

ALPS TO OCEAN CYCLE

DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

DAY 1: CHRISTCHURCH TO LAKE TEKAPO

Cycling distance: up to 50km. Meals: L, D.

Pick up time is around 8am. We will collect you from your central lodgings, but if you are staying on the outskirts of town we ask that you make your own way to our depot at 29 Iversen Tce, Waltham. Once at our depot, a quick check of your bike – or a fitting of one of our fleet of rental bikes will precede the loading of the bike trailer and then tour briefing. Once this is completed we can head south to Temuka and a coffee break before starting our first ride. We'll cycle quiet sealed roads which will lead us to a local winery for lunch. The afternoon sees us riding on more quiet rural roads with a photo stop St Davids Church at Raincliff close to the ride's end. We drive to Lake Tekapo where the local hot pools ease any aches. The turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo are a back drop to the famous Church of the Good Shepherd and the tribute to the sheepdogs that make farming the Mackenzie Basin possible. The lake is also the first of the storage lakes which feed the hydro schemes in the basin and down the Waitaki valley which we will follow over the coming days.

DAY 2: LAKE TEKAPO TO TWIZEL

Cycling distance: up to 40km. Meals: B, L.

Before leaving Tekapo we can either drive or walk to the summit of nearby Mt John – an ideal spot to view today and tomorrow's rides. The views from here put the Mackenzie basin into perspective. After a coffee, we drive to the nearby Tekapo hydro canal and enjoy the flat easy riding which takes us past ever expanding salmon farms to the edge of Lake Pukaki and a ride on the lakeside cycling trail. From the road end, Mt Cook beckons so we load up and drive to The Hermitage where we have the option to enjoy a visit to the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre and the local DOC centre – or walk to a nearby viewpoint for stunning views of the 26 km long Tasman Glacier and Mt Cook. Weather dependant we can cycle away from the Southern Alps for a spell until we finally load up and drive to nearby Twizel for the night's stay. Twizel was built for the Hydro project in the 1970's and in recent years has been rejuvenated as a holiday and rowing destination, surrounded by rolling tussock hillsides

DAY 3: TWIZEL TO KUROW

Cycling distance: up to 40 - 50km. Meals: B, L, D.

We back track to Lake Pukaki and again join the canal roads and on through the backroads to Twizel where we can visit the nearby DoC Black Stilt recovery centre to learn about one of NZ's most endangered bird species. The black stilts are under pressure from the invasive lupins which choke up the braided waterways – as well as the foraging rats and hedgehogs who attack their nests. Adventure South have undertaken to fund the centre and your visit supports this. A short drive to the low pass above Otamata accesses the downhill cycle and side road which takes us to the majestic Aviemore dam. A beautiful sealed lakeside road keeps us entertained before we have a short drive to our accommodation for the night. The small village of Kurow is worth exploration by bike, travel from the historic bridge over the Waitaki River, to the beautifully restored St. Albans Church, on to the local Pasquale vineyards to taste award winning wines.

DAY 4: KUROW TO OAMARU

Cycling distance: 40 - 60km. Meals: B, L, D.

We head east to Duntroon and then turn inland on more beautiful quiet rural roads, a walk amongst the weird rock formations known locally as Elephant Rocks is a must. The rest of the day is spent amidst more spectacular limestone outcrops and landscapes as we gradually descend towards Oamaru on some of the prime cycle roads in NZ. We enjoy a picnic lunch on the beach before completing our ride on a scenic coastal road into Oamaru. The beautifully restored historic Oamaru Victorian quarter is home to Steam Punk and in season features street actors providing entertainment, local crafts, cafes and bars. In the evening we visit the famous blue penguin colony to view the penguins returning to their nest after a day of food gathering, before dining at Loan & Merc, a medieval themed restaurant operated by Fleur Sullivan, a highly regarded New Zealand chef.

DAY 5: OAMARU TO CHRISTCHURCH

Cycling distance: up to 40km. Meals: B, L.

Today we are Christchurch bound – but not before more rural cycling. We have an option to visit the award winning Whitestone Cheese factory and Riverstone Kitchen, NZ's restaurant of the year to see their amazing gardens where they grow most of their own kitchen produce. We then start cycling on quiet roads through small farmlets and communities along the Pareora river valley. An optional challenge is the climb over Pareora Gorge before we visit the spectacular St Davids Pioneer Church, made without nails out of local river stones & timbers. A final burst of cycling takes us to a late lunch at Pleasant Point and the start of the final drive back to Christchurch. With good traffic flows, we should be into Christchurch by around 5.30pm.