



7 Day 4WD New Zealand Adventure Exclusive to Great Divide Tours

4-10 April 2010

We know Australia has some amazing 4WD country, but across the ditch is the land of the long white cloud with mountains and flooded coastal scenery of a type unknown in our great country. For over 15 years I have wanted to do a 4WD tour of the South Island and now the opportunity has presented itself.

I have been in discussion with what is my counterpart in New Zealand an experienced 4WD tag-along operator on the South Island by the name of Steve Beston. Steve has been conducting 4WD tag-along tours around the amazing mountains and fiordland country of New Zealand for several years.

The window of opportunity to conduct 4WD tours in the Sth Island is very limited running only from January to April, so if we are going to do it in 2010 we need to act quickly. I have negotiated a fantastic 7 day Sth Island 4WD tag-along to be led by Steve starting from Lake Tekapo near Christchurch on Easter Sunday 4 April. But, just like my tours, Steve needs a full trip to make it all happen and given that flights, accommodation and 4WD rental need to be confirmed asap there is not much time to waste. The number of participants is limited to 7 vehicles and I've already booked one for Julie and I. so you are invited to join us on this incredible 4WD adventure in the Sth Island of New Zealand.

Here is the itinerary for this amazing trip, your arrival and departure times from New Zealand are at you own choice as long as you are ready to go from Christchurch on 3 April.

3April – Arrive in Christchurch and collect your fully equipped 4WD, and meet Vic and Julie and drive to Lake Tekapo, accommodation at your own arrangement, there is a variety of motel and cabin style or join Vic and Julie who are staying in the Godley Motel.

4 April **Day 1--** Assemble at Lake Tekapo in the MacKenzie Basin 8.00am to meet our New Zealand guide Steve Beston. We then head to Black Forest High Country Station via Burkes Pass, do the track on edge of Lake Benmore (the beautiful turquoise coloured lake) in the morning with amazing views of the lake and then follow the Pylon track in the afternoon through very rugged country more akin to an Afghanistan landscape, we may encounter Wallaby in this area, the native NZ Falcon and Deer. Exit from this track over the Benmore Dam, part of the Pukaki Hydro scheme, the biggest and most ambitious hydro scheme undertaken in New Zealand until construction of the Clyde Dam. Stay at Omarama in the Ahuriri motel that evening, meal in local pub restaurant.

5 April **Day 2--** Today we travel down the incredible Lindis Pass to Delrachney Station, spend the day 4Wdriving on Delrachney, including one of the most impressive switchback tracks in the South Island. Amazing views of the Ahuriri Valley, Southern Alps, and Mt. Melina (6000ft) and Mt. Martha (6250ft) in the range immediately Northwest of Delrachney. Lunch beside the Lindis River and keep an eye out for deer which are plentiful on Delrachney. Stay at Omarama that evening.

6 April **Day 3--** We Head up and over the Omarama Saddle (4000ft) on the St. Bathans Range, one of the most stunning views in the South Island, Mt. St. Bathans (7000ft), Mt. Aspiring (one of the highest peaks in NZ), the MacKenzie Basin, Mt. Cook (the highest mountain in NZ) and the Hawkdun Range. Descend into the West Branch of the Manuherikia River Valley crossing the stream many times down the valley exiting at the old gold mining village of St. Bathans and the incomparable St. Bathans Pub. All the buildings in the village have been restored to their original condition as they were in the 1800's and there is an impressive Lake carved out of white rock by the sluicing of the goldminers right beside the Pub. Stay at the Alexandra Garden Court motel that evening beside the mighty Clutha River, one of the biggest rivers in the world for volume of water carried.

7 April **Day 4--** We head to Cromwell past the Clyde Dam on the mighty Clutha River, NZ's largest Hydro Power Station, follow Lake Dunstan formed by the damming of the Clutha to a private High Country Station in the wine growing country of Central Otago. Trek through the grapevines at the start of the trek then on up through the schist outcrops and into the alpine scenery of the Pisa Range stopping for lunch beside one of the many tarns in this area. Climb on up to Mt. Pisa, (6000ft) one of the highest tracks on our itinerary and take in the glorious vista out over the valley with Lake Dunstan in the foreground and the Dunstan Mountains forming the perfect backdrop. The alpine scenery on this range is different from anything else on the trip and feels more like being on the moon. From these lofty heights we head to the famous Cardrona pub via the testing facility where the world's top vehicle and tyre manufacturers test their products in controlled conditions under extreme temperatures.

8 April **Day 5 --** We exit the Cardrona valley after what is always a memorable stay at Cardrona (our hosts shout breakfast here as well), over the Crown range with great views of the Queenstown Basin and 44 hairpin bends later we enter the Kawarau Gorge. From here we climb up over the Coalpit Saddle East of the Remarkable range and trek through to the isolated Nevis Valley which is snowed in for 6 months of the year. There are multiple crossings of the Nevis River as we make our way South taking in the local gold mining history before entering Lorne Peak Station and climbing out over the Hector Mountains, an extension of the Remarkable Range, to Tenants Peak (5000ft). From here we look out over Lake Wakatipu, the Garvie Mountains, the Old Man Range and the Mataura River famous for its trout fishing. This evening is spent in the Kingston motel in a village south of Kingston in Southland Country, famous for the rolling of the RRR's.

9 April **Day 6--** Southland is quite different from the MacKenzie Basin or Otago where we have been so far, it is now one of the richest dairying areas of NZ but is very sparsely populated and incorporates the North and South Mavora Lakes nestled between the Livingstone and Thomson Mountains. This track follows the Lake shore through pristine Beech Forest and on up to a hut at the head of the valley. Lunch is an extended affair as the solitude of this area is hard to leave behind. This evening is spent on the shores of Lake

Manapouri in Fiordland in the Manapouri motel, the local Hotel bar gives us an insight into the following days Trek.

10 April Day 7-- We head South from Manapouri to the Pylon track which takes us over the Borland Saddle and into the South Arm of Lake Manapouri. The Borland Saddle looks out over the Grebe Valley, site of one of the Worlds greatest landslides which formed the valley and lakes we see today. It is also home to the Kakapo, thought to be extinct until found here recently. A 2 minute walk from here will take you into the world of Lord of the Rings, gnarled trees, hanging moss, tracks for small people and all the mystique that the movie engendered. Parts of fiordland are so rugged they are untouched by man and the continuation of the track from the South Arm to Percy's Saddle is full of vertical mountainsides, waterfalls, hanging valleys carved out by glaciers and rugged peaks as far as the eye can see. The final evening of our tag-along and we stay at the Anchorage Motel in Te Anau where we get to see a movie of the Fiordland area in a theatre built specifically to show this movie filmed over several years by a local chopper pilot who has been flying the area since the early deer culling days. Parts of the day's trek feature in the movie. We finish the trip with prize giving in a local restaurant, a chance to enjoy new found friends and reflect back on an amazing 7 days.

11 April You can either drive straight back to Christchurch or take the optional Milford Sound drive and cruise and spend an extra day in Te Anau before heading back to Christchurch to fly home. (Extra cost for this discuss with Vic)

Tour fee from 4 April to 10 April 2010 for two people and vehicle hire is NZ\$4990 per couple (Note Australian value will vary depending on dollar value at time of booking currently approx \$4000 Australian.)

Extra adults above the first two are NZ\$1250 each and children under 10 years are NZ\$900 each.

Note vehicle excess is \$3000 but this can be reduced to \$1500 for an extra \$12 per day or \$750 for \$32 per day.

What is included:

7 day NZ guided 4WD tag-along tour as described above (note weather conditions may dictate variation to the itinerary) with your specialist New Zealand tour guide and Vic Widman.

7 nights comfortable motel type accommodation, all evening meals

Station and Dept. of Conservation access fees, prize giving and movie entry on the last night to view a custom made movie of the Fiordland.

Hire of a fully equipped 4WD vehicle for 9 days from Christchurch and back to Christchurch. Hire vehicle details:-

You will be provided with a four wheel drive vehicle fully equipped with 2 way UHF radio, towrope, tent, table and seats, self inflating camping mattresses, gas bottle and stove, plates, mugs, bowls, cutlery, lantern and torch, cleaning bowl, pot scrub, detergent, dish towel, pots and pan, can opener, sharp knife, bottle opener, clothesline, pegs, rubbish bag, water container, and chilly bin (esky to us Aussies).

What is not included:

Flights to and from Christchurch

Fuel in the hire vehicle

Accommodation in Lake Tekapo on 3 April

Breakfast (unless otherwise stated)

Lunches

Extra night at Te Anau and Milford Sound cruise and extra day 4wd hire optional (Total cost for all of this is approx \$350 for 2 people (Price TBC) .

What do you need to bring:

You need to bring warm clothing, woollen beanie, cap, sleeping bag, boots, wet weather gear, sunglasses, sunscreen, toilet gear, towels and it pays to stock up on nibbles in Christchurch before departure as the days are quite long.

The weather is a study in extremes from still Autumn days to high winds and snow, however the cold fronts don't last long in the South Island and are followed by still clear days, great for getting the most out of the scenery. We include camping gear simply for safety in case we need to stay out overnight, to date it has never been necessary, but I like the umbrella principle, take it and it shouldn't rain.

Our New Zealand tour guide (Outback Vic's equivalent) will carry enough recovery equipment to get a vehicle back to civilisation for repairs if needed and we have enough tools to do running repairs enroute.

To book this tour act NOW, email Vic at info@greatdividetours.com.au or call him on 02 9913 1395 to notify your intention to join the trip. Full payment will be required within 2 weeks due to the need to reserve accommodation and vehicles. No refunds are possible unless your position can be filled.