

- 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

Information Centre

Toilet

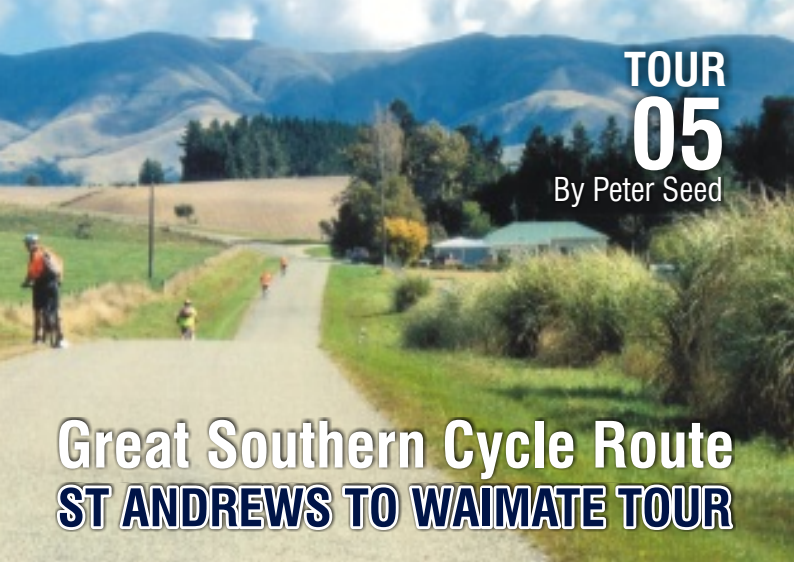
Preferred Route

Alternative Route or Side Trip

Previous or Following Tour

Great Southern Cycle Route ST ANDREWS TO WAIMATE 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.



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.

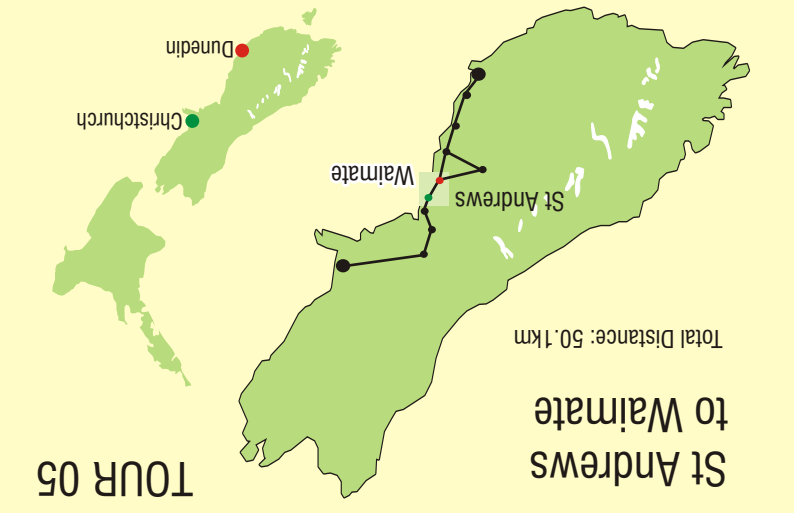
Some tours are significantly shorter than others because they are hillier and more demanding or because they are more conducive to tempting diversions on the way and/or further exploration at days end. For overseas cyclists, “Backpackers” is a lodging (sometimes with only bunk rooms) that features a 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) untrammeled 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.

St Andrews to Waimate Tour

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.

Summary Description

This tour soon traces a hollow cut by the Otaio River. It then winds through gently rolling expansive farmland (save for one steep hill and two short roller coaster hills). The Hunter Hills mountain range stretch across the horizon to the west. During the final leg of the tour, stands of tall pine trees and several shallow stream-cut ravines punctuate the landscape – providing a hemmed in look, as the Hunter Hills close in. Secluded narrow backcountry farm roads characterise most of this trip. In case of heavy rain, beware of a number of fords on the way.

Total Distance: 50.1km

Detailed Description

Kilometres	Description
K 00.0	From intersection of Blue Cliffs Rd with SH1, head south on SH1 (In the alternative you can go south on the north/south road either immediately east (partly gravel) or west of SH1 and pick up SH1 before your next turn onto Otaio River Rd.).
K 02.3	Turn right (West) onto Otaio River Rd.
K 07.7	At the T-intersection with Blue Cliffs and Esk Valley Rds, turn left (South) onto Esk Valley Rd. (Both Grays Crossing Rd and Otaio River Rd terminate at Esk Valley Rd.)
K 10.4	At the intersection (marked by a war memorial on the southeast corner) turn left (South) onto Agnew Rd and after about 1km ascend a short steep hill to high ground that lasts for about 6km.
Note: Before taking Agnew Rd, continued straight (West) ahead and at the next T-intersection, turn right (North) and go up a hill for a brief visit of the well preserved Oamaru limestone St. Marys Church(Anglican) on top to your right. This iconic building is claimed to be the oldest church remaining on the Canterbury Plains.	
K 12.7	At the T-intersection turn right (West) onto Campbell and Forest Rd that overlooks to the south a broad east/west hollow cut by the Kohika Stream. The views to the west of the rolling pastureland and looming mountain range further in the distance are breathtaking.
K 17.7	After dipping down from the high ground, turn left (South) onto Kotinga Rd , for a gentle roller coaster ride. Here's that promised 1km of gravel.
K 18.1	Turn left (East) onto Woolshed Valley Rd. For about the next 6.5km, you follow the sometimes undulating course that plies an indented landscape formed by the Kohika Stream.
K 18.6	After crossing the stream, Woolshed Valley Rd becomes tar sealed.
K 25.2	Turn right (Southwest) onto Tavistock Rd where you will face two short roller coaster hills.
K 28.3	After a steep decent to lowlands cut by Teschemaker Creek, at the T-intersection, turn left (Southeast) onto Teschemaker Valley Rd. From this point on you will from time to time spot ford signs.
K 31.2	At the T-intersection turn right (South) onto Pakihi Rd and soon begin a long gradual ascent followed by a plunge down into the steep molded ravine cut by Peters Stream.
K 34.2	At the intersection with Back Line Rd (on your right) and Bussells Rd (on your left), continue straight on Pakihi Rd as blocks of tall pines soon appear. (Waimate signs begin to lead the way.)
K 36.1	After passing Hunter Hall on your right, at the intersection with Jacksons Bush (on your right) and Hunter Rd (on your left), continue straight on what now becomes Waimate Hunter Rd. (At the southwest corner is the entrance to a Domain that does not allow camping.)
K 43.5	At an intersection, Upper Hook Rd enters on your right. About 3km up this road is Gunns Bush Camp (684 7786/timburn@xtra.co.nz) that provides both campsites and separate bunk rooms. The camping ground is an ideal location for a bit of bush walking.
K 45.6	At the T-intersection with Hertslets Rd (on your left) and Lower Hook Rd (on your right), turn right (South) on Waimate Hunter Rd.
K 47.7	At the T-intersection with Whitneys Rd , turn left (East) on Whitneys Rd and an immediate right (South) on Parsonage Rd , as you enter the outskirts of Waimate.

Note: If you are staying at either Centrewood Estate, Awatea, Te Kiteroa Lodge or Kelceys Bush Farm & Holiday Park (See below) , at K 48.0 turn right onto Browns Rd, then right at the T-intersection onto Fitzmaurice Rd, next left onto Hunts Rd and finally onto Mills Rd that leads to the three B&Bs and the holiday park.

K 49.8 At the intersection with Queen St, turn right (Southwest) onto **Queen St.**

K 50.1 At the intersection of **Queen St and High St** the tour ends in downtown Waimate.

Waimate is a charming rural town with wide streets, parks, gardens and a smattering of Edwardian Buildings. The town has a nice array of accommodation. They include three luxurious B&B homestays – Centrewood Estate (689 6035 /www.centrewoodestate.co.nz), a 115 year old French designed homestead, Awatea Retreat (689 7288/www.awatearetreat.co.nz) that features reflexology and two heated outdoor baths for tired muscles, and Te Kiteroa Lodge (689 1088/www.tekiteroa.com), a lovely mansion nestled on a hillside next to a vineyard with sweeping views to the east of the plains below and the sea beyond. All three B&Bs are located on or off Mill Rd northwest of town and provide dinner by prior arrangement.

Other accommodations are Waimate Hotel (689 7373),Cross Roads Hotel (689 8809) and Criterion Hotel (689 8079), three motels, Victoria Park Camp & Cabins (689 8079) situated in a stunning urban park that, among other things, features caged wallabies whose cohorts roam wild in the nearby hills, and Kelceys Bush Farmyard Holiday Park (689 8057/www.kiwicamp.com) that is also on Mill Rd and features the largest wallaby enclosure in New Zealand.

If you have the time (and energy), towards the end of Mill Rd you should either walk the White Horse Walkway (3km –2.5 hour return) or drive up to Centrewood Park and a lookout with glorious views of the sea and mountains behind. As stated in a brochure, the walkway takes its name from a 60ft monument to the Clydesdale horse which helped clear the land assisting in the development of Waimate.

A great place for a meal is Café on Queen. Waimate Outdoors, also on Queen St, services cycles. For more information contact the Waimate ♀ Information Centre also located on Queen St (689 7791/www.waimate.org.nz).

Note: For those looking for a break from cycling, consider spending an extra day in Waimate. A host of walkways into Wallaby country and nearby marshlands beckon.

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.