



- Be Aware - New Zealand drivers are not as used to cyclists as their European counterparts - cycle with care
- Wearing high viz clothing increases your visibility
- Share the road - be a courteous road user
- Make sure you are familiar with New Zealand road rules - read the road code

- Start Here
- Finish Here
- State Highway
- i-SITE Visitor Centre
- Toilet
- Preferred Route
- Alternative Route or Side Trip
- Previous or Following Tour

Great Southern Cycle Route

This Map, based on Topographical Map Series NZMS 262, is reproduced with the permission of Land Information New Zealand. The image has been digitally manipulated from the original LINZ sources.

GERALDINE TO TIMARU TOUR



This map and the accompanying narrative describe one of eleven proposed all-day cycle tours (Tour 1 through 11). Together, they take you from Christchurch to Dunedin on a route I call The Great Southern Cycle Route. Included in each tour are, when found, accommodations (including camping grounds) along the way that allow you to pick and choose in planning a day's ride. To that end you can either subdivide a tour into two days or combine into one day all or a portion of two or more succeeding tours.

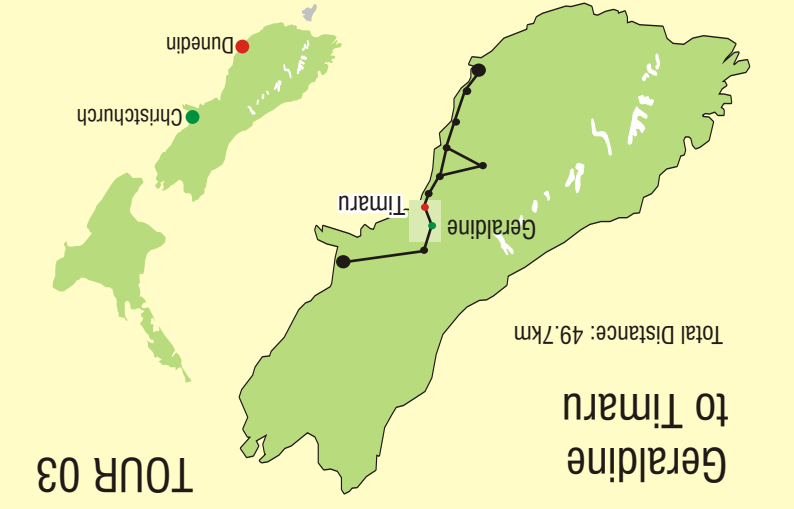
Some tours are significantly shorter than others because they are hillier and more demanding or because they are more conducive to tempting diversions on the way and/or further exploration at days end. For overseas cyclists, “Backpackers” is a lodging (sometimes with only bunk rooms) that features a communal kitchen, a “Domain” is a community park that normally provides toilets and often allows camping, and a “Holiday Park” provides sites for camper vans and tent camping and often motel units.

Most of The Great Southern Cycle Route is on quiet backcountry roads almost all of which (with 1km exception) are sealed (paved in USA lingo). The trip first traverses the fertile farmland of the level Canterbury Plains, then winds through rolling pastoral countryside with stop offs in picturesque cities and towns. Three memorable gorges and some classic coastal scenery add spice to the route. At all times the rugged Southern Alps that morph into other mountain ranges (foothills in Kiwi speak) as you proceed south, serve as a stunning backdrop.

Admittedly the route meanders a bit (at times even doubles back). But who cares so long as the scenery is soothing, the route is (mostly) untrammled and the road is sealed! Savour the solitude and enjoy! Cycle in authentic New Zealand – off the beaten path.

If you are cycling with friends, consider leapfrogging with your vehicles so that at the end of the day you will have advanced those vehicles to where you are spending the night. I did that, and it worked quite well (though admittedly it helped that my wife was more than happy to drive most of the route, join us for lunch and cycle to meet us as the muse moved her).

State Highways are designated SH followed by a number. The heavily trafficked SH1 is used sparingly and only when unavoidable. The Area Code for all the telephone numbers herein given (e.g., 302 8955) is 03 if



the call is made within New Zealand. If calling from overseas, the Country Code is 64 and the Area Code is 3.

The total distance of the route is about 579km (always taking the Preferred Route when given a choice). This distance assumes that you have decided to take the Waimate to Kurow Tour and then the Kurow to Oamaru Tour instead of the alternative Waimate to Oamaru Tour. If you choose the latter, the distance is about 518km. All distances are good faith estimates based on odometer readings but are not guaranteed.

All accommodations, eateries and cycle shops (if any) mentioned herein were confirmed as of April 2010. No assurances can be given that they will remain open. Nor can the author warrant the safety of the route. The recommended roads have no special provisions for cyclists. You must therefore assume the responsibilities and risks for your own safety when cycling the route. There, the mostly retired lawyer-author has spoken. Now go and have a good time.

Geraldine to Timaru Tour

Geraldine is worth a wander through its downtown area, along the Waihi River bank and up into the nearby Talbert Forest. Quaint shops (stocked in part by the community's gifted artists and craftsmen) and ample accommodations abound. In or near the downtown area are several B&Bs, including The Downs (693 7388/www.thedowns.co.nz). Also available are Geraldine Heritage Hotel (693 8458/geraldine-crown@xtra.co.nz), and Rivendell B&B (693 8559/ www.rivendellnz.co.nz) several motels, including Geraldine Motels (369 8501/www.geraldinemotels.co.nz: the motel located closest to the Town Centre) and Four Peaks Motels (0800 473 257/ www.fourpeaksmotel.co.nz), Rawhiti Backpackers (693 8252/host@rawhitihouse.co.nz) and three holiday parks, including Geraldine Holiday Park(693 8147/ www.geraldineholidaypark.co.nz).

The Village Inn provides attractive in and outdoor dining next to a small park square. Four Peaks Suzuki (693 9107) repairs cycles.

For more information contact the Geraldine 📍 i-SITE Visitor Information Centre at 693 1006 or geraldine@i-SITE.org or go to www.southisland.org.nz

Summary Description

The first half of the tour offers a nice mix of level to undulating backcountry roads that wind through a pleasant rural landscape punctuated by a few easy going roller coaster hills. Upon crossing SH8, the scene soon changes. The cyclist encounters steeper rolls in pastoral foothills that offer some stunning topside views framed by mountain ranges to the west. After coming back to earth in a valley cut by the Rosewill Stream, the tour culminates with a testing climb to the outskirts of Timaru and a gradual descent to SH1 and the city centre.

Total Distance: 49.7km (or 45.3km if you take the Easier Route described below).

Detailed Description

Kilometres	Description
K 0.0	From the intersection with SH79 (Cox St) and Talbot St (SH72) in Geraldine, head west on SH79 (Cox St) .
K 4.3	Turn left (South) on Earl Rd immediately after crossing the Hae Hae Te Moana River.
K 10.3	Turn right (West) on Goodwin Rd and cross a narrow bridge that spans the wee Kakahu River.
K 10.9	Turn left (South) on Seven Sisters Rd , a lovely undulating road - winding up and around low lying hills.
K 14.8	A series of roller coaster rides commence.
K 15.3	At the bottom of the first and steepest plunge, John Talbot Rd enters on your left.

Decision Time: At this point the cyclist can choose between (1) the Preferred Route that is hillier and much more scenic and takes in the town of Pleasant Point and (2) the Easier Route that is more level and 4.4km shorter and skirts downtown Temuka. The Preferred Route is described first.

Preferred Route

K 15.3	Continue south on Seven Sisters Rd .
K 17.7	At the T-intersection turn right (Northwest) onto Waitohi Pleasant Point Rd .
K 19.0	At an intersection, instead of bearing right for Waitohi, turn left (Southwest) and stay on Waitohi Pleasant Point Rd as it traverses a broad open plain before dipping down to cross the Opihi River.
K 23.2	Cross the river, staying on the road, which becomes Halstead St as it bends south and enters the outskirts of Pleasant Point.
K 25.2	At the T-intersection with SH8, the centre of Pleasant Point, take a break and check out the railroad museum across the street. Next to the museum are public toilets 🚻. Then turn right (West) on SH8 and a block later left (South) across the railway tracks and grab a bite to eat at the cosy Legends Café straight across Afgan St, which parallels the railway tracks.

Note: A tempting option is to break up the day's tour into two days and spend the night at a luxurious two bedroom farmstay cottage at Centre Hill Organic Farm (614 7385/www.centrehillcottage.com) with a view to die for about 5km out of town. You get there by following a farmstay signposted route. First take Tengawai Rd out of town northwest for 2.5km. Then turn left onto Totara Valley Rd for 1.5km and finally left again onto Howell Rd for 1km. You can arrange for a dinner served outdoors or at the cottage. If you arrive early enough, the owner will suggest an eye fetching afternoon cycle tour of the area and, if requested, a morning cycle tour for the next day. That option would add up to about 30.3km of cycling for the first day (plus any afternoon tour) and 24.4km of cycling for the second day (plus any extra morning ride). Also in town are Serenity Guest House (641 8069), Pleasant Point Hotel (614 7605) and Pleasant Point Domain Camping (614 7515). About 2km southwest of the town is the serene Longview Farmstay B&B (614 7766/www.longview.co.nz).

K 25.4	After crossing the railway tracks, turn left (East) on Afghan St and follow the road to the end of town.
K 26.4	At the T-intersection, turn right (Southeast) onto Rayner St (that quickly becomes Smart Munro Rd).
K 27.6	Turn left (South) onto Doake Rd , and soon begin your first significant but gradual climb - reaching the top about 1km later and then plummeting to the next valley below.
K 30.3	Decision Time: After reaching the bottom at the intersection with Levels Valley Rd you have a choice: Either (1) turn left (East) onto Levels Valley Rd , sticking to the lowland formed by Popaka River, and at K 33.7 turn right (Southeast) onto Rolling Ridges Rd that soon provides a testing climb to those “ridges” or (2) continue south on Doake Rd for a much hillier but more panoramic romp and, after a downward swoop and uphill grind, at the T-intersection (K 34.5) turn left (East) onto Rolling Ridges Rd for a bit more climbing before you traverse the ridgeline and enjoy sweeping views of lush green rolling countryside to the south and of the sea to the east. Regardless of which way you travel on Rolling Ridges Rd, Stevens Corner (about K 36.2, regardless of which route you take) turn south at the Y intersection onto Bassett Rd and plunge into the valley below.
K 37.6	After entering the tiny community of Rosewill, turn left (Northeast) onto Rosewill Valley Rd .

K 41.5	Cartwrights Rd T-intersects Rosewill Valley Rd from the northeast. This is the point where the Easier Route (described below) picks up the Preferred Route and completes the final leg of the tour to Timaru. Continue straight on Rosewill Valley Rd that eventually becomes - at the intersection with Washdyke Rd (on your left) and Spur Rd (on your right) - Kellands Hill Rd .
K 45.2	After a steep climb to the top of residential Timaru, turn left (East) onto Pages Rd . (From this point all the way to K 49.7, the road is marked with a cycle lane).
K 45.5	Turn right (South) onto Morgan Rd , climbing a bit twice.
K 46.8	Turn left (East) onto Wai-iti Rd and head for the centre of town.
K 49.7	The official end of the day's tour is at the intersection of Wai-iti Rd and SH1 in downtown Timaru.

Easier Route

K 15.3	Turn left (Southeast) on John Talbot Rd – a narrow sealed farm road.
K 19.4	Turn left (East) onto Waitohi Temuka Rd that eventually takes you into Temuka.
K 23.0	Turn right (South) onto busy SH1 . Temuka’s colourful Town Centre begins down a main street just across the road.
K 25.7	After crossing Opihi River, turn right (West) onto Arowhenua Rd .
K 25.9	Almost immediately turn left (Southwest) onto Levels Plain Rd . (the road's name sums up the next 7.2 kms – straight, flat and plain.)
K 33.1	Turn left (southeast) onto SH8 , a main road but not nearly as busy as SH1.
K 35.9	Turn right (Southwest) onto Cartwrights Rd (Signposted West Timaru).
K 37.2	Turn left (Southeast) onto Rosewill Valley Rd . At this point, follow the Preferred Route from K 41.5, but subtract 4.4km from the kilometre markers for that route.

Timaru is a bustling port city with ample accommodations. At the intersection of Wai-iti Rd and SH1 on the southwest corner is Bay Viaduct Motor Lodge (688 6338/www.bayviaduct.co.nz), while a few blocks south of the intersection and east closer to the Timaru 📍 i-SITE Visitor Centre are No. 8 Wired (688 3126), a hotel, and Aldon House (686 9037), a backpackers. A number of restaurants are in this area, including the atmospheric Speights Ale House and Off The Rail Cafe. Timaru Top 10 Holiday Park (684 7690/www.timaruholidaypark.co.nz) is located at 154a Selwyn St and is best accessed by staying on Page Rd and turning south onto Selwyn St to a point about half way to SH1.

A well appointed and conveniently located B&B (on Sefton St reached by way of Albert/Hewlings Sts south off Wai-iti Rd a block before it enters SH1) is Sefton Homestay (688 0017/ www.seftonhomestay.co.nz). Another conveniently located B&B (on Elizabeth St less than 0.5km north off SH1 to your west) is the Elizabeth Court Home (686 6091: 12 double/queen rooms).

If you get to Timaru early enough, visit the South Canterbury Museum with exhibits on the early settlers and whalers in the region. The museum is open daily except Mondays from 1:30PM to 4:30PM. In any event be sure to explore the lush Timaru Gardens and the downtown area lined with baskets of hanging flowers and colourfully canopied shops. Three cycle repair shops are located in town – The Cyclery (684 8890) located on Stafford St, Bike Inc (688 9060) located on Strathallan St and Howes Cycles (688 8892) located on Church St.

For more information visit the Timaru 📍 i-SITE Visitor Centre at 2 George St (687 9997/timaru@i-SITE.org) or check out www.southisland.org.nz. (To get there follow the signs to the City Centre and the signposted information symbols)

About the Author and His Wife

Peter Seed and his wife, Linda, divide their time between White Bear Lake, Minnesota, Vero Beach, Florida, and Dunedin, New Zealand. Peter co-authored a cycle touring book for Minnesota/Wisconsin (Biking With The Wind) and a walking book about the South West Coast Path in England (A Coastal Affair). Linda tries to keep Peter reined in. Both love the outdoors and cycling. Peter can be reached at slinda5938@aol.com.

How To Get More Maps

You may download this or any of the other maps of the Great Southern Cycle Route free at www.southisland.org.nz/maps.asp or www.seftonhomestay.com by clicking Cycle Tourism. The maps are also available at most visitor centres and cycle shops along the route.