



13 Day Road Tour Christchurch to Queenstown

Route: Christchurch – Hanmer Springs – Reefton – Punakaiki – Hokitika – Franz Joseph – Fox Glacier – Haast – Makaroa – Lake Wanaka – Queenstown

Day 1 Christchurch

At lunchtime we meet at our depot for a 'working lunch'. Our Guides will facilitate the trip briefing and introductions. They will give you a full understanding of the itinerary, terrain and any operational issues we need to deal with. This is the time to fit your bikes before we turn some pedals on a warm-up ride in the spectacular Port Hills above the city, providing wonderful views of Lyttleton Harbour, the Pacific Ocean & Southern Alps.

Meals: L/D

Cycling: 42kms

Day 2 Christchurch to Hanmer Springs

From our morning meeting in Christchurch we drive out of the city and start to cycle. The Canterbury Plains are vast and with Hanmer being our objective it's a matter of turning the pedals and watching the road slip by. By late afternoon we arrive at the thermal resort and a chance to soak in the hot pools before dinner.

Meals: B/L

Cycling: 103kms

Day 3 Hanmer Springs to Reefton

The road over Lewis Pass takes us up through the beech forests of the Southern Alps steadily gaining height in the Maruia valley. From the head there is a short grind to the summit of the Pass and the chance to look into Cannibal Gorge before a freewheel down to the second thermal resort of the tour at Maruia Springs with its Japanese bathhouse and outdoor pools. Continuing onwards we climb over Rahu Saddle for a final descent into the west coast mining town of Reefton.

Meals: B/L/D

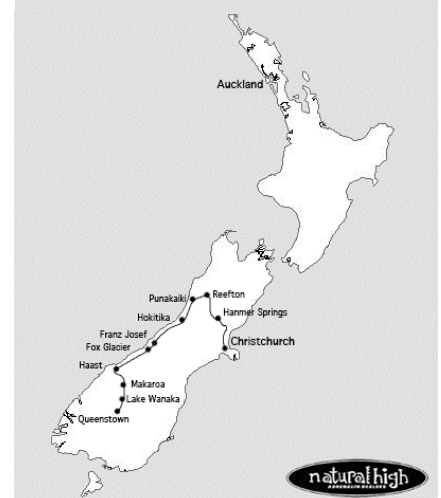
Cycling: 141kms. Short Option – Boyle River to Reefton 86kms

Tour includes:

- 12 nights in excellent accommodation 3 Star NZ standard share twin
- 12 breakfasts - (B)
- 9 lunches (L)
- 6 dinners (D)
- Cycle hire and helmet
- Tour Guide
- Support vehicle and luggage transfer
- All activities shown
- Walk to base of Glacier
- DOC Fees

Grade:

3 Challenging





Day 4 Reefton to Punakaiki

The ride from Reefton takes us out to the mighty Buller River and down to the junction with the State Highway 6 where we turn south to Punakaiki and the start of one of the best coastal rides in the world. The road hugs the eroded limestone cliffs which drop into the wild Tasman ocean. Our accommodation has the added delight of exploring the famous Pancake Rocks and the limestone wonderland of the area.

Meals: B/L

Cycling: 125kms. Short Option – Inangahua to Punakaiki – 90 kms

Day 5 Punakaiki to Hokitika

Southwards again the coastal ride today is again spectacular as the road hugs the coast with its many river mouths and bush slopes. Gradually the land opens up and the rural scenery intensifies as we reach Greymouth and the Grey River. From here the road continues southwards through the rural countryside before it finally reaches the craft center of Hokitika, home of the local jade known as Pounamu, or Greenstone.

Meals: B/L/D

Cycling: 84kms

Day 6 Hokitika to Franz Joseph

Further south, the glacier country beckons and the road soon changes from rural countryside to one fringed with the mighty podocarp rainforests. Along the way we break for coffee at Ross, one of the early gold-mining townships and then onwards through Hari Hari and Whataroa until finally we reach Franz Joseph Glacier township for the night.

Meals: B

Cycling: 135kms. Short Option – Ross to Whataroa – 81kms

Day 7 Franz Joseph to Fox Glacier

This morning is a chance to relax but for those who feel the need for some upper body exercise there is an option to do some sea-kayaking into the rainforest at the nearby Okarito Lagoon & bird sanctuary. The distance to Fox Glacier is only a matter of 25 kms but that ride crosses three strenuous passes, each followed by an exciting and exhilarating downhill. The ride is worth the effort with the last downhill into Fox leading straight into one of the village cafes or bars. In the evening we take a short tour to walk around nearby Lake Matheson with its famous sunset reflections of New Zealand's highest mountains.

Meals: B/L

Cycling: 25kms



Day 8 Fox Glacier

Time for a day off the saddle and Fox Glacier is a great place to enjoy this. Relax and catch up with your diary or postcards. Your guide will take you for a walk to the base of the Glacier, but you also have the option of going with the local Alpine Guiding company for a half or full day hike onto the glacier itself. Flight-seeing is very popular here either in fixed wing planes around the mountains or a helicopter flight to land on the snowfields high above the village. For those with extra energy we offer a late afternoon drive & then walk along the isolated Gillespies beach.

Meals: B

Cycling: No cycling today

Day 9 Fox Glacier to Haast

After the free day we head off again on the beautiful highways and flat roads. The road reaches the coast at Bruce Bay before turning inland again and skirting the beautiful Lake Moeraki and then the Knights Point coastline. Eventually we roll into Haast township and a final night on the west coast.

Meals: B/L/D

Cycling: 120kms. Short Option – Fox to Lake Moeraki – 89 kms

Day 10 Haast to Makaroa

Haast Pass presents another of the riding highlights. For some 50 kms the road slowly rises as the mighty Landsborough River joins the nearby Clark Valley. Countless waterfalls cascade from the mountains towering above the road & the lush rainforest changes to beech forest as you get higher up the valley. A final serious climb takes us to the summit of the pass at 678m. From here there is a 20km ride down into the beautiful township of Makaroa and a deserved end to the days ride. If the descent does not provide enough excitement there is a thrilling jet-boat ride nearby taking you deep into the Mount Aspiring National Park.

Meals: B/L/D

Cycling: 82 kms

Day 11 Makaroa to Lake Wanaka

Dramatic changes in the landscape today as we enter the dry arid country on the eastern side of the ranges. Today we cycle alongside spectacular lakes as the road rolls down into the headwaters of the Otago valleys and then climbs along the lake shore before taking us into the bustling resort township of Lake Wanaka. The afternoon is free to enjoy the shopping & relax alongside the lake.

Meals: B

Cycling: 68kms



Day 12 Lake Wanaka to Queenstown

This morning we head out of town on a 25km cycle to the historic township of Cardrona, with a chance to stop in the old pub for a coffee in the beautiful gardens. From here the last serious climb of your tour takes us to our highest point, 1070m at the top of the Crown Range with its spectacular views, before a wicked drop down into Arrowtown for lunch. We have time to enjoy this historic Gold Mining town before our final ride into Queenstown.

Meals: B/L/D

Cycling: 78kms

Day 13 Queenstown – Departure Day

Our tour ends today after breakfast and we must sadly say farewell. Queenstown is known as the adventure capital of the world. The town is situated alongside a beautiful lake surrounded by mountains so relaxing is also very easy to do & the shopping is fantastic. We recommend you spend some extra time here and are happy to help with accommodation bookings.

Meals: B