

Around the Mountains Trail Trip Notes

A 186km cycle on the new Around the Mountains cycle trail that circumnavigates the Eyre Mountains of Southland, featuring glacial lakes, sheer mountain peaks, vast tussock plains and green farmland.



Tour Highlights

- + Cycle 186km of the new 'Around the Mountains' cycle trail
- + Take in the spectacular scenery of Southland and the Eyre Mountains
- + Explore the small communities of Kingston, Athol & Mossburn
- + Visit Lake Manapouri and enjoy the stunning view across the lake
- + Take a walk in the magical beech forest of Fiordland National Park
- + Enjoy the comforts and soak up the relaxing atmosphere of Te Anau
- + Ride to the beautiful Mavora Lakes
- + Cycle the remote and awe-inspiring road through Mt Nicholas Station to Walter Peak
- + Finish your journey with a cruise across Lake Wakatipu on board the historic TSS Earnslaw

Tour Details

- + 5 days
- + Grade 2
- + 186km cycling with full vehicle support [55% cycle trail; 45% gravel road]
- + Starts in Queenstown or Christchurch
- + Ends in Queenstown

Tour Cost

Tour Price: \$1,850
Deposit: \$400

Grade 2



What's included?

- + 4 nights twin-share accommodation
- + 4 evening meals; 4 lunches; 4 breakfasts
- + fruit, snacks & morning teas on the trail
- + the services of a tour leader who provides vehicle support & information
- + cycle repair support
- + all transport from Christchurch
- + TSS Earnslaw Cruise
- + Goods & Services Tax of 15%

Not included:

- + wine; beer; espresso coffees
- + lunch on Day 1
- + bike hire (standard \$190; e-bike \$450)
- + single accommodation supplement (\$350)
- + transfers from Queenstown to Arrowtown on Day 1
- + optional transport from Arrowtown to Christchurch on Day 6 (\$40 approx)

Departure Dates

Refer to our website for current 2018-2019 departure dates and tour availability



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Itinerary

Day 1 Christchurch/Queenstown - Arrowtown

We head south across the plains and through the Mackenzie Basin. The scenic drive continues as we head over the Lindis Pass to Central Otago, and through the Kawarau Gorge to our accommodation, a stone's throw from the quaint village of Arrowtown. In the late afternoon enjoy a walk around the village and historic Chinese gold mining village relics. Alternatively there is the option to join the tour in Arrowtown from Queenstown. In the evening get acquainted with your travel companions over a meal at the local tavern.

Meals (D) | Cycle Distance: 0km



Day 2 Arrowtown - Mossburn

We travel to the southern tip of Lake Wakatipu and the small village of Kingston where the Around the Mountains Trail begins. The first part of the trail hugs the foot of the mountains before following the Kingston Branch railway to Fairlight Station, and then onto Garston (18km). There are some interesting shops to explore here during morning tea. The next section of trail takes you along a valley following the Mataura River to the village of Athol where we stop for lunch at a cafe (13km). Legendary Southland cuisine 'cheese rolls' are on the menu here which you are welcome to try. Our final stretch of cycling for the day takes you through picturesque farmland to the settlement of Five Rivers (16km), and then alongside the Oreti River to Lumsden (15km). From here we transfer to Mossburn and our accommodation for the evening.

Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 62km



Day 3 Mossburn – Te Anau

We head towards the Eyre Mountains to the stunning Mavora Lakes, nestled between the Livingston and Thomson Mountains, where a stunning ride through beech forest alongside the picture perfect lakes awaits (15kms). Enjoy the views over morning tea before cycling down the valley towards Centre Hill (18kms). We transfer to the trail at Centre Hill and continue cycling the trail to Mossburn (20km). Here we finish riding for the day and load up the vehicle to transfer a short distance to the town of Te Anau, nestled on the edge of the Fiordland National Park. In Te Anau, settle into your accommodation and explore the town.

Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 53km



Day 4 Te Anau (Manapouri)

We take a break from the Around the Mountains Trail today and spend the day exploring the beautiful towns of Te Anau and Manapouri, on the edge of the Fiordland National Park. We take a side trip to the quaint settlement of Manapouri. The views over Lake Manapouri to the Kepler Mountains beyond will take your breath away and if conditions allow, a swim in the lake may be called for. There is the option of cycling on a trail beside Lake Te Anau and the Waiau River (20km). In Te Anau there is time to take an optional walk around the side of Lake Te Anau on the Kepler Track, do an optional boat ride across the lake, or simply relax and take in the views.

Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 20km



Day 5 Te Anau - Queenstown

For our final morning we transfer to Mt Nicholas Station*. Originally settled in the 1860's, Mt Nicholas Station is one of the largest stations in NZ, spanning 40,000 hectares. The cycle trail follows the road that dissects the station, providing lovely views of the towering mountain peaks and vast tussock plains. The station is home to 30,000 merino sheep and 2,200 hereford cattle and traditional farming practices such as mustering on horseback and foot are still maintained today. After 39km the road reaches the shores of Lake Wakatipu and the views of the pristine blue lake and surrounding mountain ranges open up. Soak in the views for the final 12km section to Walter Peak Station - the end of the road. From here, bid your guide and bike farewell and climb aboard the TSS Earnslaw, otherwise known as 'The Lady of the Lake'. The TSS Earnslaw was commissioned in 1912 to service the isolated farming communities along the lake. At 48 metres long, she was the biggest boat on the Lake and carried passengers, sheep, cattle, mail and supplies. Enjoy the 45 minute cruise to central Queenstown and the end of the tour.

Meals (B/L) | Cycle Distance: 51km

** Access to Mt Nicholas Station is via a remote road which is sometimes impassable when rivers are in flood. If this occurs we may not be able to access Mt Nicholas, and we will instead head to Queenstown where you have the opportunity to do a cruise on the TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station.*



Questions? Call us

Phone within NZ: 0800 222 775
Phone within Australia: 1800 738 667
Phone worldwide: +64 21 178 8287
www.puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz

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Accommodation in Christchurch

If you need accommodation before and/or after your tour we recommend the following places. We provide **courtesy transfers from any of these locations** before/after your trip:

Airport Precinct:

[Airport Palms Motel](#)

56 Roydvale Avenue | Phone: 0800 200 529 | www.airportpalmsmotelchch.co.nz

Motel complex with a range of room options and free airport transfers. Breakfast available. Close proximity to the airport.

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[Airport Gateway Motel](#)

45 Roydvale Avenue | Phone: 0800 242 8392 | www.airportgateway.co.nz

Motel complex with a range of room options and free airport transfers. It also has an on-site café/restaurant & bar for convenient dining. Close proximity to the airport.

[Cophorne Hotel Commodore Christchurch Airport](#)

449 Memorial Avenue | Phone: 0508 226 663 | www.commodore.net.nz

Hotel complex in close proximity to Christchurch airport. Free 24 hour courtesy shuttle. Free bike's available to explore the local area.

[Sudima Hotel](#)

550 Memorial Avenue | Phone: 03 358 3139 | www.sudimahotels.com/christchurch

Closest hotel to Christchurch Airport.

[Papanui Precinct:](#)

[Quality Hotel Elms](#)

456 Papanui Road | Phone: 0800 109910 | www.elmshotel.co.nz

Hotel complex with a range of room options. On-site café/restaurant & bar for convenient dining. Close proximity to shops & restaurants and the PureTrails depot.

[Christchurch Top10 Holiday Park& Motels](#)

39 Meadow Street | Phone: 0800 396323 | www.christchurchtop10.co.nz

Holiday park with a range of motel style accommodation at budget-wise prices. Close proximity to shops & restaurants and the PureTrails depot.

Accommodation in Queenstown

If you need accommodation in the Queenstown area before and/or after your tour we recommend the following:

[Scenic Heartland Hotel & Scenic Suites](#)

27 Stanley Street, Queenstown | 03 442 4718 | www.scenichotels.co.nz

3 star hotel complex offering a variety of rooms and rates.

[Garden Court Suites & Apartments](#)

41 Frankton Road, Frankton | 03 442 9713 | www.gardencourt.co.nz

Well appointed modern motel complex.

[Shades of Arrowtown](#) (our accommodation for night 1 of the tour)

9 Merioneth Street, Arrowtown | 03 442 1613 | www.shadesofarrowtown.co.nz

Cottage style motel close to Arrowtown's main street

Accommodation on the tour

Our comfortable accommodation on this tour includes motels. Accommodation is based on double or twin share rooms, with en-suite facilities. Single travellers are required to pay the single room supplement fee, however if there are other singles on the trip willing to share a twin room we can arrange this for you in which case no single supplement fee will be payable.

On our website you will find links to some of the accommodations we use within the tour itinerary description. We do not send out a list of accommodation venues for your trip prior to the tour departure unless specifically requested.

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'Saddle Sore' Tip:

No amount of gel seats or padding will protect you from saddle sore if you do not cycle regularly. The best way to prepare your backside for your tour is to cycle regularly (3 or more 20km+ rides per week) during the month leading up to your trip. Failing that you are welcome to bring a gel seat cover or even your own bike saddle to fit to your hire bike.

You are also welcome to bring your own spd pedals and cleat shoes to fit to your hire bike.

Bike hire

Standard bike hire is available at a rate of \$190 for the 5 days. The bikes we use are hybrid style mountain bikes that are high quality and well maintained. We also have a small fleet of electric bikes (ebikes) available for hire at a rate of \$450 for the 5 days. Ebike availability is strictly limited so if you'd like to secure an ebike for your trip you need to book this in with us at your earliest convenience. For standard or ebike hire we need an **accurate measurement** of your height before we can confirm availability.

All bikes are fitted with comfortable seats and a small handlebar pannier bag. We also supply you with a helmet and drink bottle. To read more about our bikes, refer to our website: www.puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz/cycling-nz-information/cycle-trail-bike-hire

Please note the wearing of cycle helmets on PureTrails tours, whether you are cycling on a public road or cycle trail, is a compulsory requirement.

Bringing your own bike

You are welcome to bring your own bike. Please ensure it is in good condition, recently serviced, and suitable for the terrain you will be riding on. Your bike must not weigh more than **20kgs** as anything over this weight is unmanageable for our guides to handle. You need to supply your own spare inner-tubes and other spare parts. Your guide can assist with basic repairs such as repairing punctures, however any running repairs required beyond this are your own responsibility.

If you require the services of a bike mechanic to unpack and assemble your bike prior to your trip and/or box it up again at the end of your trip, this service is available for \$25 (for those starting/finishing in Christchurch only). There is a \$5 charge to take your own bike on the if required Earnslaw also.

Booking Conditions & Cancellation & Refunds policy

Bookings will be confirmed and held on receipt of a deposit by PureTrails New Zealand. The full name and contact details (phone, email & postal address) for each person booking the tour are required at the time of booking.

Prices quoted are in New Zealand dollars. The balance of the tour price is payable **60 days** prior to departure and payments must be made in New Zealand dollars. Payment is accepted by:

- + direct credit;
- + visa or mastercard & debit cards (subject to a 2.5% surcharge);
- + cheque (in NZ currency);
- + international bank transfer (add \$25 funds clearance fee);
- + international bank draft

Cancellations must be received in writing and the following conditions apply:

- + Cancellations outside 90 days of the tour departure date will receive a full refund;
- + Cancellations between 90-61 days prior to the departure date will lose the deposit; this deposit can be transferred to an alternative tour within 12 months of the original departure date
- + Cancellations between 60-31 days of the departure date will receive no refund; however a 50% credit can be transferred to an alternative tour within 12 months of the original departure date

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+ Cancellations within 30 days of the departure date will receive **no refund**; and no transfers or credits are available.

PureTrails New Zealand strongly recommends all clients, including **domestic** travellers, purchase travel insurance to protect against unexpected cancellations.

We strongly recommend you obtain travel insurance should you need to cancel your trip unexpectedly within 3 months of departure.

Tour departures are subject to a **minimum of 4 people**. You can enquire with us as to the status of your tour at any stage. The full conditions are available on our website at www.puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz/booking-terms-conditions.

Car Storage

In Christchurch secure car storage is available at our depot in Papanui for \$10 per day. This needs to be booked in advance. In Queenstown 'Airport Parking Queenstown' (airportparkingqueenstown.co.nz) has storage available at reasonable rates near the airport for cars/SUV's. Campervan's/Motorhomes can be left at the Arrowtown Holiday Park by prior arrangement.

Cash facilities

The only places you will encounter a cash ATM machine or bank during the 5 days is Arrowtown & Te Anau. EFTPOS and credit cards can be used at virtually all the cafes and hotels along the trail.

Contact details while on the tour

If your friends or family need to contact you urgently during the tour, they can contact you via our office on: Phone: +64 21 178 8287. Please note there is good mobile phone coverage throughout most of the region with the exception of the Mavora Lakes/Mt Nicholas Station area (Days 4 & 5 cycling).

Degree of difficulty & What to expect

The 'Around the Mountains Trail' is a cycle trail that consists of a mix of purpose built firm gravel trails, and gravel public roads, totalling 186km. Our tour features 55% cycling on cycle trails, and 45% cycling on **gravel roads**. The trail features beautiful remote rural farmland surrounded by towering peaks, coupled with magical beech forests and glacial lakes.

Although we rate days 2 & 3 as Grade 1 cycling, overall we rate the trail Grade 2 due to some moderate climbs on Day 5 that can be skipped if desired. Refer to our website for more information on our Difficulty Gradings. www.puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz/cycling-nz-information/level-of-difficulty. Cycling experience is necessary, as well as the ability to change gears proficiently.

If you do minimal training before your tour or are not 'cycle fit', you may find that you are not able to cycle all of the sections of the trail, and may require the use of our support vehicle.

Departure time and place (Christchurch)

PureTrails offer courtesy pick ups and drop offs from the locations recommended on pages 3 & 4. If you are staying at one of these locations, we will pick you up between 8:00am and 8:20am approximately. For those staying elsewhere, we ask that you make

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International Transfers Tip:

Conventional Banks have high fees when it comes to international transfers (hence our \$25 funds clearance fee). Third party institutions such as Western Union or CurrencyFair or TransferWise will offer you a competitive currency exchange rate and significantly lower transfer fees. We are happy to refund you the difference (in NZ\$ cash) in funds clearance fees if you manage to secure a better rate.

your way to our depot in Papanui (11a Langstone Lane) **by 8am**.

Unfortunately we are not able to provide pick ups or drop offs at Christchurch Airport. The nearest pick up point available is at the Airport Gateway Motel, 2kms from the terminals.

Departure time and place (Arrowtown)

If you opt to join the tour in Queenstown rather than Christchurch, the tour will meet you in Arrowtown at approximately 4:30 on Day 1, at our accommodation at Shades of Arrowtown, cnr Buckingham/Merioneth Streets, Arrowtown. Check in is available *from* 2pm.

You need to make your own way to Arrowtown. Supershuttle (www.supershuttle.co.nz) provide transfers, or the local bus service, Connectabus, run regular and affordable buses between Queenstown and Arrowtown and the airport (www.connectabus.com).

Final Payment

Your final payment is required **60 days prior** to your tour departure date, and will include items which may not be listed on your original invoice such as bike hire and any tour transfers required. You will receive an updated invoice around 10 weeks prior to departure once we have received your Tour Information & Safety Declaration Form – see page 9.

Payment can be made by:

- + visa or mastercard (Inc debit cards) - subject to a 2.5% surcharge;
- + direct transfer (NZ bank account holders only);
- + international transfer (subject to a \$25 funds clearance fee which covers the fee NZ banks charge to receive your payment);
- + cheque in NZ currency ;
- + international bank draft (cheque)

Finishing your tour

The tour finishes at the Steamer Wharf in Queenstown at approximately 3:30pm on Day 5, via the TSS Earnslaw cruise (please confirm the time with us before booking onward flights). You bring all your luggage (and bike if you are bringing your own bike) on board the boat to Queenstown as your guide does not return to Queenstown from Walter Peak on Day 5.

You can make your own way to the airport or Queenstown/Arrowtown accommodation from here via a taxi, the Supershuttle (www.supershuttle.co.nz) or the local bus service. The blue #2 run from Queenstown to Frankton/Arrowtown is the bus to catch.:

<https://www.orc.govt.nz/public-transport/queenstown-buses/queenstown-bus-timetables/2-arthurs-point-to-arrowtown>

Finishing your tour in Christchurch

Your guide and vehicle will be returning to Christchurch early on Day 6 (the day following the last day of the tour). You are welcome to get a ride back to the city, however we ask you to meet at Arrowtown for the return journey as we don't provide Queenstown city pick ups. The bus is likely to be back in Christchurch by 4pm and costs \$40 pp.

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Insurance Tip:

Domestic New Zealand travellers can obtain a Domestic Travel Insurance Policy online from www.1Cover.co.nz (Comprehensive Domestic) or www.CoverMore.co.nz (Domestic Plan D) for reasonable prices (approx \$100-\$150 for two seniors for 8 days cover). Ensure your policy includes cover for 'Cancellations & Lost Deposits'. Pre-existing medical conditions are not generally covered so check the policy wording and exclusions carefully.

Laundry Tip:

If you need to give your cycle gear a wash during your trip, bring some travel liquid detergent and an elastic travel clothes line (available from Kathmandu etc). You can wash your garments and hang them out to dry in your room overnight. Merino and quick-dry fabric garments will dry out overnight.

Guide

Your tour will be led by one of our friendly and professional guides who drives the support vehicle and will be at hand for (almost) anything you need or want to know during your tour (we try our best anyway!) We are very approachable so please do ask if you have any queries or concerns. Your guide **does not participate in the cycling** with the group, but meets up with you along the trail in our vehicle every 10 - 20kms or so.

Health & fitness

You will be cycling 186km of the Around the Mountains Trail over 4 days so you should be reasonably fit and in good health. The trail has a few moderate climbs so the more comfortable you are riding your bike beforehand, the more you will enjoy the trail. You bike at your own pace and can have plenty of photo and snack stops. Our emphasis is on having fun and enjoying the scenery. If you need a rest, there is always the option of taking the **support vehicle**.

We strongly encourage you to get out and do some biking before your tour, on gravel roads if possible, starting out with half an hour a day, building up to 3-4 longer rides (20km+) per week during the month prior to your tour (at the very minimum). The secret is to start slowly and increase your exercise gradually. The fitter you are the more enjoyable your experience will be.

If you do minimal training before your tour or are not 'cycle fit', you may find that you are not able to cycle all of the sections of the trail, and may require the use of our support vehicle.

Insurance

You never know when either yourself or a family member may fall ill. You are urged to take out travel insurance to cover yourself in the event that you need to cancel your tour with us within three months of the tour departure date. **This includes New Zealander's travelling within New Zealand.** PureTrails New Zealand Ltd is not obligated to give you a refund within this period. Refer to our website for the full terms and conditions www.puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz/booking-terms-conditions.

Laundry facilities

There are laundry facilities for you to use at some of our accommodation venues during the tour. There is usually a \$4-5 charge per wash and dry cycle.

Luggage

We urge you to try to keep your luggage to a minimum. Please limit yourself to 18kgs. All luggage is transported in our vehicle during the day. Anything you need access to during the days cycle ride should be stored in a small bag which can be left on the bus rather than in your suitcase.

Meals & Special Dietary Requirements

Meals are supplied as indicated on the itinerary (B/L/D). Beer and wine, tea & coffee etc are not included in the tour package however there will be the opportunity for you to buy beverages along the way.

Breakfasts are a continental style breakfast, and lunches are taken either in cafes along the trail or as a trail-side picnic. For dinner we dine in the local restaurants in the villages where we stay following a two course set menu format.

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We provide a range of high energy healthy snacks while biking such as bananas and fruit, froyze balls, muesli bars, fruit cake and biscuits.

PureTrails New Zealand will **endeavour** to cater to any special dietary requirements you may have (please disclose this on the Tour Info & Health & Safety Declaration form). Vegetarian and gluten free and dairy free diets are not a problem for our meal providers. Requests such as a sugar free or grain free diet and vegan meals etc are a little more problematic given the remote rural location of the tour. In these instances you may need to bring your own snacks and specialty foods. We are unable to guarantee a peanut free or allergen free trip, and therefore we strongly encourage that travellers with life threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self administering these medications.

Medical conditions

If you have a medical, physical or mental condition that may affect your ability to participate in the tour you must disclose this to us on our Tour Information and Safety Declaration form (see page 9). Your guide may follow up on your condition with you on Day 1 to help us manage your safety in the event of a medical event.

Phone reception/Wifi

There is very good mobile phone coverage throughout much of the area, with the exception of the Mavora Lakes/Mt Nicholas Station area where we cycle on days 4 & 5. Wifi is becoming more widely available and in most case (but not all) is offered free of charge, and there is also good 3G/4G coverage.

Tour Information and Safety Declaration Form

All tour participants (including non-riders) are required to complete a separate copy of our 'Tour Information and Safety Declaration Form', and return it to us **3 months** prior to your tour departure date. Please note this includes those who have been on another PureTrails New Zealand tour at some point in the past. Although we keep a database of information from previous tours, medical/dietary/emergency contact details can change from year to year so we require that a new form be completed for each tour you join.

Weather conditions

Central Otago and Southland have big extremes of weather, with temperatures ranging from -10 to 38°C. You could experience very hot or cold temperatures at any time of the year. The altitude of the trail ranges from 200 – 700 metres above sea level, and the region can be subject to strong winds.

Generally, you can expect the temperature to be around 15-25°C in Jan/Feb, and 10 - 25°C in Nov/Dec/Mar/April. By April, it tends to get quite cold in the evenings with frosts, and possibly snow in late April (!) The visual landscape is impossibly beautiful regardless of season or temperature. You will gain maximum enjoyment by being prepared for both hot and cold temperatures.

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Cycle Clothing Tip:

Bright reflective cycling gear makes you far more visible to other road users and increases your safety significantly. We require that those not wearing bright reflective cycle clothing wear a PureTrails supplied high-vis safety vest for all cycle sections that are on public roads.

1st Aid Kit Tip:

PureTrails NZ carries a comprehensive 1st Aid Kit and an Emergency Response Kit in our support vehicle; however this is kept for emergency situations only. Please bring your own supply of paracetamol, voltaren, antihistamine and any other medication you take, as well as bandaids and some dressings etc in a small kit that you can take with you on your bike.

Wet Weather Tip:

Bring a large plastic zip-lock bag that you can use inside the pannier bag of your hire bike to store your camera, phone, wallet etc to prevent them from getting wet (the pannier bags are not 100% waterproof).

What to bring

In the interest of safety and enjoyment, please ensure you are adequately equipped for your tour. **Warm clothing is essential even in January/February.** The following is a list of what you need to bring:

- Clothing:**
- Waterproof raincoat – **essential**
 - Thermal top – **essential**
 - Thermal leggings – **essential in Spring/Autumn**
 - Shorts, bike pants or light trousers for cycling
 - Woollen or fleece jacket layers (not cotton)
 - T-shirts (breathable fabrics are best)
 - Warm hat and gloves
 - A comfortable pair of shoes for cycling
 - Sports socks for cycling
 - Comfortable casual wear for evenings

- Equipment:**
- Padded cycle gloves
 - Sunscreen, sunglasses & sunhat
 - Personal toilet gear
 - Personal first aid kit** containing paracetamol, voltaren, antihistamine and any other medication you take
 - A supply of toilet tissue as it may not be provided in the public toilets along the trail
 - Insect repellent

- Optional:**
- Gel seat cover
 - Camera
 - A large plastic ziplock bag for use inside the hire bike pannier bag if it is very wet
 - Mobile phone to enable phone contact with your guide

For excellent quality NZ made cycle specific clothing and accessories, visit www.groudeffect.co.nz