

# two thumbs high country trek



## trip highlights

View the Canterbury Plains from a spectacular highpoint on the edge of the Southern Alps

Relax on a high country station in preparation for the 4 day self supported trek to come

Experience backcountry huts and tracks through a tussockland expanse of small mountain lakes and streams

Ascend a 2000m peak with stunning views over vast lakes and high plains stretching to the Southern Alps themselves

Watch a sunset over the Aoraki Mount Cook National Park from a ridgeline with amazing views of the glacial retreats in nearby Tasman and Hooker Glaciers



<b>Trip Duration</b>	7 days
<b>Grade</b>	Moderate level
<b>Activities</b>	7 day hike
<b>Accommodation</b>	3 nights hut/camping and 3 nights farmhouse/motel

## Kia Ora from Adventure South

Thank you for your interest in our Two Thumbs High Country Trek adventure. It's a superb adventure and we hope you can join us. Adventure South has been operating active holidays throughout New Zealand since 1992. Thanks to our experience we're confident to say that we offer the very best cycling, trekking and adventure travel itineraries available in New Zealand today.

There's simply no other collection of New Zealand itineraries that can match the geographic coverage, originality and overall quality of our active New Zealand adventure holidays. An Adventure South holiday aims to take you beyond the more popular and busy trails to provide you with a truly unique New Zealand wilderness experience.

We're here to show you that there are many, many more trails and cycling routes in our great country that are the new frontiers in adventure tourism - beautiful, scenic, and without the crowds. We aim to explore these delicate environments in a sustainable manner to ensure we leave as little impact as possible from our visit. We'd be honoured to introduce you to the wide variety of natural wonders that New Zealand is famous for. Go forth, go south - join us on this amazing small group, value packed adventure!

## why travel with Adventure South?

"Small Groups, Great Guides, Superb Holidays."

This comment encapsulates an Adventure South active holiday in New Zealand. The phrase was not born from a long and tortuous strategic planning process, it came from a client review! We could not have said it any better. Our client feedback also confirms that what helps make our holidays different are the quality of our professional guides. They share their humour, compassion and wilderness experience to ensure that you have a great vacation and the right degree of personal challenge.

On an Adventure South tour you can also expect the right, proven equipment is provided for your tour; the food is delicious, plentiful and can be catered to your dietary requests; your guides are all First Aid trained; that the itinerary you have chosen has been carefully crafted from decades of personal experience in the New Zealand wilderness, not from a guide book recommendation.

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*A 7-day challenging trek with several days involving carrying personal and group equipment as we explore the backcountry. Three ascents of peaks enroute.*



## trip cost

Joining Christchurch: NZD\$2295 / AUD\$1840

## options & supplements

## the trip

For those seeking an energetic self supported 7 day trekking holiday, the mountains of Mesopotamia and the Two Thumb High Country Conservation Park in New Zealand provide the ideal opportunity.

## about your leader

Our Guides are one of our biggest assets. We pride ourselves on the standard and quality of these great people who you will be spending your holiday with. They come from all walks of life but they all have a common desire to give you the best possible experience, heaps of fun and lots of fond memories to take home with you. We provide you with the services of two guides for many of our trips, (this may depend on the size of the group). All are certified in first aid and CPR and many are advanced mountain guides. To check out more about our guides see our 'Who are we' page on our website ([www.advsouth.com](http://www.advsouth.com)).

## at a glance

DAY 1	CHRISTCHURCH TO PEEL FOREST
DAY 2	PEEL FOREST TO MESOPOTAMIA STATION
DAY 3	MESOPOTAMIA STATION TO BACKCOUNTRY HUT
DAY 4	BACKCOUNTRY HUT TO ROYAL HUT
DAY 5	ROYAL HUT TO REX SIMPSON HUT
DAY 6	REX SIMPSON HUT TO AORAKI MT COOK
DAY 7	AORAKI MT COOK TO CHRISTCHURCH

## what's included

- All breakfasts (excluding day 1), 7 lunches, and 6 evening meals
- A great guide and transport
- Packs and poles if required - please let our staff know pre tour
- Accommodation as detailed based on a twin share basis with mix of shared and/or private facilities
- All group camping equipment including tents, stoves and eating utensils
- Access and Concession fees paid to the Department of Conservation
- NZ Goods and Service Tax (GST)

## detailed itinerary

### DAY 1 Christchurch to Peel Forest

Important: The night before your tour is to depart your guide will call your pre tour accommodation to advise what time they will collect you the following morning. (Please make sure you have given us information as to where you are staying). If you are not around when your guide calls they will leave a message at reception – its really important that you check with reception if you have not heard from your guide directly. If for any reason you have not heard from your guide by the morning of the tour please call us in the NZ office on 0800 00 11 66 (from within NZ).

From an early (6.30am) start with a briefing at our Christchurch depot, we depart for nearby Lake Coleridge and View peak, our first objective of the trek. By mid morning we start the trek which leads us to the summit of this spectacular vantage point with views into the headwaters of several valley headwaters. We traverse the peak and regain our vehicle and drive through to Peel Forest for tonight's stay.

meals: L,D



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## DAY 2 Peel Forest to Mesopotamia Station

Above the settlement, Little Mt Peel provides a stunning viewpoint across the Canterbury Plains. Surrounding us the native bush provides a beautiful walking environment as we gradually gain height and eventually break out to the tussock cover above. From here it is a further hour or so to the summit and on a fine day, the view is amazing. To the west is the Rangitata, and at its head is Mesopotamia Station, our home for the night.

**meals: B,L,D**

## DAY 3 Mesopotamia Station to Backcountry hut

The morning starts with packing required to exist over the next three days as we start our unsupported section of the trip. Personal and party gear and a share of group food all fit into the pack and eventually we drive to the road end and from here it is all on our back. Fortunately the trek reaches the farm track that takes us through bush stands and small passes, to finally reach our first backcountry hut and tonight's stay.

**meals: B,L,D**

## DAY 4 Backcountry hut to Royal Hut

Above the hut, the track follows the historic trail over Bullock Bow Saddle, constructed to access the remote headwaters of Bush Stream, for grazing and farming. The steep grind eventually rewards us with great views into the tussock basin with its numerous mountain tarns and empty countryside. Following the vague track we reach the stream bed and turn to follow this up to the historic Royal Hut, home for tonight and providing comfort and shelter.

**meals: B,L,D**

## DAY 5 Royal Hut to Rex Simpson Hut

High above us the ridgeline at 2000m separates us from Lake Tekapo and the Southern Alps. Selecting a suitable spur to gain access, we zig zag up the steep hill above the hut to gain a ridge and the upper basin. From here a final grind up scree slopes gains us the ridge and its stunning views of the eastern side of Mt Cook and the Southern Alps. To find tonight's shelter, we descend the beautiful ridge line as it guides us down to Rex Simpson hut, a private hut high above the turquoise waters of the lake, and offering views across the vast Mackenzie basin.

**meals: B,L,D**

## DAY 6 Rex Simpson Hut to Aoraki Mt Cook

With the road head so close, there is no rush to depart, but finally hut cleaning chores are completed and we descend to our waiting coach for a short drive to the township at the base of the lake. A lakeside picnic provides a refresh, before heading onto Mount Cook village and a final climb to a spectacular viewpoint above the Tasman and Hooker valleys in the early evening. We finally descend to the coach and drive to our nearby accommodation and enjoy a final dinner together.

**meals: B,L,D**

## DAY 7 Aoraki Mt Cook to Christchurch

With a location so steeped in history, we spend much of the morning visiting the new DoC Information center and the nearby Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre and take an optional hike out to Kea Point above the ever-increasing glacial lake. Finally its back on the coach and a final drive back across the Mackenzie basin and the Canterbury Plains to Christchurch and trips end.

**meals: B,L**

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This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

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## fast facts

### Private Groups:

Private group options are available for this trip\*

### Singles:

A single supplement is not available for this trip

### Leader:

Expert local leader

\*Ask our staff for more information

## country information

Stretching North to South for over 2000 km, and split into two main islands - the North and the South Islands - New Zealand is a country of diverse landforms. From the Pacific Island beaches and rolling farmlands in the north, to the volcanic plateau and then onto the soaring mountains within view of the sea in the south, and the sub-Antarctic islands that dot the South Island coastline, the contrasts are many.

The South Island is the 12th largest island in the world. The west coast is dominated by the Southern Alps, which contain more mountains than the European Alps altogether, and home to New Zealand's highest peak, Aoraki Mount Cook (3754m / 12,316 ft). The Main Divide, the chain of peaks that forms the backbone of the Alps from Arthur's Pass to Fiordland, splits the South Island into east and west. Several ice ages, and the fact that two continental plates are sliding past each other forming the Southern Alps, means that the scenery is as rugged as the New Zealand fauna and flora is unique. The largest city in the South Island is Christchurch.

The North Island is the smaller of the two main islands of New Zealand. Its northern location means it enjoys a warmer, more temperate climate than much of the South Island, and is much more vastly populated. The centre of the island is primarily a volcanic landscape with vast forests, volcanic peaks, and picturesque lakes. The eastern side of the island is covered with vineyards. Auckland, also known as the 'City of Sails', is the largest city of New Zealand and found on the North Island.

With a population of 4.0 million people, the wilderness areas of New Zealand are many as most 'Kiwis' now live in an urban situation near the coast. The Maori are the indigenous people of the land and they named it Aotearoa 'Land of the Long White Cloud' upon their arrival 1000 years ago. Europeans settled in the early 1800s and the country is alive today with a market driven economy and a blend of European and Asia/Pacific influences to create a buoyant South Pacific culture.

## climate

As a general rule, November to April are the most ideal months for travelling in New Zealand's stunning outdoors. One of the most important things travellers need to know about the New Zealand climate is that it's a maritime climate, as opposed to the continental climate typical of larger landmasses.

Thanks to its position in the path of the 'Roaring 40s' and mountainous terrain, New Zealand's weather can frequently change with amazing rapidity. Because the weather can change so unexpectedly you should be prepared for sudden changes in temperature and weather conditions. This basically means having a good waterproof jacket and some warm clothing. You don't need to bring your winter wardrobe but a good fleece/jumper and good thermals are a must.

The temperature during the South Island summers range from 10-30 °C, with a pleasant 40-50% humidity. Higher altitudes are always considerably cooler and snowfall is not uncommon even in summer. The Southern Alps act as a barrier to the moisture laden winds coming west across the Tasman Sea, creating a wet climate on the west side of the mountains and a drier climate on the east side. The geography also creates a wind pattern, which can in summer be very hot, dry and fierce. Maximum temperatures we may encounter range up to 30°C. Minimum temperatures expected in the Southern Alps in Summer time are around -5°C. Weather is an integral facet of any mountain range and getting to understand and work with this major environmental factor is what will make you more prepared for your tour - any questions about what to expect on your tour talk to one of our sales team.

## accommodation on the trip

The accommodation for this trip has been carefully selected to provide comfort and value in the best locations possible. The accommodation is on a twin share or double room



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## responsible travel

We all have a responsibility to minimise the impact we have on the environment and communities we visit when we travel.

Since our beginnings this has been a cornerstone of our company. The New Zealand travel industry has become a world leader in developing an external audit process to identify quality, and that process has been extended to now include a 3 level Enviro Mark based on company processes. We're very proud that we've received a Gold rating, the highest category; each year since this initiative began.

Being responsible when we travel isn't about a single process or project but rather a way of thinking and then doing.

We started this journey many years ago, and acknowledge we still have a lot to learn. We invite you to join 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 daily hikes on this trek are on simple tracks and the occasional farm track. On the open tops there is seldom any track to follow and the way ahead weaves through tussock and scree. Carrying a pack while trekking in untracked terrain does require additional care. Once we reach Mt Cook village, the tracks are well formed and graded with information panels to provide interest. For you to be able to really enjoy this trip we recommend that you can walk comfortably for a few hours at a time (with breaks included).

We recommend 90 minutes of aerobic type exercise, (either cycling, jogging or power walking) three times a week for the three months leading up to your trip.

basis with private facilities. Please note: although every endeavour is made to stay at the accommodation detailed in the itinerary, occasionally, due to seasonal shortages, we need to use other accommodation of a similar standard. Single supplement isn't available on this tour.

## pre and post tour accommodation

If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation speak to our staff as they can help with different suggestions.

## what you carry

Three days of the tour are fully self supported and you will be required to carry your own clothing, sleeping gear and a share of the groups food and cooking equipment. The rest of the walks on the tour are day walks so a small pack with personal essentials is all you will need to carry. The support vehicle will then take the rest of the equipment.

## what's not included

- Alcoholic and soft drinks with included meals
- Sleeping bag, liner and sleeping mat
- Personal expenses
- Personal rainwear, gaiters etc
- Gratuities, tipping is not expected in NZ but gratefully received. It is at your discretion whether or not to reward for excellent service

## private groups

The adventures featured in our brochures, and on our website, are just a starting point. Planning and providing special group departures is something we do exceptionally well. Over the past 18 years we have developed some exceptional itineraries, from cycling to hiking or combination multi-adventure trips. School groups, charities, work colleagues and cycling buddies have all been part of our experience. Our team can assist you with all aspects of your private group to ensure the trip is tailored just right for your group. Contact our team today.

## subscribe to our e-newsletter

To keep up to date with the new and exciting trip releases, special offers plus more please subscribe to our free e-newsletter at [www.advsouth.com](http://www.advsouth.com)

Or why not view past travellers images and join in on the conversation at <http://www.facebook.com/AdventureSouthNZ>

## trip availability

If this trip seems right for you then we encourage you to call us now to check availability. A popular reason to travel with Adventure South is because of our small group sizes. These can fill quickly so it is important to check your availability well in advance. We always need to ensure other services, like train tickets or accommodations, are also available before we can confirm your place on our tours. To ensure we can assist you onto your New Zealand adventure of a lifetime we ask that you check your trip availability with our team at your earliest convenience.

## how to book

To book an Adventure South holiday, you can book directly online (<http://www.advsouth.com/booking.aspx>) or you will need to complete a booking form (found at the back of our brochure). You can also download a copy from [www.advsouth.com](http://www.advsouth.com). On completion, please fax or post the form to Adventure South or your nearest World Expeditions office, along with



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## 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 trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

## important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

your non-refundable deposit. If you're coming from outside New Zealand call your nearest World Expeditions office or travel agent for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance and additional accommodation. If you're unsure what would be the best option for you call us NZ free phone 0800 00 11 66, AUS free phone 1800 10 70 60, USA free phone 1866 479 9827 anywhere else +64 3 942 1222 or email us on [guide@advsouth.co.nz](mailto:guide@advsouth.co.nz)