



Hiking & Tramping in New Zealand



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

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Jim DuFresne

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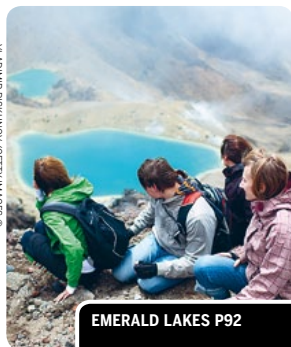
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Hiking & Tramping in New Zealand



Abel Tasman Coast Track
Postcard-perfect beaches and azure waters (p169)

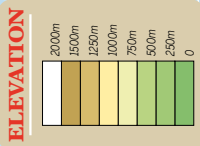
Heaphy Track
The longest and most diverse of the Great Walks (p175)

Routeburn Track
Wondrous, popular alpine crossing (p261)

Milford Track
Glaciated valleys, waterfalls and alpine splendour (p290)

Kepler Track
Lofty loop track on the fringes of Fiordland (p300)

Rakiura Track
Bird-lover's paradise on NZ's 'third island' (p308)



Itineraries



Southern Highlights

Wing into resurgent **Christchurch** and stock up on supplies before tramping some of the South Island's best tracks. Dive in at the deep end in **Arthur's Pass National Park** by summiting Avalanche Peak, a strenuous but rewarding day walk rivalling the best in the land.

Take the Inland Scenic Route south to **Lake Tekapo**, arriving in time to tour the night skies at Mt John Observatory. The views here are just as impressive during the daytime, too. Get up early and drive to **Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park**, allowing you time to tramp in to Mueller Hut, one of New Zealand's highest.

Make your way south to buzzy **Queenstown**, stopping to sample Central Otago wines and perhaps do a bungee jump at Kawarau Bridge along the way. Soak up some hospitality before setting off the following day for the Routeburn Track, NZ's second-most-popular Great Walk. Having traversed the Southern Alps, take a day off and ogle **Milford Sound** on a boat trip or scenic flight. Return to Queenstown on foot via the Greenstone or Caples Tracks, two distinctly different river valleys that meet near the shores of Lake Wakatipu.



**6-8
WEEKS**

The Grand Tour

Kick off your tramping bonanza in metropolitan **Auckland**. Warm up with a day tramp on the volcanic island of Rangitoto, before driving north via the beautiful **Bay of Islands**. Pilgrimage to NZ's northernmost point, **Cape Reinga**, on Te Pahi Coastal Track.

Head south to the sun-soaked **Coromandel Peninsula**, to explore its myriad attractions as well as venturing in to Kauaeranga Valley to scale the Pinnacles. Travel south, pit-stopping at **Rotorua** and **Taupo** to marvel at geothermal wonders and Maori culture. The volcanic landscapes of **Tongariro National Park** could burn up a week; make a beeline for the Northern Circuit, or if time is tight, traverse the Tongariro Alpine Crossing – arguably the world's finest day walk.

Head to **Wellington** and interact in the national museum, Te Papa Tongarewa, then savour the city's great restaurants and bars. Having crossed Cook Strait and cruised the Marlborough Sounds, stop in at vibrant Nelson on the way to **Abel Tasman National Park** and its golden beaches and turquoise waters. Walk, kayak or sail your way around. Two more national parks – **Kahurangi** and **Nelson Lakes** – lie nearby. Tramp the Heaphy or Lake Angelus, on your way to the wild West Coast. Follow the stunning Tasman Sea coast road past Paparoa National Park, pausing at **Punakaiki's** pancake rocks. Walk the half-day Pororari River Loop if you can't fit in the whole Inland Pack Track.

Keep on trucking south towards glacier country. Call in at the West Coast Wildlife Centre in **Franz Josef Glacier** to coo over the kiwi chicks, before tramping into **Welcome Flat** for a well-earned soak in the hot springs. Having cleared Haast Pass, the **Siberia Valley** awaits. Go in on foot, plane, jetboat, or even all three. Don't miss pretty lakeside **Wanaka**, from where you can head into Mt Aspiring National Park via the Matukituki Valley, then head over the Crown Range to adrenaline capital, **Queenstown**. Take your pick from some of NZ's most fabulous walks – the Routeburn, Greenstone Caples and Rees-Dart. Head round to postcard-perfect **Milford Sound**, arriving by car through the Homer Tunnel or on foot via the Milford Track, NZ's most famous Great Walk. Fly or drive to **Christchurch** from Queenstown and you're done.



The Gentle Option

Ease into things with a couple of days in **Christchurch**, before taking in dramatic coastlines, secluded bays and remnant forest on the private **Banks Peninsula Track**. Head inland to the hot pools of **Hanmer Springs**, priming yourself for the five-day **St James Walkway** through subalpine river valleys and over two easy mountain passes. Continue through Lewis Pass to **Nelson Lakes National Park**, a wonderful place for low-level nature walks if you don't fancy the Mt Robert or St Arnaud Range climbs. Meander through the Motueka Valley, popping in to the Tableland within **Kahurangi National Park**, before hitting **Abel Tasman National Park**, exploring the idyllic coast by boat, kayak or on foot. Or all three.

Indulge in **Nelson's** fine local food and wine, then wind your way eastwards to **Picton** via the scenic Queen Charlotte Drive. Cruise through the Marlborough Sounds, then hit the **Queen Charlotte Track** while your bags are ferried ahead of you by water taxi. Take a restorative tour of Marlborough's world-class wineries. Complete your loop back to Christchurch via **Kaikoura**, where you can whale-watch, bird-watch and swim with seals and dolphins, before embarking on your last South Island tramp, the Kaikoura Coast Track.

Fly to **Rotorua** to soak up some Maori culture and a good dose of sulphur at the region's many geothermal delights, then venture into mystical **Te Urewera National Park** to complete the Lake Waikaremoana Great Walk. Be sure to take time to row on pristine Lake Waikareiti if at all possible. Head southwards to art deco **Napier** in sunny Hawke's Bay. Gorge yourself on the region's ample produce, then burn off the calories on its flat (!) cycling trails. Onward to Taupo, the lakeside resort just a stone's throw from **Tongariro National Park** and the legendary Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Check out the twinkling glowworms of **Waitomo Caves** before heading to **Auckland**, where day tramps abound – out to volcanic Rangitoto Island or Great Barrier Island in the Hauraki Gulf, or the Hillary Trail on the rugged east coast just an hour from downtown.

2
WEEKS

Alpine Explorer

Start in vibrant **Nelson** before heading on this lofty tour along the spine of NZ's Southern Alps. Drive to St Arnaud, gateway to **Nelson Lakes National Park**, where the Lake Angelus Track climbs up Robert Ridge for panoramic views of the Southern Alps.

Wend your way through the wild Buller Gorge to the West Coast and take in **Punakaiki's** Pancake Rocks, before heading east to **Arthur's Pass National Park**. Tackle your first mountain saddle, either Goat Pass or Cass-Lagoon Saddles Track. Top this off with one of the country's best day walk, Avalanche Peak. Through the pass, stick close to the mountains on the Inland Scenic Route through to Tekapo and **Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park**, where you can climb to Mueller Hut for views of NZ's highest mountain.

Epic scenery abounds southwards to Central Otago and the lakeside town of Wanaka. Tramp high above the Matukituki Valley in **Mt Aspiring National Park** on Cascade Saddle and French Ridge. Finally, knock off another pass on the Routeburn, a popular Great Walk, before taking in the razzle-dazzle of **Queenstown**.

2
WEEKS

North Island National Parks

From glitzy **Auckland**, head south to the unique geothermal hot spot of **Rotorua**, where geysers, bubbling mud, steaming vents and authentic Maori performances await. Venture into the densely forested **Te Urewera National Park** and complete the Lake Waikaremoana Great Walk, before driving to **Taupo** to leap out of a plane, raft a river or catch a trout.

Nearby is volcanic **Tongariro National Park**, home to the Northern Circuit Great Walk. One of its sections is the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, one of the world's most famous day tramps. Next up is the Great Walk that is actually a river paddle: the 145km Whanganui Journey through the North Island's largest lowland wilderness, **Whanganui National Park**.

Truck west to **Egmont National Park** and the near-symmetrical cone of Mt Taranaki, which can be explored on a network of high-altitude tracks. Loop back to Auckland via **Waitomo Caves** where you can ogle upwards at glowworms or, if you're game, don a wetsuit and explore deep into subterranean labyrinthine passages and caverns.

NORTHLAND, AUCKLAND & COROMANDEL

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Te Pahi Coastal Track (p56)	3 days	easy	year-round	bus	Tramp spectacular beaches and the rugged coast around New Zealand's northern tip
Rangitoto Island Loop (p61)	4–5 hours	easy	year-round	boat	Climb a volcano and tramp through lava fields, enjoying one of the best views of central Auckland
Aotea Track (p64)	3 days	moderate	Oct–May	bus	Wander a rugged island with historic kauri dams and hot springs
Hillary Trail (p69)	4 days	moderate–demanding	year-round	bus, train, private	Explore a wilderness-like setting only one hour's drive from Auckland
Kauaeranga Kauri Trail (p75)	2 days	easy–moderate	Oct–May	shuttle bus	Step back in time with logging and gold-mining relics on the forested hills of the Coromandel Peninsula

TONGARIRO, UREWERA & CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Tongariro Northern Circuit (p89)	4 days	moderate	Dec–Mar	shuttle bus	Tramp past volcanoes and through a spectacular thermal area on this Great Walk
Umukarikari-Urchin Circuit (p94)	2 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	bus, shuttle bus	View the Tongariro volcanoes from a neighbouring forest park
Lake Waikaremoana Great Walk (p98)	4 days	easy–moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus, boat	Enjoy beaches, swimming and fishing on this Great Walk
Ruapani Circuit (p101)	2 days	easy–moderate	Nov–Apr	no transport	Follow a remote river route with plenty of fords and fishing opportunities
Whirinaki Track (p104)	2 days	easy	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus	Explore a lush forest with caves and an impressive gorge

TARANAKI, WHANGANUI & AROUND WELLINGTON

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Pouakai Circuit (p115)	2 days	moderate	Oct–May	shuttle bus	Beat the elements and explore the bush while circuiting a stunning volcano
Pouakai Crossing (p118)	1 day	moderate	Oct–May	shuttle bus	As above
Around the Mountain Circuit (p119)	5 days	moderate–demanding	Oct–May	shuttle bus	As above
Mt Taranaki Summit (p121)	1 day	moderate–demanding	Jan–Mar	shuttle bus	As above
Matemateaonga Track (p123)	4 days	easy–moderate	Oct–May	shuttle bus, boat	Wander along an isolated wilderness track, ending with a thrilling jetboat ride on the Whanganui River
Mangapurua & Kaiwhakauka Tracks (p126)	3 days	easy–moderate	Oct–May	shuttle bus, boat	Pass through the sites of old settlers' farms and grassy flats with small stands of exotic trees
Rangiwahia & Deadmans Loop (p130)	3 days	moderate–demanding	Jan & Feb	shuttle bus, private	Explore lightly used ridges and valleys in Ruahine Forest Park
Mt Holdsworth-Jumbo Circuit (p134)	3 days	moderate–demanding	Oct–May	private, taxi	Stay in scenic huts and admire views from an alpine ridge in Tararua Forest Park
Holdsworth-Kaitoke Track (p136)	3 days	moderate	Oct–May	private, train, taxi	Follow pleasant river valleys through the Tararua Range

QUEEN CHARLOTTE & MARLBOROUGH

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Queen Charlotte Track (p146)	4 days	moderate	Nov–Dec & Feb–Apr	boat, shuttle bus	Treat yourself to beautiful coastal scenery and interesting accommodation options
Nydia Track (p152)	2 days	easy	Nov–Dec & Feb–Apr	boat, shuttle bus	Cross two saddles and explore a sheltered shoreline
Pelorus Track (p154)	3 days	moderate	Oct–Apr	shuttle bus	Tussle with trout or take a dip in the deep green pools of the Pelorus River
Kaikoura Coast Track (p159)	3 days	easy–moderate	Dec–Mar	bus	Enjoy following the Pacific coast by day and staying at farms by night

ABEL TASMAN, KAHURANGI & NELSON LAKES

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Abel Tasman Coast Track (p169)	5 days	easy	year-round	boat, shuttle bus	Explore a series of beautiful beaches and bays on this Great Walk
Heaphy Track (p175)	5 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus, plane	Follow in historic footsteps and enjoy a stunning variety of scenery on this Great Walk
Wangapeka Track (p180)	5 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus	Climb two 1000m saddles and wander beech-forested valleys
Tableland Circuit (p184)	3 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus	Combine great trout fishing with the dramatic scenery of an earthquake-torn valley
Lake Angelus Track (p191)	2 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus, boat	Climb a challenging alpine pass, tempered by the beauty of Blue Lake
Travers-Sabine Circuit (p193)	5 days	moderate–demanding	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus, boat	Explore grassy river flats, beech forests and two alpine saddles

CANTERBURY, ARTHUR'S PASS & AORAKI/MT COOK

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Banks Peninsula Track (p204)	4 days	easy–moderate	Oct–Apr	shuttle bus	Take in wonderful seascapes and wildlife on this private track
Mt Somers Track (p208)	2 days	moderate	Nov–Mar	shuttle bus	Tramp the subalpine areas around Mt Somers, soaking in refreshing pools at night
St James Walkway (p212)	5 days	easy–moderate	Nov–Apr	bus, shuttle bus	Cross two low passes while enjoying fine mountain scenery
Avalanche Peak (p218)	1 day	moderate	Nov–Mar	no transport	Climb high above Arthur's Pass on the South Island's most scenic day tramp
Goat Pass Track (p220)	2 days	moderate	Nov–Mar	shuttle bus	Spend a night high above the bushline in Goat Pass Hut
Harper Pass (p222)	5 days	moderate	Nov–Mar	bus, shuttle bus	Follow a historic gold-mining route over a low pass
Cass-Lagoon Saddles Track (p226)	2 days	moderate	Nov–Feb	bus, shuttle bus, train	Admire spectacular views from two alpine saddles
Mueller Hut Route (p230)	2 days	demanding	Nov–Mar	none	Climb steeply to spend a night among the spectacular peaks of Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park

WEST COAST

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
The Old Ghost Road Track (p240)	5 days	moderate	Nov–May	bus, shuttle bus	Traverse native forests, river flats and valleys with stunning views of Mokihinui Gorge
Inland Pack Track (p244)	2 days	moderate	Dec–Mar	shuttle bus, private	Admire an unusual karst landscape and stay in one of NZ's largest rock bivvies
Croesus Track (p247)	2 days	moderate	Nov–Mar	shuttle bus	Retrace history on a subalpine track loaded with mining relics

MT ASPIRING NATIONAL PARK & AROUND QUEENSTOWN

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Routburn Track (p261)	3 days	moderate	Oct–Apr	shuttle bus	Explore one of NZ's best alpine crossings on this Great Walk
Greenstone Caples Track (p265)	4 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus	Enjoy moderate tramping and legendary fishing
Mavora-Greenstone Walkway (p269)	3 days	easy	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus, plane	Savour the solitude, impressive alpine scenery and trout fishing of the Mavora Valley
Rees-Dart Track (p272)	4 days	moderate	Dec–Apr	shuttle bus, jetboat	Cross an alpine pass dividing two splendid valleys
Matukituki Valley Tracks (p275)	2–5 days	easy–demanding	Dec–Mar	shuttle bus	Experience the beauty of the Matukituki Valley's private farmland and beech forest flats

FIORDLAND & STEWART ISLAND/RAKIURA

TRACK	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	BEST TIME TO GO	GETTING THERE	WHY GO?
Milford Track (p290)	4 days	moderate	Oct–Apr	shuttle bus, boat	Experience lush rainforests, an alpine pass and waterfalls along the 'finest walk in the world'
Hollyford Track (p295)	5 days	easy–moderate	Oct–May	shuttle bus, jet-boat, plane	Tramp to the rugged coast and explore the wildlife of Martins Bay
Kepler Track (p300)	4 days	moderate	Oct–Apr	shuttle bus, boat	Spend a full day surrounded by alpine beauty on this Great Walk
Hump Ridge Track (p303)	3 days	moderate	Nov–Apr	shuttle bus	Explore a spectacular coast and intriguing logging relics
Rakiura Track (p308)	3 days	moderate	Oct–Apr	boat, plane	Follow sheltered shores and beautiful beaches
North West Circuit (p312)	11 days	demanding	Oct–Apr	boat, plane	Slog through mud to wild Mason Bay; admire beaches and birdlife



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Sarah Bennett & Lee Slater

Coordinating Authors Sarah and Lee live in hilly Wellington, but spend many months on the road each year in their small campervan, boots on board, bikes on the back, living like kings on morsels of cheese, craft beer and fresh air. Specialists in 'soft-core adventure' (tramping without crampons, kayaking without capsizes), they relive their journeys in magazine features and guidebooks including *Let's Go Camping* and Lonely Planet's *New Zealand*. For more information,

visit www.bennettandslater.co.nz.



Jim DuFresne

Author of the previous edition Jim first came to New Zealand more than 20 years ago in search of high peaks and wild places. He found both, along with some fine trout fishing, and has been returning ever since with his backpack and fly rod in hand. Jim began his writing career as the sports and outdoors editor of the *Juneau Empire* and was the first Alaskan sportswriter to win a national award from Associated Press. Today he lives in Michigan and feeds his appetite

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Professor James Belich wrote the History chapter (p324). James is one of NZ's pre-eminent historians and the award-winning author of *The New Zealand Wars*, *Making Peoples* and *Paradise Reforged*. He has also worked in TV – *New Zealand Wars* was screened in NZ in 1998.

Tony Horwitz wrote the Captain James Cook boxed text (p327) in the History chapter. Tony is a Pulitzer-winning reporter and nonfiction author. His fascination with James Cook, and with travel, took him around NZ, Australia and the Pacific while researching *Blue Latitudes* (alternatively titled *Into the Blue*), part biography of Cook and part travelogue.

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