



Paradise Plus

19 day Road Cycle Tour from Christchurch to Auckland

- Day 1** Arrival in Christchurch and sightseeing
- Day 2** Christchurch - Twizel: 281km, **33km biking** Tekapo-Canal Road
- Day 3** Twizel - Queenstown: 220km, **61km biking** Lindis P.-Lake Dunstan
- Day 4** Freeday in Queenstown: Walking, bungy, rafting....
- Day 5** Queenstown - Wanaka: 81km, **51km biking** Arrowtown-Wanaka
- Day 6** Wanaka - Fox Glacier: 264km, **81km biking** Makarora-Haast
- Day 7** Fox Glacier - Hokitika : 160km, **62km biking** Franz Josef-Hari Hari
- Day 8** Hokitika - Westport: 145km, **45km biking** Greymouth-Punakaiki
- Day 9** Westport - Nelson: 230km, **65km biking** Westport-Lyell
- Day 10** Freeday in Nelson: walking, kayaking, swimming ...
- Day 11** Nelson - Wellington: 105km, **34km biking** Havelock-Picton
- Day 12** Wellington - Wanganui: 195km
- Day 13** Wanganui-National Park: 125km, **57km biking** Wanganui-Kakatahi
- Day 14** National Park-Rotorua: 200km, **53km biking** National Park-Turangi
- Day 15** Freeday in Rotorua
- Day 16** Rotorua - Whitianga: 245km, **49km biking** Whiritoa-Tairua
- Day 17** Freeday in Whitianga: Excursion to Hot Water Beach, kayaking...
- Day 18** Whitianga - Auckland: 251km, **52km biking** Miranda-Clevedon
- Day 19** Auckland: departure

pacific CYCLE tours
Unit 3, 14 Kennaway Road
Christchurch, 8002
New Zealand
www.bike-nz.com

US TEL: 800 732 0921
UK TEL 0808 234 6780
NZ TEL: +64 3 9829 913
NZ FAX: +64 3 9829 911
reservations@bike-nz.com

Introduction

New Zealand offers a diversity of landscape from volcanoes, hot springs, fast flowing rivers, alluvial plains, native forests alive with the sound of native bird song, to impossibly rugged, snow covered Alps and deep, sheer sided fjords. Where else can you find such variety in a country roughly the size of Great Britain? As one client put it "Yesterday was amazing, I just couldn't imagine today being better, yet it was!" (Dennis Hill) He was still saying that after 19 days!

New Zealand is sparsely populated, with only 4 million people. The roads are generally quiet and the scenery spectacular; a combination which makes it a perfect cycling destination. It is through this constantly changing, uncluttered countryside that you will cycle, your senses invigorated by the sights and sounds of your surroundings.

A combined bus and cycle tour ensures that you can cycle the highlights of both Islands in a relatively short time. You will cycle approximately 700 km, however you are always welcome to ride in the support vehicle whenever you feel the need. Experience has taught us that it's best not to overdo the first couple of days. Stop when you feel you have done enough. Over doing those first few days could spoil your holiday!

Day 1 Christchurch - Arrival

All tour members meet at the hotel early afternoon. Participants arriving today (transfers are between 7am and 2pm only) will be picked up from the airport and transferred to the accommodation. Later in the afternoon we take you on a short sightseeing tour of the city, including the Port Hills and the 'Sign of the Takahē' with its magnificent views over the South Pacific and across the Canterbury Plains to the Southern Alps. The bike fitting (for those that hire bikes) will also be completed this afternoon

No Cycling



Whatever the time of year, Christchurch is the perfect choice for a well-deserved short break, longer stay or even for just a few hours. Christchurch's unique combination of fascinating heritage, beautiful coastline, peaceful rivers and spectacular natural harbour appeals to all ages and provides all the ingredients to make your visit extra special. Christchurch Tourism - the Southern Alps provides a fantastic backdrop to the city. Perched on the coast, the city is the doorway to the Canterbury Plains, which spread westwards towards the mountains.

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To the south-east, Banks Peninsula, formed by two huge volcanic craters, extends into the Pacific Ocean. Nature has been kind to this part of New Zealand and it is nature that offers the richest rewards for the visitor.

Day 2 Christchurch - Twizel

We depart the city in good time this morning and drive across the flat, alluvial Canterbury plains through Ashburton, Geraldine and Fairlie. From here the road climbs the 709m to Burkes Pass, which serves as the northern entrance to the area known as the MacKenzie Basin. The area is now famous for its Merino sheep and Hydro-Electric Power System which consists of 6 lakes joined by large canals. After a short lunch break we start cycling along the canal to Lake Pukaki and then further to Twizel. On a clear day you will be treated to magnificent views of New Zealand's highest mountain, Mt Cook, or Aoraki, the cloud piercer at the head of Lake Pukaki.

Cycling from: Tekapo to Canal Rd Turnoff – 33km, total distance 281km



Aoraki/Mt Cook is New Zealand's highest and largest mountain. Reaching a height of 3754 metres its sheer size and massive bulk easily dwarf the surrounding peaks.

Day 3 Twizel - Queenstown

Today's ride is predominantly downhill, but if the nor'west wind is blowing watch out for strong gusts! Once over Lindis Pass you have left the province of Canterbury and entered Central Otago. Further on you will come to New Zealand's newest hydro lake, Lake Dunstan, on the Clutha River. Cromwell is at the heart of a large pip fruit growing area, with many of the growers selling their wares at roadside stalls, which you will pass on the way to Queenstown. The route into Queenstown follows the Kawarau River through its gorge, past the world famous A.J Hackett bungy bridge and several wineries and many vineyards.

Cycling from: Lindis Pass to Lake Dunstan – 61km, total distance 220km

Day 4 Queenstown – Rest Day/Other Activities Day

Queenstown is an outdoor adventurers playground. Options include: a day trip to Fiordland's, Milford or Doubtful Sound. Or local activities such as shopping, gondola ride to the Skyline restaurant and viewpoint, lake ride aboard the historic steamship Earnslaw, jet boating on the Shotover River, bungy jumping, white water rafting, tandem paragliding, or a visit to the Kiwi house to see New Zealand's national icon in the flesh.

No Cycling

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Welcome to the original home of Bungy...



The Kawarau Bridge. A 43 metre Bungy Jump above the Kawarau River. Situated 20 minutes from the heart of Queenstown.

Originally built to link Queenstown to Central Otago during the gold rush of the 1880's, later replaced by the larger and more modern Battling Betty Bridge in the 1960's. The bridge fell into a state of disrepair and was deemed unsafe until Henry van Asch and AJ Hackett applied for a one month license to use the bridge commercially for Bungy Jumping in 1988. As they say; the rest is history and a piece of New Zealand heritage has been saved. A fee is paid to the Department of Conservation for every jump by AJ Hackett Bungy to maintain the site. In 2002 the company is investing in a new development for the Kawarau Bridge reserve, this will include a Cinematic Bungy Experience, interactive displays, quality cafe and shopping facilities.

Day 5 Queenstown - Wanaka

An early morning visit to Arrowtown, an idyllic & old gold mining town with its lovely tree lined streets and fascinating shops, is followed by a challenging ride over the Crown Range. From the saddle there is a great downhill into the Cardrona Valley. On your left you will pass the historic Cardrona Hotel, a relic from the gold prospecting days. From there we cycle to the beautiful lakeside town of Wanaka.

Cycling from: Arrowtown to Wanaka – 51km, total distance 81km



Here in the heart of the Southern Lakes, ringed by golden hills, snow-clad peaks, ancient forests, crystal-clear lakes and rivers, you'll find time and space to truly enjoy yourself. The town acts as a magnet for New Zealanders and international visitors alike who want to return to sample the delights of a range of activities, cafes, shops and restaurants.

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Day 6 Wanaka – Fox Glacier

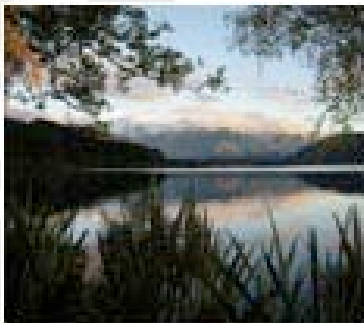
Travelling west toward the main divide of the Southern Alps the road initially follows Lake Hawea, then rejoins Lake Wanaka over a low pass. We witness a gradual change in New Zealand's ever changing landscape. The dry, arid pasturelands of Central Otago slowly give way to the dense native bush of the Mount Aspiring National Park. As we start cycling, the road slowly climbs out of the Makarora Valley and heads towards the newest alpine road to transect the Southern Alps, the 563m Haast Pass. Further on a short walk leads to the 30m Thunder Creek Falls, a good place to stretch the legs and enjoy the rainforest. From here the road follows the Haast River plains into Haast Village, situated in Fiordland National Park, New Zealand's largest World Heritage Park. There may be time to stop at the local Visitor's Centre, which has excellent displays showing how the land has evolved.



The northward journey is spectacular. The road snakes its way through dense rainforest, over fast running rivers and past lovely lakes, such as Lakes Paringa, Ianthe and Moeraki. To the left the rugged, ever changing coastline and to the right the massive, snow covered peaks of the Southern Alps towering above all. Today's destination is the Fox Glacier township, which lies a short distance from it's glacier. A short walk to the Glacier face – just above sea level will be the perfect ending to the day.

Cycling from: Makarora to Haast – 81km, total distance 264km

Day 7 Fox Glacier – Hokitika



This morning you may choose to take an **optional** helicopter flight to the Glaciers (including landing) with spectacular views to Mt. Cook on a clear day. Or maybe take a walk to the picturesque Lake Matheson, which is also known as mirror lake.

Leaving Fox the road twists and turns as it seeks passage through the almost impenetrable rainforest and unforgiving, rugged countryside passing Franz Josef Glacier and heading

towards Ross - a rural service town. From here we continue our trip by bus to Hokitika,

As a fitting finale to the day, take a walk along the nearby beach and watch the setting sun disappear into the sea.

Cycling from: Franz Josef to Hari Hari – 62km, total distance 160km

Day 8 Hokitika - Westport

We drive the 40km north to Greymouth where we visit a greenstone factory with the opportunity to buy jade carvings and jewellery at reasonable prices. From here we bike along the spectacular coastline to Punakaiki, where you can take a walk around the famed blowholes and pancake rocks, so named because the limestone formations look like, well pancakes of course! A visit to a small fur seal colony at Cape Foulwind, near Westport will be the last highlight of the day.

Cycling from: Greymouth to Punakaiki – 45km, total distance 145km



Greymouth is the gateway to the South Westland World Heritage National Park. The Arahura River, which enters the sea 8 kilometres north of Hokitika, is a traditional source of pounamu (greenstone) for the Maori people and still yields a large proportion of the Coast's continuing supply.



Cape Foulwind is a conservation area toward the northern end of the West Coast of the South Island. It's main feature is a breeding colony for the New Zealand Fur Seal, which is well worth a look, since you get an excellent view of the nursery area from the viewing platforms on the cliff above it.

Day 9 Westport - Nelson

Starting on the Coast you will travel northeastwards along the gorgeous Buller gorge, with its deep, slow flowing waters contrasting against the lush vegetation of the native forest. The ride finishes at Lyell, now an empty paddock surrounded by bush. Into the van for a drive through the upper gorge to Murchison and further to New Zealand's newest National Park, the Kahurangi. The day finishes in Nelson – the sunniest town of the South Island, situated not far from the beautiful Abel Tasman National Park.

Cycling from: Westport to Lyell – 65km, total distance 230km



Day 10 Nelson (Rest Day)

The township of Nelson is very beautiful, colourful and offers a great opportunity to stroll around. Today's program could be hiking, kayaking or just relaxing with a good book. The famous Abel Tasman Coastal walk is just an hours drive away and offers an easy graded track on which to explore some of the lovely native forest and sandy beaches.

No Cycling

Whether you're looking for an active holiday or a lazy day at the beach, Abel Tasman National Park is the perfect destination. Abel Tasman National Park is New Zealand's smallest national park.



Day 11 Nelson - Wellington

The days ride is a short one, although equipped with enough climbs to keep you honest. It starts in Havelock and traverses the lovely Queen Charlotte Drive, finishing in Picton in time to catch the afternoon ferry. It takes about 3 hours and travels along Queen Charlotte Sound, leaving the South Island via Tory Channel bound for New Zealand's capital, Wellington, euphemistically known as the "Windy City". If you are unlucky, you may learn why!

Cycling from: Havelock to Picton – 34km, total distance 105km

Welcome to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city.



Perched on the edge of a spectacular harbour, encircled by green, towering hills, Wellington is a stunning and compact city. Vibrant, exciting and cultured, the nation's capital combines the stimulation and sophistication of a big city with the quirkiness of a charming village.

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Extending just two kilometres in diameter, Wellington is a truly 'walking city'. Here you'll find a unique blend of national treasures, arts and culture, gastronomic delights, shopping sensations and scenic beauty, making Wellington the ultimate urban destination in New Zealand.

Wellington has a feast of cultural attractions and its crowning glory is Te Papa, the national museum of New Zealand. Situated on Wellington's magnificent waterfront, this internationally acclaimed museum combines leading edge technology with traditional exhibits to tell the stories of New Zealand's land and people.

Day 12 Wellington – Wanganui

Today is a cycle free day. After a short sightseeing tour of Wellington you still have time to visit the famous National Museum 'Te Papa' or the option for a cable car ride to the Botanical Gardens. Around lunch time the vehicle heads north along state highway 1 towards Wanganui, nestled on the plains near the mouth of the river that gave it its name. It is one of New Zealand's oldest towns and, due to its many mature gardens, is known as the "Garden City".

No Cycling, total distance 195km



The fabulous Wintergardens of Wanganui in the south of New Zealand's North Island are made up of parklands, the Virginia Lake and a spacious hothouse which boasts spectacular arrays of exotic flowering plants and vines.

Day 13 Wanganui - National Park

The three volcanic peaks of Tongariro National Park, New Zealand's oldest, Mt's Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro beckon as you ride along the Mangawhero river toward your nights destination in National Park.

Cycling from: Wanganui to Kakatahi – 57km, total distance 125km



In 1993 Tongariro became the first property to be inscribed on the World Heritage List under the revised cultural criteria describing cultural landscapes. The mountains at the heart of the park have cultural and religious significance for the Maori people and symbolize the spiritual links between this community and its environment. The park contains active and extinct volcanoes, a diverse range of ecosystems and highly scenic landscapes.

Day 14 National Park – Rotorua

This morning you cycle along Lake Rotoaira and further on to Turangi, which lies on the shores of Lake Taupo, the largest lake of New Zealand. Consider for a moment that this lake was formed by a huge volcanic eruption around 135 AD. From there we continue our journey aboard the vehicle on State Highway 1 to Rotorua, famous for its active wonderland of geysers, hot springs and boiling mud pools.

Cycling from: National Park to Turangi – 53km, total distance 200km

Day 15 Rotorua – Rest and activities day

Whitianga has much to offer, from kayaking, riding and hiking some of the local bush walks. We suggest you bike to Hot Water Beach (40km return), so named because a hot spring bubbles up through the sand, making it a lovely warm place to relax at low tide and watch swimmers enjoying the sea and surf.

Optional Cycling



Rotorua is one of the most famous destinations in New Zealand, and has a long history of welcoming visitors. From the moment people arrive in Rotorua they know they're somewhere quite different. There is a scent of sulphur in the air, and at nearby geothermal hotspots there are spouting geysers, acrid-smelling mud pools bubbling and belching, and warm geothermal pools and ponds that create a kaleidoscope of colour.

Day 16 Rotorua – Whitianga

From Lake Rotorua we take the Kaimai - Mamaku forest road toward temperate Tauranga, which lies on the edge of the Bay of Plenty. Its warm climate and rich soil enables it to grow much of the countries citrus fruits including kiwi fruit, tamarillos and feijoas. The cycle leg today starts in Whiritoa and takes you north east along the Coromandel Peninsula where the coastal road threads its way between the rugged Coromandel range on the left and the coast, littered with beautiful white sandy beaches to our right.

Cycling from: Whiritoa to Tairua – 49km, total distance 245km

Day 17 Whitianga (Rest Day)

Whitianga has much to offer, from kayaking, riding and hiking some of the local bush walks, to an excursion to Hot Water Beach, so named because a hot spring bubbles up through the sand, making it a lovely warm place to relax at low tide and watch swimmers enjoying the sea and surf.

No Cycling



For many residents of Auckland the Coromandel has become a weekend retreat from the pressures of the modern world of work. For drop-outs from around the

world the Coromandel is Shangri-la. Coromandel is an alternative to the Bay of Islands of the far north: a slower, sun-washed piece of New Zealand made up of artist colonies, empty beaches, jungle tracks, and mountain hideaways. The great attraction of the Coromandel remains its natural beauty, which can be experienced by driving (or cycling) the peninsula's few roads, hiking any of its many fine walking tracks, or swimming, boating, snorkeling or just strolling along its coast.

Day 18 Whitianga – Auckland

The day starts with a drive over the forest covered Coromandel range, where remnants of the beautiful Kauri trees that once covered the peninsula can be found. We travel through Coromandel's main town, Thames, which lies at the southern foot of the Peninsula, en route to Miranda and the start of the day's ride. What follows is a beautiful way to finish your tour on an easy coastal section to Clevedon. After arriving in Auckland, "The city of Sails", we head off to a sightseeing tour in the largest population centre of New Zealand.

Cycling from: Miranda to Clevedon – 52km, total distance 251km



Like Sydney, Auckland is dominated by the sea and by the hills. If Rome was built on seven hills, Auckland was built on seven extinct sea-side volcanoes. On one side of the isthmus on which it is built is the Pacific Ocean; on the other the Tasman Sea. At its narrowest, this isthmus is only about a kilometre wide. The city, however, sprawls sideways along the shores of Waitemata and Manukau Harbours and along the Hauraki Gulf. Waitemata Harbour - Sea of Sparkling Waters - is dominated by Rangitoto Island.

This closeness to water has two results. First, everyone in Auckland is mad bonkers on sailing. There is one boat to every 16 people. Another effect is that Auckland has a very temperate climate. Most of the rain falls in June, July and August and the coldest month, July, averages about 13 degrees Celsius during the day.

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Day 19 Auckland – Departure

All participants will be transported to the airport between 7am and 3.30pm.

Please note that your trip may differ from the above itinerary either to better suit the needs of the group, or due to circumstances beyond our control such as the weather.

Tour includes:

- * Airport transfers
 - Day 1 only: Christchurch (between 7am & 2pm from the Airport)
 - Day 19 only: Auckland (between 7am & 3.30pm from the Hotel)
 - Transfers outside these days/times are your own arrangements
- * **Accommodation: 18 nights in 3–4 star (NZ standard) hotels & motels**
- * Meals: none
 - There is an option to contribute to a group kitty for the occasional breakfast and many picnic lunches. For those that are interested (purely optional), the Tourguide will collect approx NZ\$100pp
- * Tourguide (who is also the driver)
- * Support vehicle (Coaster Bus) with bike trailer (& luggage space) (luggage limited to 1 suitcase per person + 1 daypack)
- * Ferrycrossing Picton to Wellington (normally early afternoon crossing)
- * Sightseeing tour Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland

Tour Excludes:

- * International flights & airport taxes
- * Airport transfers outside the days/times specified above
- * Travel Insurance
- * Meals
- * Drinks (except daily drinking water), phone calls & Minibar expenses
- * Personal expenses (including any specific medical related requirements)

Tour Grading -



1= Easy, 2=Moderate, 3=Medium, 4=Challenging, 5=Extreme

Optional Bike Hire is available:

Please ask for more information about our optional bike hire.

For the latest departure dates and pricing visit our website:

<http://www.bike-nz.com/>