



Christchurch & Canterbury

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Pegasus Bay (p161)
- ➔ Twenty Seven Steps (p147)
- ➔ Supreme Supreme (p146)
- ➔ Bodhi Tree (p148)
- ➔ Oxford (p170)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Onuku Farm Hostel (p154)
- ➔ Halfmoon Cottage (p154)
- ➔ Peel Forest (p167)
- ➔ Lake Ohau Lodge (p175)
- ➔ Lake Tekapo Lodge (p174)

Why Go?

Nowhere in New Zealand is changing and developing as fast as post-2016-earthquake Christchurch. Visiting the country's second-largest city as it's being rebuilt and reborn is both interesting and inspiring.

A short drive from Christchurch's dynamic re-emergence, Banks Peninsula conceals hidden bays and beaches – a backdrop for wildlife cruises with a sunset return to the attractions of Akaroa. To the north are the vineyards of the Waipara Valley and the family-holiday ambience of Hanmer Springs. Westwards, the chequerboard farms of the Canterbury Plains morph quickly into the dramatic wilderness of the Southern Alps.

Canterbury's summertime attractions include tramping along alpine valleys and over passes around Arthur's Pass, and mountain biking around the turquoise lakes of Mackenzie Country. During winter, the attention switches to the ski fields. Throughout the seasons, Aoraki/Mt Cook, the country's tallest peak, stands sentinel over this diverse region.

When to Go

➔ Canterbury is one of NZ's driest regions, as moisture-laden westerlies from the Tasman Sea dump their rainfall on the West Coast before hitting the eastern side of the South Island. Visit from January to March for hot and settled summer weather, and plenty of opportunities to get active amid the region's spectacular landscapes.

➔ The shoulder seasons of October to November and March to May can be cool and dry, and blissfully uncrowded.

➔ Hit the winter slopes from July to October at Mt Hutt or on one of Canterbury's smaller club ski fields.

Christchurch & Canterbury Highlights

1 Christchurch

(p134) Experiencing the dynamic rebuilding and re-emergence of the city post-earthquake.

2 Christchurch

Botanic Gardens

(p136) Meandering through the city's beautiful green heart.

3 Mt John (p173)

Marvelling at the otherworldly views of Mackenzie Country and the surreal azure blue of Lake Tekapo from the top.

4 Hamner Springs

Thermal Pools (p158)

Taking a soothing soak at this famous hot spring.

5 Banks Peninsula

(p152) Admiring the surf-bitten edges from Summit Rd before descending to the quaint and Francophilic village of Akaroa (p154).

