

mt taranaki & the forgotten world



trip highlights

Marvel at rugged, remote inland farming country hardly anyone gets to see

Enjoy great hospitality from the locals of back country NZ

Traverse the Volcanic Plateau with stunning views across to the North Island's 3 active volcanic peaks.

Ride the famous Forgotten World Highway to the equally infamous Republic of Whangamomona

Get up close and personal with the slopes of the dormant volcano, Mt Taranaki,

Enjoy the beaches, parks, art galleries and cafes of New Plymouth

Ride like a local on a smorgasbord loop of back country Taranaki



| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Trip Duration | 5 days | Trip Code: TFW |
| Grade | Moderate | |
| Activities | Road and gravel biking | |
| | Short walks | |
| Accommodation | 4 nights hotel/motel | |

Kia ora from Adventure South

Thank you for your interest in our Mt Taranaki & The Forgotten World 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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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 this evening please ensure your flight departs New Plymouth domestic airport no earlier than 5pm. You can get a taxi, shuttle or public bus to the airport from the city centre. For those staying in New Plymouth on the final evening your guide will drop you at a central drop off point around 4-5pm (depending on traffic).

trip dates

2026 26 Oct - 30 Oct **HS**

2027 08 Feb - 12 Feb **H**
18 Apr - 22 Apr

important notes

HS - Holiday Season
H - High Season

the trip

A hidden gem on the Western flank of New Zealand's North Island, Taranaki is often overlooked because of its remoteness, but that's the reason to visit! The region is dominated by Mt Taranaki, a dormant volcano with its near-perfect cone and the second highest mountain in the North Island. The mountain reigns supreme over Egmont National Park, a area of diverse vegetation, lush waterfalls, rainforests, and mossy swamps that has developed in an environment of frequent volcanic activity.

We make our way to Taranaki from Taupo, where our trip starts, via the Volcanic Plateau, an active volcanic and thermal area including the North Island's 3 active volcanic peaks, Ruapehu, Tongariro and Ngauruhoe. Our day offers an exploration of a section of the Mountains to Sea cycle trail by bike, to the remote Whanganui riverside settlement of Whakahoro; following a vehicle transfer in the morning from Taupo, through the volcanic tupuna (ancestors) of this area, Ruapehu, Tongariro & Ngauruhoe.

The following two days are spent on the famous The Forgotten World Highway, Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest heritage trail, giving us all things remote, mysterious and scenic. The highway follows ancient Maori trade routes and pioneering farm tracks through ambitious historic settlements, untamed native bush and stunning natural scenery. Our night on the highway is spent in one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most iconic country hotels in the charismatic town of the Republic of Whangamomona, declared as such by residents in 1989 due to their frustration with the local council!

The highway ends in the Shakespearean inspired town of Stratford, beneath the Eastern slopes of Mt Taranaki. We'll head up the mountain late afternoon to experience the stunning scenery, unique mountain flora, and bountiful birdlife.

From Stratford, our adventure continues, with a vehicle transfer to kick off cycling on quiet country roads around the base of the Maunga (mountain), all the way into of New Plymouth. Along the way, we'll pay a visit to Cape Egmont, then Pukeiti, a garden of international significance hosting one of the world's biggest and most diverse collections of rhododendrons and other exotics. New Plymouth itself is a vibrant and contemporary city, known for its art galleries, picturesque parks and spectacular, wild surf beaches.

As all the locals will tell you, our final loop ride is a memorable gem delivering a satisfying smorgasbord of riding experiences. It has it all - flats, hills, sea-edge promenade, scenic farmland, quiet roads, a tunnel and a historic bridge. We will be back in New Plymouth by late afternoon when our tour ends; please book any onwards flights from New Plymouth for departure after 5pm.

about your leader/escort

Our guides are one of our biggest assets and we pride ourselves on their level of quality and high standards. You will have two experienced members of our guiding team. 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 | MEET TAUPO; START TOUR FROM RAURIMU |
| DAY 2 | NATIONAL PARK TO WHANGAMOMONA |
| DAY 3 | WHANGAMOMONA TO STRATFORD |
| DAY 4 | STRATFORD TO NEW PLYMOUTH |
| DAY 5 | NEW PLYMOUTH TO INGLEWOOD |



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fast facts

Countries Visited:
New Zealand

Singles:
A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local leader

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

what's included

- 4 nights hotel/motel accommodation, based on twin share
- 4 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 4 dinners
- Central Location Pick up from Taupo and Drop off in New Plymouth
- Comfortable support vehicle throughout
- Speciality bike trailer to carry bikes and luggage
- Snacks, fruit and water while cycling
- Department of Conservation and National Park Fees

what's not included

- Domestic airfares and taxes
- Arrival and departure airport transfers
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- All beverages, other than breakfast and water while cycling
- Road/Gravel bike - available to hire
- Optional activities
- Personal expenses (eg. phone calls, internet, laundry, shopping etc)
- Travel insurance
- New Plymouth to Taupo return transfer available on morning after tour ends (departing 8am) at \$75pp - please advise office to prebook

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Meet Taupo; Start Tour from Raurimu

Welcome to Aotearoa New Zealand and your North Island Adventure! Hopefully you should all have arrived yesterday and be ready to ride this morning, with any personal bikes built up and gear prepared. Meeting at a central location in Taupo, we'll start with an introduction and short tour briefing before loading up and heading off on a beautiful drive around Lake Taupo to the small settlement of Raurimu, home of the engineering masterpiece, the Raurimu railway Spiral.

After bike fitting and a safety briefing, we'll head out on our first back country gravel ride with our lunch stop at the Kaitieke Horse Memorial, a sculpture made of horseshoes to commemorate the horse history of this rural heartland. Appropriately our ride follows a horseshoe shape and we head back to Owahango, another small town whose name translates as 'the place of wheezy noses'!

Loading up it's a short drive to the rural town of Taumaranui, our home for the night. Originally a Maori settlement at the confluence of the Ongarue River with the Whanganui, Taumaranui was at the head of important canoe routes linking the interior of the island with the lower Whanganui River settlements.

Cycle : 42km, 626m, 78% gravel, 22% quiet sealed country lane

meals: D

DAY 2 National Park to Whangamomona

Today is our first taste of real back country, remote, heartland New Zealand! Starting in civilisation, we end in the tiny Republic of Whangamomona (pop. 40 humans plus numerous other inhabitants), where a goat was once the President and which sells its own passports.

Built on colonial bridle paths formed in the late 19th century, the Forgotten World Highway is remote and mysterious to the extreme. "A bit upsy downsy" is how one local resident puts it - a classic New Zealand understatement to describe a road that hugs the rugged contours of the land to provide a natural roller coaster experience.

We start with a 30km stretch of hilly farmland initially alongside the Whanganui River, the original 'highway' into this hinterland. The asphalt Highway leaves the river and winds up Paparata Saddle

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Moderate

The trip is graded moderate. You will need a good level of fitness and we suggest 2-3 hours of cycling three times a week for the three months leading up to your trip. You will need to be able to cycle 50-60km each day for the Standard itinerary, and as much as 90km on the longest day of the Avid itinerary. The on-road sections will have low to moderate traffic levels on back-roads. Riders need to be confident riding with some traffic. Ebikes are suitable if ridden appropriately and battery life is managed (using the Eco mode, and in the correct chain ring for climbing hills). The tour is fully supported and if at any stage you feel like having a rest from cycling you will be able to ride in the support vehicle.

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.

before descending into the beautiful Tangarakau Gorge, where the landscape changes from farmland to dense native bush. Rolling through the Gorge we ride through the single-lane Moki Tunnel, known locally as the 'Hobbits' Hole', over the Tahora Saddle and finish with a mostly downhill final few kms into Whangamomana.

Tonight we'll stay at the Whangamomana Lodge, part of the Whangamomana Hotel, one of New Zealand's iconic country hotels.

Cycle Options : The Forgotten World Highway, 100% asphalt

Standard : Taumarunui to Mokis Tunnel via Nevins Lookout: 66km, +1,288m

Avid : Taumarunui to Whangamomana 86km, +1369m

meals: B,L,D

DAY 3 Whangamomona to Stratford

Another stunning, challenging ride starting back on the Forgotten World Highway, distinguished by 2 Saddle crossings, both worth stopping at the top to take in stunning vistas and catch your breath!

Leaving straight from the hotel, it's just a short warmup before heading over the first Whangamomana Saddle, offering spectacular views of the surrounding landscape with a backdrop of beech and Podocarp forest.

Next up is the Pohokura Saddle, named after a prominent Maori Chief and with views into the valley used as a large railway construction campsite.

We then divert off the Forgotten Highway to avoid logging trucks and enjoy a delightfully quiet scenic road through to Stratford, named after its English counterpart, but rather less iconic, although Shakespeare is reflected in the Street names and the Glockenspiel Clock.

Later this afternoon, we'll head up the lower slopes of Mount Taranaki to enjoy the stunning views and mountain flora and birdlife. There is a diverse range of vegetation to observe that has developed in an environment of frequent volcanic activity.

Cycle : The Forgotten World Highway, 69kms, +1003m 100% asphalt

meals: B,L,D

DAY 4 Stratford to New Plymouth

The legendary annual Tour of Taranaki Cycle Challenge takes riders on a striking road race around Mt Taranaki, tackling the full 148km circuit in one day. Today's journey takes in the same circuit with the mountain continually changing its aspect throughout the day. Considered one of the most symmetrical mountains in the world, it is a landmark that locals are strongly bonded to. From Stratford we head south with wide ranging views both of Mt Taranaki and across farmland out to the Tasman Sea. We eventually head into the native bush, although there are still peeks of the sea, but the native trees and ferns are a delight to ride through. Pukeiti Gardens is a Garden of International Significance with its world renowned collection of rhododendrons and other exotics. After a lunch stop here it's almost all downhill to the vibrant city of New Plymouth. There may be some free time to visit Pukekura Park, the impressive Puke Ariki Museum or the Len Lye Centre before our final tour dinner at a local restaurant. Cycle Options : Around the Mountain, 100% asphalt

Standard : Stratford to Pukeiti Garden: Up to 62km, +647m

Avid : Stratford to New Plymouth: Up to 85km, +783m

meals: B,D

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DAY 5 New Plymouth to Inglewood

The Kennett brothers have been pioneers in the development of all things biking here in New Zealand and they describe today's ride as one of the best loops in New Zealand, which is high praise indeed. This is where the locals ride and for good reason - it takes in rural New Zealand at its most beautiful.

We start by riding up the coast on the award winning New Plymouth Coastal Walkway with crashing waves, and crystal ocean as far as your eye can see. Turning inland we'll experience the beautiful rich dairy country of rural Taranaki steeped in history, including the historic Bertram Suspension Bridge over the Waitara River and the Tarata Tunnel dug by hand in 1904 to enable residents to get to the valley from Waitara.

Climbing up and over the Tarata Saddle, it's then an 18km rural rollercoaster through to lunch in the small town of Inglewood, founded in 1875, in a clearing in dense forest.

After a final celebration lunch it's an hr to transfer back to New Plymouth where you can be dropped either back in the central city or at the airport for an early evening flight.

Cycle : New Plymouth to Inglewood : 66km, +927m

meals: B,L

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

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.



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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/jumper and good thermals are a must.

The temperature during the South Island summers range from 10-30 °C, with a pleasant 40-50% humidity. Higher altitudes are always considerably cooler and snowfall is not uncommon even in summer. The Southern Alps act as a barrier to the moisture laden winds coming west across the Tasman Sea, creating a wet climate on the west side of the mountains and a drier climate on the east side. The geography also creates a wind pattern, which can in summer be very hot, dry and fierce. Maximum temperatures we may encounter range up to 30°C. Minimum temperatures expected in the Southern Alps in Summer time are around -5°C. Weather is an integral facet of any mountain range and getting to understand and work with this major environmental factor is what will make you more prepared for your tour – any questions about what to expect on your tour talk to one of our sales team.

a typical day

Each day will be different but you can expect to make the most of every daylight hour! Cycling will obviously be the main feature of every day and there are 2 ride options on most days. Whilst technically relatively easy there are hills and gravel terrain to keep you focused and the stunning scenery will be a great distraction. Breakfasts will be at your accommodation or a nearby cafe, packed lunches at scenic spots along the way and dinners in local restaurants.

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 great hospitality in the best locations possible. The accommodation is on a twin share or double room basis with ensuite facilities. If you wish to reserve a room to yourself a single supplement is available at extra cost. Please note: although every endeavour is made to stay at the accommodation detailed in the itinerary, occasionally, due to seasonal shortages, we need to use other accommodation of a similar standard.

pre and post tour accommodation

You will need to stay overnight in Taupo the night before before the start of the tour. We would advise choosing a central location as the pick up location will be close to the town centre. If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation speak to our staff as they can help with different suggestions. we are able to offer a transfer back to Taupo on the day after the trip ends departing 8am - please enquire with the office for more details.



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joining instructions

On the first day of the tour, you will meet your guides and fellow travelers at a central city location in Taupo, at a time to be advised. Please be dressed to cycle and have any items you may need during the day in a day bag, including any personal saddles or pedals you would like fitting to any hire bikes. If you miss your flight or are unable to reach the meeting point on time, please call us at the Adventure South NZ office (Free phone in NZ 0800 00 11 66 or 03 942 1222).

equipment provided

ROAD BIKE (Additional Charge)

On road cycling tours our road bikes provide the ultimate cycling experience. The drop handle bars offer multi hand positions. Our bikes have wider 32mm tyres and disc brakes which are safer and better suited to NZ road conditions. They have a relaxed geometry and wide range rear cassette to suit people with varying levels of cycling experience and for longer cycle touring routes.

HYBRID BIKE (Additional Charge)

These bikes have the same narrower tyres and lightweight frames, only with flat handlebars to give the performance and speed of a road bike. The geometry allows you to sit in a more natural upright riding position that provides the best control of the bike with a well-placed centre of gravity and in a posture that reduces strain on the rider's neck and back.

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

A bicycle helmet will be supplied with all bike rentals.

what you carry

You will need to carry your own personal items while cycling, such as a light rain jacket, camera, sunscreen, water bottle, sunglasses. A pannier bag will be supplied with any hire bikes. You will have access to the support vehicle during most of the days if you wish to leave any other items on board.

equipment required

A hybrid or gravel bike is recommended and both are available to hire. If bringing your own bike, please ensure it has been recently serviced and is in good mechanical order with new brake pads, sealant if tubeless and ideally new tyres. Your guides will carry bike tools and basic repair equipment, but please bring any spare parts that are specific to your bike such as inner tubes, brake pads, hangars and spokes. Ebikes are also acceptable but likely only suitable for the Standard itinerary unless the battery is well managed. A good quality helmet is also recommended. A comprehensive gear list will be provided closer to the date of departure.

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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 many 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.

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follow us

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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. You can download a copy from www.adventuresouth.co.nz/Contact/How-to-Book. On completion, please scan/email or post the form to Adventure South, 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.