

Lakes, Fiords & Mountains Cycle Tour



Southern Highlights - The perfect cycle combo

This might just be the e-bike tour of your dreams. Discover the best the Queenstown region has to offer – cycle the most impressive sections of the Around the Mountains Trail and see the Fiordland highlights you always wanted to visit. Then enjoy three nights in picturesque Arrowtown including a relaxed cycle day in the Gibbston Valley wine region before exploring the recently finished Lake Dunstan Trail between Cromwell and Clyde. A vast array of landscapes, enjoyed in comfort and good company!

Dates:
29 November 2021 – fully booked
28 January 2022 and 26 February 2022 – available
7 Days / 6 Nights
Easy to Moderate Cycling
\$2995 person – e-bike included

ITINERARY

This tour offers trails that are easy to conquer on e-bikes, amazing diversity in landscapes and the chance to tick off some real stunners on your 'Bike It' list! The Around the Mountains Trail near Queenstown is legendary and the new Lake Dunstan Trail is a total stunner! A day off in the middle of it all to explore Fiordland treasures, plus a leisurely day cycling through Gibbston Valley's grapevines makes this tour one of the best ways to spend your holidays in our opinion!



Day 1: Queenstown – Around the Mountains Trail - Cycle Day 1

You will be picked up by your guide in Queenstown around 10:00am and we jump start into our new adventure. We drive by bus to the start of the Around the Mountains Trail at the southern tip of Lake Wakatipu in the village of Kingston. This little settlement earned fame as home to the historic steam train which shares its name – the Kingston Flyer. The famous vintage Kingston Flyer was officially back on track in mid July 2021!.

After a tour briefing, we unload the bikes and get them fitted for you. Then it's time to choose the nicest photo spot and hop onto our bikes. Off we are following the route of the Kingston Flyer railway track – past Fairlight Station – The Kingston Flier Steam Train destination.

Then we pass through gentle rolling land and the pretty Mataura valley. Surrounded by the Hector and Eyre mountains we cross some suspension bridges, dubbed by locals the Golden Gate Bridges, with great opportunities for photo stops! Riding through the historic townships of Garston and Athol, we reach today's cycling destination of Five Rivers. Nestled like an oasis amongst rich countryside, it is an ideal place to end our first day. From here our van will take us to our accommodation in Mossburn, self-proclaimed deer capital of New Zealand but visually surrounded mainly by cows. The main attraction is most definitely the beautiful mountains all around. We celebrate our first riding day in front of this stunning setting with your welcome drink of choice and then enjoy our first dinner together in the local pub.

Distance: 48 km

Fitness/Difficulty: easy

Accommodation: Mossburn – Motel

Meals: L, D (Pub in Mossburn), S



Day 2: Around the Mountains Trail - Cycle Day 2

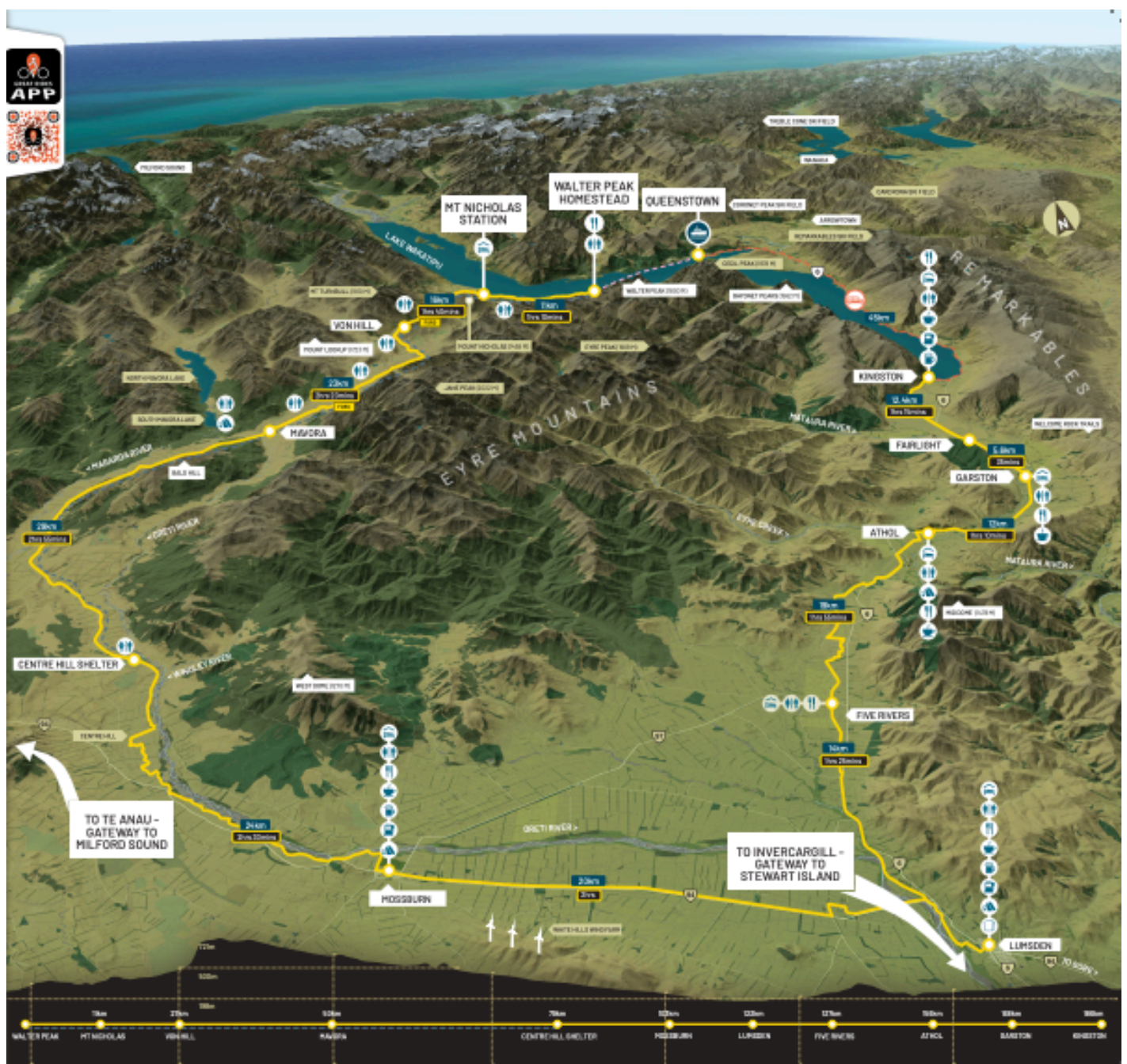
Today's ride starts on a cycle trail along the picturesque Oreti River which takes us towards the aptly named Centre Hill. From here the trail merges with a gravel road that leads through the Eyre Mountains Conservation Park. Bearing in mind that the road is open to traffic and can get a bit dusty, you may want – but don't have – to make the most of our support vehicle and jump on board for the ride to the pristine waters of the two equally beautiful Mavora Lakes. Nestled amongst a striking landscape of mountains, forest and tussock grass, the lakes are one of the awe-inspiring locations featured in the Lord of the Rings films and it is no wonder they are recognised as part of the Te Wāhipounamu/South-West New Zealand World Heritage Area. From here our van takes us to Manapouri, set on the edge of another beautiful lake and our base for the next two nights.

Distance: Mossburn to Centre Hill - 24 km, Centre Hill to Mavora – 29 km

Fitness/Difficulty: easy to moderate

Accommodation: Manapouri - Holiday Houses & Cottages

Meals: B, L, D, S



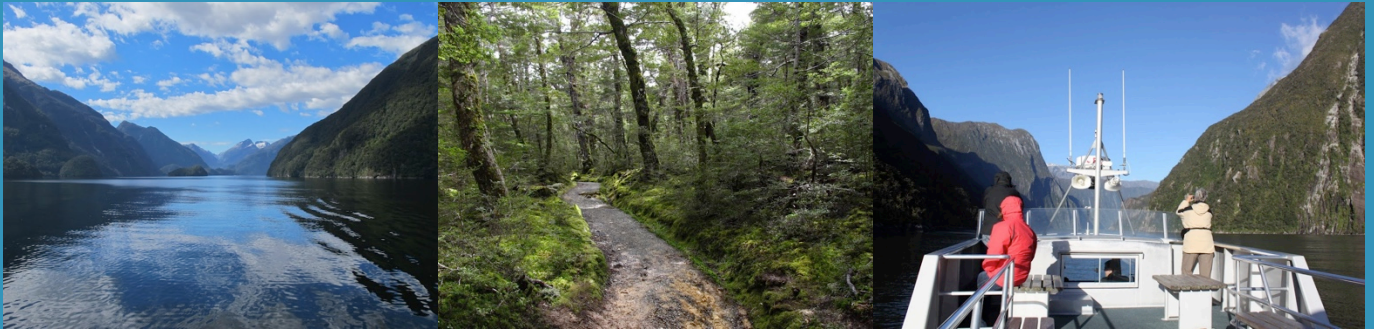
Day 3: Fiordland / Te Anau Region

In Manapouri we are dwarfed by the mountains looming all around us and are right on the edge of the wonderfully rugged and remote Fiordland National Park. You have today off to do whatever you might still have on your bucket list – how about exploring either world-famous Milford Sound or the serene Doubtful Sound on a day tour? (We can help you pre-arrange one of those tours if you wish.) Or you might fancy cycling the new Lake2Lake Trail (20km) connecting Lake Manapouri with Lake Te Anau, following the glistening Waiau River?

Maybe you feel more like stretching your legs after two days of cycling? If wandering along the shores of Lake Te Anau is not quite enough, how about walking part of one of Southlands' Great Walks? The Kepler track to Rainbow Reach or Luxmore Hut is well worth considering. Your guide can help with plenty of other suggestions and make any bookings from this plethora of optional activities.

Accommodation : Manapouri – Holiday Houses & Cottages

Meals: B, L, D, S



Day 4: Around the Mountains Trail - Cycle Day 3

We are back on the saddle today and start off where we had left the trail by Mavora Lakes. After some cycling through beech forest, the magnificent Von Valley opens up in front of us. There is a real sense of isolation and the huge mountain and tussock landscape is vast.

We will be very grateful for our e-bikes on the, rather steep, uphill section, making the slog up Von Hill a breeze! So we can just immerse ourselves in the native tussock wonderland and postcard views as we pedal through to the high-country farm of Mount Nicholas Station and eventually downhill to the shores of Lake Wakatipu. Here we are greeted with stunning views of alpine peaks and snow-covered Mount Earnslaw at the head of the lake. We follow the lakeside trail to Walter Peak Station, where the next highlight awaits us. The TSS Earnslaw is a century-old coal-fired steamship and the only remaining commercial passenger-carrying steamship in the Southern hemisphere. A cruise across picturesque Lake Wakatipu back to Queenstown on the iconic vintage steamship is the perfect end to our day's cycle.

Our van will take quite a bit longer than us to make its way back to Queenstown, so we will change out of our cycle gear at Walter Peak Station and have time to stroll through Queenstown for 3-4 hours. Then we will drive to our accommodation for the next three nights in the charming historic Arrowtown, amidst gorgeous mountain views.

Distance: 50 km

Fitness/Difficulty: moderate

Accommodation: Arrowtown – Apartments, amidst gorgeous mountain views.

Meals: B, L, S



Day 5: Arrowtown - Gibbston Valley - Cycle Day 4

Today is especially attractive for all the wine enthusiasts, and there really is no better way to enjoy Gibbston's 'Valley of Vines' than by bicycle. On a designated bike trail, we will ride along the meandering Arrow River, home of the gold rush in the 1800s. There will be photo opportunities galore with four historic suspension bridges criss-crossing the Arrow River. There are swimming holes and picnic spots along the willow-lined river's edge, so we'll take our time to enjoy our leisurely ride.

We will pass the historic Kawarau Bungy Bridge, home to the world's first commercial bungy jumping operation. The AJ Hackett Bungy Centre is a stunning piece of architecture and well worth a visit – there is a café, toilets and of course tickets for that bungy jump you've been promising yourself. But even if you are not inclined to jump off the bridge, there are many informative panels about the history of the area on the viewing platform and the views of Kawarau Gorge are epic.

From here, we enter dramatic wine country, all set within the iconic Central Otago landscape. The vineyards nestle between the steep slopes of the surrounding Pisa Mountain Range and the precipitous rocky gorge of the Kawarau River – a real visual treat.

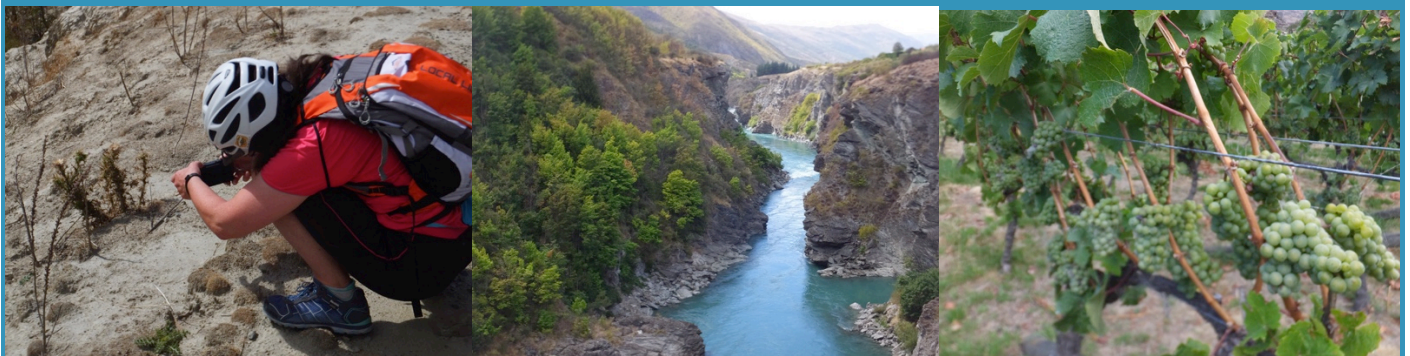
By around lunchtime, you may have seen enough vines to feel ready for a glass of Pinot Noir, so feel free to indulge in a wine tasting of some of Central Otago's most delicate drops (optional). Apart from celebrated Pinot Noirs, you'll find fragrant Pinot Gris and flinty Rieslings and some distinctive Chardonnays – the choice is yours.

Distance: 15km each way

Fitness/Difficulty: easy

Accommodation: Arrowtown - Apartments

Meals: B, L, D, S



Day 6: Arrowtown - Cromwell – Lake Dunstan Trail – Clyde – Arrowtown - Cycle Day 5

It's just 50 kms or a 45-minute drive by van through the attractive Kawarau Gorge to Cromwell, the starting point of perhaps THE HIGHLIGHT of our tour.

Soon after its opening on the 8th May 2021, the Lake Dunstan Trail was dubbed the most spectacular bike trail in New Zealand, if not the Southern Hemisphere. Many think it is set to become an iconic cycling day trip – today you will see for yourself what the hype is about!

The track features impressive human-made architectural and engineering feats, including spectacular bolt-on bridges that cling to rocky bluffs above the lake, as well as fantastic views of Central Otago's rugged terrain. Along the way are sections where the land has been reshaped in the search for gold and then again when the lake was formed. New Zealand's third-largest hydroelectric dam is the dominant feature at the Clyde end of the trail and there are plenty of drainage tunnels dotted along the length of the gorge.

One thing is sure, as we journey alongside the beautiful teal waters of Lake Dunstan, the Kawarau River and the mighty Clutha River – it will become clear to see why many early settlers chose to reside in this region. After a spectacular day cycling, we say farewell to our trusty bikes, then sit back and relax in the van which takes us back from Clyde to Arrowtown, maybe with a tad of sadness as this will be our last evening together.

Cycling Distance: 55km

Driving Time: Arrowtown to Cromwell ~45 mins, Clyde to Arrowtown ~ 1h

Fitness/Difficulty: easy to moderate

Accommodation: Arrowtown - Apartments

Meals: B, L, D, S



Day 7: Arrowtown - Queenstown

With a sense of achievement and lifelong memories we make our way back to Queenstown, where we will have to say our last farewells to each other. We will then drop you off in town or at the airport.

Meals: B

B-Breakfast L-Lunch D-Dinner S-Snack

DETAILS

Start - Queenstown between 9:00 and 9:30 am. Pick up options with tour confirmation

Finish - Queenstown approximately 10:00 am

Included

- Transport to track in minibus from/to Queenstown
- Support vehicle on entire tour
- 3 days cycling on Around the Mountains Trail near Queenstown
- Cruise back to Queenstown on board the vintage TSS *Earnslaw*
- 1 day at your disposition in Fiordland region
- 1 day cycling in Gibbston Valley wine region
- 1 day cycling on Lake Dunstan Trail
- 6 days **e-bike** hire including helmet, rear carrier bag, drink bottle cage
- 6 nights in motel, holiday home & cottages, apartments (twin-share)
- All transfers from/to daily start/finish of cycle track
- 6x breakfast, 6x picnic lunch, 5x dinner (incl 1 Pub Meal in Mossburn), snacks
- Welcome drink first night
- Two professional female guides, sharing the cycling and driving the support van
- All access and concession fees
- Detailed map & track brochure

Optional upgrades

- Single Room Supplement – Single/shared bathroom \$300

Only limited single rooms available, early reservation recommended.

Not Included

- Any travel costs from your home to/from Queenstown
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses
- 1xDinner in pub in Arrowtown
- Optional activities (Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound, Kepler Track day tour etc -please see our trip notes to learn more about your options)
- Wine tasting in Gibbston Valley

Preparing for your trip

Once you've booked, we will send you **Trip Notes** including a detailed gear list and other important information to help you prepare for your adventure ahead.

If you are looking for more information and inspiration for your tour, you may want to check out some of these interesting posts in our **Sidetracks Women Blog**:

- [Our Cycle Trail Grading System explained](#)
- [Can I bring my own \(E\)bike?](#)
- [Oh no, I don't have the proper gear to wear!](#)





