back to Christchurch.



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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 Tekapo Canal 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
- ▶ Web: 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 Kaikoura Trail
The Kenepuru 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 Hanmer Cycle Trail
The Kaikoura Trail
The Kenepuru Trail
The Tekapo Canal Trail
The Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail
The Molesworth Cycle Trail
The Westland Wilderness Cycle Trail
The Otago Rail Trail

Japan Walking Tours

All of these tours and more available at 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
- Insect repellent
- Camera
- Drink bottle (we supply you with one bottle, but you may wish to bring another)

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 and click the free subscription button.

how to book

Go to 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.



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4 Days of Cycling

