



New Zealand Climbing and Exploring

It is true, a lot of New Zealand scenery is just as beautiful as in Lord of the Rings and it seems as if everyone wants to visit this wonderful country. So we are offering the opportunity for you to do so and to climb some of the country's finest peaks.

This trip will be lead by New Zealand born and SMC owner SP Parker. SP lived in New Zealand for decades before moving to the USA and he has climbed and hiked though most of the country and at various times has worked for the Park Service there and done geology work in the mountains of the North Island. So with him as your guide you will be visiting not only the well know tourist places but the ones known to locals and off the beaten path.

This trip will include sightseeing, hiking and climbing as we try to climb the some of the most famous peaks in the country. Mt. Cook (Known to the local Maori people as Aoraki) is the high point of the nation at 12,316 feet. This may not seem high but it rises directly from sea level and is a massive snow covered mountain with no easy way to the summit and in many ways is similar to the peaks of Canada. For this ascent we hope to fly into Plateau Hut and climb from there via the Linda Glacier Route or Zurbriggens Ridge. Further south Mount Aspiring is a beautiful symmetrical pyramid of ice and rock in both a National Park and a World Heritage site. Weather willing we will helicopter into the Colin Todd hut and from there attempt the northwest ridge of the mountain which involves snow, ice and rock climbing.

To complete our journey through the mountains of New Zealand we will travel to the southwest corner of the South Island to the Darran Mountains. While these peaks claim the best rock in the country (granite) they also claim the record as one of the wettest places on earth. We would like to attempt Tutoko, the highest point in the region, but this involves a very lengthy approach. If we are blessed with a fine weather spell we will try this, but in the event of poor weather we will climb one of the closer peaks such as Talbot or Sabre.

All in all this is an ambitious schedule and the New Zealand weather can readily dash the best of plans. But it does not hurt to dream and to plan for the best possible outcome.

But along with the climbing we will also travel through the country and sightsee, visiting places such as Arthurs Pass, Westland, Fiordland and Aoraki/Mt. Cook.

We will be using a van for transportation around the country and so there is the opportunity for non climbers to join us and sightsee or hike in the parks while we are climbing.

Itinerary: This is a tentative schedule at best. Since our goal is to climb some of the peaks we will most likely change this outline to work with the weather we encounter. This trip is slated for the best mountain weather but it does rain a lot in New Zealand; all of those glaciers and lush forest comes from somewhere! We are also dealing with variable mountain conditions and if there are bad conditions we will go to where we can possibly find better.

But in a perfect world this is what we would aim for.

- Day 0 You arrive in Christchurch.
- Day 1 Drive south towards Mt. Cook.
- Day 3 Arrive at Mt. Cook Day
- Day 4 Fly into Plateau Hut for an ascent of Mt. Cook.
- Day 5-9 Climb Aoraki or wait to climb it.
- Day 10 Fly out and drive south to Aspiring
- Day 11 Fly into Colin Todd Hut
- Day 12-15 Stay at Colin Todd Hut for an ascent of Mt. Aspiring.
- Day 16 Drive south to Homer Hut on the Milford Road
- Day 17-20 Climb in the Darrans
- Day 21 Return to Christchurch

Meeting place and time: You need to arrive in Christchurch the day before the trip starts. Most major airlines fly on a regular schedule into Christchurch. We will rendezvous here on Day 0 and depart on Day 1

Dates and Prices: Check the latest brochure, call us or go to our web site and locate on the first page the pull down menu for downloadable schedules and rates. Should minimum participant numbers not be reached you will be given the option of paying our private rate, rescheduling, or cancelling. Price includes guiding, permits, all necessary group climbing gear, tents, kitchen gear, meals in the mountains, van rental and vehicle expenses, camping site fees, plane and helicopter flights Not included are restaurant meals, hotel stays and travel to Christchurch. Since this is a small trip we have the ability

to vary the start and finish times if that fits with your schedule better. When you call we can fine tune the dates

Ratios: Some of these climbs are straightforward and can be undertaken at a 1:2 ratio. However Mt. Cook (Aoraki) is a difficult and long climb. So for this we will contract with a New Zealand guide to reduce the ratio to 1:1. For the traveling and sightseeing portion we can have several additional persons.

Notes and other information: Conditions on this route vary from year to year and the Linda Glacier can become very broken up and in some cases impassable. We will be keeping track of things as the time draws closer.

Aoraki is sacred to the Maori people and in accordance with their wishes most climbing parties stop some 30 feet below the actual summit.

US citizens do not need a Visa for travel to New Zealand and there are no required immunizations or shots to get.

New Zealand is a very safe country and perfect for travel. Most of the time we will travel via vehicle and sleep in the ubiquitous campgrounds using hotels infrequently.

Prices in New Zealand are similar to the USA in dollars, but the exchange rate works well in Americas favor at present.

Air fares to New Zealand are expensive. Expect to pay up to \$US2000 depending upon the time of year. Peak season runs over the Xmas period and then drop to merely High Season after December 30th

Prerequisites: Mt. Aspiring and climbing in the Darrans is fairly straightforward and you need to have basic mountaineering skills. Aoraki is a much bigger and more serious mountain. For this you need competent crampon skills and have prior glacier travel experience and be able to travel smoothly and efficiently in the mountains. We will talk with you comprehensively when you call to ensure that your skills are appropriate for the climbing portions of the trip.

Equipment List for New Zealand Climbing

The following list is a general guide and will assist you in packing for the program. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have specific questions regarding equipment or if you need assistance prior to making a purchase. The following list will vary according to your individual requirements. Please try to pack lightly and compactly.

Items on the list with an * may be rented from SMC.

Climbing equipment

- Ice Axe*. A 60-70 cm. general purpose axe will suffice.
- Second ice tool. A 50cm axe or hammer.
- Crampons*. These should be matched to the boot. We suggest for very flexible boots the Charlet Moser G10 or Black Diamond Contact Clip; for stiffer boots the Black Diamond Sabretooth, the Moser G12 or Rambo.
- Harness*. An adjustable leg loop type such as the Black Diamond Bod or Wild Things Espresso will accommodate layering changes.
- Helmet. New models such as the Grivel Cap or the Black Diamond Hemisphere are comfortable and light weight. We provide these.
- Carabiners*. Two locking carabiners (Screwgates are more secure than twist lock style and easier to manipulate) and two regular carabiners are required.
- Belay/rappel device. An ATC or Figure 8 device.

Other essentials

- Footwear. Highest quality leather or good quality plastic boots. It can be cold on Cook.
- Large Pack. A 4000 cubic inch will hold everything for the five days in the backcountry. Internal frame packs are recommended for their comfort and balance when climbing. The Gregory Makalu or Reality are about the right size.
- Climbing pack. A good one with ice axe loops etc. About 1500 cu in is adequate.
- Sleeping Bag. Most trips are warm and a bag rated to about 25°F will be sufficient.
- Sleeping pad. A 3/4 length Ultralight thermarest paired with a Ridgerest foam pad is the best combination. Bring a Thermarest repair kit to fix any leaks.
- Bivvy Sac. Useful in bivvy rocks
- Hiking boots. A good waterproof pair of hiking boots to use in place of the climbing boots. Must be well seam sealed.

Clothing

- 2 pair synthetic liner socks
- 2 pair heavier synthetic or wool blend socks
- Gaiters
- Long underwear top. Capilene or some other synthetic is best.
- Long underwear bottom.
- Warm pants. Tights or Expedition weight Capilene
- Warm shirt. Synchilla or 200 weight works well.
- Another fuzzy sweater top or pile jacket of some sort
- GoreTex Jacket and Pants - A quality set is sufficient though heavy bulky clothing is unnecessary. Side zips on the pants should be long enough to slide on over boots. Jackets must have a hood. Do not skimp on your rain gear in New Zealand.
- Shorts for on the trail
- Tee shirt for on the trail
- Polypropylene or similar gloves.
- Heavyweight shelled gloves.
- Warm hat. Synthetics are less itchy than wool.
- Sunhat

Etc.

- Sun glasses. Good quality with side shields.
- Water Bottles. Two 1-quart wide mouth bottles.
- Headlamp. With a spare set of batteries.
- Eating and drinking equipment.
- Pocket knife. Swiss army style.
- Personal toiletries. It is not necessary to smell like a rose each day so do not over do it. Remember toilet paper, a lighter to burn it with and a small zip-lock bag to carry out residue in.
- Personal Medical Kit. The guide will carry a large kit so yours will predominately consist of foot repair items, mild pain killer such as Advil and bandaids.
- Sunscreen and lip screen. SPF 30+. Make sure the lip stuff actually contains a sunscreen. A 1oz. bottle will be enough.
- Bug repellent. New Zealand sandflies are legendary and are rumored to carry away small children and dogs.....
- Camera. Bring film and a spare battery to record those special summit moments.
- Plastic Trash Sac. Handy for keeping gear in outside the tent should it rain.
- Optional reading material etc.
- Ski poles. These are not essential, but can be handy on the trail (or track as it is in NZ).
- We will buy food in NZ. You can bring your favorite snacks although you can certainly buy plenty there.

Shared Equipment Provided by SMC

- Shelter. We will provide lightweight, storm worthy tents. If you have your favorite, by all means bring it, but we do want to pair people up where possible to reduce weight.
- Stove. We provide MSR Whisperlite stoves.
- Cookwear.
- Water purification. A sad but true fact of life is that New Zealand water has followed suit with American water and is contaminated. Iodine may be used individually or the group can carry a pump style purifier.

Around Town Clothing.

General travelling clothing and traveling clothing. Bring enough but not too much. We will have laundry opportunities. Have a duffle or similar bag for packing it in.