

Welcome to Wanaka

Wanaka is one of Otago's most popular holiday spots. A spectacular place for recreation: mountains, lakes and rivers for all to enjoy and explore. Warm summers are ideal for the region's wide range of readily available facilities: tracks to walk, tramp or mountain bike; rock faces to climb; waterways to boat on. And in winter, skiing or snowboarding on one of the area's three internationally-rated ski fields.

General

NOTE: The maps in this brochure are guides only and should not be used for navigation purposes.

Always contact the nearest visitor centre for the latest information about facilities and conditions.

Many of the tracks in this brochure cross private land. Please respect the landowner's property and livestock.

Where horse riding is allowed, an access key may be required, as horse gates are limited. Please check with the local DOC office.

Track times are one way unless otherwise stated.



Short walk – a well-formed track for easy walking, suitable for most ages and fitness levels.



Walking track – a defined, formed track, suitable for most ages and abilities.



Tramping track – limited track formation, often with steep grades. 'Boot standard', suitable for fit, properly-equipped groups.



Dog walking



Mountain biking



Lookout/views



Horse riding



Fishing



Boating



Historic site



Camping



Hut



No dogs



No bikes



No vehicles



Managed by Queenstown Lakes District Council



Managed by Department of Conservation



Managed by Upper Clutha Tracks Trust



Part of Te Araroa – The Long Pathway.
A walking trail from Cape Reinga to Bluff.
www.teararoa.org.nz

Acknowledgement

The Department of Conservation acknowledges the work of the Upper Clutha Tracks Trust, whose efforts in establishing the Gladstone, Hāwea River, Upper Clutha River and Damper Bay Tracks are a major contribution to both residents and visitors.



Check, Clean, Dry

Stop the
spread of
didymo and

other freshwater pests.
Remember to Check,
Clean, Dry all items before
entering, and when moving
between, waterways.

Wanaka's weather

Oct–Dec: Changeable,
11–17°C

Jan–Mar: Hot and dry,
21–34°C

Apr–Jun: Warm,
temperate days, 12–25°C

Jul–Sep: Frequent snow,
crisp, clear days, 5–12°C

Remember – your safety is your responsibility

Please choose a track that suits your fitness and experience.

Follow the Outdoor Safety Code:

- Plan your trip
- Tell someone your plans
- Be aware of the weather
- Know your limits
- Take sufficient supplies

For more information, visit:

www.adventuresmart.org.nz



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Wanaka Outdoor Pursuits

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Cover photos: (bottom) Grandview Range, P. Tisch; (centre) Diamond Lake; (top) Isthmus Peak Walk, T Geddes.



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Wanaka islands



There are four significant islands on the lake, each a public reserve: Mou Waho Scenic Reserve (118 ha), Mou Tapu Scenic Reserve (126 ha), Ruby Island Reserve (3 ha) and Stevensons Island Scenic Reserve (62 ha).

Mou Waho and Mou Tapu have high conservation value as havens for plants, birds, and insects that have disappeared from the adjacent mainland. On Mou Waho, a well-formed track at the landing leads to Arethusa Pool, a small lake sitting in a rock cradle some 150 m above the main lake.

Stevensons Island was the first habitat for the return of the buff weka to mainland New Zealand, in 2001. Thanks to a joint project between Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and DOC, this inquisitive weka can now be seen here and on Mou Waho, and the islands of Lake Wakatipu.

The islands are popular with local boaties during the summer months. Several operators run daily island cruises.



Picnic guest on Mou Waho. Photo: Eco Wanaka Adventures

Rock climbing

Wanaka is an international destination for rock climbing. Climbing was established here in the 1970s at Hospital Flat, 12 km from Wanaka town on Mount Aspiring Road. The sport's growing popularity saw more and more spectacular routes opened up at Hospital Flat and on the neighbouring Diamond Lake Conservation Area. Further along Mount Aspiring Road, both the Riverside and Roadside recreation reserves offer a range of crags for rock-climbing enthusiasts.



Hospital Flat. Photo: M Painting

Hospital Flat's climbing difficulty ranges from Grade 10 (Six Feet Under) to Grade 29 (Blue Meanie and Engage). A good starting point is Maincliff, with quality single-pitch routes ranging from Grade 12 to 22. Tombstone is the next most significant feature, with routes graded from 16 to 24. Be prepared for crimp hand-holds but good friction for the feet.

The Wanaka Rock Climbing Club works hard to set a high standard of bolting and encourages a progressive attitude to rock climbing ethics. Check out their rock climbing and bouldering guide *Wanaka Rock* for further details.

Rock fall is an ever-present risk at Roadside Reserve. Visitors should reassess the dangers each visit – to this and other rock climbing areas in this region.

Natural history

Lake Wanaka is 45 km long and up to 12 km wide, making it New Zealand's fourth largest lake, and the main source of our biggest river, the Clutha/Mata-Au. At 277 m above sea level, the lake's maximum depth is 311 m, near Mou Waho, one of Wanaka's four significant islands – all of them public reserves.

With a 175 km shoreline and a host of bays and inlets, Lake Wanaka occupies a deep valley excavated by huge glaciers that also sculpted the surrounding hills. Around 20,000 years ago the Wanaka and Hāwea basins were filled with ice and the glaciers carved the present terrain. Nearby Mount Iron, and Mou Waho and Mou Tapu Islands, all show the effects of glaciation – rounded on the upstream side, and steep, craggy faces downstream.

The Wanaka area lies in the rain shadow of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana, but it is wetter than other parts of Central Otago. Native vegetation is dominated by shrubland, featuring kānuka, pittosporum/kōhūhū, cabbage tree/tī rākau and a range of coprosma and olearia species. Mount Iron has a representative sample of local native plant life.

Common native species include silvereye/tauhou, bellbird/korimako, kingfisher/kōtare, the Australasian harrier hawk/kāhu and the much rarer New Zealand falcon/kārearea.



Clematis on Mou Waho. Photo: DOC

Human history

To Māori, Wanaka was originally known as Oanaka. This probably referred to the junction or meeting-place role the area played, at the crossroads of the trading routes for the highly prized pounamu/greenstone.



Paraerae (sandals).
Courtesy Canterbury Museum

Māori travelled great distances for Wanaka's resources, and occupied it for varying periods over several centuries before Europeans arrived. They came for the food and fibre the lake, river and forest produced, and the earliest people hunted the flightless moa. Among their preferred foods were eel/tuna, wood pigeon/kererū, weka and kākāpō. Fern root/aruhe

and young cabbage tree/tī rākau stems were staple foods. Tī rākau leaves and those from some celmisia (mountain daisy) species were used for plaiting garments and sandals.

The settlements were seasonal and, therefore, temporary, though a few villages were established around Lakes Wanaka and Hāwea. The main Wanaka settlement, Takikarara, was on a peninsula near the Clutha River/Mata-Au outlet and incorporated a wharekura or school of learning. The first Europeans to reach Wanaka found potatoes growing wild there.



Lindis Pass Hotel c. 1890s. Photo courtesy of the Lucas family

In the 1850s European pastoralists and surveyors came inland looking for grazing land. Using Māori guides, a young farmer, Nathaniel Chalmers, reached Hāwea from the south in 1853. But it was in the summer of 1857–58 that the surveyor, John Turnbull Thomson, put Wanaka and Hāwea firmly on European maps when he explored the lakes region via Lindis Pass. Thomson painted Lake Wanaka and the Alps beyond, and gave Mount Aspiring/Tititea its European name. Later in 1858 sheep farmer Jock McLean arrived to establish Morven Hills Station, the first of many such runs in the region.

Gold was discovered in Central Otago in the early 1860s and the subsequent rushes certainly enlivened the region. A direct result was that timber became a very valuable commodity. There were substantial native forests in the adjoining Matukituki and Makarora valleys – rimu, mataī, kahikatea and red beech/tawhairaunui logs were rafted down the lake to supply the goldfield towns. In the 1880s tourism began with steamers on the lake and the establishment of hotels at Pembroke – now Wanaka – and at the head of the lake. Mou Waho, then known as Pigeon Island, was another popular visitor destination.



Lindis Pass
Hotel today.
Photo: DOC

Pisa Conservation Area

These tracks provide easy access to the Pisa Conservation Area's attractive tussockland. The area is steeped in history – the route from the Cardrona valley into the Kawarau valley being a major pathway for Māori to and from the West Coast.

There is 'simple' avalanche terrain on the western side of the Pisa Conservation Area in the steep-sided gullies, and 'challenging' avalanche terrain on the eastern faces and Colour Burn catchment. Get current avalanche information at www.avalanche.net.nz before entering this area during winter and spring.

For all these tracks take warm and windproof clothing as temperatures can drop quickly, even in midsummer.

27. Meg Hut



Tuohys Gully car park to Meg Hut: 2 hr, 7 km

The car park is signposted to the right, across the Waiorau Snow Farm entrance bridge and again at the end of the road. The track climbs steadily up a 4WD track to Tuohys saddle (1,140 m), from where an easy grade track to the left leads down to the Meg Hut (960 m). It's possible to return to Tuohys Gully on a small unmarked circuit, via the Roaring Meg Stream.

28. Meg Hut – Deep Creek Hut

2 hr 30 min – 3 hr, 8 km



Climbing from Meg Hut, the poled track crosses golden tussock before following one of the area's many prominent ridgelines. After passing through sections of an old water race the track descends a 4WD road to the historic Deep Creek Hut (1,325 m).

29. Rock Peak Track



Crown saddle car park to Rock Peak: 1 hr 30 min

This track at the southern end of the Pisa Range gives quick access to great views. Follow an old 4WD track as it zigzags up from the car park to the transmitter station at Rock Peak. For the adventurous and well-equipped, the track continues to Tuohys saddle.

30. Little Criffel Track



Avalon car park to Little Criffel to The Larches car park:
6–7 hr, 18 km

Avalon car park to Little Criffel: 3–4 hr, 8 km

The Larches car park to Little Criffel: 3 hr, 10 km

The track up the 1,341 m Little Criffel from Avalon car park is steep and unformed, but provides a good opportunity for fit, experienced walkers to enjoy extensive views of the upper Clutha basin and Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana.

From the car park, cross the Cardrona River and follow the markers and stiles up the hill. Along the tops, remnants of the Criffel Diggings – reputed to be the highest gold diggings in Otago – reveal hand-dug water races, tailings and outlines of former miners' dwellings. The descent from the peak to The Larches car park is mostly on 4WD track until The Larches Conservation Area.

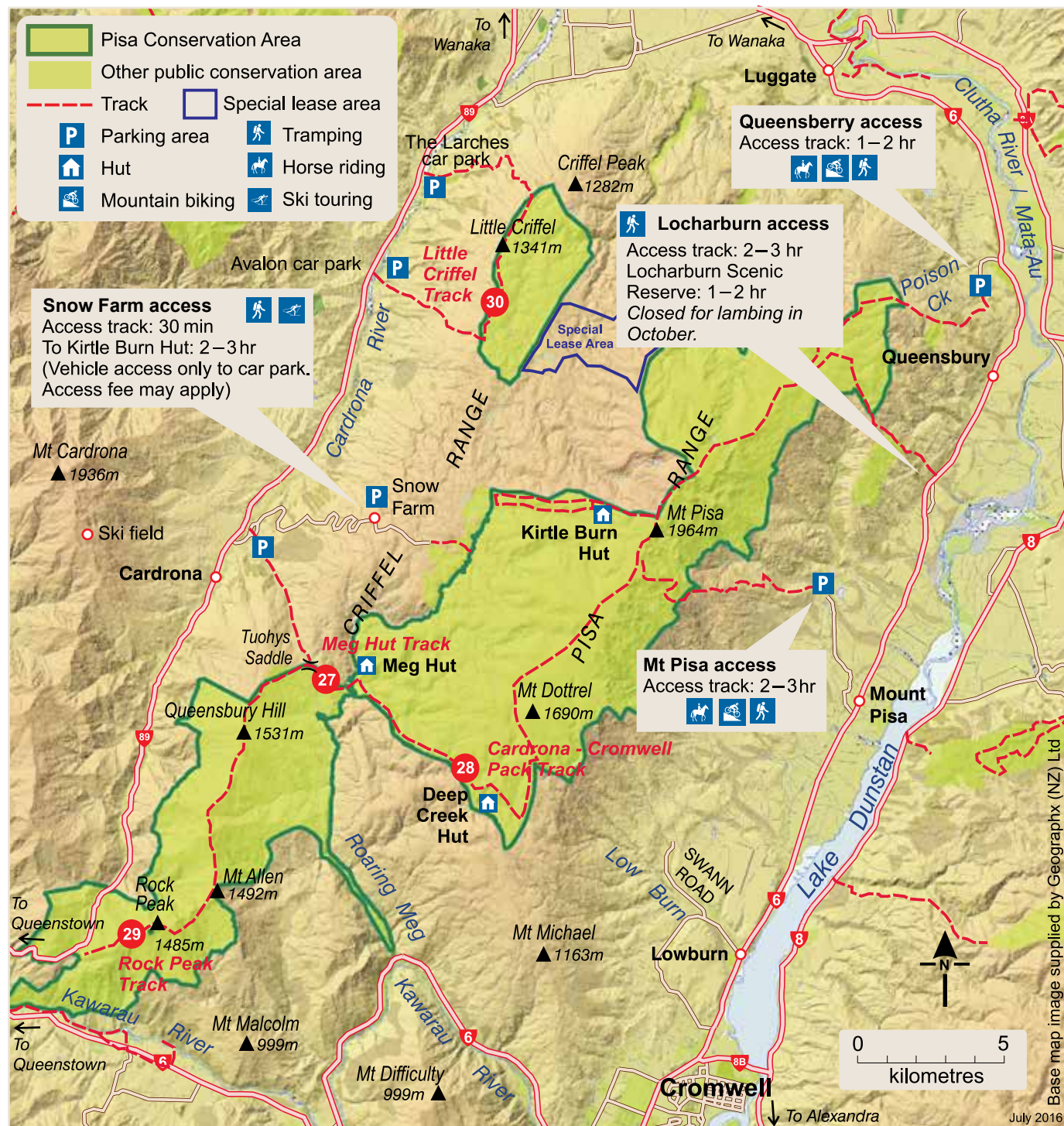
Access via Avalon car park closed 10 October to 10 November.

Mountain biking

The region's mountain bike tracks cater for beginners through to advanced: cruise alongside the Hāwea River, the lakeside, or tackle the undulating Minaret Burn or Dingle Burn tracks. For pedal-grinding a-plenty: Isthmus Peak, Lindis Peak and Grandview Range tracks.

Remember the 'off-road code': wear a helmet, respect other users and give way to walkers.

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimise the effects of fire
- Respect wildlife and farm animals
- Be considerate of others



Track times are one way unless otherwise stated.

1. Minaret Burn Track



Car park to Colquhouns Beach: 2–3 hr, 7 km

This well-formed track provides easy access to beautiful beaches along Wanaka's western shore. From Homestead Bay car park the track gently undulates towards small, sheltered Colquhouns Beach, a popular swimming and picnic spot. The longer, more demanding trips beyond here are described on the Minaret Burn Track brochure.

2. Diamond Lake



Diamond Lake Circuit Track return: 45 min, 2.5 km

Diamond Lake lookout return: 1 hr, 2 km

Lake Wanaka lookout return: 2 hr, 5 km

Rocky Mountain Summit Track return: 3 hr, 7 km

Follow the 4WD track from the car park, climbing to the lake where the circuit track is marked. Another track winds up to a lookout above Diamond Lake. Beyond here, there's a choice of the Lake Wanaka lookout, off to the right or to Rocky Mountain's 775-m summit via a loop track. Spectacular views include Lake Wanaka and a skyline dominated by the surrounding peaks. The distinct shape of Mount Aspiring/Tititea lies to the west. Sections of this track are steep, with significant fall hazard. The track is often slippery, even in summer – take extreme care. *This track is not recommended during the winter months due to ice.*

3. Motatapu River Track



1–2 hr, 5 km

Starting from the Motatapu River bridge on Wanaka-Mount Aspiring Rd and ending at the Motatapu Rd, this track winds its way through a beautiful rural area via wide-open river flats.

4. Waterfall Creek Track



1 hr, 2.5 km

This track starts from the western end of Roys Bay, soon reaching Wanaka Station Park, a beautiful picnic area on the left. The track then winds along the lake's western shores for superb views, passing Edgewater Resort and Rippon Vineyard before reaching Waterfall Creek.

5. Glendhu Bay Track



3–4 hr, 12.5 km

Incorporating the Waterfall Creek Track, continue past the creek for one hour on terraces above Lake Wanaka, before dropping onto a small north-facing beach suitable for swimming. From here the track continues around to Glendhu Bay and the motor camp. For mountain bikers this is an average grade track with a few steep gradients.

6. Roys Peak Track



5–6 hr return, 16 km

The all-encompassing panorama from this 1,578-m summit includes most of Lake Wanaka, the surrounding peaks and Mount Aspiring/Tititea. This exposed track has no shelter from the sun or rain. Temperatures can drop quickly, even in midsummer – take warm and wind-proof clothing. There is challenging avalanche terrain above 1,000 m during winter and in spring. Refer to www.avalanche.net.nz if planning a trip. *Closed for lambing 1 October to 10 November.*

7. Skyline Track



10–11 hr, 23 km

This challenging tramp begins with the track to Roys Peak. From the peak, follow the ridgeline over to Mount Alpha and descend through snow tussock to a 4WD track. Then follow the poled route to the Cardrona Valley Road, 10 km from Wanaka township. *This track is prone to low cloud cover, and is not recommended during winter as it passes through challenging and complex avalanche terrain.*

Safari hunting takes place on Spotts Creek station; be alert and stay visible especially during the roar (March to May each year).

8. Fern Burn



Fern Burn Hut: 3–4 hr, 7 km

The Wanaka end of the challenging, multi-day Motatapu Track provides an enjoyable day or overnight walk into Fern Burn Hut (720 m). Beginning with easy travel along the Fern Burn, the track passes through steeper country as the burn cascades through remnant beech forest. Above the treeline it climbs through upland tussock to the hut.

9. Mount Iron Walk



1 hr 30 min loop, 4.5 km

Mount Iron is an impressive, glacier-carved, 240-m rocky knoll. From its summit a great panorama unfolds: lakes Wanaka and Hāwea, the Cardrona and upper Clutha valleys, and all the surrounding peaks.

10. Eely Point Walk



20 min, 1 km

Eely Point is a popular, sheltered boating and picnicking area. From Wanaka town follow the lakeshore to the right past the marina, and on to Eely Point. Carrying on round the point for another five minutes takes you to Bremner Bay, a good family swimming spot.

11. Beacon Point Walk



30 min, 1.5 km

The track continues from Bremner Bay to Beacon Point, with great lake and mountain views along the way. It suits all ages and abilities, including baby buggies and bikes. From Beacon Point it's a 30 min walk to link with the Outlet Track.

12. Outlet Track



1 hr, 3 km

Spectacular scenery makes this popular for both walkers and bikers. The track follows the Clutha River/Mata-Au; start or finish at the Lake Wanaka outlet or Hikuwai Conservation Area in Albert Town. Bikers should ride carefully and give way to walkers. The Hikuwai mountain bike loop above the main river track gives a more challenging ride.

13. Deans Bank Track



1 hr 30 min – 2 hr, 11.5 km loop track

The Deans Bank Track situated on the Clutha River/Mata-Au near Albert Town is a one-way multi-use track popular with mountain bikers. A walking track leads down to Dublin Bay.

14. Hāwea River Track



Albert Town to Hāwea dam: 3–4 hr, 14 km

Suitable for all ages and experience, this riverside walk is over easy country and links Lake Hāwea township to Wanaka, via Albert Town.

15. Gladstone Track



Hāwea dam to Johns Creek Recreation Reserve:
1 hr 45 min, 6.9 km

From Hāwea dam the track follows the foreshore in front of Lake Hāwea township before travelling through open farmland to Johns Creek.

16. Newcastle Track



2–3 hr, 12 km

Suitable for biking and walking, this track follows the true left of the Clutha River/Mata-Au from Hāwea River swing bridge to Kane Road.

17. Upper Clutha River Track



4–5 hr, 16 km

From the car park off Kinnibeg Street, Albert Town, follow the track a short distance to 'Pawsons Crossing' bridge over the Cardrona River. Walk or bike along the picturesque Clutha River/Mata-Au to historic Reko's Point Conservation Area – the site of 19th and 20th century gold mining activity – and on to Luggate.

18. Deep Gully – Eastern Hills loop



3–5 hr, 10.5 km

Providing a great loop option, the tracks start across the road from (and slightly north of) the Sandy Point car park. A poled route follows Deep Gully up onto the Grandview ridge for great views over the upper Clutha valley, before descending down the Eastern Hills Track back to the starting point.

In winter and spring these access points travel through 'challenging' avalanche terrain before entering 'simple' avalanche terrain on the tops. Refer to www.avalanche.net.nz if planning a trip between May and November.

Deep Gully Track closed for lambing 30 September to 4 November

Eastern Hills Track closed for lambing 15 September to 30 October

19. Grandview Ridge Track



38.5 km one way

Long Gully car park to Breast Hill Track junction:
38.5 km

Sandy Point Conservation Area: 5 min

Sandy Point car park to south Awa Nohoaka Conservation

Area via Deep Gully Track: 3–5 hr, 11 km

Deep Gully Track to Long Gully car park: 3–5 hr, 11.5 km

Eastern Hill Track to Long Gully car park: 3–5 hr, 11 km

From the Long Gully car park, a well-formed farm track (on moderately steep terrain) links tracks across the upper slopes and ridgeline of the Grandview Range. Options from a few hours to full or multi-day walks are available, providing extensive views from the upper slopes across the upper Clutha valley to the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana. The Grandview Ridge Track ends at the Breast Hill Track junction; for mountain bikers there is no exit/entry via Breast Hill or Timaru River tracks.

In winter and spring these access points travel through 'challenging' avalanche terrain before entering 'simple' avalanche terrain on the tops. Refer to www.avalanche.net.nz if planning a trip between May and November.

Deep Gully Track closed for lambing 30 September to 4 November

Eastern Hills Track closed for lambing 15 September to 30 October

20. Isthmus Peak Track



Isthmus Peak: 5–6 hr return, 16 km

Matatiaho Conservation Area: 5–7 hr, 15 km

This track is signposted just south of Stewart Creek on SH6. Follow the poled route along the creek until it joins a farm track. From here it's a steep, winding, rocky climb to a skyline ridge, with sections where bikers will need to dismount and push. A sign on the ridge points right to the track to 1,385-m Isthmus Peak, and left along the exposed ridge to the Matatiaho Conservation Area.

Closed for fawning 20 November to 20 December

Craig Burn access: A short walk from the car park leads to a pleasant picnic spot on the lower Craig Burn. There is no formed track above this point on the conservation area; access is via scrubby, steep and rocky terrain.

21. Dingle Burn Peninsula Track



Car park to Turihuka Conservation Area: 3–4 hr, 11 km

Walking along Lake Hāwea's eastern shores there are great views up the Hunter valley and, on a clear day, to the west as far as Mount Aspiring/Tititea. From the car park, 8 km north of Timaru Creek, follow the 4WD track to Rocky Point and around the bluffs to Silver Island Bay, before gaining height to sidle around The Peninsula. The Turihuka Conservation Area is at the mouth of the Dingle Burn.

22. Lower Timaru River Track



Lower Timaru River Loop Track: 4–5 hr return, 12 km

Popular with trampers and anglers, the high river track is signposted 50 m along the road from the Timaru Creek car park and leads to a 4WD track above the river. Follow this somewhat demanding, undulating track to Deer Spur Creek near Junction Hut (1 hr 30 min). Return by the lower river track. This requires several river crossings and is only recommended in normal flow conditions.

23. Breast Hill Track



Dingle Burn Rd entrance to Pakituhi Hut: 4–5 hr, 4 km

Pakituhi Hut to Stodys Hut via Breast Hill:

4–5 hr, 12.5 km

Pakituhi Hut to Stodys Hut via 4WD track: 3–4 hr, 13 km

Stodys Hut to Top Timaru Hut: 6–7 hr 30 min, 13.5 km

Stodys Hut to Lower Timaru River car park:

5–6 hr 30 min, 12.5 km

With its powerful landscape and stunning panoramic views, experienced trampers are offered a challenging day-walk option to the summit of Breast Hill (1,578 m).

The 18 km tramping track multi-day option, taking 2–3 days to complete, forms part of the national trail Te Araroa – The Long Pathway, and connects to the Lower Timaru River Track. Two huts: Pakituhi (1,270 m) and Stodys (1,080 m) are located on the Breast Hill section.

24. Grandview Mountain Track



2–3 hr, 9 km

Grandview Mountain Track – Breast Hill Track (Nook Road car park to Dingle Burn Rd): 9–12 hr, 26 km

Pockets of kānuka shrubland merge with the pastoral lands of the lower section of the track, before opening up to the tussockland dominating the top. The steady climb to Grandview Mountain (1,398 m) offers stunning views of Lake Hāwea, pastoral flats and surrounding peaks. Grandview Mountain and Breast Hill tracks (via Pakituhi Hut track) offer a full day or overnight option. Mountain bikers can travel to Pakituhi Hut but cannot exit via the Breast Hill Track.

Closed for lambing 26 September to 7 November

25. Nine Mile



From SH8, drive 6 km along the unsealed (and in some places steep and narrow) Old Faithful Road to reach the reserve, which includes the remarkable stone ruins of the Lindis Pass Hotel. Originally the site of the general store for Otago's first gold rush in 1861, the hotel provided almost continuous service of some kind for over 70 years.

26. Lindis Peak Track



4–5 hr return, 11 km

The track is signposted at the start of Old Faithful Road, off SH8. The view from the 1,226-m summit is one of the most extensive in Central Otago. The vista includes the stunning St Bathans Range to the east and numerous peaks along the Main Divide – from the head of the Hopkins valley in the north, to Mount Aspiring/Tititea in the south.

Closed for lambing 10 October to 5 December

