

volcanoes and rivers north island wilderness adventure



trip highlights

Experience biking on a mix of gravel and sealed back country roads through remote country, amongst limestone gorges and spectacular farmland.

Stay 2 nights at River Valley, a rustic lodge on the banks of the magical Rangitikei River

Enjoy a scenic 'float' through the Rangitikei River Canyon by raft

Stay in Ohakune at the foot of the North Island's highest mountain, Mt Ruapehu

See the stunning Whanganui River up close by jetboat and canoe

Hike the Tongariro Alpine Crossing in Tongariro National Park, New Zealand's oldest national park and a dual UNESCO World Heritage site.



Trip Duration	6 days	Trip Code: NIMA
Grade	Moderate to Challenging	
Activities	2 days biking	
	1 day raft & hike	
	1 day jetboat, hike & canoe	
	1 day alpine hike	
Accommodation	2 nights rustic riverside lodge	
	3 nights motel/hotel	

Kia ora from Adventure South

Thank you for your interest in our Volcanoes and Rivers North Island Wilderness Adventure adventure. It's a superb adventure and we hope you can join us. Adventure South has been operating active holidays throughout New Zealand since 1992. Thanks to our experience we're confident to say that we offer the very best cycling, trekking and adventure travel itineraries available in New Zealand today.

There's simply no other collection of New Zealand itineraries that can match the geographic coverage, originality and overall quality of our active New Zealand adventure holidays. An Adventure South holiday aims to take you beyond the more popular and busy trails to provide you with a truly unique New Zealand wilderness experience.

We're here to show you that there are many, many more trails and cycling routes in our great country that are the new frontiers in adventure tourism - beautiful, scenic, and without the crowds. We aim to explore these delicate environments in a sustainable manner to ensure we leave as little impact as possible from our visit. We'd be honoured to introduce you to the wide variety of natural wonders that New Zealand is famous for. Go forth, go south - join us on this amazing small group, value packed adventure!

why travel with Adventure South?

"Small Groups, Great Guides, Superb Holidays."

This comment encapsulates an Adventure South active holiday in New Zealand. The phrase was not born from a long and tortuous strategic planning process, it came from a client review! We could not have said it any better. Our client feedback also confirms that what helps make our holidays different are the quality of our professional guides. They share their humour, compassion and wilderness experience to ensure that you have a great vacation and the right degree of personal challenge.

On an Adventure South tour you can also expect the right, proven equipment is provided for your tour; the food is delicious, plentiful and can be catered to your dietary requests; your guides are all First Aid trained; that the itinerary you have chosen has been carefully crafted from decades of personal experience in the New Zealand wilderness, not from a guide book recommendation.



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If you are travelling alone, we will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveler of the same gender and if we cannot match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share, a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. Please refer to our website for the additional cost.

You will need to arrive into Taupo the day prior to the tour departure. Your guide will collect you from a central Taupo location on the first morning of the tour. At the end of the trip if you wish to fly home today please ensure your flight departs Taupo domestic airport later than 6pm. You can get a taxi, shuttle or public bus to the airport from the city centre. For those staying in Taupo on the final evening your guide will drop you at a central drop off point around 5pm (depending on traffic).

trip dates

2026 24 Nov - 29 Nov **H**

2027 17 Feb - 22 Feb **H**

important notes

HS - Holiday Season

the trip

Experience back-country, remote New Zealand, dominated by geography carved from long-ago volcanic activity with stunning limestone gorges, steep, dissected hill country and razorback ridges, formed from soft sandstone and mudstone.

Starting with a gravel cycle through remote sheep/cattle country, offering panoramic mountain views, we finish our first day on the banks of the Rangitikei River, known for its steep walled gorges. We spend 2 nights here staying at River Valley Lodge, owned by a family descended from local sheep and cattle farmers.

The following day is devoted to experiencing the magic and beauty of the Rangitikei River via an easy scenic rafting trip journeying over 30 Grade 2 (easy) rapids surrounded by immense cliffs cradling the river canyon.

We leave River Valley by bike, enjoying another remote ride on a mix of gravel and sealed sections, finishing in Taihape, known as the Gumboot Capital of New Zealand.

It's then a short transfer by van to Ohakune, a vibrant, small alpine town at the southern foot of Mount Ruapehu, the highest mountain in the North Island. From here we spend a full day adventuring in the Whanganui National Park, exploring the culturally significant Whanganui River by jet boat and canoe through gorges and amongst native bush.

And finally we have the opportunity to experience the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, a challenging 20km hike in New Zealand's Tongariro National Park, often lauded as the country's best one-day trek. Shorter hikes in the Park are also available, either by choice or if weather prevents the Crossing.

about your leader/escort

Our guides are one of our biggest assets and we pride ourselves on their level of quality and high standards. Once the trip reaches 8 people, we provide you with two of our expert guides to maximise your enjoyment and overall experience. You'll know you're in safe hands as all of our guides are certified in first aid and CPR and many of them are trained bike mechanics. They come from all walks of life but our guides have a common desire to give you the best possible experience, fun and lots of fond memories to take home with you.

at a glance

DAY 1	TAUPO TO RIVER VALLEY LODGE : REMOTE BIKING
DAY 2	RANGITIKEI COUNTRY : RAFTING THE RANGITIKEI RIVER
DAY 3	RIVER VALLEY LODGE TO OHAKUNE : BIKING ON MT RUAPEHU
DAY 4	WHANGANUI RIVER ADVENTURE : JETBOAT, CANOE AND BUSH HIKE
DAY 5	TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK ALPINE CROSSING HIKE
DAY 6	WAIMARINO TO TAUPO

what's included

- Tasty cafe breakfasts (x5), gourmet picnic or cafe lunches (x4), two course restaurant dinners (x5) catered to all dietary requirements
- 2 nights at River Valley Lodge
- 3 nights motel accommodation with ensuite facilities on a twin share basis
- Experienced guides who handle all the hard bits and share epic stories (2 guides on groups of 8 or more)
- Half day Rangitikei River scenic rafting trip
- Whanganui Jetboat & canoe River Adventure
- Shuttle to and from Tongariro Alpine Crossing (weather permitting)
- Tasty nutritious snacks, drinks and treats plus our famous morning and afternoon teas



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fast facts

Private Groups:

Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:

A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:

Expert local leader

Advice for people with limited mobility

This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

- Transport from Taupo (return)
- Pre departure information kit to help you plan and prepare
- Access and concession fees paid to the Department of Conservation

what's not included

- Bike hire (including helmet) - standard or ebikes available
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- All beverages, other than breakfast
- Arrival and departure transfers
- Any optional activities
- Water bottle (help us save the environment and bring your own bike drink bottle)
- Personal expenses (eg. phone calls, internet, laundry, shopping etc)
- Travel insurance

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Taupo to River Valley Lodge : Remote Biking

Your adventure begins with a short tour briefing in central Taupo before a 2.5hr drive heading south to a rather remote start. We will have a short break en route.

After a bike set-up and safety briefing, we start riding on a mix of gravel and sealed roads through rolling farmland, native bush, and sweeping high-country landscapes.

Our destination is River Valley Lodge on the banks of the Rangitikei River, known for its steep papa rock cliffs, deep gorges, and dramatic, often turbulent, white water.

Our hosts for the next 2 nights are the McGaw family, who run River Valley Lodge, a venue of rustic charm providing exceptional country comfort, where the focus is on delivering a quality, fun experience, maintaining good relationships with the local community, and operating with a minimum footprint in the natural environment.

Ride : 32km +663m 54% gravel

Accommodation : River Valley Lodge

meals: L,D

DAY 2 Rangitikei Country : Rafting the Rangitikei River

Today we explore this mostly unknown part of New Zealand with a scenic 13km 'float' on the Rangitikei River. Travelling by raft we take in over 30 Grade 2 (easy) rapids, passing through an incredible steep sided gorge with a side hike to a spectacular waterfall (weather dependent).

We'll return to the lodge mid afternoon in time to explore the lodge gardens, swimming spots or just relax on the riverbank.

A second night is spent enjoying dinner at River Valley Lodge where meals are a celebration of seasonal produce, sourced primarily from the garden. The chefs create the daily menu from whatever produce is freshly harvested that day.

Scenic Raft : 13km easy - no prior experience required

Short hike

Accommodation : River Valley Lodge

meals: B,L,D

responsible travel

We all have a responsibility to minimise the impact we have on the environment and communities we visit when we travel.

Since our beginnings this has been a cornerstone of our company.

The New Zealand travel industry has become a world leader in developing an external audit process which monitors tourism businesses based on quality, safety and sustainable experiences.

We're very proud to have received a Gold Qualmark rating, having met standards designed to protect what makes New Zealand unique and special.

Being responsible when we travel isn't about a single process or project but rather a way of thinking and then doing.

We started this journey many years ago and although we are not perfect, we are striving to continually learn and improve.

trip grading

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Moderate to Challenging

The Central North Island Bike, Alpine Hike and 3 Small Boats tour is graded mostly moderate with the final day hike regarded as challenging. The cycle routes are not technical but you do need to be capable of cycling distances between 30-40km and there will be some gravel sections so experience of riding on gravel will be helpful. On-road biking sections may have low to moderate traffic levels so riders need to be confident riding with some traffic. Ebikes are suitable if ridden appropriately and manage battery life (i.e. not on turbo the whole time, and in the correct chain ring for climbing hills). With the trip being fully supported, you can also choose to ride shorter sections and hop in the van at any time. The water based activities are easy with no previous experience of rafting or canoeing required. The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is challenging and a good level of hiking experience and fitness is required; there are shorter, less challenging hikes available.

adventure travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are mentally flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your consultant or travel agent.

important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

DAY 3 River Valley Lodge to Ohakune : Biking on Mt Ruapehu

Back on our bikes, we head out from River Valley Lodge on another scenic gravel/sealed road to the official Gumboot Capital of New Zealand, Taihape.

After testing your skills in the gumboot throwing lane. it's an hour's drive to the alpine village of Ohakune. Ohakune's claim to being the Carrot Capital reflects the importance of market gardening in the area, but perhaps of more interest is its proximity to Tongariro National Park and the skifields on the slopes of Mt Ruapehu.

As well as a stunning ride on the slopes of Mt Ruapehu, the rest of the day will be spent enjoying some short walks in the Mangawhero Forest bursting with kamahi, broadleaf and five finger, with giant rimu, matai and kahikatea trees reaching 30 metres or more above the forest floor.

Ride : Morning 30km +484 32% gravel; Afternoon 12.5km +206m 83% trail

Short walks

Accommodation : Powderhorn Chateau or Peaks Motor Lodge

meals: B,D

DAY 4 Whanganui River Adventure : Jetboat, canoe and Bush Hike

The Whanganui National Park is a special place which was created to protect the upper reaches of the Whanganui River. Once an important transport route for both Maori and early European settlers, the river flows from Tongariro National Park to the Tasman Sea through wild lowland forests.

Today's excursion on the Whanganui River will be truly memorable. A short transfer to Pipiriki and we start our adventure with a 55 minute jet boat journey upriver 32 kms to the Mangapurua Landing, through an area of spectacular natural features with deep river gorges covered with lush native vegetation. From the drop off, it's an easy grade 40 minute walk following in the footsteps of the early pioneers along the old roadway to the "BRIDGE TO NOWHERE" . Here you will stop for lunch on this historical monument of a bygone era and learn the history from your local guide.

The next part of your adventure is an easy grade canoe back down the Whanganui River to Pipiriki, through a landscape of remote hills and bush clad valleys. We'll pass through the scenic gorge of the Manganui o te Ao River and the Ngaporo and Autapu rapids should provide some 'gentle' excitement. More exotic trees and farmland, an eel weir and the Paparoa rapid follow before reaching the boat ramp below Pipiriki village.

We finish the day with a 1hr van transfer to Waimarino, in the heart of the Tongariro National Park.

Accommodation : Park Hotel, Waimarino or similar

meals: B,L,D

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DAY 5 Tongariro National Park Alpine Crossing Hike

Today's our Queen stage hike, tackling the popular Tongariro Alpine Crossing Trek across a volcanic alpine landscape of dramatic contrasts – steaming vents, glacial valleys, ancient lava flows, alpine vegetation and vivid crater lakes, all with stunning views.

This challenging hike starts on a well-formed boardwalk with a gradual climb through the Mangatepopo Valley. The initial 5kms is shared with the Soda Springs Walk, an easy 2hr return hike which is a good option for those who may prefer an easier trek.

At the end of the valley the track increases in difficulty, with a steady climb of around 350m up a staircase to a short plateau in South Crater. The climb resumes with the ascent to Red Crater, the highest point in the Crossing. A steep descent on volcanic rock scree brings walkers to the vivid Nga Rotopounamu-Emerald Lakes.

The track continues past Blue Lake - Te Wai Whakaata o Te Rangihiroa (Rangihiroa's mirror) and begins the long zig-zag descent of the Northern slopes including many steps. Enjoy the magnificent views over Lake Rotoaira and Lake Taupo before descending further into lush forest to the track end.

Be prepared for a long and challenging day out and be rewarded with stunning vistas and experiences.

Hike : 20.2km 7-8hrs Steep & undulating

Fitness required: High

Accommodation : Park Hotel, Waimarino or similar

meals: **B,L,D**

DAY 6 Waimarino to Taupo

After breakfast, it's a 2 hr transfer to Taupo where our trip finishes with a drop off around lunchtime at a central location. It's a 20 min transfer by taxi or shuttle to the airport for those booked to fly out today or the city has many attractions to warrant staying an extra couple of days.

meals: **B**

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

cycling

We believe that cycling is one of the best ways to see a country. Our cycling trips have been well researched to take you on the best route which usually means a combination of dedicated cycle trails, and quiet secondary roads, both sealed and unsealed (gravel). Our cycleway tours travel through historic and scenic countryside. With easy gradient cycling, the occasional hill, a mix of character lodgings and motels, these tours are suitable for all level of cyclists. All of this so that you can enjoy the incredible scenery and landscapes, view the well-known sights and along the way eat delicious food, stay at unique accommodation and meet the locals.

We have two different styles of bikes available for hire, or you are welcome to bring your own bike. The Avanti Discovery hybrid mountain bike allows a relaxed upright riding style and has wide ranging 10-speed Shimano gears, 29" wheels, front suspension, hydraulic disc brakes and comfortable saddles. These bikes are available in a low rise, also known as a step-through bike frame.

We also offer quality Sinch eBikes providing people who might need a little pedalling assistance the opportunity to enjoy our cycling holidays. eBikes are simple to operate, very comfortable to ride, and are more gentle on the body than a traditional bike. You still need to pedal, however our eBikes provide up to 80kms of pedal assistance before requiring a recharge. Please see our website for the cost of bike hire. All our rental bikes can be fitted with flat pedals or MTB SPD pedals, we can also fit your own pedals and seat if you have a

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favourite. Bike helmets will be supplied with your rental bike, along with a 15L saddle bag for any personal items you might need in the day. All equipment and luggage will be carried by the support vehicle.

These cycling journeys are not designed to be a marathon event and no one should feel under pressure to ride, everyone is able to ride at their own pace. If at any point you do not wish to ride, the vehicle is always available for you and your bike. Remember that cycling involves some physical exertion and pre-trip preparation will make your cycle tour a more enjoyable experience. Ask us for more details or advice. Cycling, of course, is an active pursuit and to maximise your own personal protection in case of a tumble or fall, the wearing of a bicycle helmet is compulsory at all times while cycling. We also recommend wearing bright, fluoro cycle clothing to increase your visibility on the road.

country information

Stretching North to South for over 2000 km, and split into two main islands - the North and the South Islands - New Zealand is a country of diverse landforms. From the Pacific Island beaches and rolling farmlands in the north, to the volcanic plateau and then onto the soaring mountains within view of the sea in the south, and the sub-Antarctic islands that dot the South Island coastline, the contrasts are many.

The South Island is the 12th largest island in the world. The west coast is dominated by the Southern Alps, which contain more mountains than the European Alps altogether, and home to New Zealand's highest peak, Aoraki Mount Cook (3754m / 12,316 ft). The Main Divide, the chain of peaks that forms the backbone of the Alps from Arthur's Pass to Fiordland, splits the South Island into east and west. Several ice ages, and the fact that two continental plates are sliding past each other forming the Southern Alps, means that the scenery is as rugged as the New Zealand fauna and flora is unique. The largest city in the South Island is Christchurch.

The North Island is the smaller of the two main islands of New Zealand. Its northern location means it enjoys a warmer, more temperate climate than much of the South Island, and is much more vastly populated. The centre of the island is primarily a volcanic landscape with vast forests, volcanic peaks, and picturesque lakes. The eastern side of the island is covered with vineyards. Auckland, also known as the 'City of Sails', is the largest city of New Zealand and found on the North Island.

With a population of 4.0 million people, the wilderness areas of New Zealand are many as most 'Kiwis' now live in an urban situation near the coast. The Maori are the indigenous people of the land and they named it Aotearoa 'Land of the Long White Cloud' upon their arrival 1000 years ago. Europeans settled in the early 1800s and the country is alive today with a market driven economy and a blend of European and Asia/Pacific influences to create a buoyant South Pacific culture.

climate

As a general rule, November to April are the most ideal months for travelling in New Zealand's stunning outdoors. One of the most important things travellers need to know about the New Zealand climate is that it's a maritime climate, as opposed to the continental climate typical of larger landmasses.

Thanks to its position in the path of the 'Roaring 40s' and mountainous terrain, New Zealand's weather can frequently change with amazing rapidity. Because the weather can change so unexpectedly you should be prepared for sudden changes in temperature and weather conditions. This basically means having a good waterproof jacket and some warm clothing. You don't need to bring your winter wardrobe but a good fleece or jumper are a must.



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dietary requirements

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

accommodation on the trip

The accommodation for this trip is of a good standard and has been carefully selected to provide comfort and value in the best locations possible. The accommodation is on a twin share or double room basis with private facilities wherever possible. If you wish to reserve a room to yourself a single supplement is available at extra cost.

pre and post tour accommodation

If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation speak to our staff as they can help with different suggestions.

joining instructions

On the first morning of the tour, you will meet your group at one central city location. The place and time will be emailed to you with your booking confirmation. If you miss your flight or are unable to reach the meeting point on time, please call us at the Adventure South office (Free phone in NZ 0800 00 11 66 or international +64 3 942 1222). Once you meet the group, you will test the bikes and fit any saddles and pedals you have brought with you. This is followed by a short briefing and once the bikes are loaded on the bike trailer, you will set away on your cycle tour.

equipment provided

HYBRID FRONT SUSPENSION BIKE (Additional Charge)

Our new fleet of Avanti Discovery hybrid front suspension bikes combines the best characteristics of a hybrid bike and a mountain bike to give you a great ride and comfort on gravel roads. This bike has a more upright riding style meaning you can still take in the amazing scenery you'll encounter along the way.

These bikes have 29" wheels, suspension forks and suspension seat posts to iron out the bumps and hydraulic disc brakes give responsive braking.

They are also available in a low rise, also known as a step through bike frame, please specify on your booking form.

ELECTRIC BIKE (Additional Charge)

Our Sinch ebikes are perfect for cyclists that may require a little assistance on their travels. Pedalling our ebikes is easier on knees and joints than riding a traditional bike. They provide up to 100kms of pedal assistance before requiring recharging. Very simple to operate and they provide people with varying levels of cycling experience, health and fitness levels the opportunity to enjoy our cycling holidays.

ACCESSORIES



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A bicycle helmet will be included with your bike rental, along with a 15L saddle bag for personal items you might need in the day.

what you carry

The tour is fully supported so you won't have to carry anything major on your activities! If hiring one of our bikes it will have a small rear saddle bag with enough space to put an extra layer, your camera, wallet, phone etc. We recommend you pack your luggage in a soft luggage bag for easy stowing in the trailer/vehicle. Please keep your luggage to a minimum of one main bag and one small day pack.

equipment required

A comprehensive gear list will be provided on confirmation of your trip.

protecting the environment

In a world where more and more rubbish is produced every year we are trying to do our little bit to help the planet. We encourage you to please bring your own water bottle. If you are a keen coffee or tea drinker you might like to bring your own reusable cup, as there are a few opportunities along the tour to get take-away drinks. Also if you think you might do some shopping, it could be useful to carry small foldable reusable shopping bags to reduce the need for plastic bags.

private groups

The adventures featured in our brochures, and on our website, are just a starting point. Planning and providing special group departures is something we do exceptionally well. Over the past 18 years we have developed some exceptional itineraries, from cycling to hiking or combination multi-adventure trips. School groups, charities, work colleagues and cycling buddies have all been part of our experience. Our team can assist you with all aspects of your private group to ensure the trip is tailored just right for your group. Contact our team today.

subscribe to our e-newsletter

To keep up to date with the new and exciting trip releases, special offers plus more please subscribe to our free e-newsletter at www.adventuresouth.co.nz

Or why not view past travellers images and join in on the conversation at <http://www.facebook.com/AdventureSouthNZ>

follow us

Follow us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/AdventureSouthNZ>

trip availability

If this trip seems right for you then we encourage you to call us now to check availability. There are many reasons why you may not be able to join your desired departure and limited space on our small group departures is just one of them. Many of our adventures require us to secure services on your behalf. The demand is increasing each year making it difficult to join a trip last minute. To ensure we can assist you onto your adventure of a lifetime we ask that you check your trip availability with our team at your earliest convenience.

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how to book

To book an Adventure South holiday, you can book directly online or you will need to complete a booking form (found at the back of our brochure). You can also download a copy from www.adventuresouth.co.nz/Contact/How-to-Book. On completion, please fax, scan/email or post the form to Adventure South or your nearest World Expeditions office, along with your non-refundable deposit. If you're coming from outside New Zealand contact your nearest World Expeditions office or travel agent for assistance with your travel arrangements including flights, travel insurance and additional accommodation or just for some information in your time zone.

ADVENTURE SOUTH CONTACT DETAILS

Toll Free from New Zealand: 0800 00 11 66

Toll Free from Australia: 1800 10 70 60

Toll Free from the USA: 866 479 9827

All other countries please dial: +64 3 9421 222

Australian Travel Agents: 1300 904 454

Email: info@adventuresouth.co.nz

WORLD EXPEDITIONS WORLDWIDE OFFICES

UK: Toll free within UK 0800 0744 135 or + 44 (0)20 8545 9030

North America: Toll free 1800 567 2216 or 613 241 2700

Australia: 1300 904 454