

West Coast Wilderness Trail & Beyond Trip Notes

205km of cycling on the West Coast's cycle trails, following historic rail and tram lines and logging roads along the wild coast and through virgin rainforest, and into the warm welcoming communities of 'The Coast'.



Tour Highlights

- + Cycle the West Coast Wilderness Trail, featuring native forest and wild coastline
- + Climb to the treetops and admire the forest from above at the Treetop Walkway
- + Visit the spectacular Hokitika Gorge
- + Enjoy cycling the stunning coastline on the new Kawatiri Coastal Trail
- + Learn the gold mining, logging and farming history of our early pioneers
- + Explore the small towns of Punakaiki, Charleston & Westport

Tour Details

- + 6 days
- + Grade 1
- + up to 205km cycling [100% cycling on gravel cycle trail/gravel roads]
- + Starts/Ends in Christchurch

Tour Cost

Tour Price: from \$2,275
Deposit: \$400

What's included?

- + 5 nights twinshare en-suite accommodation
- + 5 evening meals; 4 lunches; 5 continental 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/to Christchurch
- + Entry to the West Coast Treetop walk
- + Goods & Services Tax of 15%

Not included:

- + wine; beer; espresso coffees
- + Lunch on Day 1 & 6
- + bike hire (standard \$200; e-bike \$500)
- + single accommodation (\$400)
- + optional TranzAlpine Train from Moana to Christchurch Day 6 (from \$183)



Departure Dates

Refer to our website for current departure dates and tour availability

Grade 1



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Itinerary

Day 1 Christchurch – Hokitika

The West Coast Wilderness Trail & Beyond tour gets underway with a very scenic drive over Arthur's Pass to the west coast. Our first ride at Lake Kaniere on a very scenic ride around the side of the lake through native bush. This is a good opportunity to get familiar with your bike before we commence the West Coast Wilderness Trail. We then head to the Hokitika Gorge, where the vivid turquoise waters will take your breath away. Take a walk here to take it all in. We transfer to a elevated ridge overlooking the ocean and mountains and settle into our accommodation for the next two nights. **Meals (D) | Cycle Distance: 18km**

Day 2 Hokitika

This morning we transfer to the small gold mining town of Ross and commence our ride of the West Coast Wilderness Trail, following an old railway line north. Our morning tea stop is at the West Coast Treetop walkway, where you can enjoy a walk along a 450m steel platform suspended 20 metres high, giving you an amazingly different perspective of the forest. The trail then heads inland through native bush featuring towering rimu trees, and on to the roaring coast at Hokitika. Enjoy a picnic lunch on the beach and time to explore the township of Hokitika - the heart of the coast. Our final section of the ride follows an old tram line along the Hokitika River. **Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 38.5km**

Day 3 Hokitika - Kumara

The trail today features virgin rainforest and massive Podocarp trees as well as serene canals and streams. The first section features a stunning water race to Lake Kaniere. From here the trail follows a road across farmland and through native bush to the Arahura River, where the trail leaves the road and climbs along a well benched switch back trail to 'Cowboy Paradise'. Continue through the forest and over the spectacular swingbridges to the Kawhaka Pass. From here the trail descends the Kawhaka Valley to the picturesque hydro canals. Enjoy a picnic lunch before the final section of trail through to the historic mining town of Kumara. Here galleries occupy refurbished shops and the recently restored historic Theatre Royal Hotel, circa 1876, takes pride of place on the main street, the West Coast's only restored miners' hotel, and once world-renowned theatre. We settle in here for the night. **Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 58km**

Day 4 Kumara - Cape Foulwind

Today we finish the West Coast Wilderness Trail, cycling 28kms across farmland, through native bush, beside the roaring coastline and finally along the stop banks of the Grey River to the centre of Greymouth. After morning tea we head north along the famed coastal road to Punakaiki. View the famous Pancake Rocks. Back in the support vehicle we continue north to Westport where there is time to explore this township before we transfer to our accommodation for the next two evenings at Cape Foulwind. We dine at a pub full of warm West Coast hospitality. **Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 28km**

Day 5 Cape Foulwind

Today we ride the new Kawatiri Coastal Trail, firstly through a lush nikau palm glade and out along the coast past Carters Beach. The trail continues to Cape Foulwind and alongside the stunning Tauranga Bay and Okari Lagoon coastlines, before turning inland and through a forest clad wetland all the way to Charleston. The coastline of this mild region of the upper west coast is very attractive and is steeped in gold-mining history of our pioneers. In the afternoon there is ample time to relax at our accommodation and enjoy a walk along the beach. **Meals (B/L/D) | Cycle Distance: 52km**

Day 6 Cape Foulwind - Christchurch

This morning we head back down the beautiful coast road, stopping at Punakaiki for an opportunity to enjoy a serene kayak up a quiet river, or a bush walk through the bush on the Paparoa Trail. We then head to Greymouth. From here you can opt to take the TranzAlpine train over Arthur's Pass and back to Christchurch, arriving at approximately 6.30pm, or travel back in our vehicle. **Meals (B) | Cycle Distance: 0km**



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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. We do not provide central city or city-wide pick ups at the start or end of your tour.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Accommodation on the tour

Our comfortable accommodation on this tour includes a restored historic hotel & cottage, and boutique 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.

Bike hire

Standard bike hire is available at a rate of \$200 for the 6 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 \$500 for the 6 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. To read more about our bikes, refer to our website: www.puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz/cycling-nz-information/cycle-trail-bike-hire

'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.



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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

If you are bringing your own, please take the following into consideration:

- Your bicycle **does not weigh more than 20kg** – including e-bikes (with the battery off). Bikes heavier than this are too heavy for our guides to be able to lift on and off the cycle trailer safely and are too heavy for our trailer fittings.
- Your bike **does not have any mudguards fitting on the front tyre** (due to how they are secured on the trailer). Rear mudguards are fine.
- The bike is well maintained, recently serviced, and in a good safe condition.
- Your helmet is in a good safe condition with no cracks, and can be fastened properly.
- The tyres have a good level of tread on them, suitable for trails/gravel. Slick tyres are not recommended.
- A basic bike repair kit must be carried including 2 x spare inner tubes.
- Any major mechanical breakdown is your own responsibility.
- **PureTrails staff will secure your bike on our cycle trailer when in transit during the tour, but the company is not held responsible for any damages that occur during transportation.**

Your guide can assist with basic repairs such as repairing punctures, however any running repairs required beyond this are your own responsibility.

Booking Terms & Conditions

Our Booking Terms & Conditions can be found on our website at:

<https://puretrailsnewzealand.co.nz/booking-terms-conditions/>

Please read carefully these terms and conditions of contract. In completing and submitting the Booking Form and/or paying a deposit, you agree to be bound by these conditions which constitute the agreement between PureTrails New Zealand Ltd and you.

Car Storage

In Christchurch secure car storage is available at Superior Airport Parking.

www.superiorairportparking.co.nz. If you are making your own way to the west coast, we recommend you leave your car or motorhome at the Theatre Royal Hotel Kumara where your guide can pick you up on Day 1 and drop you off on Day 6.

Degree of difficulty & What to Expect

The 130km 'West Coast Wilderness Trail' & 50km Kawatiri Coastal Trail are purpose built **gravel** cycle trails that showcases the wild coastline and stunning forests and lakes of the West Coast. Much of the trail goes through native forests and is very remote, with little infrastructure along the trail outside the main towns.

While we consider trip to be Grade 1 cycling overall, on Day 3 there is a 20km section with a number of climbs that is more akin to Grade 2. This section 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.



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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

Departure time and place

PureTrails offer courtesy pick ups and drop offs from the locations recommended on page 4. If you are staying at one of these locations, we will pick you up between 8:00am and 8:20am approximately. We do not provide central city or city-wide pick ups at the start or end of your tour. If you choose to stay elsewhere in Christchurch we will talk to you about a meeting location at one of the locations below, or a suitable location (*where we can park our 7m bus + 6m cycle trailer off any suburban roads*) en-route (EG Yaldhurst), prior to your tour departure.

Unfortunately we are not able to provide pick ups or drop offs at Christchurch Airport terminals. The nearest pick up point available is at Spitfire Square Shopping Centre, 800m from the terminals. Please factor in a 10 minute walk to get to/from the terminal from there. Our bus stops outside the Lonestar Restaurant.

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.

Payment can be made by:

- + 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);

Finish time and place

If you are finishing your tour in Christchurch, you are likely to be back in the city by 6pm on Day 6. Your guide can drop you off at any of the accommodation locations on page 4. If you are flying out of Christchurch on Day 6, do not book flights that require check in before 6:00pm.

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 15kms or so.

Health & fitness

You will be cycling 205km of the West Coast Wilderness Trail over 6 days so you should be reasonably fit and in good health. While the trail is not technically difficult, 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



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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.

secret is to start slowly and increase your exercise gradually. The fitter you are the more enjoyable your experience will be.

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. **This includes New Zealander's travelling within New Zealand.** 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 our accommodation 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. On Day 1 when you join the tour, please be ready wearing your cycle gear.

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 supplied by our accommodation hosts, and lunches are taken either as a trail-side picnic or in cafes along the trail. For dinner we dine in the local restaurants in the villages where we stay following a two course set menu format.

We provide a range of high energy healthy snacks while biking such as bananas and fruit, froye 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. 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.



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Phone reception/Wifi

There is very good mobile phone coverage throughout most of the West Coast, with the exception of the stretch of trail between Kumara and Lake Kaniere. Wifi is becoming more widely available and in most cases (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 online 'Tour Information and Safety Declaration Form' **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.

TranzAlpine Train

The TranzAlpine train ride across the Southern Alps from Greymouth to Christchurch is reputed to be one of the best train trips in the world, and it is a great way to finish your trip. To get the best price (especially if you hold a NZ Super Gold card) you can book your fare directly at www.greatjourneysfnz.co.nz.

The train arrives in Christchurch at 6:31 on Day 6 of your trip*. The train can often be delayed so we do not recommend booking flights out of Christchurch much before 8pm. Taxi's are available at the station to take you to your destination.

* The TranzAlpine Train timetable is operating on a limited service post covid-19, so may not be available on your date of travel. Their timetable continues to evolve so it is best to check with them directly to clarify train availability.

Weather conditions

The West Coast is generally perceived as being very wet all of the time, however you may find it surprising dry. The coast to the north of the Franz/Fox Glaciers receives far less rainfall than the coast to the south. Generally, you can expect the temperature to be around 15-27°C in Jan/Feb, and 15-22°C in Nov/Dec/Mar/April. The visual landscape is impossibly beautiful regardless of season or temperature. You will gain maximum enjoyment by being prepared for hot, cold, and wet conditions.



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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).

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

Help us go green:

Help us save the planet by bringing your own reusable drink bottle and coffee cup. Alternatively a branded PureTrails 'Specialised' drink bottle can be purchased for \$10.

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:**
- A drink bottle (or buy a PureTrails branded bottle for \$10)
 - A cup for tea/coffee stops
 - Padded cycle gloves
 - Sunscreen, sunglasses & sunhat
 - Personal toilet gear
 - Personal first aid kit** containing paracetamol, voltaren, antihistamine and any other medication you take
 - 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

On Day 1 when you join the tour, please be ready wearing your cycle gear.

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



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