



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
- i-SITE Visitor Centre
- Toilet

- Preferred Route
- Alternative Route or Side Trip
- Previous or Following 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.

Oamaru to Moeraki Tour

Oamaru is another bustling port city renown for (1) its extraordinary array of 19th century Whitestone buildings clustered in the downtown area and in the adjacent historic precinct, (2) the antics of its penguins at the Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony and (3) the childhood home of Janet Frame, a world famous author. Among other attractions are the Oamaru Public Gardens🌳.

The city offers a feast of choices for accommodations – a luxury lodge, Pen-y-bryn Lodge (434 7939/www.penybryn.co.nz), a variety of B&Bs, including Federation House (434 9537/www.federationhouse.co.nz: dinner by prior arrangement), Anne Mieke Guest House (434 8051/ www.theoamarubnb.com) and 41 on Tyne B&B (434 5066/carolandads@xtra.co.nz), all of which are located closer to the city centre, Kingsgate Hotel (0800 782 548/ www.kingsgatehotels.co.nz), Criterion B&B Hotel (434 6247/ www.criterion.net.nz), numerous motels, several Backpackers, including Empire Hotel Backpackers (434 5546) in the centre of town, and a camp/holiday park at Oamaru Top 10 Holiday Park (434 7666) next to the Oamaru Public Gardens.

For atmosphere and good food, a meal at either The Last Post or Fat Sallys (a pub) will serve you well. For great window scenery the Portside Restaurant and Bar is the place to be. Martyn's Cycle (434 8416) and Victor Nelson Oamaru (434 9077), both on Thames St, provide any cycle repair service you may need.

For more information contact the Oamaru 📍 i-SITE Visitor Centre (434 1656/www.visitoamaru.co.nz).

Summary Description

Once you have mounted a steep hill out of Oamaru and descended to the sea, a classic 20km back road coastal run awaits you. The mix of surging ocean waves on your left lashing the shoreline, rolling countryside to your right and the mountainous Horse Range in the distance to the west and south is enthralling. Meandering through the tranquil settlement of Kakanui at the midway point is the icing on the cake.

All good things however must come to an end. So when you finally reach SH1 at K 27.2, your venue changes to a ride alongside SH1 for about 11.8km of the tour's remaining 14.4km. As for SH1, at least sealed shoulders along part of this highway and intermittent views of foothills and mountain ranges to the south and west provide some compensation for the accompanying swish of heavy traffic. The real prize however awaits you at the end – the astonishing Moeraki Boulders and the picturesque Moeraki fishing village.

Total Distance: 41.8km

Detailed Description

Kilometres	Description
K 00.0	From the intersection of Thames and Itchen Streets, turn left (East) onto Itchen St and right (South) onto Tyne St for a ride through the historic precinct before a steep ascent.
K 00.9	On the side of the hill, turn right (West) onto Avon St , traverse a block, then turn left (South) onto Wharfe St and complete the climb.
K 01.2	On top bear right (Southwest) onto Beach Rd for a downhill respite soon followed by a coastal romp cheek to jowl with the ocean. Signposting to Kakanui leads the way.
K 01.3	Perth St enters on your right.
K 03.1	On your right is an entry marked Oban Park that leads to Cedar Cottage Countrystay (434-6529/www.oban-park.co.nz).
K 03.6	The coastal romp begins as the road bends to the southwest.
K 05.8	Old Bones Backpackers (434 8115/ www.beachroadbackpackers.com or www.oldbonesbackpackers.com) is on your right.
K 06.0	The road is closed because of erosion but is still manageable for cyclists. Otherwise turn right (West) onto Gardner Rd and left (Southeast) onto Thousand Acre Rd back to Beach Rd for an extra kilometre of cycling on sealed roads.
K 10.1	Seaview Restaurant (open 10am-4pm Tuesday-Friday, 10am-8pm Saturday/Sunday) is on your left – a great spot for a break.
K 10.2	Fortification Road enters on your right, and Beach Rd becomes High St as you enter Kakanui.
K 10.6	At the intersection of High St and Kakanui Rd (with On the Spot Convenience Store on your right), turn right (West) onto Kakanui Rd . At this juncture, if instead you turn left, a trip to the beach for a semi-precious stone treasure hunt may be a tempting diversion.
K 11.1	After crossing the Kakanui River, the road becomes Waianakarua Rd . Ahead, after the road bends east and just before it turns south, is the Kakanui Camping Ground (021 525 896/allan.chris@vodafone.net.nz.)
K 12.0	Just beyond the camping ground turn left (East) onto Harbour Tce , a road that runs clockwise along the river, harbour and headland through the charming Kakanui residential area to Kakanui Point and further on to Campbell Bay Reserve. At the reserve are toilet 🚻 and changing facilities and an eye popping view southward of an endless beach and marching waves. From there continue your clockwise jaunt, first right (North) onto Stirlin St , then left (West) onto Magdala St and finally back to Waianakarua Rd. The three bedroom self contained Kakanui Beach Retreat (434 5794/ www.kakanui.co.nz: meals upon prior request) is located on Stirlin St.
K 14.5	Where Magdala St intersects with Waianakarua Rd , turn left (South) onto this road. The route along Waianakarua Rd offers some memorable vistas of the ocean on your left and the rolling countryside on your right, all framed by the mountainous Horse Range lying to the southwest.
K 16.0	Coastal Backpackers (439 5411/www.coastalbackpackers.co.nz) is on your left. A little further on is a public toilet 🚻 on your left by the beach.
K 27.2	After turning inland, Waianakarua Rd eventually intersects with SH1, along which is (from time to time) a sealed shoulder. Turn left (South) onto SH1 . Brace yourself for heavy traffic and a couple of roller coaster hills. However, if you think the next 11 kilometres is too daunting, arrange for the Oamaru – Dunedin Shuttle (027 2565 651) to pick you up and deposit you in Moeraki. The shuttle can only carry two bikes.

- Note:** Within easy striking distance of the intersection of SH1 and Waianakarua Rd are The Millhouse Hotel (439 5515/ www.themillhousehotel.co.nz) right across the street – a charming abode with large gardens nestled on the banks of the Waianakarua River(dinner by prior arrangement), Olive Grove Lodge & Holiday Park (439 5830/ www.olivebranch.co.nz), a Backpackers and camping ground on 25 acres located just 0.3km north on SH1, and a classy B&B -Glen Dendron (439-5288), a spacious home with panoramic views of the river and ocean, located 1.2km north on SH1 and about 2km west on the sealed Breakneck Rd.
- K 34.8 You have entered Hampden and weathered the least scenic part of SH1. On your right is a grocery store, the last one on this tour. Public toilets 🚻 are on your right a block further south. Also in town are the Hampden Tavern and Accommodation (439 4695). Hampden Court Motel (439 4695)and Hampden Beach Motor Camp (439 4439). Closer to the beach is a self-contained cottage (439 4706/ hilltopstore@ihug.co.nz: breakfast on request).
- K 37.8 On your left is the turnoff to the Moeraki Boulders and, fittingly, the Moeraki Boulders Restaurant located just 0.6km off SH1. These spherical wonders of nature that are partially buried in the sand are a Must See and are accessible from the restaurant. (Add 1.2km to your trip if you partake.)
- K 39.0 Turn left onto **Moeraki Rd** signposted for Moeraki. On the way to the end of the road you will pass all the accommodations and eateries described below as well as public toilets 🚻.
- K 41.8 You have reached the end of Moeraki Rd and the day's destination.

Moeraki is a wee laid-back fishing village. Most of the settlement is tucked around the bay of a peninsula framed by the Razorback Mountain Range to the west and the sea looking south. Accommodations consist of Noah's Boutique Accommodation (439 4998/www.noahsaccommodation.co.nz), a Backpackers with one bedroom (439 4106), Moeraki Motels (439 4862/john.bev@xtra.co.nz) Moeraki Haven Motel (439 4859) and Moeraki Village Holiday Park (439 4759/moerakimotorcamp@xtra.co.nz: includes motel accommodations). The closest grocery store is in Hampden.

Near the end of the line is a special attraction in the village - the delightful and funky bayside restaurant, Fleurs Place, which has a well-deserved national reputation for superb food. (Meals are also served at the Moeraki Tavern - in addition of course to the Moeraki Boulders Restaurant accessed at K 37.8).

On your left about 1km along Moeraki Rd from the turnoff is a parking area that provides access to the beach where the astonishing spherical Moeraki Boulders can be reached about 1.7km north. (This approach is best taken at low tide.)

If you have the time, take Tenby St (accessed about 0.9km from the SH1 turnoff) southeast about1km and then right (South) onto the gravel Lighthouse Rd about 3km to Katiki Point, a lovely headland topped by a lighthouse and teeming with sea mammals and the occasional yellow-eyed penguin. Best viewing is at low tide. The headland was once the site for a Pa (a Maori fortress) from which were launched in the 18th century, attacks on another Pa located in Karitane. (See Waikouaiti To Dunedin Tour 11.) Both fortresses proved to be impregnable.

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.