

Exploring the South Island's 'Big Sky' Country: Cycling the Otago Central Rail-Trail

March 17 - 22, 2019

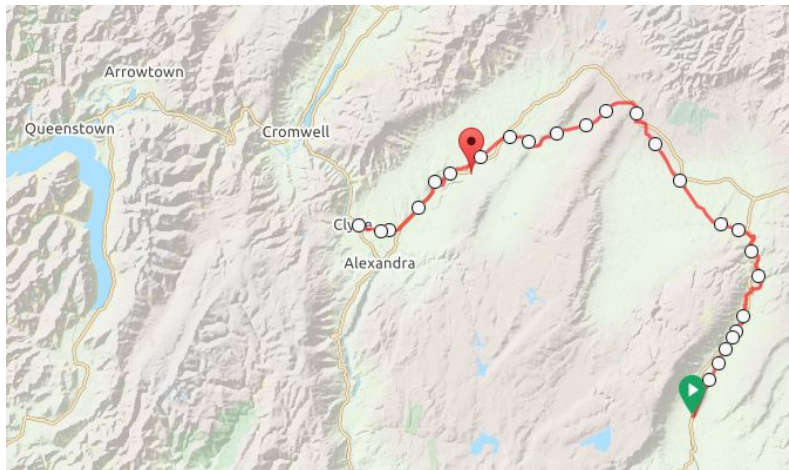
an optional trip extension to New Zealand trip #1901



Overview: Join us on an optional New Zealand trip extension that features cycling through the eastern side of the south island on the Otago Central Rail Trail. The route takes us through a magnificent semi-arid region with many points of local interest. The trail was built for steam trains, so it has a very gentle 1-2% grade on a packed gravel surface. The region has a rural, 'old-timey' vibe unlike anywhere else we will have explored thus far on our travels together. Other trip extension highlights include the city of Dunedin with its famous botanical gardens and oceanfront wildlife preserves and a ride on the Taieri Gorge railway. The Rough Guide to New Zealand rates both the rail trail and the train trip among the top twenty-nine New Zealand destinations. The rail-trail itself is rated five stars on [Tripadvisor](#) based on over 850 reviews. Here is a [video](#) of the rail trail experience.

Itinerary: On Sunday March 17th we take a morning bus transfer to Dunedin. Dunedin is the second largest city on the south island. The afternoon is free to explore the area on your own. You can stroll for miles along the [Pinellas Trail](#) or visit several interesting parks and a fine art museum. Optional tours go to the [Royal Albatross center and the blue penguin reserve](#).

On Monday we climb aboard the Taieri Gorge Railway for a spectacular ~two hour journey north. The train climbs into the Taieri Gorge, a narrow and deep gorge carved out over aeons by the ancient Taieri River. The train negotiates the gorge with ease as it travels through ten tunnels and over countless bridges and viaducts.



In Middlemarch we pick up our bicycles and begin our cycling journey. We will ride [including Monday] 25 - 35 miles/day in the central Otago region. We will stay in historic inns and farmhouses. Each day will have its own special features: traveling over viaducts and through tunnels, trying one's hand at the olympic sport of curling, visiting historic remnants of the area's gold mining past,

etc. We will stop at the [Hayes Engineering Works](#) and marvel at the workshop and homestead of Ernest and Hannah Hayes, 19th-century pioneers whose resourcefulness, skill and determination defined the the spirit of 'Kiwi ingenuity'. Our travels reluctantly come to an end on Thursday March 21st when we leave our bicycles in Clyde and take a bus to Queenstown. Participants would fly home on March 22nd or continue to explore other areas of New Zealand independently.

Below is a detailed itinerary along the Otago Rail Trail:

Day#	Distance (miles)	Day highlights (besides riding in a beautiful countryside)	Stay
0		Dunedin sights	Dunedin
1	25	train ride, get bikes and ride	Waipata
2	29	gold mining town (Naseby) and curling	Naseby
3	34	Hayes Engineering exhibit, gold mining town (Ophir)	Omakau
4	27	wineries (Alexandra), bus back to Queenstown	Queenstown



Participant profile: This optional excursion is rated [moderate](#). We will ride up to 35 miles per day on a flattish packed gravel trail at a moderate pace of 8-12 miles/hour. There may be a segment on a lightly traveled road to reach a point of interest. Each participant should have average cycling skills. This is no sag wagon,

so each participant should be able to make minor repairs. In case of major difficulty we will contact the renter of bicycles for assistance. You will be expected to carry water, lunch, and raingear. This excursion should be doable by everyone on the front end of the trip.

Pricing and registration: The trip starts after breakfast on Sunday March 17, 2019 and ends on Friday March 22, 2019. It includes:

- Five nights lodging, four breakfasts, and five dinners. Lodging is two persons per room.
- All ground transportation starting in Wanaka and going through the return to Queenstown.
- Rental of a bicycle including helmet



- Luggage transfer of up to 32 pounds between accommodations. If there excess beyond that, it will be taken directly to Clyde where we will pick it up on the last day.

It does not include:

- All lunches
- All meals on Friday March 22, 2019
- All beverages excluding those provided at no-charge at breakfast
- Entrance to any point of interest including those mentioned in the text above

The price for this excursion is \$1,400. Registration (an email is sufficient) is required by July 15, 2018. Payment in full is due by August 1, 2018. A check payable to the Appalachian Mountain Club should be sent to Stephen Cohen at 2802 Arbor Drive #2 Madison, WI 53711.



The leaders' expenses for the trip and administrative costs to support the trip are included in the trip costs to be shared by the participants. This is a non-profit excursion conducted by the leaders on a volunteer basis. Any unforeseen increases in costs will be shared by all participants. Any funds remaining after all expenses are paid will

be divided among the participants in accordance with AMC Adventure Travel rules.

Cancellations prior to confirmation that this trip extension will run as scheduled will be entitled to a refund on money deposited with the AMC. Cancellations after the trip is confirmed will be subject to a minimum \$100.00 cancellation charge. Refunds will only be made to the extent that the cost of the trip for other participants is not affected. Trip cancellation insurance is advised. Late cancellations are likely to result in no refund.

Applicability of previously provided documents: This extension is part of trip #1901 (Spectacular New Zealand: a cultural hiking adventure) to which you have already been accepted. By registering for this extension you are agreeing that the previously provided documents (trip application, medical health questionnaire, supplemental medical form, and waiver of liability form) become part of this extension as well.

The sections of the original prospectus related to safety and risk (page 7) and trip requisites (pages 9 and 10) are specifically included in this trip extension.

Summary: This trip extension offers a very complementary set of experiences to the ones we experienced in New Zealand's major cities and along its hiking trails. We hope this prospectus encourages you to extend your 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience in New Zealand a bit further and explore New Zealand's 'Big Sky' country.

