

New Zealand Rimu Adventure



Trip Summary

New Zealand is an adventurer's paradise! From Fiordland to Nelson Lakes, guests on the Rimu Adventure will not find themselves lacking in adrenaline, exceptional views, and unforgettable memories. Hike, bike, kayak, and drive your way across the South Island on this fourteen-day adventure. Experience amazing cities and townships such as Queenstown and Punakaiki, as well as gorgeous natural sights such as the Franz Josef Glacier and Milford Sound. The Rimu adventure proves to be the perfect way to completely immerse yourself in one of the most beautiful places on earth.

Itinerary

Day 1: Christchurch / Kaikoura

Most people leave the Northern Hemisphere on a Saturday evening, arriving in Auckland early Monday morning • You'll lose a day crossing the dateline – but you get it back on the way home! • It's a short flight from Auckland to Christchurch on the South Island where we'll meet you • We'll start your trip by travelling up the coast to the seaside town of Kaikoura, where we'll hike the scenic peninsula • Passing weathered limestone cliffs, we'll watch a colony of fur seals basking on the rocks and playing in the eddies, on a stretch of rugged coastline that was uplifted in the Kaikoura earthquake - it's amazing to see this brand-new land! • Today is a relaxed introduction to New Zealand • *Overnight The Fairways or similar (L, D)*

Day 2: Nelson Lakes National Park*

From Kaikoura, we'll travel along spectacular coastline for a couple of hours to Blenheim, a town in the Marlborough wine region • We'll visit Forrest Estate Winery to sample some of their fantastic wines and have a picnic lunch before we head off for our various activities • Our hike begins in the charming village of Saint Arnaud, on the edge of Nelson Lakes National Park • This is serious wilderness country, with incredible views and marvelous solitude • The park straddles the upper Southern Alps, an area composed of beech forests, big lakes and even bigger mountains • We'll hike the relatively gentle trail through the forest alongside Lake Rotoiti to Lakehead Hut, a small mountain cabin at the head of the lake and our home for the night • Your guides are tough and will carry the lion's share of the load • You'll be carrying a backpack with your sleeping bag, a few spare clothes, and a share of the food • *Overnight Lakehead Hut (B, L, D)*

** When you book, you have the choice of three multi-day options (three days/two nights each): a hiking trip in Nelson Lake National Park, a sea kayaking trip in the Marlborough Sounds, or a biking trip on the Queen Charlotte Track. The hiking trip stays in mountain huts, while the cyclists and sea kayakers stay in conventional lodging, with private rooms. The biking and kayaking options are an additional charge. Please contact your Adventure Consultant for more details.*

Day 3: Nelson Lakes National Park*

Today is an unforgettable day – the scenery gets better with each step! • We follow the Travers River through beech forest, before heading up the Hukere Stream towards the ridgeline • This is a challenging hike, with an elevation gain of 1000 meters (3280 feet), but it's absolutely worth it • The Angelus Circuit has exceptional scenic diversity, so it provides a great reward for the efforts you put in • It's a tremendous feeling at the top when you reach Angelus Hut, nestled beside a gorgeous alpine lake • Many people say this hidden gem was the highlight of their New Zealand adventure! • *Overnight Angelus Hut (B, L, D)*



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Day 4: Nelson Lakes National Park / Punakaiki*

Wake up on the top of the world! • After breakfast, we'll hike out along the barren Robert Ridge with dramatic views of Tasman Bay and the mountainous Kahurangi National Park in the distance • We'll descend below the tree line again into native beech forest completing our hike on the shores of Lake Rotoiti • Here, we'll meet up with the kayakers and cyclists and share stories of our adventures before carrying on • After regrouping in Saint Arnaud, we'll head across the Southern Alps to the West Coast – a dramatic and rugged coastline stretching 600 kilometers (372 miles), with a population of only 40,000 people • We'll mingle with the 'coasters' tonight in the seaside village of Punakaiki, exchanging tales of our adventures over fish and chips at the local pub! • *Overnight Paparoa Park Motel or similar (B, L, D)*

Day 5: Punakaiki / Hokitika / Franz Josef

We'll spend the morning hiking the Inland Pack Track through temperate rainforest and limestone canyons, following in the footsteps of gold miners who established this trail over a century ago • While we're in Punakaiki, we'll also check out the famous Pancake Rocks and blowholes – aptly named limestone formations that have been sculpted through the relentless pounding of the Tasman Sea • Travelling along the scenic coastline, we'll stretch our legs in Hokitika and check out local art galleries and pounamu-carving workshops (pounamu is Maori for jade), before carrying on to the township of Franz Josef where we'll stay for the next couple of nights • Nestled in the rainforest-clad foothills of the Southern Alps, Franz Josef is the heart of New Zealand glacier country • *Overnight Rainforest Retreat (B, L, D)*

Day 6: Okarito Lagoon / Franz Josef

This morning we'll take a short journey over to Okarito, a little-known beach community on the coast • We'll take to the water in sea kayaks and glide along a picturesque lagoon, set against a stunning backdrop of snow-capped peaks • Okarito is home to the only native white heron colony in New Zealand, as well as a host of other interesting birds • Later we'll walk through lush coastal forest to Three Mile Lagoon, and wander along the beautiful stony beach next to crashing waves • Later we'll head back to Franz Josef where you'll have the option to take another walk or relax in the hot tub, before enjoying a traditional Kiwi roast dinner • *Overnight Rainforest Retreat (B, L, D)*

Day 7: Franz Josef Glacier / Makarora*

With some 140 glaciers making their way down from the Southern Alps, this area is fittingly known as glacier country • Few sights equal the spectacle of two of these giant frozen rivers (Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers) imperceptibly grinding their way down through temperate rainforest to just 250 meters (820 feet) above sea level • We'll spend most of the day near Franz Josef Glacier hiking up through the forest to either Alex Knob or Roberts Point, both of which give incredible views of the ice • These hikes can be inaccessible in wet weather, so we may opt to hike close to the terminal face of Fox Glacier, around Lake Matheson and to the Blue Pools near Haast Pass instead • *Overnight Makarora Chalets (B, L, D)*

** Optional Heli Hike: an outrageously scenic alternative to today's hike is to heli-hike on Franz Josef Glacier itself at an extra cost. Please inquire with your Adventure Consultant for more details.*

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Day 8: Hawea River / Queenstown

The landscape this morning changes rapidly from dense beech forest to semi-arid mountainous terrain • Arriving at Lake Hawea, we'll take a scenic ride along the Hawea River Trail • This gently undulating track follows the Hawea and Clutha Rivers through the rugged Central Otago landscape to the charming lakeside town of Wanaka • Here we'll stop for lunch before a short but dramatic journey over the Cardrona Saddle to Queenstown on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, our base for the next couple of days • You'll sleep sweetly tonight at a lakefront hotel located in the heart of Queenstown • *Overnight Crowne Plaza Hotel (B, L)*

Day 9: Queenstown

Queenstown is the adventure capital of New Zealand (if not the world!) and all the comforts of civilization are packed into this tiny resort town: restaurants galore, sidewalk cafés, stylish lounge bars, day spas and boutiques • You'll also find incredible optional activities here including horse trekking, a gondola, kayaking, fishing, winery tours, hang gliding, mountain biking, bungee jumping, jet boating and skydiving • Or you can just soak up the atmosphere or lounge about reading a book • Your guides will happily share their favorite haunts and point you in the right direction for your free day today • *Overnights Crowne Plaza Hotel (No meals included)*

Day 10: Fjordland National Park / Milford Sound

This morning, we set off for our largest and perhaps most spectacular national park, Fiordland • We'll hike part of the Routeburn Track for unsurpassed views of the Hollyford Valley, as well as Lake Marian and Mt Christina • We'll take a short drive through the Homer Tunnel and emerge at the top of a spectacular glacier-carved valley for a memorable descent to the shores of Milford Sound • Rudyard Kipling rated this fiord as the eighth natural wonder of the world and it is truly breathtaking, with steep granite walls plunging over a thousand meters to the Tasman Sea and waterfalls cascading into deep inky water • Tonight we'll stay at Milford Lodge, to make the most of a wonderfully remote location • *Overnight Milford Lodge Chalets (B, L, D)*

Day 11: Milford Sound / Kepler Track / Lake Manapouri

Most people see Milford Sound from the deck of a ship, but we've got a more active way – gliding along in sea kayaks, causing very little disruption for the best chance of getting up close and personal with the friendly fur seals and dolphins that are sometimes in the area • It's an early start this morning, but the calm waters and peaceful solitude that you'll enjoy out on the fiord, are well worth it • Fully kitted out in double sea kayaks and lead by a specialist kayak guide, the padding is equally suitable for beginners and experts alike • After kayaking, we'll enjoy a tasty lunch before heading out to explore more of Fiordland's wilderness on foot • This afternoon we'll take a hike on the famous Kepler Track, one of New Zealand's Great Walks – we follow the track through mountain beech forest and along the Waiau River • It's an awesome hike with spectacular views! • Tonight, we'll stay on the edge of Lake Manapouri, enjoying the scenery and the delicious local fare • *Overnight Lake Manapouri Inn (B, L, D)*

Day 12: Cromwell Old Town / Lake Pukaki

Carefully relocated or lovingly reconstructed, the buildings of Cromwell Old Town represent the character of Cromwell's gold-mining history • We'll explore the intriguing buildings and eat lunch here together • Afterwards we'll drive through the tussock-country of Lindis Pass to Lake Pukaki, where



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we stay on Hamish and Julia McKenzie's 5000-hectare high country sheep farm, Braemar Station • While we're here, we'll stay in a farm cottage that was built for the sheep shearers • It's a rustic little place with views that will knock your socks off – the biggest mountains in New Zealand piercing the sky on the far side of a gorgeous cobalt-blue lake • With no lights for miles around, the stars on a clear night are like nothing you've ever seen • Many travelers have said this was one of their favorite places on the whole trip – just the place for your last couple of nights in New Zealand! • *Overnight Shearer's Quarters (B, L, D)*

Day 13: Mt Cook National Park / Lake Pukaki

Mt Cook, named Aoraki or 'cloud piercer' by South Island Maori, is the highest mountain in New Zealand • Directly opposite the mountain, we have a stunning day hike to the main ridge above Mueller Glacier • It's a challenging hike, but you'll remember the view of the glacier and the surrounding peaks forever! • The weather conditions are very important in this area, as it's a true alpine climate notorious for sudden weather shifts • If we aren't able to do the Mueller Glacier hike, or you'd like to take it a little easier, there's an impressive hike up to a glacial lake (complete with icebergs!) at the base of the Hooker Glacier • Then we head back to Braemar Station for the last night of the 'Rimu' • We'll enjoy a celebratory dinner as we sit outside and watch the sun set on Aoraki/Mt Cook • *Overnight Shearer's Quarters (B, L, D)*

Day 14: Christchurch

After breakfast we'll head to Christchurch, arriving in time for afternoon flights • This is the end of your 'Rimu' trip and we'll leave you refreshed and invigorated from the good food, exercise, rest, and great times you'll have had with us in New Zealand! • *No overnight (B, L)*

***Trip itineraries are subject to change without notice due to road, weather and other factors outside of our control, for the safety and enjoyment of our guests, as deemed necessary and appropriate by Austin Adventures.*

Our Partner – Active Adventures

Austin Adventures is proudly offering this trip in conjunction with Active Adventures. Active Adventures is a full-service tour operator specialising in customised, multi-day, small group experiences in New Zealand. They started with two adventurous guys, a van, and a simple plan: Show a handful of visitors New Zealand 'through the eyes of locals'. More than two decades later, local immersion is still at the heart of what they do, though along the way, they've perfected the art of personalised small group travel, with an emphasis on high-quality service and active elements. They run multi-day trips throughout New Zealand getting truly active and off the beaten track – hiking, biking and kayaking our way through New Zealand's best scenery.

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Activities

Hiking: Much of this adventure involves walking or hiking on trails with a moderate rating (and at times strenuous). Hikes range in length from 3 miles to 8 miles long and can be adjusted to fit your needs. Terrain includes dirt, rocks, sandy beach, tree roots, and rocks. Trails in New Zealand are typically not as well manicured as those in the USA, so expect to be hiking in mud, getting your boots wet, and to be navigating around rocks and tree roots. Often instead of switchbacks a trail will go straight up a hill! So, while the mileage may seem small, pay more attention to the elevation gains and the estimated time that the hike will take. The Rimu is one of our more adventurous trips, but has options to suit a wide range of fitness levels and outdoor experience. If you keep reasonably active and like to give things a go, you're more likely to enjoy the trip much more. If you're used to pushing yourself, this itinerary will keep you challenged as well. Typically hikes range between three and six hours to complete, with longer hikes available on the multi-day option.

Bicycling: On Day 8, a bicycle ride along the Hawea Trail is up to 24 kilometers (15 miles) long and is mostly flat (260 feet elevation loss). You'll be biking along a wide, dirt track and the ride is vehicle supported.

Kayaking: Equipment and instruction provided. No experience necessary. Excursions last approximately 2 to 3 hours.

Discovery: New Zealand offers incredible opportunities for adventure, whether it be on backcountry hikes, atop looming glaciers, or in small resort towns. As you hike through Nelson Lakes National Park, notice the spectacular landscape that was sculpted by massive glaciers during the most recent of ice ages. Embark on an adventure or two in Queenstown, the 'adventure capital of the world' and birthplace to bungee jumping. Keep an eye out for the endearing and flightless national bird: the kiwi (also what New Zealanders call themselves!) Witness a glacier cutting through a rainforest as you trek to the base of Franz Josef Glacier. Hang out with the stars in Mt Cook National Park, which forms a portion of the world's largest International Dark Sky Reserve. Did you know that Milford Sound's water appears black? The fiord is hundreds of meters deep, but the rainfall creates a layer of fresh water up to 6 meters deep, which sits on top of the ocean. All this rainfall washes a tannin from the forest, which stains the fresh water, resulting in its unique black appearance. Come discover this adventurous destination with the leaders in adventure travel!

Your guides are experienced facilitators and regional experts. They will take the time to explain the details of each activity, answer any questions and demonstrate the use of all equipment. Each activity has been carefully planned to include options for all levels. Most importantly, Austin Adventures guides will help you select the distance that's right for you.



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Distinctive Accommodations

Night 1: The Fairways or similar

Kaikoura enjoys one of the most breathtaking locations of any town in New Zealand, clinging to the sculpted edge of the Pacific Ocean below spectacular jagged mountain peaks often brilliantly tipped with snow. Beautifully styled to reflect this bold natural environment, The Fairways apartments and studios offer unparalleled living space for total indulgence.

Night 2: Lakehead Hut

Lakehead Hut is a small mountain cabin at the head of the lake and our home for the night. Lakehead Hut sits at the head of Lake Rotoiti in the Travers River valley, at an altitude of 630 m. You will be sleeping in bunk beds in a shared dormitory. Facilities are basic with pit toilets and no showers. There is a fireplace and tables and seats for cooking and eating.

Night 3: Angelus Hut

Angelus Hut is an alpine hut nestled beside Lake Angelus deep in the mountains of the Nelson Lakes National Park at 1,650m above sea level. It is a basic backcountry hut, so you will be sleeping in bunk beds in a shared dormitory. Facilities are basic with pit toilets and no showers. There is a fireplace and tables and seats for cooking and eating. The views from here are phenomenal – it's often people's favorite spot of the whole trip.

Night 4: Paparoa Park Motel or similar

This Punakaiki accommodation, nestled in native forest on the edge of Paparoa National Park, is a treasured location in New Zealand, and just 1.2 kilometers south of the Pancake Rocks on State Highway 6 West Coast. An ideal stopping place on what Lonely Planet has called "one of the best drives of the world" along the West Coast.

Nights 5 & 6: Rainforest Retreat

Immerse yourself in the spectacular scenery of New Zealand's West Coast. The Rainforest Retreat is the leader in luxury accommodations in this rural area. Set on six acres of native bush with a nature-centric design, you'll feel as though you're truly sleeping in the rainforest when you relax in this comfortable abode.

Night 7: Makarora Chalets

Tucked in under Mt Shrimpton, your 'a' frame accommodation borders the Mt Aspiring World Heritage National Park. These chalets are completely self-contained and are set in natural bush surrounds giving each unit seclusion and privacy.

Nights 8 & 9: Crowne Plaza Hotel

Situated in the adventure capital of the world, the Crowne Plaza Hotel will provide an excellent base camp for any adventures you may hope to have in Queenstown. Each room has a unique view, from mountain territory to lakeside peace, alongside unique aromatherapy profiles catered to each guest. Dine at threesixty, the world-class restaurant stationed right in the lobby of the Crowne Plaza, and enjoy your adventures with the perfect mixture of adrenaline and peace.

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Night 10: Milford Lodge Chalets

Stay on the edge of the Milford Sound in an expertly crafted cabin at the Milford Lodge Chalets. With floor to ceiling windows allowing for incredible views of New Zealand's flora rich landscape accompanied by first-class communal and rest areas, these accommodations are nearly impossible to top.

Night 11: Lake Manapouri Inn

Mere feet from multiple trailheads and the beautiful Doubtful Sound, Lake Manapouri Inn provides the perfect space to rest and recuperate from many days of adventure. With rooms featuring a modern style of décor and remarkable views, you'll relax into these comfortable accommodations without fail.

Nights 12 & 13: Shearer's Quarters at Braemar Station

Stay on an authentic New Zealand station (local slang for a ranch or farm) to finish off your adventure! Cozy cottages await you and yours, with views of the farm and the remote scenery surrounding it. The Shearer's Quarters of Braemar Station are remarkably quiet, picturesque, and the perfect way to wind down from fourteen days of strenuous adventuring.

Meals

The hallmark of an Austin Adventures vacation is our exceptional dining. Meals are included as indicated in the daily itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities are not included in the trip price.



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Arrival & Departures

Arrival: On Day 1 of the trip, your guides can either pick you up from the Heartland Hotel Cotswold in Christchurch at 10:30 AM, or at Christchurch Airport in front of the Travel and Information Center at 11:00 AM. We recommend you fly into Christchurch no later than 10:00 AM on day of arrival.

Departure: On the last day of the trip, your guides can drop you off at the Christchurch Airport in time for flights departing after 4:00 PM. If you choose to extend your stay, your guides can drop you off in central Christchurch at about 3:00 PM.

Trip Price

From \$5,699 + tax

Trip Length

14 days / 13 nights

2020 Dates

Departs weekly throughout the year, call for availability.

Host City

Christchurch, NZ (CHC)

Reservations & Availability

1-800-575-1540

*Be prepared to leave a piece of
your heart in New Zealand!*

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Trip Reservations

Reservations, Deposits and Balances Due

To make a reservation, contact Austin Adventures with your choice of trip and dates. A nonrefundable \$750 per person deposit is required to confirm your reservation. **Some Custom and International programs may require additional deposits.** Full payment is required at the time of booking if your trip departs within 90 days. Choose one of the following contact methods:

Toll free: 800-575-1540

Phone: 406-655-4591

Online: austinadventures.com

Email: reservations@austinadventures.com

Mail: Austin Adventures, P.O. Box 81025, Billings, MT 59108

* You may also book your Austin Adventure with your preferred travel professional.

** We accept most major credit cards and personal checks (U.S. funds made payable to Austin Adventures). Please do not send cash.

Included in the Trip Price

- Comfortable accommodation featuring the lodging listed in this itinerary.
- Meals as listed in daily detailed itinerary (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner).
- All guiding services: 2 guides per trip – a lead guide/driver & a co-guide/chef.
- Any necessary equipment – all safe and well-maintained.
- Vehicle support and land transportation during the trip.
- Austin Adventures T-shirt and luggage tags.
- All activities described in the itinerary including hiking, kayaking, and biking.

Not Included in the Trip Price

- Gratuities to your guides.
- 15% NZ government tax.
- Several meals in places like Queenstown and Christchurch.
- Optional add-on activities.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and associated expenses.
- Air and land transportation to/from host city.
- All types of personal insurance.
- Personal expenses.

Pre-departure Information

After receiving your reservation and deposit, we'll send you a pre-trip planner with general information about the area you'll be visiting, a packing list, exercise guidelines, a guest information questionnaire and a liability release agreement for you to sign and return within 10 days.



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Private Custom Trips

Maybe your vacation schedule doesn't fit our list of trips and dates. Or perhaps you'd prefer a slightly different itinerary or level of luxury and activity. A Custom Adventure is the perfect answer. You pick the date and destination and brief us on the size of your group, what activities you want, your "must haves" and just how you like to relax and unwind. No detail is too small, no idea too outrageous. Our staff of experts will help create a tailor-made vacation that's just right for you and your group. In short, if you can dream it, we can make it happen.

Room Occupancy, Single Supplements, and Shared Room Assignments

All trip prices are based on double occupancy. Single rooms are available for an additional charge, referred to as a "single supplement." If you're traveling alone and wish to share a room, make the request at the time of booking. Austin Adventures will attempt to find a suitable roommate for you.

Minimum Age

The minimum age on our non-family designated adult and teen adventures is sixteen years old.

Cancellations and Refunds

The following cancellation policies and cancellation fees are in effect:

***As with deposits on some international and custom programs, refund schedule may vary, speak with your Adventure Consultant for details.

Cancellation 91 days or more before trip departure – Full trip payment refunded less \$750 nonrefundable per person deposit

Cancellation 61-90 days before trip departure – Full trip payment less 25% per person is refunded

Cancellation 31-60 days before trip departure – 50% of the trip payment is refunded

Cancellation 0-30 days before trip departure – No refund is given

Our Guarantee

Exceeding your expectations is our number one priority. In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with something during your trip, immediately notify your guide(s). If he or she is unable to resolve the issue, call our main office and give us the details of the problem, and a chance to correct it. We will do our best to find a resolution. If we are unable to do so during your trip, we will work with you upon your return home to arrive at a fair and equitable solution, including up to a full refund.