



- 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 RouteTIMARU TO ST ANDREWS TOUR

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.





# TOUR 04

By Peter Seed

## Great Southern Cycle Route TIMARU TO ST ANDREWS 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 bicycling 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 bicycle 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.

### Timaru to St Andrews Tour

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)


### Summary Description

This tour gets you really off the beaten path. After a gradual climb west out of Timaru, a gentle descent (with a couple of dips) traverses the edge of rolling foothills to the Pareora River Valley below. Close up panoramas of the majestic Hunter Hills range of the Southern Alps soon beckon. Once you hit the bottom, you enter the South Canterbury Plains. The route then meanders south through the captivating Gordons Valley on a narrow farm road that nestles sloping offshoots of the nearby mountain range. Otaio Gorge – a tempting diversion – lies ahead. Eventually the route doubles back on the opposite side of the Otaio River and then heads east for St Andrews.

**Total Distance:** 48.4km

### Detailed Description

Kilometres	Description
K 00.0	From the intersection of Wai-iti Rd and SH1, head south on <b>SH1</b> .
K 01.1	Turn right (West) onto <b>North St</b> .
K 02.0	Turn left (South) onto <b>Woodlands Rd</b> .
K 02.4	Turn right (West) onto <b>Hassell St</b> .
K 02.6	At the T-intersection turn left (South) and immediate right (West) onto <b>Coonoor Rd</b> .
K 03.8	Turn left (Southeast) onto <b>Rockdale Rd</b> .
K 05.2	At the T-intersection, turn right (Southwest) onto <b>Beaconsfield Rd</b> and soon begin a gradual 1km climb.
K 07.6	Begin a long decent interspersed with a couple of short dips and soon enhanced with glorious panoramas of the mountain ranges to the west.
K 17.2	Turn left (Southwest) onto <b>Holme Station Rd</b> and immediately cross the Pareora River.
K 18.3	At the Y intersection ignore the right turn signposted for Cave and continue straight onto <b>Pareora River Rd</b> signposted for St Andrews.
K 18.6	On your right is the turnoff onto the gravel road signposted for Holme Station Homestead (529 1539/www.holmestation.co.nz) - a sumptuously restored manor house with 12 ensuite bedrooms. This place is an ideal overnight accommodation for a group of cyclists who can either prepare their own meals in a fully equipped kitchen or arrange through the owner for the meals to be catered.
K 18.8	After heading east on Pareora Rd, turn southwest onto <b>Gordons Valley Rd</b> and enjoy more than 11km of an undulating secluded rural road flanked by shapely foothills - one of the most quiet and scenic segments of the Great Southern Cycle Route.
K 30.5	Turn left (Southeast) onto <b>Blue Cliffs School Crossing Rd</b> signposted for St Andrews and cross the Otaio River.


**Option:** A very tempting diversion is to first continue southwest on the scenic Gordons Valley Rd (technically **Colliers Rd**) for another 3.9km and at a T-intersection turn left (South) onto **Back Line Rd**, a gravel road that in 0.6km leads downhill to the Otaio Gorge Reserve on the right just shy of the bridge spanning the Otaio River. The reserve is an ideal picnic spot with toilets and running water plus inviting trails that lead into the gorge. The reserve may also be used for camping. Add 9km more to your day trip if you succumb and abhor gravel because the best return route for minimising gravel is the way you came. Otherwise shorten your trip by 1km and avoid the climb out of the river bottom by crossing the bridge and riding the gravel Back Line Rd for 3.3km to a T-intersection with the sealed Blue Cliffs Rd. Turn left (North) and proceed 0.9km onto Blue Cliffs Rd, the point marked by K 31.6 below (where Blue Cliffs School Crossing Rd enters on your left).

K 31.6	Turn left (Northeast) onto <b>Blue Cliffs Rd</b> and begin a level slog of about 13km.
K 36.3	Cross the Otaio River, turn right and continue east on Blue Cliffs Rd.
K 45.0	Pass the turnoff to your right onto Grays Crossing Rd.

**Note:** If you want to combine in one day this tour with the St Andrews to Waimate Tour 05, turn right (Southwest) onto Grays Crossing Rd and cycle 1.5km to the intersection with Otaio River Rd and Esk Valley Rd marked K 07.7 in the St Andrews to Waimate Tour 05. By taking this route and bypassing St Andrews, the total distance of the two combined tours is 85.6 km.

K 49.7 At the intersection with SH1, the tour ends in St Andrews.

St Andrews is a tiny farm community hardly a stone's throw from the ocean. The community hosts the attractive Masonic Hotel St Andrews (612 6740/jan\_margaret@xtra.co.nz) that its new owners have transformed into a stunning and immaculate six bedroom accommodation with a cosy dining room and a spacious sports bar. The hotel is open 24/7 and is located 0.2km south on SH1 on your right.

About 0.6km south of the intersection on SH1 on your left is St Andrews Camping Ground (612 6628). Straight east from the intersection a block away is access to the beach, an information kiosk and a picnic table. Public toilets are at the camping ground.

If you are traveling with a group and are able to drop a vehicle in St Andrews the morning before you depart by cycle from Timaru, an alternative to staying overnight in St Andrews is available: Drive back on SH1 to Timaru for a second overnight and resume your tour the next day after returning in your vehicle to St Andrews. I chose that option, and it worked well because Timaru is only about 18km north of St Andrews.

### 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.