



Alps 2 Ocean, Canterbury

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NEW ZEALAND**

[newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

# NEW ZEALAND CYCLE TRAIL GUIDE

**EXPLORE NEW ZEALAND'S  
GREAT RIDES**





Otago Central Rail Trail

## EXPLORE THE BEST OF NEW ZEALAND ON A GREAT RIDE

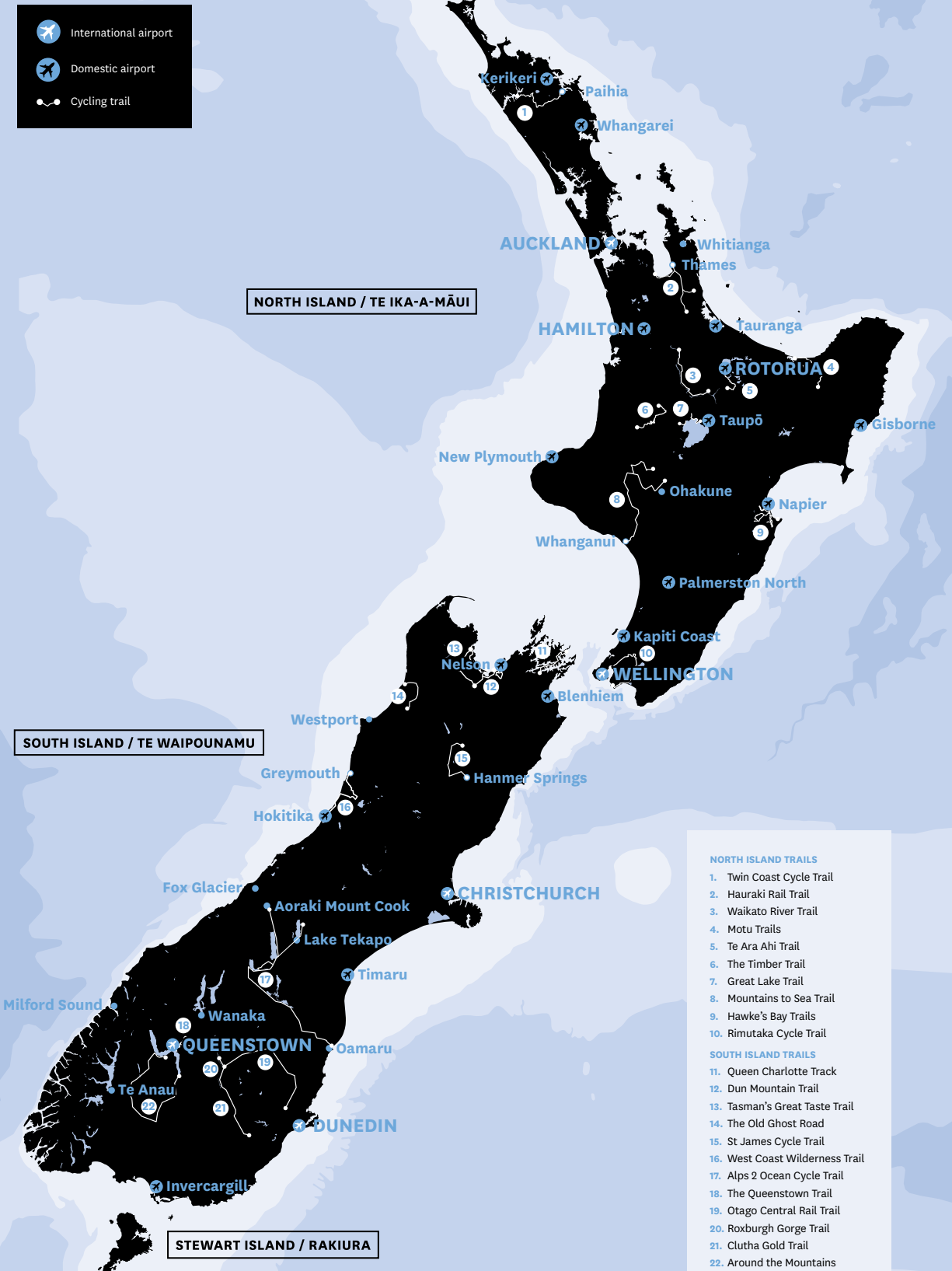
New Zealand's Great Rides are an unforgettable way to soak up breathtaking scenery while visiting must-see attractions and discovering hidden gems.

Collectively known as the New Zealand Cycle Trail and spreading from north to south, the Great Rides vary from a leisurely few hours to an epic eight days. Mostly off-road and predominantly easy to intermediate, they traverse a remarkable range of landscapes, from sparkling coastlines to rolling farmland and flinty mountain passes.

They are a memorable way to reach some of New Zealand's major sights including world-famous natural landmarks, as well as cultural sites, historic settlements, museums and galleries. There are plenty of opportunities to experience other activities along the way, from walking, wildlife watching and scenic flights, to indulging in hot pools, fine dining and wine tours.

There really is something for everyone, with excellent cycling services making things easy. Most Great Rides are accessible from towns and cities where tour guides and shuttle operators offer advice and support including luggage transfers for multi-day trips. Welcoming and atmospheric accommodation, cafés and restaurants provide home comforts along the way.

A world of possibility awaits, whether you're a rusty rider looking for a fun way to see the sights, or a mad-keen mountain biker up for a challenging adventure. Every day is a special journey on the New Zealand Cycle Trail.





Tasman's Great Taste Trail

## RIDING THE NEW ZEALAND CYCLE TRAIL

### WHICH TRAIL SHOULD I CHOOSE?

Most Great Rides are multi-day but can easily be split into shorter rides of various lengths and levels of difficulty, so there is an enjoyable trip to suit every traveller. Trails are mostly off-road but range widely in terrain, from smooth rail trails and paved pathways to hilly, technical single track. It is important that riders check the trail grading to make sure it's the right one for them.

### HOW ARE THE TRAILS GRADED?

Each Great Ride is graded from 1 (easiest) to 5 (expert), with some the same grade the whole way and others varying from section to section. Grade 1 trails are so easy almost anyone can ride them, while Grade 3 (intermediate) rides are best for reasonably fit cyclists and those over 12 years old. Grade 5 is for highly fit, experienced cyclists with solid off-road skills.



Hauraki Rail Trail, Coromandel



Alps 2 Ocean, Canterbury



Motu Trails, Otago

### WHAT KIND OF BIKE DO I NEED?

Easy trails can be ridden on an upright hybrid bike with knobby tyres and front suspension, while a mountain bike is recommended for most Grade 3 rides and higher. Bike hire depots and cycle tour companies will provide the right bike for the terrain, helmet (compulsory in New Zealand), spare tubes and other necessary gear.

### WHAT TOURS ARE AVAILABLE?

Various tours are offered on each of the trails, ranging from half-day, self-guided rides through to fully guided multi-day trips with food and accommodation provided. Some tours combine cycling with other popular activities such as hiking and kayaking. Tour companies are listed on the trail websites.

### WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO RIDE?

Most Great Rides can be cycled all year round, with spring and autumn offering spectacular colours, and some trails serving up excellent winter riding. New Zealand's changeable climate, however, means it is essential to check current track conditions and the weather forecast.

### HOW DO I GET TO THE TRAILS?

Many trails are close to towns and villages, with conveniently located bike hire depots. More remote rides are accessed via trailheads with car parks, with local bike shuttles offering handy drop-offs and pick-ups for those without their own transport.



Hawke's Bay Cycle Trails

## WHERE CAN I STAY?

Most multi-day trails have a variety of accommodation en route or nearby, with shuttle operators transferring luggage between overnight stops. Many trails can also be ridden as day trips, offering the convenience of basing yourself in one place.

## WHAT DO THEY COST?

Thanks to government funding and significant support from local communities, almost all of the Great Rides are free. Visitors can contribute to the maintenance and development of the trails by making a donation or paying the modest cost of track permits.

## IS THERE FOOD & DRINK ON THE TRAILS?

Many trails pass cafés, restaurants and shops. In fact, sampling local food and wine is a major highlight of many Great Rides. Others, however, traverse remote countryside with no services whatsoever, so riders need to plan well and carry appropriate supplies of food and water.



The Old Ghost Road, West Coast

## FITNESS & EXPERIENCE

There are cycling trails to suit all levels of fitness and experience, including novice riders and families. Follow the New Zealand Cycle Trail's grading system to choose the perfect ride:



### GRADE 1 (Easiest)

Suitable for all riders. Mostly off-road trails wide enough for side-by-side riding, with some gentle climbs.



### GRADE 2 (Easy)

Suitable for most riders. Mostly off-road trails wide enough for riding two abreast, some sections may require riding single file. Surfaces are generally smooth, with some gentle hills.



### GRADE 3 (Intermediate)

Suitable for reasonably fit and capable riders. Most of the trail is single file, and/or the surface is rough, with hills. Some sections may be on-road with open road traffic.



### GRADE 4 (Advanced)

Suitable for experienced cyclists with good skills, and a high level of fitness. Off-road trails are narrow with steep climbs and unavoidable obstacles. Hill climbs and possible gravel sections.



Twin Coast Cycle Trail, Northland

## TWIN COAST CYCLE TRAIL



Easiest-Easy (1-2)

A leisurely ride between peaceful Hokianga Harbour and beautiful Bay of Islands.

Breathtaking coastal views, wetlands, native forest and rolling countryside can all be enjoyed on this coast-to-coast ride between the popular Bay of Islands and peaceful Hokianga Harbour. Following smooth rail trail, dedicated cycle paths and back roads, it offers an opportunity to visit significant cultural sites such as the Waitangi Treaty Grounds near Paihia as well as welcoming small towns like Kawakawa and Kaikohe.

A rewarding day ride can be had between Opuia marina and Kawakawa, with the option of boarding a vintage train at charming Taumarare Station.

There are plenty of accommodation options and restaurants on and near the trail, particularly around the Bay of Islands end. And thanks to Northland's sub-tropical climate, this trail offers great riding all year round.

[twincoastcycletrail.kiwi.nz](http://twincoastcycletrail.kiwi.nz)



1-2 days



87 km

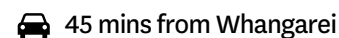


Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE



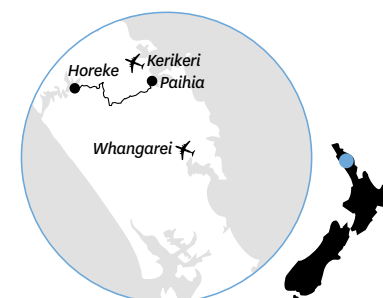
4 hours from Auckland



45 mins from Whangarei



15 mins from Paihia



## HAURAKI RAIL TRAIL



Easiest-Easy (1-2)

Explore verdant countryside, a bushy gorge, rusty relics and old gold towns.

A Great Ride for all ages, this trail follows historic railway lines between quiet country towns within easy reach of Auckland and The Coromandel. With gentle terrain and an abundance of accommodation, cafés and restaurants, this is one of the easiest and most satisfying cycle trails in the North Island.

The northern section of the trail skirts the Hauraki Gulf from Kaiaua to Thames, taking cyclists past one of the most important coastal areas for shorebirds in New Zealand. From Thames it's a leisurely cruise through lush farmland to Paeroa and on to Te Aroha, famed for its therapeutic hot pools. There are memorable views of the Hauraki Plains and forested Kaimai Ranges the whole way.

The trail's highlight is Karangahake Gorge – a rocky ravine hiding intriguing gold mining relics and spooky tunnels. The gorge can be reached via vintage railway from Waihi to Waikino Station where there's a great café and bike hire.

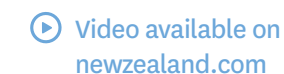
[haurakirailtrail.co.nz](http://haurakirailtrail.co.nz)



3-4 days



173 km

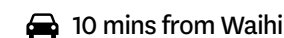


Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE



1 hr from Auckland



10 mins from Waihi



5 mins from Thames



Hauraki Rail Trail, Coromandel


**Nearby Attractions** • Historic Russell • Waipoua kauri forest • Ninety Mile Beach

**Nearby Attractions** • East Coast beaches • Driving Creek Railway • Waihi Gold Discovery Centre



Waikato River Trails, Waikato

## WAIKATO RIVER TRAILS



 Easy-Advanced (1-4)

### Changing landscapes and handsome dams along New Zealand's longest river.




Tracing the winding Waikato River through the North Island's rural heartland, this trail offers ever-changing scenery from rural farmland and pine forest, to native bush alive with birds and wetlands regenerating with the help of local communities. A series of tranquil hydro-lakes and handsome dams offer interesting photo opportunities, particularly at Arapuni where a historic suspension bridge overlooks a striking powerhouse.

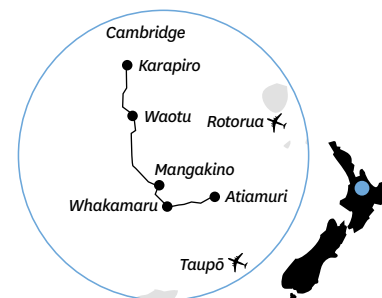
The trail is divided into five sections, two of which (Karapiro and Whakamaru) are great for beginners and families, while intermediate sections offer fun, flowing riding through mature, lakeside forest. Numerous access points make it easy to tailor day rides of any length and level of difficulty, but the trail can also be ridden in full stopping overnight in campsites or varied accommodation.

[waikatorivertrails.co.nz](http://waikatorivertrails.co.nz)

 1-4 days  
 103 km

#### GETTING THERE

-  2 hrs 30 mins from Auckland
-  1 hr 45 mins from Hamilton
-  50 mins from Taupō



## THE TIMBER TRAIL

 Easy-Intermediate (2-3)

### Ancient forest, thrilling suspension bridges and intriguing timber-milling relics.

Located in the heart of the North Island, Pureora Forest Park is an enchanting mix of virgin, regenerating and exotic forest rich in natural and human history.


The Timber Trail traverses this remote wilderness, following historic logging roads and bush tramlines, linked with flowing purpose-built track and some of New Zealand's longest and highest suspensions bridges. Curious timber-milling relics add an element of surprise.

The trail runs between the tiny settlements of Pureora and Ongarue, with similarly small Piropiro around the halfway mark where riders can overnight in a lodge, campsite or meet a shuttle to nearby accommodation. Piropiro is also the starting point of a rewarding and mostly downhill ride to Ongarue for those with just a day to spare.




[timbertrail.co.nz](http://timbertrail.co.nz)

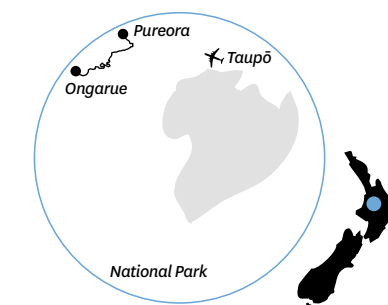
 1-2 days

 85 km

 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

#### GETTING THERE

-  3 hrs 15 mins from Auckland
-  1 hr from Taupō
-  50 mins from National Park



The Timber Trail. Credit: Love Taupō



Te Ara Ahi Trail, Rotorua

## TE ARA AHI TRAIL

 Easy-Intermediate (2-3)

Easy riding between geothermal wonders and Māori cultural sites.

Be wowed by Mother Nature's fire power at four unique geothermal areas linked by three leisurely sections of trail, starting from the visitor hot spot of Rotorua.



Dubbed Thermal by Bike and an enjoyable way to get from A to B, Te Ara Ahi is enriched by fascinating Māori history, pretty lake and mountain views, and cafés along the way. Keen mountain bikers also have the option of exploring Rotorua's world-famous Redwoods Mountain Bike Park, while weary legs can be soothed in natural hot pools and thermal resorts alongside the trail.

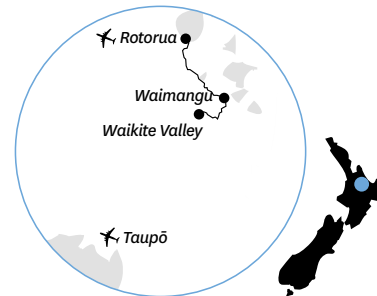
Easily split into one-day and half-day rides with helpful bike hire and shuttle services, the trail is a great way to get some fresh air and moderate exercise while sightseeing around the area.

[nzcycletrail.com/te-ara-ahi](http://nzcycletrail.com/te-ara-ahi)

 1-2 days  
 48 km

### GETTING THERE

 3 hrs from Auckland  
 2 mins from Rotorua






## MOTU TRAILS

 Easy-Advanced (2-4)

Three diverse trails through coastal dunes, verdant valleys and deep forest.

 1-3 days  
 11-91 km

### GETTING THERE

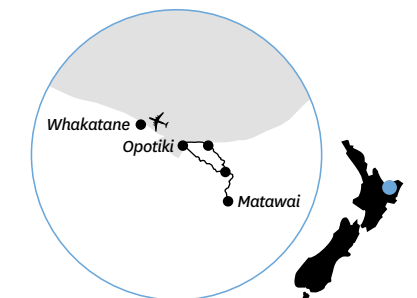
 45 mins to Whakatane from Auckland  
 45 mins from Whakatane  
 5 mins from Opotiki

Accessed from Opotiki, gateway to New Zealand's legendary Pacific Coast Highway, the Motu Trails comprise three distinct routes exploring the coast and penetrating deep into remote back-country. There's something for everyone as well as close proximity to other enjoyable visitor attractions in Eastland and the Bay of Plenty.

The family-friendly Dunes Trail offers an irresistible blend of easy riding and beach time, perfect for a half-day adventure. Fitter cyclists can venture along the historic Motu Road that runs from the ocean to the rugged hinterland, while the Pakihi Track is a challenging downhill through magical forest.

All three trails can be combined for a demanding 91 km loop, stopping overnight at atmospheric rural accommodation.

[motutrails.co.nz](http://motutrails.co.nz)



Motu Trails, Opotiki



Great Lake Trail, Lake Taupō

## GREAT LAKE TRAIL



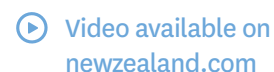
### All-seasons riding around the shores of beautiful Lake Taupō.

Skirting the shores of New Zealand's largest lake not far from central Taupō, this trail dishes up an enviable mix of lush forest and wetlands, waterfalls, beaches, plus panoramic views of Tongariro National Park's volcanoes.

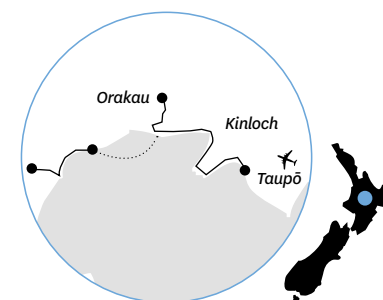
The trail is smooth and flowing with some moderate hill climbs and long, fun downhills. The whole ride can be spread over two days, or broken into shorter sections of various lengths and difficulty using local shuttles and a water taxi.

The Waihaha trail offers waterfalls, panoramic views across Lake Taupō and a water taxi ride out from Kotukutuku Landing. The deservedly popular W2K trail starts in picturesque Kinloch then climbs around a bushy headland between Whangamata and Whakaipo Bays, with the option of completing the additional Headland Loop. Both trails take around half a day.

[greatlaketrail.com](http://greatlaketrail.com)



#### GETTING THERE



## MOUNTAINS TO SEA



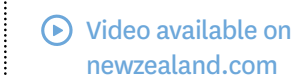
### Journey from a volcanic plateau through deep forest to the coast.

Mt Ruapehu, the North Island's highest mountain, signals the start of this gnarly adventure through Tongariro and Whanganui National Parks all the way to the Tasman Sea.

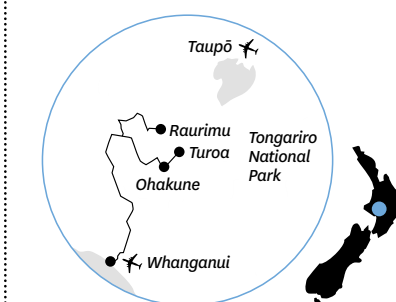
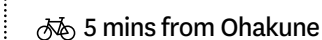
It's a journey rich in natural and cultural heritage, featuring such sights such as an old cobbled road, towering bluffs and the isolated Bridge to Nowhere. Off the bike activities include hiking, kayaking and a jet boat ride down the magical Whanganui River.

Completing the full trail requires good planning, dry conditions, reasonable fitness and off-road bike skills. The trail also readily lends itself to shorter rides such as the Ohakune Old Coach Road – a relatively easy half-day trip through enchanting forest and featuring a handsomely restored and highly photogenic 294m-long railway viaduct.

[mountainstosea.co.nz](http://mountainstosea.co.nz)



#### GETTING THERE



Mountains to Sea, Ruapehu/Whanganui. Credit: Visit Ruapehu





Hawke's Bay Trails, Napier

## HAWKE'S BAY TRAILS




 Easiest-Intermediate (1-3)

### Easy riding, grand landscapes, great wineries and stacks of other sights.




This extensive, mostly flat trail network is a memorable way to explore Hawke's Bay's sights and attractions while soaking up breathtaking coastal and rural scenery. Following dedicated cycle paths and quiet country roads, it offers day trips for all ages and abilities, with the convenience of accommodation and dining along the way.

The all-weather network is divided into three themed trails. The Landscapes Ride takes in relaxed seaside settlements, dramatic views of Cape Kidnappers and the bucolic Tukituki Valley. The Wineries Ride wends between the vineyards around Hastings and Havelock North with ample opportunity for tastings. Art deco Napier lies on the Water Ride that features coastal, wetland and riverside scenery and a lovely loop out to the charming Puketapu pub.

[hawkesbaynz.com](http://hawkesbaynz.com)

 1-4 days  
 200 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

#### GETTING THERE

-  1 hr from Auckland & Wellington
-  2 hrs from Taupō
-  5 mins from Napier & Hastings



## RIMUTAKA CYCLE TRAIL

 Easiest-Advanced (1-4)




### Explore the wild side of Wellington and neighbouring Wairarapa region.

Readily accessible from Wellington city and well serviced by public transport, bike shuttles and accommodation, this cycleway showcases the lower North Island's diverse and often rugged natural environments.



Starting on the shores of Wellington Harbour, the trail heads along the pretty Hutt River trail which features plenty of short, easy loop options. An old railway line provides a gentle traverse over the Rimutaka Ranges to the rural Wairarapa where it's possible to detour to world-class wineries and catch a train back to downtown Wellington.

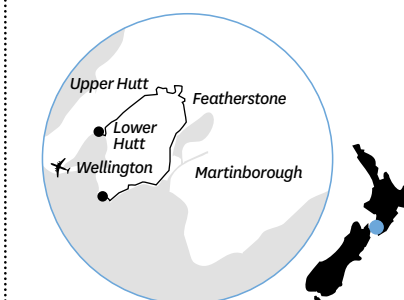
Eager riders can continue to the coast along quiet country roads beside bird-filled lakes, before tackling the last leg round the wild and rocky Cook Strait coastline back towards Wellington.

[wellingtonnz.com/rimutaka-cycle-trail/](http://wellingtonnz.com/rimutaka-cycle-trail/)

 2-3 days  
 115 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

#### GETTING THERE

-  20 mins from Wellington
-  25 mins from Martinborough



Rimutaka Cycle Trail, Wairarapa

## ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTH ISLAND



### DOLPHIN WATCHING IN NORTHLAND

Northland is home to large populations of friendly, playful dolphins who flock to the region for its warm waters and sheltered coastline.



Credit: Kirsten Simcox Photography

### ART DECO NAPIER

A tour of Napier's city streets is a must do for any visitor to see some of the finest examples of 1930s Art Deco architecture in the world.



### FOOD AND WINE IN AUCKLAND

Auckland is home to award-winning wineries, delicious local produce and buzzing restaurants in the inner-city precincts.



Credit: Love Taupō

### FISHING IN LAKE TAUPŌ

Clear, fast rivers run throughout the volcanic Lake Taupō region, making the area an internationally renowned trout fishery.



### VISIT HOBBITON IN WAIKATO

Experience the real Middle-earth with a visit to the Hobbiton™ Movie Set, featured in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies.



### WHITE ISLAND

Take an unforgettable boat or helicopter tour to New Zealand's only active marine volcano, estimated to be between 100,000 and 200,000 years old.



### GEO THERMAL IN ROTORUA

Get up close to spectacular geysers and colourful crater lakes, relax in a mud bath or enjoy a simple soak in a natural hot stream.



### CULTURE IN WELLINGTON

Wellington is home to the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, as well as many other fascinating cultural attractions.

## ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTH ISLAND



### ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

Abel Tasman National Park is a paradise of white-sand beaches. Home to native seals, dolphins and sea birds, it's the perfect place for a kayak or hiking trip.



### HIKE THE WEST COAST GLACIERS

Witness the puzzle of huge valleys of ice that extend well below the snowline, almost to the sea.



### WINE TASTING IN MARLBOROUGH

Marlborough is one of New Zealand's premier wine regions and is world-famous for its sauvignon blanc.



### ADVENTURE IN QUEENSTOWN

Queenstown is New Zealand's adventure capital, with a host of activities on land, water and in the air to thrill, challenge and inspire you.



### WHALE WATCH IN KAIKOURA

Kaikoura is known as New Zealand's whale-watching mecca. Get up close with majestic giant sperm whales, as well as humpbacks, pilot whales and orca.



### SCENIC FLIGHT OVER MILFORD SOUND

From the air, Fiordland's spectacular mountains, waterfalls and alpine lakes are breathtaking – a scenic flight over the area is unforgettable.



### JOURNEY THROUGH THE SOUTHERN ALPS

The TranzAlpine is one of the world's greatest train journeys, travelling coast to coast through forest and farmland and over the spectacular Southern Alps.



### BIRD WATCHING IN STEWART ISLAND

Stewart Island is a bird watcher's paradise, teeming with many of New Zealand's native and endangered species.



Queen Charlotte Track, Marlborough Sounds. Credit: Mike Heydon

## QUEEN CHARLOTTE TRACK

 Intermediate-Advanced (3-4)




### Meander around the bays, hills and ridges of the Marlborough Sounds.

Delve deep into one of New Zealand's most beautiful waterways on this classic mountain biking adventure. It features a mix of intermediate and challenging sections, all of which are equally welcoming to walkers.




The journey starts with a scenic boat cruise to historic Ship Cove in the outer reaches of the Marlborough Sounds, from where the trail skirts around bay after bay, linked by saddles and ridges topped with stupendous viewpoints. The whole track can be completed over 2-3 days by fit riders, or broken into more leisurely sections and combined with kayaking, hiking or lingering over a resort lunch.

Water taxis ferry luggage between memorable overnight stops including nature campsites and seafront lodges, so riders can pedal light through the amazing scenery.

[qctrack.co.nz](http://qctrack.co.nz)

-  2-3 days
-  70 km
-  Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

#### GETTING THERE



-  5 hrs from Christchurch
-  1 hr from Picton
-  3 hrs from Wellington






## DUN MOUNTAIN TRAIL

 Intermediate-Advanced (3-4)

### Adventure in the hills with panoramic views and a thrilling downhill.

-  4-6 hours
-  38 km

#### GETTING THERE

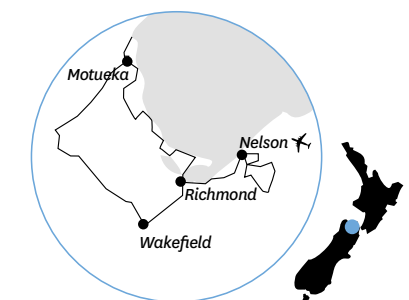
-  45 mins from Wellington and Christchurch
-  2 hrs from Picton
-  15 mins from Nelson

This captivating one-day loop traces the old Dun Mountain Railway into breathtaking alpine territory before barreling downhill for 20 kilometres back into Nelson city.

The mountain's unique geology, rich mining history and vast inland and coastal vistas make this one of New Zealand's finest day rides. It's also easy to reach, with the starting point just a 15-minute pedal from the vibrant heart of Nelson city, and the final stage a gentle wend down the picturesque Maitai Valley.

Completing the full loop involves a technical downhill over loose, rocky terrain, best suited to fit and experienced mountain bikers. Riders of lesser ability, however, can still enjoy a fantastic ride by following the trail up to Coppermine Saddle and returning the same way.

[heartofbiking.org.nz](http://heartofbiking.org.nz)



Dun Mountain Trail, Nelson. Credit: Grant Sterling



Tasman's Great Taste Trail, Nelson

## TASMAN'S GREAT TASTE TRAIL

Easy-Intermediate (2-3)

Sparkling seas, pretty countryside, plus food and drink for miles.

Meandering through picturesque countryside and along the Tasman Bay coastline, this easy going trail is a terrific way to tour the region's attractions ranging from art galleries and boutique shops, to craft breweries, cafés, fruit stalls and sophisticated winery restaurants.

Tasman's Great Taste Trail is in fact a network of cycleways, mostly easy and linking the region's visitor hubs of Nelson, Wakefield, Richmond, Motueka and Kaiteriteri.

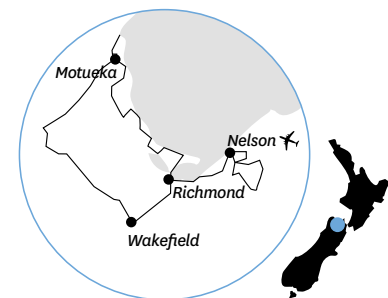
This trail also lends itself to leisurely day-rides allowing plenty of time for sightseeing and other activities (such as lazing on the beach) along the way. Multiple access points and loop options, bike hire depots and shuttle services make logistics simple, as do luggage transfers for those wishing to spread out their overnight stops.

[heartofbiking.org.nz](http://heartofbiking.org.nz)

1-4 days  
 38-175 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE

- 45 mins from Wellington and Christchurch
- 2 hrs from Picton
- 5 mins from Nelson & Motueka



## THE OLD GHOST ROAD

Advanced (4)

An epic and serious wilderness adventure for fit, intrepid mountain bikers.

2-4 days  
 85 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

Riders in search of the ultimate back-country mountain biking adventure need look no further than the Old Ghost Road.

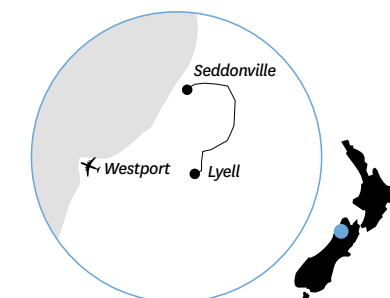
New Zealand's longest single-track resurrects an old gold miners' route between the ghost town of Lyell in the Buller Gorge and Seddonville on the West Coast. With expertly cut track and comfortable sleeping huts in an environment dominated by ancient rainforest, rocky mountain tops and a rugged river gorge, this is a premier multi-day mountain biking experience.

Remote and challenging, the full 2-4-day trail should only be attempted by riders who are technically competent, fit and totally self-sufficient including food, water, sleeping bags, spare clothing and a medical kit. A rewarding taster, however, is offered by riding in and back from either end, with Lyell offering the bonus of delightfully spooky gold mining relics.

[oldghostroad.org.nz](http://oldghostroad.org.nz)

### GETTING THERE

- 40 mins to Westport from Wellington
- 5 hrs 30 mins from Christchurch
- 45 mins from Westport



Old Ghost Road, West Coast. Credit: Sven Martin



West Coast Wilderness Trail, West Coast

## WEST COAST WILDERNESS TRAIL

 Easy-Intermediate (2-3)

Mesmerising mountain, coastal, lake, river and rainforest scenery.

This easy trail is an unbeatable way to explore this spectacular part of the South Island, with fascinating natural and human history revealed as it retraces old packhorse tracks, tramlines, railways and even water races, linked by some impressive new sections.

The trail is divided into four roughly equal sections between Greymouth, Kumara, Cowboy Paradise, Hokitika and Ross. It takes riders deep into the intensively scenic landscapes around the foot of the Southern Alps, while offering a journey back in time to the days of Māori pounamu (greenstone) gatherers and the glittering gold rush era.


Accommodation, shuttles and luggage transfers make it easy to complete in full or get a taste on shorter rides.

[westcoastwildernesstrail.co.nz](http://westcoastwildernesstrail.co.nz)

 1-4 days

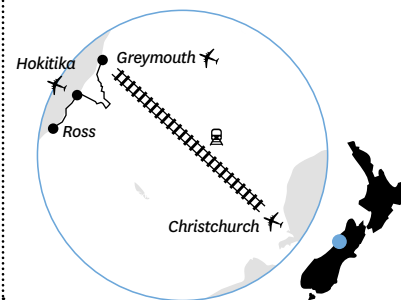
 139 km

### GETTING THERE


 4 hrs from Christchurch

 5 mins from Greymouth

 5 mins from Hokitika



## ST JAMES CYCLE TRAIL

 Easy-Advanced (2-4)

Survey the unforgettable sub-alpine wonderland of the high country.

 1-2 days

 64 km

### GETTING THERE

 3 hrs from Christchurch

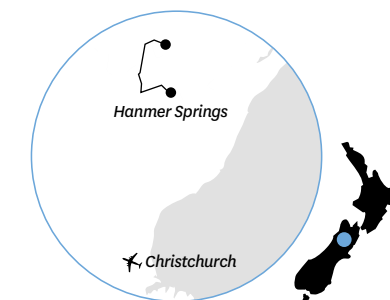
 1 hr from Hanmer Springs

Close to the resort town of Hanmer Springs, this trail leads riders through historic St James Station, which was once one of the largest cattle and sheep farms in New Zealand.

The trail is definitely challenging in parts, particularly as it skirts the foothills of the Southern Alps, but riders are rewarded with simply stunning scenery. Crystal-clear rivers, rocky passes, soaring peaks, blooming alpine meadows and beautiful beech forest complete the picture, while herds of wild horses add a magical energy.

Although determined riders can complete the trail in one long day, stopping overnight in a hut or campsite allows greater appreciation of this exceptional wilderness. Those with less experience or time can get a great taste of it on the 15 km Homestead Run loop.

[nzcycletrail.com/st-james-cycle-trail](http://nzcycletrail.com/st-james-cycle-trail)



St James Cycle Trail, Hanmer Springs. Credit: Bevan Triebels



Alps 2 Ocean, Canterbury

## ALPS 2 OCEAN CYCLE TRAIL

 Easy-Intermediate (2-3)




### Epic vistas from the Southern Alps all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

New Zealand's highest mountain – Aoraki/Mt Cook – is just one of many stunning sights on this unforgettable journey from the Southern Alps to the historic port town of Oamaru.




Amidst the grandeur of braided rivers, glacier-carved valleys, turquoise hydro-lakes, tussock-covered highlands and rural plains are a host of tantalising off-the-bike activities including wine-tasting, penguin-spotting, glider flights and soaking in alfresco hot tubs.

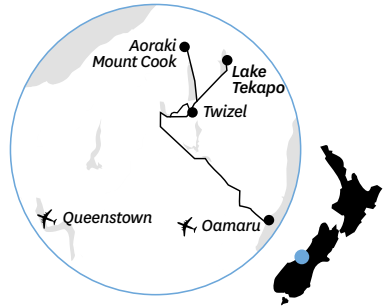
Divided into nine predominantly gentle sections, the Alps 2 Ocean (A2O) can be completed in 4-6 days by intermediate-grade cyclists. There are multiple access points and shuttle services on the trail, making it easy to tailor a shorter ride to suit riders of all levels while abundant accommodation, cafés and other visitor services ensure maximum enjoyment along the way.

[alps2ocean.com](http://alps2ocean.com)

 1-6 days  
 306 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

#### GETTING THERE

-  3 hrs 30 mins from Queenstown
-  4 hrs from Christchurch
-  5 mins from Tekapo & Twizel



Nearby Attractions • Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park • Lake Tekapo • Oamaru

## OTAGO CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL

 Easiest-Easy (1-2)




### An easy cruise through legendary big-sky country, rich in local hospitality.

New Zealand's original Great Ride provides a grand tour of Central Otago, famed for its alluring blend of natural beauty, fascinating history, friendly folk, plus fantastic local food and wine.




Tracing the route of the old railway between Clyde and Middlemarch, the multi-day trail offers super-easy riding through ever-changing scenes featuring mountain backdrops, flinty river gorges and golden high-country. Special sights include viaducts, eerie tunnels, abandoned gold diggings and art deco buildings in quaint country towns.

There are plenty of places to eat, drink and sleep along the way, while well-oiled support crews, including shuttles and cycle tour companies, make the whole adventure a breeze. The all-seasons trail can be ridden in either direction and split into shorter rides taking in major highlights.

[otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz](http://otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz)

 1-5 days  
 152 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

#### GETTING THERE

-  1 hr from Queenstown
-  2 hrs 30 mins from Dunedin
-  2 mins from Alexandra



Otago Central Rail Trail, Central Otago

Nearby Attractions • Queenstown • Wanaka • Taieri Gorge Railway • Dunedin



Roxburgh Gorge Trail, Central Otago. Credit: Bennett & Slater

## ROXBURGH GORGE TRAIL

 Easy-Intermediate (2-3)




Experience another world of remarkable geology and a glittering past.

This extraordinary one-day adventure follows the mighty Clutha Mata-au River through the Roxburgh Gorge, a seldom-seen world of towering bluffs, huge schist boulders, willow-lined riverbank and remnants of the gold rush era.




Starting from pretty Alexandra and finishing at the impressive Lake Roxburgh Dam, the trail follows a wide, smooth path through the rocky terrain, with a few gentle climbs. A 12-km section in the middle is bridged by a jetboat ride featuring thrilling spins and the chance to see schist huts and water races left in the wake of pioneer gold miners.

A fantastic 4-6 hour outing, the Roxburgh Gorge can easily be combined with the Clutha Gold and Otago Central Rail Trail nearby.

[roxburghgorge.co.nz](http://roxburghgorge.co.nz)

-  1 day
-  34 km
-  Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE

-  1 hr from Queenstown
-  2 hrs 30 mins from Dunedin
-  5 mins from Alexandra



## CLUTHA GOLD TRAIL

 Easiest-Easy (1-2)




A journey of discovery through changing landscapes, river scenery, history and great local hospitality.

Following a mix of gentle riverside path and old railway line, this trail serves up mesmerising Central Otago scenery alongside captivating sights on its journey between Roxburgh Dam and the country town of Lawrence.




The trail begins at the dam, which is the endpoint of the Roxburgh Gorge Trail upstream. Following the bends of the mighty Clutha Mata-au River, it soon reaches Roxburgh where visitors can try sweet stone fruit, legendary pies and great coffee before continuing past such highlights as Pinders Pond, Horseshoe Bend Bridge and the Lonely Graves that commemorate the kindness of strangers.

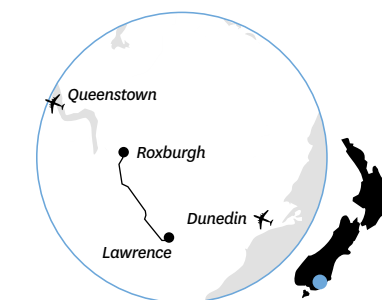
Easy terrain makes it possible to ride this trail in one day, but breaking the journey allows more time to uncover local secrets. Homespun hospitality and convenient transport make all options simple to arrange.

[cluthagold.co.nz](http://cluthagold.co.nz)

-  2-4 days
-  73 km
-  Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE

-  1 hr 45 mins from Queenstown
-  2 hrs from Dunedin
-  30 mins from Alexandra




Clutha Gold Trail, Central Otago



Queenstown Trail, Queenstown

## THE QUEENSTOWN TRAIL

 Easy-Advanced (2-4)




Pedal between sights including wineries, Arrowtown and the Kawarau Bridge.

Proving the saying that getting there is half the fun, this extensive trail network is a richly rewarding way to reach many of the Queenstown region's must-see attractions while soaking up sublime Central Otago scenery.



Linking Queenstown, Arrowtown and the Gibbston Valley, trails range from easy lakeside jaunts to ambitious cross-country treks, offering adventures for cyclists of almost every ability and interest. Options include the family-friendly Lake Hayes Loop, and the Gibbston River Ride, an easy wine-tour through the 'Valley of the Vines' beginning at the iconic Kawarau Bridge, the location of The Kawarau Bridge Bungy - the 'World Home of Bungy Jumping'.

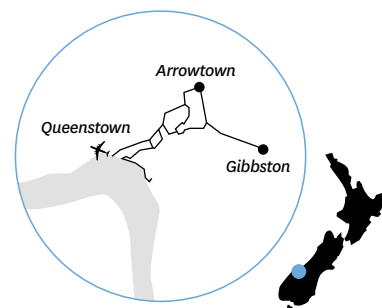
Handy bike hire depots, open terrain and clear signage make planning and navigation a breeze, while wide, smooth paths means riders can keep their eyes front and camera at the ready.

[queenstowntrail.org.nz](http://queenstowntrail.org.nz)

 1-3 days  
 120 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE

 5 mins from Queenstown  
 5 mins from Arrowtown



## AROUND THE MOUNTAINS TRAIL

 Easy-Intermediate (2-3)




Contrasting worlds of remote wilderness and idyllic rural country.

Staking a claim as one of the most scenic in New Zealand, this trail boasts not only awe-inspiring mountain, lake and valley vistas, but also warm hospitality in a series of charming country towns.




The leisurely 3-5 day journey begins with the iconic steamship TSS Earnslaw lake cruise from Queenstown to Walter Peak Station, after which riders pedal through the show-stopping Von Valley to the remote Mavora Lakes. Having ambled alongside the Oreti River the trail skirts the southern end of the Eyre Mountains, passing historic Southland towns Mossburn, Lumsden, Garston, Athol and Kingston.

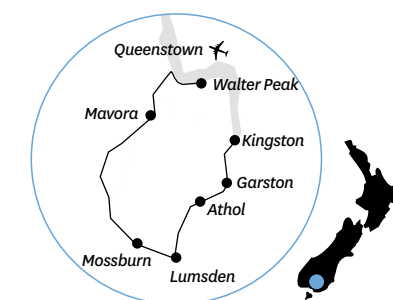
Day-trippers can enjoy a memorable taste of the trail on the section from Walter Peak to Mavora Lakes, with transport and bike hire easy to arrange.

[aroundthemountains.co.nz](http://aroundthemountains.co.nz)

 3-5 days  
 180 km  
 Video available on [newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)

### GETTING THERE

 45 mins from Queenstown  
 1 hr from Invercargill  
 1 hr 30 mins from Wanaka



Around the Mountains Trail, Southland





Otago Central Rail Trail

## THINGS TO KNOW

### Bike Etiquette

#### RESPECT OTHERS

- Give way to walkers and you will help foster a positive attitude towards bikers.
- Ride shared-use tracks in small groups (6-8 or less) so as not to displace other users.
- Be patient behind slower riders and pull over where practical to let faster riders pass.

#### RESPECT THE RULES

- Ride only where permitted – keep off closed tracks, including those that are seasonally closed to protect the surface or minimise conflict with other users.
- Be prepared (take food, water, tools, first aid and warm clothes) and plan for the unexpected (a change in the weather, an accident or getting lost).

#### RESPECT THE TRACK

- Avoid riding in the mud and rain. Both bikes and walkers damage soft, wet tracks.
- Take your rubbish home – leave only tyre prints.
- Clean your bike to prevent spreading weeds like gorse and didymo.

#### SHARING THE ROAD

- Follow the road rules – stop for red lights and at pedestrian crossings.
- Ride predictably, in a straight line and signal your intentions clearly in advance.
- Ride no more than two abreast and only where safe and appropriate.
- Try not to slow the flow of traffic – where practical pull over to let vehicles pass.

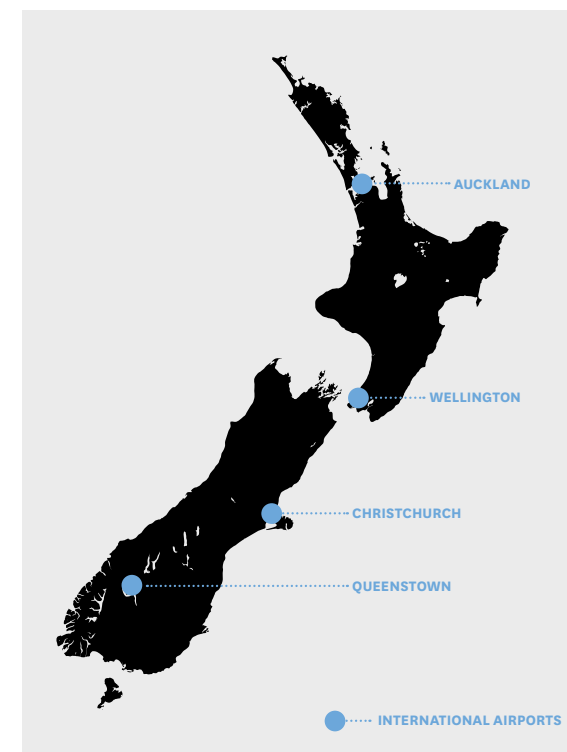
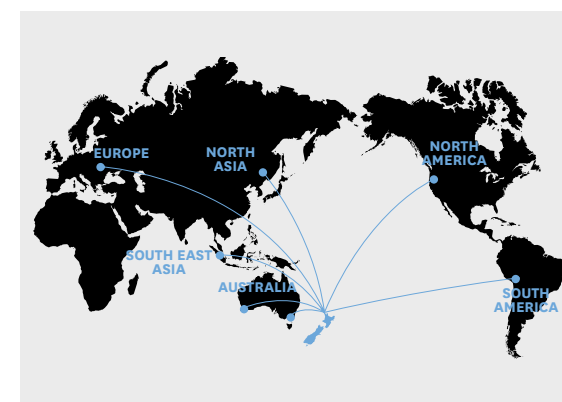


Tasman's Great Taste Trail

### International flights to New Zealand

New Zealand is approximately a three-hour flight from the eastern seaboard of Australia and approximately a ten-hour direct flight from most places in the Pacific Rim, including Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo and the west coast of the USA. Flights from UK and Europe to New Zealand will have one or more stopovers with the total flight time approximately 24 hours.

Europe–24 hours	North America–12 hours
North Asia–11 hours	South America–12 hours
South East Asia–10 hours	Australia–3–6 hours





Bay of Islands, Northland





## ENTERING NEW ZEALAND

- Eligible passport holders do not need to apply for a visitor visa before travelling to New Zealand; provided you are staying less than three months, have proof of onward travel, and can provide evidence of funds. For immigration and visa information visit [immigration.govt.nz](http://immigration.govt.nz)
- You must declare all food items you intend to bring into New Zealand. For more information visit [biosecurity.govt.nz](http://biosecurity.govt.nz)
- For information on duty free allowances visit [customs.govt.nz](http://customs.govt.nz)


## NEW ZEALAND'S BIO-SECURITY

New Zealand's rural-based economy requires strict biosecurity, so it is important for cyclists bringing their own gear to enter the country with clean bikes and clean cycling shoes, or risk being diverted to quarantine inspection upon arrival in New Zealand.

## GETTING AROUND

-  New Zealand has an extensive domestic air network. Book well in advance for the best airfares.
-  Trains operate in some cities and there are a range of scenic and world-class train journeys.
-  Passenger ferries connect the North and South Island. The journey between Wellington and Picton takes approximately three and a half hours.
-  Self-drive is an excellent way to explore New Zealand. Varied landscapes and dramatic geographical features are in close proximity. New Zealand drives on the left side of the road.

**ALWAYS DRIVE  
ON THE LEFT SIDE  
OF THE ROAD.**



## DRIVING IN NEW ZEALAND

Driving in a new country can be challenging, especially if you are tired. Consider staying a night or two in your arrival city before collecting a rental vehicle.

- You must obey all road rules and signs at all times. Always drive on the left side of the road and do not exceed the speed limit.
- Always keep left. Every time you drive, keep left of the centre line
- Driving in New Zealand can be challenging. Many roads are narrow, winding and there are lots of hills and sharp corners.
- Trips will take longer than you think. It may look close on the map, but allow plenty of time for travel.
- In New Zealand, it's illegal to break the road rules, and if you do, you will be fined.
- If you break the road rules or cause a crash, the police will get involved and you could be fined or prosecuted.
- Keep your eyes on the road, not the scenery.
- If you want to stop and look at the scenery, make sure you pull completely off the road in a place that is safe to stop.

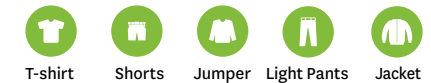


Queenstown

## CLIMATE & WHAT TO BRING

Always be prepared for sudden changes in weather, especially during outdoor activities.

**Summer (Dec to Feb) 14°C–28°C**



**Autumn (Mar to May) 10°C–24°C**



**Winter (Jun to Aug) 9°C–20°C**



**Spring (Sep to Nov) 12°C–22°C**



This is a guide to help you to pack, but always plan what to bring based on activity you intend to participate.



Omarama, Canterbury



Waitangi, Northland

For more information on cycling holidays in New Zealand,  
please contact your nearest travel agent.

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[newzealand.com](http://newzealand.com)