# Wanaka outdoor pursuits Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawbai

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# Welcome to Wanaka

Wanaka is one of Otago's most popular holiday spots. A spectacular place for recreation: mountains, lakes and rivers for all to enjoy and explore. Warm summers are ideal for the region's wide range of readily available facilities: tracks to walk, tramp or mountain bike; rock faces to climb; waterways to boat on. And in winter, skiing or snowboarding on one of the area's three internationally rated ski fields.

#### Acknowledgements

The Department of Conservation acknowledges the work of the Upper Clutha Tracks Trust, Bike Wanaka and Te Kakano for their contributions to the tracks and reserves in the Wanaka area.

#### Wanaka's weather

Oct–Dec: Changeable, 11–17°C Jan–Mar: Hot and dry, 21–34°C Apr–Jun: Warm, temperate days, 12–25°C Jul–Sep: Frequent snow, crisp, clear days, 0–12°C

#### Remember - your safety is your responsibility

- Plan your trip
- Tell someone your plans
- Be aware of the weather
- Know your limits
- Take sufficient supplies

Please choose a track that suits your fitness and experience.

For more information, visit: www.adventuresmart.org.nz

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Dispose of waste properly
- · Leave what you find
- Minimise the effects of fire Check before you light a fire a ban may be in place
- Respect wildlife and farm animals
- Be considerate of others



# Rock climbing

Wanaka is an international destination for rock climbing. Climbing was established here in the 1970s at Hospital Flat, 12 km from Wanaka town on Mount Aspiring Road. The sport's growing popularity saw more and more spectacular routes opened up at Hospital Flat and on the neighbouring Diamond Lake Conservation Area. Further along Mount Aspiring Road, both the Riverside and Roadside recreation reserves offer a range of crags for rock-climbing enthusiasts.

Hospital Flat's climbing difficulty ranges from Grade 10 (Six Feet Under) to Grade 29 (Blue Meanie and Engage).

A good starting point is Maincliff, with quality single-pitch routes ranging from Grade 12 to 22. Tombstone is the next most significant feature, with routes graded from 16 to 24. Be prepared for crimpy hand-holds but good friction for the feet.

The Wanaka Rock Climbing Club sets standards of bolting and encourages a progressive attitude to rock climbing ethics. Check out their rock climbing and bouldering guide *Wanaka Rock* for further details.

Rockfall is an ever-present risk at Roadside Reserve. Visitors should reassess the dangers each visit – to this and other rock climbing areas in this region.



### Natural history

Lake Wanaka is 45 km long and up to 12 km wide, making it New Zealand's fourth largest lake, and the main source of our biggest river, the Clutha/Mata-Au. At 277 m above sea level, the lake's maximum depth is 311m near Mou Waho, one of Wanaka's four significant islands – all of them public reserves.

With a 175 km shoreline and a host of bays and inlets, Lake Wanaka occupies a deep valley excavated by huge glaciers that also sculpted the surrounding hills. Around 20,000 years ago the Wanaka and Hāwea basins were filled with ice and the glaciers carved the present terrain. Nearby Mount Iron, Mou Waho and Mou Tapu islands all show the effects of glaciation – rounded on the upstream side, and steep, craggy faces downstream.

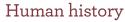
Crey Warbler. Photo. C.

The Wanaka area lies in the rain shadow of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana, but it is wetter than other parts of Central Otago. The vegetation is diverse. At high altitude vast golden grasslands of predominantly alpine snow tussock are interspersed with alpine herbfields and upland shrublands of hebe, turpentine shrub (*Dracophyllum sp.*) and tauhinau (*Ozothamnus leptophyllus*).

At lower altitudes shrublands include kānuka, matagouri, cabbage tree/tī rākau and coprosma.

Past fires and a long history of pastoral use have been the major modifiers of the original indigenous vegetation. However extensive areas of indigenous vegetation remains, particularly in the uplands and mountains.

Wanaka was once home to the impressively large flightless bird, the moa, and Haast's eagle, that largest eagle ever to have lived, with a 3 m wingspan. Today, common native bird species include the grey warbler/riroriro, bellbird/korimako, kingfisher/kōtare, the Australasian harrier hawk/kāhu and the much rarer New Zealand falcon/kārearea.



To Māori, Wanaka was originally known as Oanaka. This probably referred to the junction or meeting-place role the area played, at the crossroads of the trading routes for the highly prized pounamu/greenstone.

Māori travelled great distances for Wanaka's resources, and occupied it for varying periods over several centuries before Europeans arrived. They came for the food and fibre the lake, river and forest produced, and the earliest people hunted the flightless moa. Among their preferred foods were eel/tuna, wood pigeon/kererū, weka and kākāpō. Fern root/aruhe and young cabbage tree/tī rākau stems were staple foods.Tī rākau leaves and those from some *celmisia* (mountain daisy) species were used for plaiting garments and sandals.

The settlements were seasonal and, therefore, temporary, though a few villages were established around lakes Wanaka and Hāwea. The main Wanaka settlement, Takikarara, was on a peninsula near the Clutha River/Mata-Au outlet and incorporated a wharekura (school of learning). The first Europeans to reach Wanaka found potatoes growing wild there.

In the 1850s, European pastoralists and surveyors came inland looking for grazing land. Using Māori guides, a young farmer, Nathaniel Chalmers, reached Hāwea from the south in 1853. But it was in the summer of 1857–58 that the surveyor, John Turnbull Thomson, put Wanaka and Hāwea firmly on European maps when he explored the lakes region via Lindis Pass. Thomson painted Lake Wanaka and the alps beyond, and gave Mount Aspiring/Tititea its European name. Later in 1858, sheep farmer Jock McLean arrived to establish Morven Hills Station, the first of many such runs in the region.

Gold was discovered in Central Otago in the early 1860s and the subsequent rushes enlivened the region. Timber became a very valuable commodity. Rimu, mataī, kahikatea and red beech/tawhairaunui logs were rafted down the lake to supply the goldfield towns. In the 1880s, tourism began with steamers on the lake and the establishment of hotels at Pembroke – now Wanaka – and at the head of the lake.



#### Check, Clean, Dry

Stop the spread of didymo and other freshwater pests. Remember to Check, Clean, Dry all items before entering, and when moving between, waterways.

Water at huts is not treated or tested, and may not be suitable for drinking, food preparation, tooth brushing or washing dishes. Boil water before use.



#### No unauthorised drones

An authorisation is required from DOC to use drones on public conservation land. To apply, visit www.doc.govt.nz/drones.

#### General

Note: The maps in this brochure are guides only - you should carry the relevant 1:50,000 topographical maps.

Always contact the nearest visitor centre for the latest information about facilities and conditions.

Many of the tracks in this brochure cross private land. Please respect the landowner's property and livestock.

Where horse riding is allowed, an access key may be required, as horse gates are limited. Please check with the local DOC office.

Track times are one way unless otherwise stated.



**Short walk** – a well-formed track for easy walking, suitable for most ages and fitness levels.



Walking track - a defined, formed track, suitable for most ages and abilities.



**Tramping track** – limited track formation, often with steep grades. 'Boot standard', suitable for fit, properlyequipped groups.

No dogs

No bikes

No vehicles

Bike Wanaka

Managed by

Managed by

Department of

Conservation

Queenstown Lakes

Managed by Upper

Clutha Tracks Trust

Part of Te Araroa -

The Long Pathway.

A walking trail from

Cape Reinga to Bluff. www.teararoa.org.nz

District Council



Dog walking



Lookout/views



Fishina



Historic site





Mountain biking



Horse riding



Boating



Camping



#### Pisa Conservation Area

These tracks provide easy access to the Pisa Conservation Area's attractive tussockland. The area is steeped in history - the route from the Cardrona valley into the Kawarau valley was a major pathway for Maori to and from the West Coast.

For all these tracks, take warm and windproof clothing as temperatures can drop quickly, even in midsummer.



There is 'simple' avalanche terrain on the western side of the Pisa Conservation Area in the steep-

sided gullies, and 'challenging' avalanche terrain on the eastern faces and Colour Burn catchment. Get current avalanche information at www.avalanche.net.nz before entering this area during winter and spring.

### 30 Roaring Meg Pack Track

Tuohys Gully car park to Meg Hut: 2 hr, 7 km

















The car park is signposted to the right, across the Waiorau Snow Farm entrance bridge and again at the end of the road. The track climbs steadily up a 4WD track to Tuohys saddle (1,140 m), from where an easy grade track to the left leads down to the Meg Hut (960 m).

#### Meg Hut to Roaring Meg: 3-4 hr, 12 km

For a more adventurous tramp from Tuohys Saddle, continue through the Roaring Meg gorge. This poled track has steep sidles before descending an unmarked 4WD road (private land) to the Roaring Meg power station in the Kawarau Gorge. Mountain bikes, firearms and dogs are not permitted on this private land - access through this section is for trampers only.

#### Gardrona-Cromwell Pack Track

Tuohys Gully car park to Lowburn car park (Swann Road): 9-12 hr, 24 km Tuohys Gully car park to Meg Hut, 2-3 hrs 7 km Meg Hut to Deep Creek Hut: 3-4 hr, 8 km Deep Creek Hut to Lowburn car park (Swann Road): 4-5 hr, 10 km















Climbing from Meg Hut the poled track traverses through golden tussock grasslands before following one of the area's many prominent ridgelines. After passing through sections of an old water race, the track descends a 4WD road to the historic 6-bunk Deep Creek Hut (1325 m altitude).

The section of track from Deep Creek Hut through Lowburn Station to Swann Road travels through private property on a working farm. To ensure continued access through this section, please respect the landowner's access conditions and remain on the marked track.

From the Deep Creek Hut the 4WD road continues descending through private farmland and Packspur Gully to Lowburn car park, Swann Road.



# 32 Rock Peak Track

Crown Saddle car park to Rock Peak: 1 hr 30 min













This track at the southern end of the Pisa Range gives quick access to great views. Follow an old 4WD track as it zigzags up from the car park to the transmitter station at Rock Peak. For the adventurous and well-equipped, the track continues to Tuohys saddle.

#### 33 Little Criffel Track

Avalon car park to Little Criffel to The Larches car park: 6-7 hr, 18 km

Avalon car park to Little Criffel: 3-4 hr, 8 km The Larches car park to Little Criffel: 3 hr, 10 km













The track up the 1,341 m Little Criffel from Avalon car park is steep and unformed, but a good opportunity for fit, experienced walkers to enjoy extensive views of the upper Clutha basin and Southern Alps. From the car park, cross the Cardrona River and follow the markers and stiles up the hill. Along the tops, remnants of the Criffel Diggings - reputed to be the highest gold diggings in Otago - reveal hand-dug water races, tailings and outlines of former miners' dwellings. The descent from the peak to The Larches car park is mostly on 4WD track until The Larches Conservation Area.

Access via Larches car park closed 10 October to 10 November.

#### 34 Kirtle Burn Hut

From Snow Farm car park to Kirtle Burn Hut. 2–3 hr, 8 km













Access: Foot access on the SnowFarm Access Road is not permitted. There is a road toll of \$20 for summer and \$30 for winter if not paying to use the services at SnowFarm.

There is no 4-wheel drive access to this hut.

To reach the Pisa Conservation Area on foot, take the easement track marked with orange markers from the car park next to the Snowfarm Lodge. This track starts at 1,500 m altitude.

There are two marked tracks from this easement track that both go to the Kirtle Burn Hut: one in the valley following a stream, the other on the ridge above the stream.

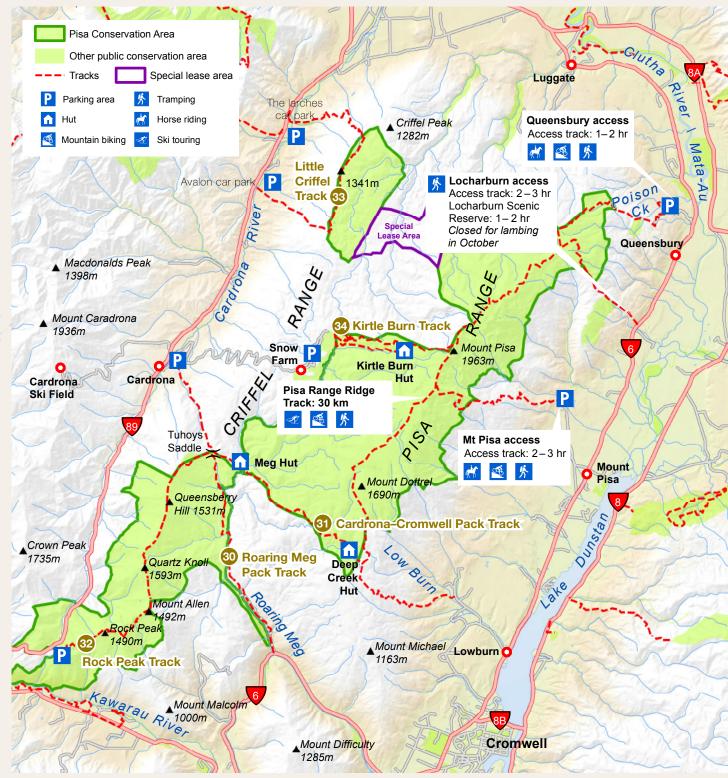
### Mountain biking

The region's mountain bike tracks cater for beginners through to advanced: cruise alongside the Hāwea River, the lakeside, or tackle the undulating Minaret Burn or Dingle Burn tracks. For pedal-grinding a-plenty: Isthmus Peak, Lindis Peak and Grandview Range tracks.

Remember the 'off-road code': wear a helmet, respect other users and give way to walkers.

Follow the Mountain Bikers care code on the DOC website.





#### Wanaka islands













There are four significant islands on the lake, each a public reserve: Mou Waho Scenic Reserve (118 ha), Mou Tapu Scenic Reserve (126 ha), Ruby Island Reserve (3 ha) and Stevensons Island Scenic Reserve (62 ha).

Mou Waho and Mou Tapu have high conservation value as havens for plants, birds and insects that have disappeared from the adjacent mainland. On Mou Waho, a well-formed track at the landing leads to Arethusa Pool, a small lake sitting in a rock cradle some 150 m above the main lake.

Stevensons Island was the first habitat for the return of the buff weka to mainland New Zealand, in 2001. Thanks to a joint weka breeding project between Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and DOC, this inquisitive weka can now be seen on Mou Waho and the islands of Lake Wakatipu.

The islands are popular with local boaties during the summer months. Several operators run daily island cruises.

Track times are one way unless otherwise stated.



Car park to Colquhouns Beach: 2-3 hr, 7 km











This well-formed track provides easy access to beautiful beaches along Wanaka's western shore. From Homestead Bay car park the track gently undulates towards small, sheltered Colguhouns Beach, a popular swimming and picnic spot. The longer, more demanding trips beyond here are described on the DOC website.



Diamond Lake Circuit Track return: 45 min, 2.5 km Diamond Lake lookout return: 1 hr, 2 km Lake Wanaka lookout return: 2 hr, 5 km Rocky Mountain Summit Track return: 3 hr, 7 km











Follow the 4WD track from the car park, climbing to the lake where the circuit track is marked. Another track winds up to a lookout above Diamond Lake. Beyond here, there's a choice of the Lake Wanaka lookout, off to the right or to Rocky Mountain's 775-m summit via a loop track. Spectacular views include Lake Wanaka and a skyline dominated by the surrounding peaks. The distinct shape of Mount Aspiring/ Tititea lies to the west.

Sections of this track are steep, with significant fall hazard. The track is often slippery, even in summer - take extreme care. This track is not recommended during the winter months due to ice.







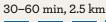






Starting from the Motatapu River bridge on Wanaka-Mount Aspiring Rd and ending at the Motatapu Rd, this track winds its way through a beautiful rural area via wide-open river flats.

# 4 Waterfall Creek Track



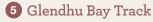








This track starts from the western end of Roys Bay, soon reaching Wanaka Station Park, a beautiful picnic area on the left. The track then winds along the lake's western shores for superb views, passing Edgewater Resort and Rippon Vineyard before reaching Waterfall Creek.



3-4 hr, 12.5 km









Incorporating the Waterfall Creek Track, continue past the creek for one hour on terraces above Lake Wanaka, before dropping onto a small north-facing beach suitable for swimming. The track continues around to Glendhu Bay and the motor camp. For mountain bikers this is an intermediate grade track with a few steep gradients.

# 6 Rovs Peak Track

5-6 hr return, 16 km



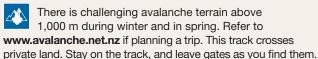








The all-encompassing panorama from this 1,578-m summit includes most of Lake Wanaka, the surrounding peaks and Mount Aspiring/Tititea. This exposed track has no shelter from the sun or rain. Temperatures can drop quickly, even in midsummer - take warm and wind-proof clothing.



Closed for lambing 1 October to 10 November.

#### 7 Spotts Creek Track 10-11 hr, 23 km









Also known as Skyline Track, this challenging tramp begins with the track to Roys Peak. From the peak, follow the ridgeline over to Mount Alpha and descend through snow tussock to a 4WD track. Then follow the poled route to the Cardrona Valley Road, 10 km from Wanaka township. This track is prone to low cloud cover, and is not recommended during winter as it passes through challenging and complex avalanche terrain.

Safari hunting takes place on Spotts Creek station; be alert and stay visible especially during the roar hunting period (March to May).



### 8 Motatapu Track

Fern Burn Hut: 3-4 hr, 7 km













The Wanaka end of the challenging, multi-day Motatapu Track provides an enjoyable day or overnight walk into Fern Burn Hut (720 m). Beginning with easy travel along the Fern Burn, the track passes through steeper country as the burn cascades through remnant beech forest. Above the treeline it climbs through upland tussock to the hut.

#### 9 Mount Iron Track

1 hr 30 min loop, 4.5 km











Mount Iron is an impressive, glacier-carved, 548 m rocky knoll. From its summit a great panorama unfolds: lakes Wanaka and Hāwea, the Cardrona and upper Clutha valleys, and all the surrounding peaks.

#### 10 Eely Point Walk

20 min. 2 km









Eely Point is a popular, sheltered boating and picnicking area. From Wanaka town follow the lakeshore to the right past the marina, and on to Eely Point. Carrying on round the point for another five minutes takes you to Bremner Bay, a good family swimming spot.

# 11 Beacon Point Walk

30 min, 1.5 km









# 12 Outlet Track

1 hr. 3 km











Spectacular scenery makes this popular for both walkers and bikers. The track follows the Clutha River/Mata-Au; start or finish at the Lake Wanaka outlet or Hikuwai Conservation Area in Albert Town. Bikers should ride carefully and give way to walkers. The Hikuwai mountain bike loop above the main river track gives a more challenging ride.

#### 13 Hikuwai Conservation Area













This conservation area is mostly kānuka shrubland above the Outlet Track on a river terrace beside Albert Town. The Hikuwai Link Track is a 600 m easy grade track from the Gunn Road entrance to the Outlet Track. There are other dual-use tracks made by Bike Wanaka, including a fantastic pump track for kids. Grades vary from easy to advanced. See www.bikewanaka.org.nz

### 14 Deans Bank Track

1 hr 30 min - 2 hr, 11.5 km loop track













The Deans Bank Track situated on the Clutha River/Mata-Au near Albert Town is a one-way multi-use track popular with mountain bikers. A walking track leads down to Dublin Bay.

#### 15 Hawea River Track

Albert Town to Hāwea dam: 3-4 hr, 14 km













Suitable for all ages and experience, this riverside walk is over easy country and links Lake Hāwea township to Wanaka, via Albert Town.

#### 6 Gladstone Track

Hāwea dam to Johns Creek Recreation Reserve: 1hr 45 min, 6.9 km









From Hāwea dam the track follows the foreshore in front of Lake Hāwea township before travelling through open farmland to Johns Creek.

# **17** Newcastle Track

2-3 hr. 12 km









Suitable for biking and walking, this track follows the true left of the Clutha River/Mata-Au from Hāwea River swing bridge to Kane Road.

# 18 Upper Clutha River Track

5-5 hr 30 min, 18.5 km













From the car park off Kinnibeg Street, Albert Town, follow the track a short distance to 'Pawsons Crossing' bridge over the Cardrona River. Walk or bike along the picturesque Clutha River/Mata-Au to historic Reko's Point Conservation Area - the site of 19th and 20th century gold mining activity - and on to Luggate.

#### 19 Deep Gully – Eastern Hills Loop Track 3-5 hr. 10.5 km













Providing a great loop option, the tracks start across the road from the Sandy Point car park. A poled route follows Deep Gully up onto the Grandview ridge for great views over the upper Clutha valley, before descending down the Eastern Hills Track back to the starting point.

In winter and spring these access points travel through 'challenging' avalanche terrain before entering 'simple' avalanche terrain on the tops. Refer to www.avalanche.net.nz if planning a trip between May and November.

Deep Gully Track closed for lambing 30 September to 4 November, Eastern Hills Track closed for lambing 15 September to 30 October.

### 20 Grandview Ridge Track

36 km one way

Long Gully car park to Breast Hill Track junction: 36 km Sandy Point car park to the Sandy Point Conservation Area boundary and access to the Clutha River/Mata-Au: 10 min Sandy Point car park to south Awa Nohoaka Conservation Area via Deep Gully Track: 3-5 hr, 11 km Sandy Point car park to Long Gully car park via Deep Gully track: 3-5 hr. 11.5 km

Sandy Point car park to Long Gully car park via Eastern Hills track: 3-5 hr, 11 km



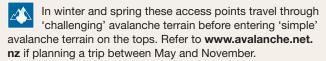








From the Long Gully car park, a well-formed farm track (on moderately steep terrain) links tracks across the upper slopes and ridgeline of the Grandview Range. Options from a few hours to full or multi-day walks are available, providing extensive views from the upper slopes across the upper Clutha valley to the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana. The Grandview Ridge Track ends at the Breast Hill Track junction; for mountain bikers there is no exit/entry via Breast Hill or Timaru River tracks.



Deep Gully Track closed for lambing 30 September to 4 November. Eastern Hills Track closed for lambing 15 September to 30 October.

#### 21 Isthmus Peak Track

Isthmus Peak: 5-6 hr return, 16 km











This track is signposted just south of Stewart Creek on SH6. Follow the poled route along the creek until it joins a farm track. From here it's a steep, winding, rocky climb to a skyline ridge, with sections where bikers will need to dismount and push. A sign on the ridge points right to the track to 1,385-m Isthmus Peak.

Closed for fawning 20 November to 20 December.

### 22 Glen Dene Ridge Track

Matatiaho Conservation Area: 5-7 hr, 12 km











At the Isthmus Peak Track junction turn, left to follow along the exposed Glen Dene Ridge Track to the Matatiaho Conservation Area.









A short walk from the car park leads to a pleasant picnic spot on the lower Craig Burn. There is no formed track above this point on the conservation area; access is via scrubby, steep and rocky terrain.

### 24 Dingle Burn Peninsula Track

Car park to Turihuka Conservation Area: 3-4 hr, 11 km













Walking along Lake Hāwea's eastern shores there are great views up the Hunter valley and, on a clear day, to the west as far as Mount Aspiring/Tititea. From the car park, 8 km north of Timaru Creek, follow the 4WD track to Rocky Point and around the bluffs to Silver Island Bay, before gaining height to sidle around The Peninsula. The Turihuka Conservation Area is at the mouth of the Dingle Burn where there is designated camping.

#### 25 Lower Timaru River Track

Lower Timaru River Loop Track: 4-5 hr return, 12 km











Popular with trampers and anglers, the high river track is signposted 50 m along the road from the Timaru Creek car park and leads to a 4WD track above the river. Follow this undulating track to Deer Spur Creek near Junction Hut (1 hr 30 min to 2 hr). Return by the lower river track. This requires several river crossings and is only recommended in normal flow conditions.

#### 26 Breast Hill Track

Timaru Creek Rd to Pakituhi Hut: 3-4 hr, 4 km Pakituhi Hut to Stodys Hut via Breast Hill: 4-5 hr, 12.5 km Pakituhi Hut to Stodys Hut via 4WD track: 3-4 hr, 13 km Stodys Hut to Top Timaru Hut: 6-7 hr 30 min, 13.5 km Stodys Hut to Lower Timaru River car park: 5-6 hr 30 min, 12.5 km













With its powerful landscape and stunning panoramic views, experienced trampers are offered a challenging day-walk option to the summit of Breast Hill (1,578 m). The 18 km

tramping track takes 2-3 days to complete, forms part of the national trail Te Araroa - The Long Pathway, and connects to the Lower Timaru River Track. Two huts - Pakituhi (1,270 m) and Stodys (1,080 m) - are on the Breast Hill section.

# **27** Grandview Mountain Track

2-3 hr, 9 km

Grandview Mountain Track - Breast Hill Track (Nook Road car park to Timaru Creek Road): 9-12 hr, 26 km













Pockets of kānuka shrubland merge with the pastoral lands of the lower section of the track, before opening up to the tussockland dominating the top. The steady climb to Grandview Mountain (1,398 m) offers stunning views of Lake Hāwea, pastoral flats and surrounding peaks. Grandview Mountain and Breast Hill tracks (via Pakituhi Hut Track) offer a full day or overnight option. Mountain bikers can travel to Pakituhi Hut but cannot exit via the Breast Hill Track.

Closed for lambing 26 September to 7 November.

### 28 Nine Mile Historic Reserve













From SH8, drive 6 km along the unsealed (and in some places steep and narrow) Old Faithful Road to reach the reserve, which includes the remarkable stone ruins of the Lindis Pass Hotel. Originally the site of the general store for Otago's first gold rush in 1861, the hotel provided almost continuous service of some kind for over 70 years.

# 29 Lindis Peak Track

4-5 hr return, 11 km









The track is signposted at the start of Old Faithful Road, off SH8. The view from the 1,226-m summit includes the stunning St Bathans Range to the east and numerous peaks along the Main Divide - from the head of the Hopkins valley in the north, to Mount Aspiring/Tititea in the south.

Closed for lambing 10 October to 5 December.

