

Alpine Pacific Triangle

Compact and highly scenic, the Alpine Pacific Triangle takes you to the wine and food experiences of Waipara, the Spa delights of Hanmer Springs and the marine mammal encounters of Kaikoura

This South Island road journey is a pleasant and easy drive of 370 kilometres, beginning at its southern end just 45 minutes from Christchurch, and at its northern end from Kaikoura. At almost every turn a new vista unfolds – pastoral country side, majestic mountains, rivers, forests, lakes and seascapes combine with sculptured limestone formations and bubbling hot springs to capture your imagination.

A well signposted route, the journey is made up of three legs and you can connect to it from the North, South and West.

Commence Christchurch

While the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes caused massive damage and upheaval in Christchurch it is still a must on all itineraries. We suggest you spend a day or two in the city which is reinventing itself in a unique way. A small area of the central business district remains closed to the public, but a new “pop up” city has emerged. This ingenious use of shipping containers has brightened the environment and boosted the morale of its business community. With 29 retail shops there is something for everyone, whether you are looking for a casual coffee break, fine dining, exclusive designer fashion, or Kiwi-icon based products, this makes a visit to Christchurch a memorable experience.

The Avon River runs through the centre of Christchurch and the many willows along its banks provide for relaxing picnic and rest spots. Hop aboard a punt and be gently drifted along the tranquil river or hire a canoe and row along at your leisure. Spend some time in beautiful Hagley Park which lies in the middle of the city, a riot of colour in spring with masses of cherry blossom and daffodils and in autumn adorned with the striking colours of deciduous trees.

Sightseeing tours are available to show you the best that Christchurch has to offer; beautiful parks & gardens, quaint seaside suburbs and superb views of the city and surrounds. Look for the red double-decker bus for a fun and informative tour



and see some of the areas affected by the earthquakes.

Visit the International Antarctic Centre which is a unique working Antarctic campus and the only one of its kind in the world. Have fun in real snow and ice or get “exhilarated” in the Antarctic Storm! Take an exciting outdoor ride on a genuine Antarctic vehicle – the Hagglund. These vehicles will take you over a purpose built adventure course where you will experience the amazing capabilities of these unique Antarctic workhorses.

One hours drive from Christchurch is Akaroa, a delightful “French” inspired village. Plan a day trip to explore the galleries, craft stores and cafes overlooking the picturesque harbour. Fresh locally caught seafood features on menus, along with fine wines from the Canterbury region. Join one of the cruises around the harbour where the dolphins “play” alongside the boat. Akaroa Harbour is the only place on the planet where you can swim with the world’s smallest and rarest dolphins – the Hector’s or New Zealand Dolphin.

Overnight stop suggestions:

- Amber Park Holiday Park, Blenheim Road, (Central)
- All Seasons Holiday Park, Kidbrooke Street, Linwood (South Eastern)
- Spencer Beach Holiday Park, Spencerville, (Northern)

From Christchurch drive 58 kilometres (45 minutes) along State Highway 1 to Waipara where you will commence the Alpine Pacific Triangle.

Waipara to Hanmer Springs (77 kms - 1 hr)

The first leg takes you on State Highway 7 through the Waipara





Valley. This valley is one of New Zealand's fastest expanding grape growing regions, and is gaining a fine reputation for its Pinots, Riesling, Chardonnay and Sauvignon wines. Many wineries are open to the public and several have restaurants featuring local cuisine. The fascinating diversity of the local terroir is also ideal for olive farms, nut farms, lavender and other flower growing. The Waipara Valley Wine and Food festival, held annually on the last Sunday of March, gives the region's growers a chance to showcase their produce, and visitors the opportunity to savour a selection of local wines and foods.

For over one hundred years the thermal pools at Hanmer Springs have been attracting visitors eager to rejuvenate themselves in their therapeutic waters. Hanmer Springs is an alpine village and its environment of rivers and mountains makes it an appealing destination all year round, with a good mix of activities for everyone to try – anything from forest walks, thermal pools and golf to jet boating, horse trekking, mountain biking and bungy jumping.

Overnight stop suggestions:

- The Pines Holiday Park, Hanmer Springs
- Mountain View Top 10 Holiday Park, Hanmer Springs

Hanmer Springs to Kaikoura

(135 kms - 2 hrs 30 mins)

From Hanmer Springs take State Highway 7 back to State Highway 70 and continue on to the coastal township of Kaikoura. Kaikoura's nutrient waters make it a favourite location for a host of marine life. Sperm whales frequent the waters year round, migratory Humpbacks arrive in June and summer sees the arrival of Orca whales. Permanent residents include the tiny Hector dolphins and the high spirited Dusky dolphins, Royal Albatross and a huge variety of other pelagic birds. Kaikoura is also famous for its fishing and succulent crayfish.

Overnight stop suggestions:

- Alpine-Pacific Holiday Park



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Travel Tips

- Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa was voted Best Visitor Attraction for 3 straight years at the 2004-2006 New Zealand Tourism Awards and received the coveted Distinction Award in 2006
- Kaikoura is the first community in New Zealand and second in the world to achieve Green Globe Benchmark status in 2002
- To book any Holiday Park recommended in this itinerary refer to the Holiday Park booking service elsewhere in this website



Kaikoura to Waipara (122 kms - 1 hr 45 mins)

Lying on the coastal route (State Highway 1) between Kaikoura and Amberley, Cheviot is another great base for those who enjoy fishing and hiking. Gore Bay, one of the safest surf beaches in the South Island lies just out of the town. Cheviot lies between the Waiau and Hurunui Rivers, meaning those who enjoy fishing are spoilt for choice, with plenty of salmon and trout to be caught. As you drive along State Highway 1 on your return to Christchurch, take the time to check out some of the many walks along the way. One of these is the Amberley Beach walkway, a flat, easy walk of about 2 kilometres that makes a figure 8. To find it, turn down Amberley Beach Road, turn left into Grierson Avenue and follow that road until it merges into Golf Links Road. The walkway will be on your left not far from the Amberley Golf Course.

Kaikoura to Picton (160 kms - 2 hrs 15 mins)
Hanmer Springs to Greymouth (218 kms - 4 hrs)

Things to see and do:

- Relax in the thermal pools at Hanmer or indulge in a top to toe luxury massage
- Boost the adrenalin with a bungy jump, jetboat ride or whitewater rafting at Thrillseekers Canyon in Hanmer Springs
- Take a 4WD bike tour with amazing views of the rugged Kaikoura coastline
- Experience Kaikoura Whale Watch by Sea or Air
- Dolphin and Albatross Encounter, Kaikoura
- Wine Tours, Waipara Valley
- The Weka Pass railway line, Waipara Valley
- Clydesdale horse drawn wagon trails, Waipara Valley
- Grey River Nature Trail (1 hour return). 15 kilometres east of Amberley
- Kowhai River Walk, 35 kilometres north of Christchurch



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