

Inland Scenic Route 72

Outdoor adventures - both gentle and daring - are your reason to follow Inland Scenic Route 72.

In any season, you'll find captivating ways to appreciate the breathtaking landscapes where the Canterbury Plains meet the Southern Alps

The journey of 172 kilometres takes you from Rangiora, north of Christchurch, to the farming centre of Oxford. The route continues along the foot of the Southern Alps to Mount Hutt, Canterbury's premier ski field. Past Mount Somers and then it's over the Rangitata River to Geraldine, where you can link to State Highway 1 or head inland to Mount Cook.

Commence Christchurch

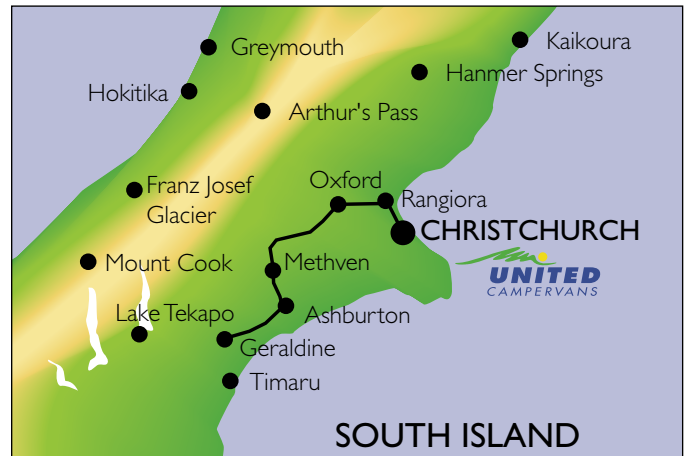
While the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes caused massive damage and upheaval in Christchurch it is still a must on all itineraries. We suggest you spend a day or two in the city which is reinventing itself in a unique way. A small area of the central business district remains closed to the 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)



Freedom

motorhome tours

Christchurch - Rangiora (33 kms – 30 mins)

From Christchurch follow the signs north to Rangiora where you will commence Inland Scenic Route 72.

Rangiora - Oxford (33 kms – 25 mins)

Rangiora is the centre of the farming community of North Canterbury where you'll find a well serviced main street, with a good number of cafés and restaurants. From Rangiora you'll find many opportunities to explore the rural beauty of the wider region. Oxford is a tiny country town that services the farming communities and ski fields of the region. Jet boating, fishing, horse riding and skiing are easily accessible from Oxford.

Oxford to Methven (78 kms – 1 hr)

From Oxford continue towards Methven, travelling through some spectacular scenery that gradually changes from serene pastureland to the rock solid majesty of the Southern Alps, New Zealand's longest, highest mountain range. Stop at the Rakaia Gorge for some hair-raising adventures. Many excellent walks can also be found in this area.

Overnight stop suggestions

- Abisko Lodge and Campground Geraldine.

Methven to Geraldine (61 kms – 45 mins)

As you drive south to Geraldine you'll pass through some of the most beautiful rural scenery New Zealand has to offer. Here, too, you'll come



across the Rangitata River where white water rafting is incredibly exciting, but also suitable for first timers. And as an added attraction for fans of the Lord of the Rings, rafting trips begin where Edoras was created for the movie trilogy.

Your journey ends at Geraldine, a charming rural town of beautiful tree-lined streets and colonial character. Geraldine is conveniently located within two hours' drive of eight ski fields and offers clear mountain views, beautiful walks and a vibrant boutique shopping village.

Overnight stop suggestions:

- Geraldine Kiwi Holiday Park
- Grumpy's Retreat Top 10 Holiday Park

THINGS TO SEE & DO

- Ryde Falls Walk near Oxford
- Experience a farm stay in the rural environs of Oxford
- For a challenging one day expedition, climb up Mount Oxford or Mount Somers
- From Methven, drift across the Canterbury Plains to the Pacific Ocean in a hot air balloon
- The rugged beauty of the Southern Alps
- Fly fishing for Rainbow or Brown trout
- Jet boating at the Rakaia Gorge
- Whitewater rafting on the Rangitata River
- Salmon fishing on the Rakaia and Rangitata rivers
- Mountain walks deep into the Southern Alps
- Boutique shopping in Geraldine
- Visit the Berry Barn at Geraldine
- Try a round of golf at one of the picturesque golf courses at Darfield, Methven, Rakaia and Mayfield

Travel Tips

- From Methven it's easy to arrange transport to the Mount Hutt ski area, and safer than taking your own vehicle.
- Weather can change quickly around Mount Somers - hikers should be prepared for all conditions.
- January, February and March are the best months to catch salmon during their migration upstream.
- To book any Holiday Park recommended in this itinerary refer to the Holiday Park booking service elsewhere in this website

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