

OUTDOOR TRAVEL



THE ACTIVE HOLIDAY COMPANY

CYCLING HOLIDAYS IN NEW ZEALAND

2023-2024

NEW ZEALAND – OTAGO RAIL TRAIL

4-days / 3-nights small group guided cycling



Cycling along rail trails is great fun and the most popular in New follows the former Otago Central Branch railway line from Clyde to Middlemarch on the South Island. The railway once provided a vital link between Dunedin, at that time New Zealand's largest city, and the major goldfields of Central Otago. The line closed after 83 years, and the Department of Conservation acquired the disused railway in 1993 spending 6 years preparing and upgrading the route for use as a walking or cycling trail.

The riding is generally easy to moderate, and the trail surface is similar to a good unpaved road with some rougher loose bluestones in places. Highlights of the Rail Trail include the tunnels at Price's Creek and Poolburn Gorge, viaducts and wooden trestle bridges and of course, the absence of motor traffic. The popularity of the Otago Rail Trail has breathed new life into many of the small towns of the Maniatoto and Central Otago and you will be able to admire the art deco buildings of towns such as Ranfurly.

Departures: 24 October 2023
8, 13, 20, 28 November 2023
5, 12 December 2023
4, 16, 30 January 2024
3, 11, 27 February 2024
2, 12, 20, 26 March 2024
2, 8, 16, 22 April 2024

Costs from: \$2225 per person, twin-share
\$590 Single supplement
\$270 E-Bike hire

Included: A selection of characterful hotels or B & B/guesthouse accommodation all with private facilities, continental breakfasts, packed lunches, home cooked dinners, multi-gear cycle hire with panniers, repair kit, bike lock, helmet, luggage transfers, experienced tour guide, support vehicle, Department of Conservation access fees, entrance fees for Hayes Engineering and Curling.

Not included: Drinks, meals not mentioned, personal expenses, travel insurance, gratuities.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Clyde to Lauder

Cycling 44km

You will be collected from your accommodation in Queenstown, at approximately 8.30am and driven to Clyde where the ride begins. We'll cycle to Alexandra, through rural countryside to Chatto Creek then branch off at Omakau, to the quaint township of Ophir. The highlights of today are the wooden trestle Muttontown Viaduct; the Old Tucker Hill gold diggings; views of the Dunstan Mountains and Raggedy Range and (hopefully) a sighting of brown trout in the Manuherikia River.

Dinner tonight is at a local café.

Day 2: Lauder to Ranfurly

Cycling 48km

This morning, we'll take a trip in the bus to the historic gold-mining town of St Bathans and walk around the beautiful Blue Lake. Then we return to Lauder and cycle along one of the most spectacular sections of the trail. Cross the Manuherikia River on the trail's longest bridge then pass through the Poolburn Gorge, home to the rare New Zealand Falcon, to the Ida Valley. Ride through two tunnels and cross the 37m high Poolburn Viaduct. In Oturehua we visit the Hayes Engineering Works (Hayes invented the wire strainer, pulley block and cattle stop at the beginning of the 20th century). A stop in the town of Wedderburn and then, after an easy climb to the summit of the trail, we enjoy the descent down to the art deco township of Ranfurly.

Day 3: Ranfurly to Hyde

Cycling 33km

This morning we drive to Naseby and play a game of curling at the only dedicated curling rink in the Southern Hemisphere then drive back to Ranfurly to start the day's cycling. We follow the trail to Waipiata and along the edge of an old lake, before entering the Taieri Gorge. The trail then crosses through further tunnels and bridges before a fast downhill to Hyde. The highlights of today's cycle include crossing the vast Maniototo Plains; following the Taieri River as it snakes around the Rock and Pillar Range; crossing the stone bridge over Cap Burn; and experiencing the 32-metre-high Price's Creek Viaduct, and the 152-metre-long tunnel.

Day 4: Hyde to Middlemarch

Cycling 40km

Today's highlights include views of the Rock and Pillar and Taieri Ranges; the Hyde Railway Disaster memorial; and dropping down into the Strath Taieri Plain. We end at Middlemarch – which is a small farming town that is well known for the Easter Singles Ball. Girls travel there to meet eligible rugged young Southern Men who come down to the ball from their hill country stations.

After lunch we drive to the historic Kawarau Bridge and AJ Hackett Bungy Centre where we get on the bikes and ride alongside the Arrow River crossing over two very impressive suspension bridges until we arrive in Arrowtown. You'll then be transferred to your accommodation in Queenstown.



Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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