New Zealand Tour 2013

Kent College Geography Department

New Zealand Geography Tour 2013

Information and FAQs

Who is the tour intended for?

This tour is open to any students currently in Year 6 or above.

When will the tour take place?

The tour will leave during the Easter holidays of 2013.

How many students will be going?

The group will have a maximum of 15 students

How many staff will be going?

Mr Letley and Miss McCardle will lead the tour with a ground team based in New Zealand from Discover the World.

Does it matter if any of my friends are not going?

No not at all, by keeping the group small everyone mixes very well regardless of friends / year group.

What is included in the itinerary?

Full details of the itinerary are included in the rest of this information package. We have been working very hard to develop a bespoke package to suit the likely ages and interests.

Will the itinerary change?

We can refine the itinerary according to the interests of the group once we know who is going, we are very flexible.

Have trips like this been run before?

Mr Letley and Miss McCardle have already run a trip to Iceland this year and are taking a group to Jordan in February 2012. They both have many years experience running fieldtrips.

What is the idea of the tour?

The tour is designed to be an awe-inspiring adventure in one of the most spectacular natural environments. We are committed to providing an insight into some of the most powerful natural forces through numerous activities and sightseeing, full details are included below.

Do I need to be really good at walking / climbing etc.?
No, we will expect to have a variety of levels of experience and fitness etc. in the party and this will be catered for.

How can the trip be paid for?
Very flexible options in terms of payment are available, these are detailed in this information pack.

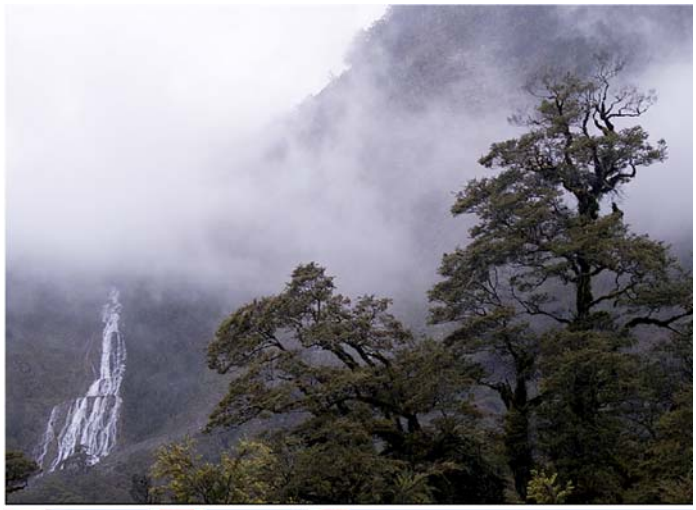

Image to left: Rainforest South Island
Image above: Fox Glacier South Island

Itinerary, day 1-4

Day 1: Christchurch, impact of the 2010 Earthquake

Arrive in New Zealand after one stop flight from the UK via either Los Angeles or Singapore.

Transfer from Auckland to Christchurch the largest city in South Island.

This day is designed to give an insight into the damage caused by the 2010 7.1 magnitude earthquake that rocked the city in 2010. We will tour the city to view the areas most severely damaged, meet survivors and talk to rescue / emergency services as well as consider the tectonic forces creating such destructive forces. How the city has been reconstructed and protective measures for the future will be examined. Early night!

Day 2: Christchurch to Kaikoura, Coastal margins

We travel north along the stunning coastline from Christchurch to Kaikoura taking in the landforms and unique character of this part of South Island. We have the chance to go Whale watching or swimming with dolphins under the dramatic backdrop of snow capped mountains.

Later in the day we will encounter more of the wildlife that lives along the coastal margins. Seal colonies are common along this coastline, we will see these and learn about their habitat and patterns of behavior.

It is planned to round the day off with a beach bonfire and time to reflect on the first full day in New Zealand.

Day 3: Kaikoura to Moteuka, National Park, beaches and waterfalls

We say farewell Kaikoura and take a walk through the forest to the Ohau waterfall to observe the baby seals playing under the waterfall. We continue north with a stop in Nelson where there will be a chance to visit the WOW (World of Wearable Art museum).

This afternoon we arrive in Motueka, gateway to the Abel Tasman National Park. Abel Tasman National Park is renowned for its golden beaches, sculptured granite cliffs, and its world-famous coastal track. We will be able to witness the impacts of the destructive forces of the coastal erosion and enjoy the golden beaches created by depositional forces.

Day 4: Moteuka, National Park, beaches and trails

The Abel Tasman National Park is the focus of Day 4. We will explore the coastal features that are preserved in this Park. We will take to the water in sea Kayaks for some gentle paddling in this breathtaking scenery. The formation of the dramatic granite cliffs and landforms will form part of the aim of this activity as well as getting up close to the other features seen here.

Later in the day we will complete part of the coastal trail and relax on the golden beaches washing off the sand with a swim / paddle in the sea.

Itinerary, day 5-7

Day 5: Motueka – Greymouth, Rainforest and Caves

The day is designed to experience and learn something of two contrasting natural environments, rainforest and the subterranean world of caves. We will drive through the Buller Gorge to the spectacular West Coast. We visit the famous Punakaiki 'Pancake Rocks', limestone formations, hopefully seeing the spectacular spouting display formed during large swells. We travel to Charleston to join our underworld rafting experience.

We will take a train ride in open carriages through primeval rain forest to the magnificent Nile River Canyon. We pass through the film sites for the "The Lost World" film production and walk over the Nile River Suspension Bridge before entering the world of stalactites, stalagmites in the large dry caves. Down in the lower active levels of the cave, we meet up with a slow moving underground river on which you float in your tube using only the natural light from a display of glow worms!

Day 6: Greymouth to Franz Josef, Mountains – the power of ice, glaciers

Our first visit this morning is Hokitika famous for Pounamu (New Zealand Jade), we have an opportunity to watch experts create beautiful 'Taonga' (treasure) from special West Coast Pounamu before travelling onto Franz Josef township.

This afternoon we take a helicopter ride over Fox Glacier to land on Franz Josef, we will clip on the crampons, take our ice pick and head off to explore the glacier. Our guide leads us through crevices, around towering pinnacles and into brilliantly blue ice caves. The guided walk on the glacier will give an insight into how these rivers of ice carve dramatic scenery.

Tonight we unwind among the rainforest and relax in pure geothermal glacier meltwater pools.

Day 7: Franz Josef to Queenstown, stunning scenery

We will travel through three National Parks, and have some great photo stops. We drive over the Haast pass, which is the only southern crossing from the West Coast to the East Coast. The drive is packed with opportunities to witness some of the most varied landscapes in New Zealand.

Our destination this evening is the adventure capital of New Zealand Queenstown with our first stop the Kawarau Bridge (the home of the bungy jump) where we take a tour through the secrets of bungy before you have an opportunity for an optional bungy jump, or just a look.

Itinerary, day 8-10

Day 8: Queenstown, activities

Today enjoy a mountain bike ride through the tracks above Queenstown, these will be designed with the age / ability of the group in mind. This activity offers a brilliant way to appreciate the stunning setting of Queenstown.

In the afternoon we take the gondola to the top of Bob's Peak for some fantastic views before taking a luge and having two fast rides down through the forest tracks. Tonight dinner is your choice. Then we will have a ride on the Shotover Jet

Day 9: Queenstown to Milford Sounds, fjord cruise

A really special day in store today as our drive takes us deep into the wilderness of Fiordland National Park. We pass through the famous 'Homer Tunnel' before emerging into the 'sound'. We trade our coach for our Milford Cruise boat for our amazing journey through the Milford Sound (Fjord). Our journey is magical as we travel through the Sound surrounded by lush rain forest clinging to towering 1000 metre cliffs. Dolphins keep you company on your journey while seals glance up from their resting place to watch you go by. Keep an eye out for sea birds and penguins and if you are lucky you may see a tree avalanche. After dropping anchor in Harrisons Cove we take the Kayaks and explore the fiord and those who dare can jump from the boat into the cold dark water. After a sumptuous dinner it's farewell party night time to reminisce

Day 10: Milford Sound – Christchurch – Auckland - Home

Time to reflect on all the experiences from the last ten days as we travel back to Christchurch. The journey takes us back through the different physical environments encountered on the tour. Last photo opportunities will be built in to the various stops made on the way back to Christchurch where we catch our internal flight to Auckland and on from there back to Heathrow.

Payment plan / options – booking a place

November 2011

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

I hope you will agree that the itinerary above represents a wonderful opportunity to discover New Zealand and gain an insight into some of the most powerful natural forces on the planet.

We have worked hard to secure all the activities described in the itinerary above to provide the most exciting and varied experience for those on the trip. No reduction in the itinerary is anticipated other than to tailor things around the group we take, we are very flexible in that respect, no one should feel they cannot go just because they do not like one of the activities presented here. We will discuss this with those wishing to be part of the trip.

Planning a trip such as this a year and a half ahead poses particular challenges in terms of giving an accurate price for the trip. However, following extensive discussions with the travel company we are using we are confident that the total price should be in the region of £2,900. In April next year we will be able to confirm the final price and itinerary as flights will be released for us to buy by then. We have been advised that a 10% increase in this figure should be budgeted for to cover potential changes in fuel prices, clearly this may not be the case.

We are very conscious that the cost of the trip needs to be spread in the most flexible way possible to assist with the payment. We have been working with the Bursary department and have agreed a number of different options for payment. Culminating in full payment being made no later than the last day of the first half term in Spring 2013.

1. A monthly standing order could be used which would work out at approximately £180 per month prior to the departure of the trip.

2. Equal amounts of the cost could be added to the end of each term's bill between now and the departure of the trip which would work out at approximately 5 payments of £580

3. An agreed payment plan of key deadlines spread between now and departure when amounts would need to be paid by, perhaps by each half term.

4. Complete payment

We are very happy to discuss the details of the trip, planned activities etc to assist in decision making prior to booking a place. Please contact either of us using the email contacts at the bottom this page and we will phone meet with you.

To secure a place on this trip we are asking for a non refundable deposit of £250 to be returned with the form on the next page. We will keep a reserve list of places from the point we reach our maximum number for the trip. Should a pupil be withdrawn from the trip after paying the deposit a commitment to pay for the whole trip will remain with the parents unless a replacement can be found.

Thank you for taking the time to read the details here, we will be holding a series of detailed planning meetings and presentations with those on the trip in 2013 during 2012.

Yours faithfully

Mr G. Letley
Director of Studies

Miss A McCardle
Head of Geography

New Zealand tour 2013, booking form

Please print and complete this form returning it to either Mr Letley or Miss McCardle at Kent College.

I wish to secure a place on the New Zealand tour taking place during Easter in 2013.

I have read the details concerning the trip and understand that the final cost of the trip will be confirmed in April 2012.

I enclose the deposit payment of £250 which is non refundable.

I would like to pay for the trip using method 1. / 2. / 3. / 4. (circle the preferred method).

Name of Parent / Guardian: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name of Student: _____ Form / Class : _____