

# Canterbury Trails

PERSONALLY GUIDED TOURS

## Queenstown – Glacier Country - Christchurch

TranzAlpine, Valleys, Coastlines, Geology, History

3Days 2Nights

Tour code: SH04a

### Day 1: Queenstown to Glacier Country

Depart Queenstown and head over the rugged and remote Crown Range after first visiting Arrowtown, the site of gold diggings in the 1860's. Stop in Wanaka for a break on the shore of Lake Wanaka with stunning views of the mountains. From Wanaka head towards the West Coast crossing the Haast Pass. On the way, you can take short walks to see waterfalls and if there has been recent rainfall, the Haast River passing through the gorge known as the Gates of Haast can be truly spectacular. North of Haast we join the West Coast Highway which passes through primeval temperate rainforest where we can take the opportunity to explore. The coastline is also spectacular and there is a possibility of seeing Hector's Dolphins, the smallest and rarest dolphin in New Zealand. Continuing north, we enter glacier country, to visit either Fox Glacier or Lake Matheson. Your accommodation for the next two nights will be in either of the glacier villages.

### Day 2: Glacier Country

A day to explore the glaciated landscape of the Franz and Fox Glacier region. Walks are available to the terminal face of the Franz Josef or Fox Glacier and to a viewpoint to witness the glacier's descent down the mountain into the rainforest. Here you can also experience a guided hike on the glaciers with an alpine guide or perhaps an exciting helicopter ride to view the Southern Alps with a snow landing on the upper reaches of the glacier. (Please note that the optional 'On the glacier hike' and helicopter trips are not included in the tour cost and are subject to the weather).

Travelling north we could visit Okarito Lagoon and take a boat cruise or kayak on New Zealand's largest area of unspoilt wetlands. This area is host to the largest number of species of birds in New Zealand including the White Heron, spoonbills, godwits and shags. Your guide will be at your disposal to help you explore and enjoy this almost natural untouched playground.



### Day 3: Franz Joseph to Christchurch

As we start the day continuing north we head to Hokitika for lunch. Once the capital of Westland and a roaring gold mining town, and also a place where the Maori sought their treasured greenstone (jade). Greenstone, glass and native timbers are features in this town's bustling centre of art and craft shops. Turning east we head inland across the Southern Alps. In the heart of the Southern Alps, Arthur's Pass National Park has an incredible diversity of flora and landscape. They range from eastern beech clad hills and tussock valleys to the luxuriant rain forest in the west. The highest mountains have glaciers and surrounding them are tussock basins, flowering herbs and alpine grasses. In Arthur's Pass National Park, we can take walks to see waterfalls, discover the forests and alpine plants of this area and experience the alpine landscape. Explore the glacial landscape and see the features that the Ice Age left behind. We will also seek out and hopefully find a unique South Island personality who is mischievous, inquisitive, comical and rowdy; this is cheeky Kea - the world's only alpine parrot. We may have to defend our mini coach, as they have been known to try and remove aerials and door trims with their beaks! Mid-afternoon, you will take the TranzAlpine train to Christchurch crossing the vast expanses of the Canterbury Plains. Travel through the dramatic gorge of the Waimakariri River and arrive in Christchurch at around 6pm where your guide will meet you again and transfer you to your overnight accommodation and bid you farewell.

#### Inclusions:

- Travel by deluxe mini-van
- Picnic morning or afternoon teas
- Café lunches on each day
- Guided walks to explore the alpine and rainforest landscapes (as required)
- TranzAlpine train Arthur's Pass to Christchurch on Day 3
- Fully escorted with local knowledgeable guide

#### Not included...

- Guest accommodations, breakfasts, evening meals or optional activities

Depart Queenstown at 8am on day one and finish in Christchurch at 6:30pm on day 3

+64 (0)3 384 6148  
+64 (0)21 384 614  
trails@xtra.co.nz  
canterburytrails.co.nz

WE'LL GUIDE YOU  
**PROPERLY**  
SO YOUR ADVENTURE  
UNFOLDS AT YOUR PACE

PO Box 12206  
Beckenham  
Christchurch  
New Zealand, 8242