



## Bike Mackenzie Country South Island: Christchurch to Christchurch 5 days

If you've ever driven through the Mackenzie Basin and been captivated by the impossibly beautiful scenery and surreal watercolour landscape, then this is the biking tour for you. With its amazing turquoise waters, velvety yellow brown foothills, and the rugged and imposing snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps providing a backdrop, the Mackenzie Basin is one of the most scenic parts of the country. This tour explores the quieter back-roads of the Basin by bike where the ever-changing vistas and the rich and colourful history of the region will leave you with a smile on your face. The biking terrain ranges from flat sealed roads to gently to moderately undulating gravel roads, which are all well off the main highway on secondary roads. The biking options and distances covered are all flexible and your guide may alter the routes used depending on the conditions, from our repertoire of bike trails available. Your support vehicle will be with you at all times, ready to provide water and refreshments, bike repair support, and even a comfy deck chair at the pit stops!

### Day 1 Christchurch - Lake Tekapo

Departing Christchurch, we head south across the Canterbury Plains stopping for lunch at a beautiful rural café. After lunch it's just a short distance on to the start of our first bike ride through the Mackenzie Pass. The full distance of the ride is around 38km, but you can choose to do shorter sections if you prefer. We encounter the historic site where legendary sheep hustler James Mackenzie was caught in the act in 1855, and the views of the Mackenzie Country from here are simply stunning as we descend into the Basin. After the ride we continue by bus to Lake Tekapo and our accommodation a stones throw from the lake. Eat out at a local restaurant. In the evening there is the opportunity to visit the Mt John Observatory to view the southern night sky in one of the clearest locations in the Southern Hemisphere. (L)

### Day 2 Lake Tekapo - Twizel

Today's ride takes us along the side of Lake Tekapo on the picturesque and quiet Lilybank Road, right to the head of the lake (42km+ biking). The views as you bike alongside Lake Tekapo are quite breathtaking. In the afternoon we make our way a short distance on to the town of Twizel and our accommodation for the next two evenings, featuring million dollar views of Aoraki/Mt Cook. (B/L/D)

### Day 3 Twizel

Bike one of the best cycle rides in the South Island - alongside the hydro-electricity canals that lead from Lake Tekapo to Lake Pukaki, which is virtually 27km of completely flat sealed road. The elevated canal offers stupendous views of the Mackenzie Basin and even Aoraki/Mt Cook if you're lucky! After our picnic lunch beside Lake Pukaki, we bypass the busy highway and continue on by bus to the Twizel area. Here there are several biking options following the Lake Pukaki to Lake Ohau canal - bike from 8km to 55km here - the choice is yours. Later we visit the viewing hide of the highly endangered Black Stilt or Kaki at the breeding recovery centre. Through loss of habitat wetland numbers declined to just 23 and now the birds are intensively managed by the Department of Conservation. This is a great opportunity to view the birds up close and learn about their plight. (B/L/D)

## Tour Map



## Grade



## Tour Details

Tour Price: \$1,295

Deposit: \$200

What's included? See bottom of page.

Groups of 10+ people will receive a 5% discount off the tour price.

### Departure Dates:

2010	2011
Oct 21 – 25	Jan 12 – 16
Nov 8 – 12	Feb 8 – 12
Dec 8 – 12	Mar 2 – 6
Dec 28 – Jan 1	Mar 24 – 28
	Mar 30 – Apr 3
	Apr 20 – 24
	Apr 26 – 30

#### Day 4 Twizel – Ohau

We travel by bus a short distance to the quiet sealed road leading to Lake Ohau, where the biking begins. This is a great 37km+ ride, with views of the lake and mountains beyond unfolding as you go, which are absolutely stunning. There are optional starting points and plenty of refreshment stops and a picnic lunch along the way. We retire to the stunning Lake Ohau Lodge for the evening, which affords absolutely stunning views out over the lake and mountains. (B/L/D)

#### Day 5 Ohau - Christchurch

We farewell the Mackenzie Basin and travel down the Waitaki Valley. Our last bike ride takes us around the side of one of the great hydro lakes of the valley, under the cool shade of the willow trees (20km). After lunch we head down the Waitaki Valley and back to Christchurch via Waimate and the east coast. (B/L)

#### Included in the tour package:

All prices are in New Zealand dollars and include New Zealand Goods & Services Tax of 12.5%. The fare includes just about everything including: 4 nights accommodation; 3 evening meals, 5 lunches, 4 breakfasts and plenty of healthy snacks in between (as indicated on the itinerary - B/L/D); entry into the Black Stilt/Kaki viewing hide; a friendly guide; all transport and vehicle support; and bike repair support.

Not included in the tour price is one evening meal where we eat out at local restaurant; wine and beer (you are welcome to BYO where permitted); optional bike hire (\$150); and the optional activities mentioned in the itinerary.

#### Level of Difficulty:

On this tour we have full vehicle back up – the support vehicle will be travelling along the same piece of road that you will be biking on, so there is unlimited opportunities to ride out parts (or all) of each ride in our vehicle if you are not feeling up to it.



#### Grade 2

Routes generally on mildly undulating quiet rural country roads. Surfaces range from seal to gravel, with some gravel areas rough in places. Distances cycled average 40-50km per day. For this grade we recommend an average level of fitness. Training beforehand is recommended, on gravel roads if possible.

## Testimonials

Here we are on the final morning of our trip. All agree it's been a marvellous experience. The scenery is awesome and our accommodation for the 4 nights has been exceptional, 4 star in fact. Jim & Grant have been outstanding in looking after us. So thank you to all for making this a very pleasant and relaxing trip.  
Joan & Max Hook, New Zealand, Feb 09

Having done the Rail Trail I was looking for some more and this was it. Completely different - more challenging and scenically gorgeous - always comfortable in the knowledge that we were safely guided by Grant. Thank you and best wishes for the future. PS Accommodation at Twizel superb. Loathe to leave.  
Beryl Borthwick, New Zealand, Mar 09