

# WILDERNESS LODGES OF NEW ZEALAND



## WILDERNESS LODGE® LAKE MOERAKI

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## WILDERNESS LODGE® ARTHUR'S PASS

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## WILDERNESS DISCOVERY WEEKS IN THE WILD HEART OF THE SOUTH ISLAND

### BACKGROUND TO THE WILDERNESS LODGES

In 1989, Anne Saunders and Dr Gerry McSweeney left Wellington where Gerry was Conservation Director of Forest and Bird, and moved with their 3 young children to set up **Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki**. Over the next 16 years on the banks of the Moeraki River in remote South Westland, between Haast and Fox Glacier, they have established a luxurious 28 room Wilderness Lodge retreat. Lake Moeraki is an area of ancient valley floor rainforest and rich birdlife including flocks of kaka, NZ pigeon (kereru), tui and waterbirds. The Lodge offers fine food, lovely accommodation in 24 Rainforest Rooms and 4 Riverview Rooms, canoeing, fur seals, penguins in a wild and beautiful natural landscape. In 1997 Gerry and Anne with a family partnership opened **Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass** on 2,400 hectare Cora Lynn Station alongside Arthur's Pass National Park in the heart of the Southern Alps. The 24 room Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass is on its own 1,200 hectare nature reserve and 1,200 hectare super-fine merino sheep farm. The Lodge also features fine food and stylish Mountain View rooms and Alpine Lodges. Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass offers beech forest and alpine flower discovery, mountain walks, lake canoeing, tussock grassland expeditions and the cultural delights of a working high country sheep farm.

Gerry McSweeney is an ecologist with a doctorate in high country ecology. He has spent 30 years exploring the South Island high country and the West Coast forests carrying out research, running education and conservation programmes and living amongst these wild places. From 2001 to 2005, Gerry was the National President of the Forest and Bird Protection Society. He remains on the Forest & Bird National Executive. In partnership with our Managers at both the Lodges, Gerry and Anne will coordinate and guide the 2008 Wilderness Weeks.

### The 2008 Wilderness Discovery Week Programme

The 2008 Wilderness Discovery Weeks are a wonderful opportunity for you to spend 6 days based at either one of New Zealand's two Wilderness Lodges located in some of our most stunning scenic landscapes.

The Wilderness Lodges are stylish, warm and inviting. Your Lodge rooms are also magnificent. Huge picture windows look out across the mountains, river and rainforest. If you are a painter or a photographer, you could spend the whole week in the Lodge lounges or guests rooms capturing the changing moods of the river, forest and mountains. While you take in the scenery, you will enjoy a very high standard of food and warm hospitality. The Wilderness Week's charge includes every meal from Lunch on Day 1 to Lunch on the last day. Meals vary every day and you can choose from our restaurant table d'hote menu (check [www.wildernesslodge.co.nz](http://www.wildernesslodge.co.nz) for sample menus). We cater for vegetarians and other special dietary requirements but please let us know in advance. We have an excellent wine list for those of you interested in New Zealand and Australian wines.

However the Wilderness Weeks are much more than relaxation and comfort. They are fun and every day is an outdoor adventure. You will be guided every day to see the special plants, landscapes and wildlife that make these places so special.

**We walk**, sometimes slowly sometimes faster. The pace depends on your fitness and on what we find along the way. We visit an extraordinary range of landscapes during our Wilderness Weeks. **We canoe** in our safe stable Minnows. You are led, and sometimes, beginners are towed, on a journey of discovery in the wetlands of high country lakes

(Lake Pearson, Lake Sarah) and West Coast rainforest lakes (Lake Poerua, Lake Moeraki and possibly Lake Paringa).

**We bird watch.** Over 50 species of birds have been recorded around each of the Wilderness Lodges. As I write this today at Arthur's Pass, I am still excited from guiding a walk this morning where we watched a NZ falcon attack and kill one of a flock of brown creeper. Three days ago at Lake Moeraki I watched another NZ falcon try to attack a flock of 4 kaka flying low around the Lodge. The falcon failed and was driven off by the kaka! At both Lodges you discover the birds of "old New Zealand". A dawn chorus of bellbirds will wake you every morning. There are flocks of pigeon, tui and fantail at Lake Moeraki as well as seabirds (tawaki penguin) and waterbirds (crested grebe and fernbird). Arthur's Pass is a paradise of insect eating tomtit, rifleman, warbler and brown creeper and well as a large flock of resident kea. There are also very rare roroa kiwi, orange-fronted parakeet, wrybill and other river-bed nesting birds and on Lake Pearson is found the third largest breeding population of crested grebe in New Zealand.

**We botanise, geologise and learn.** The weeks are a chance to spend time to learn to identify different alpine flowers, shrubs, trees and plants and where they traditionally grow. We will make small herbariums to aid our memory. We will be patiently guided through different plant identification books so we can use these skills elsewhere after the Wilderness Weeks finish. We don't just look at individual plants but we look at the relationships between the plants, soils and landforms in some of New Zealand's least modified natural landscapes. On the weeks at both Lodges we visit the continental plate collision point, the Alpine Fault, and learn about the dramatic changes in geology either side of the faultline.

**We relax and have fun.** There is abundant time during the Wilderness Weeks to relax, enjoy great food, your favourite wines, paint, photograph, read a book and soak up the magnificent natural surrounds. There is also time for socialising with our group of wilderness enthusiasts around the fire, over dinner and out in the field during lunch, morning and afternoon breaks.

**Wilderness Weeks are specially designed by us to introduce New Zealanders to the wild heart of the South Island.**

We have planned the Weeks to show you the best plants, wildlife and landscapes of the lowland rainforests and seacoast of Lake Moeraki and of the flowers and tussock grasslands of the Southern Alps around Arthur's Pass.

Traditionally, we are visited by a lot of international nature enthusiasts. The wild places around the Lodges are perhaps appreciated even more by New Zealanders than our international visitors because it is your country. You know just how rare are valley systems like the Moeraki filled with primary rainforest. You also know that the wide open spaces of the Upper Waimakariri are so special and in many places elsewhere in the high country are being filled with holiday homes and even dairy farms. We need your help to keep protecting these special places. We will do practical conservation work during our week. In the future we may call on you for help if there are threats to these special places.

We want New Zealanders to have the chance to explore the mountains, forests, seacoast and wildlife with us. The special six day discovery programmes at each Wilderness Lodge over 2008 go to the most fascinating parts of these wild places to explore their plants, wildlife, cultural history and natural landscapes

## **1. WHEN ARE THE PROGRAMMES BEING OFFERED? WHAT DOES IT COST? WHAT DOES THIS COVER AND HOW DO I BOOK?**

Autumn and Spring are special times at the Wilderness Lodges. Our schedule of Wilderness Weeks is designed to let you experience the Lodges during periods when numbers of other visitors are lower but natural attractions are at their peak and the weather is likely to be good.

### **Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass**

**APWW1** Thursday 10 April 2008 – Tuesday 15 April 2008

**APWW2** Thursday 16 October 2008 – Tuesday 21 October 2008

### **Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki**

**LMWW1** Thursday 24 April 2008 – Tuesday 29 April 2008

**LMWW2** Wednesday 1 October – Monday 6 October 2008

To see what plants, flowers and animals you are likely to encounter in different months at the Lodges check out our Nature Calendar at [www.wildernesslodge.co.nz](http://www.wildernesslodge.co.nz)

**Arthur's Pass Wilderness Weeks: The mid-April Arthur's Pass Wilderness Week (April 10-15)** coincides with the settled autumn weather in the Southern Alps. Cool nights and shortening sunny days make it a great time to relax in

the mountains. The autumn colours of poplars and willows make a striking contrast to the blues and greens of the water and fields. The visitor rush of February and March is past. This is a great time to explore the lakes, rivers and mountain valleys and walk amongst golden The high country spring starts about mid September at Arthur's Pass. **Our spring-early summer Wilderness Week at Arthurs' Pass (Oct 16-Oct 21)** coincides with the start of the alpine flowering season in the high mountains of the region. The world's largest buttercup, *Ranunculus lyallii* will be starting to flower. Also flowering then are mountain foxgloves (*Ourisia*). Spring is also the season when the river valleys and lakes are filled with breeding birds including the rare Wrybill Plover, Southern Crested Grebe, Black Fronted Tern, Oystercatcher and NZ Dotterill. On Cora Lynn Station, mid-October is the start of the lambing season.

**Lake Moeraki Wilderness Weeks:** These are offered in the autumn of 2008 and the spring of 2008. **The mid-April 24-29 2008 Wilderness Week** coincides with the most settled weather of the year. This is important because it means that we can make the most of the trips to the Cascade Plateau, Jackson's Bay and canoe trips on Lake Moeraki, on Lake Paringa and on the lower Moeraki River. In autumn, there is great birdlife as the birds move down to the coastal forests for the winter. Kahikatea fruit load down these riverside and wetland trees making them appear a red colour. Fruit of supplejack, pigeonwood and bush lawyer can also be found throughout the forest. **The spring Wilderness Week at Lake Moeraki October 1-6 2008** coincides with the breeding season of Tawaki - Fiordland Crested penguin all along the coastal rainforest. Visits to the seacoast to see these endangered birds will be a feature of the week. We also look at NZ Fur seal and tiny Hector's dolphin. October is also the peak season for flowering of kowhai. Tui and bellbird crowd to get nectar from these trees and NZ Pigeon/kereru eat the whole flowers. October is in the middle of South Westland's famous whitebait season.

Our base for each Wilderness Week is the luxurious surroundings of the Arthur's Pass and the Lake Moeraki Wilderness Lodges. From the Lounges and Restaurants of both Lodges you gaze out over wild nature with magnificent views of rivers, rainforest and snow capped mountain peaks. Both Lodges feature the highest standard of cuisine with hearty musterer's breakfasts, gourmet picnic lunches and four course dinners. These meals are included in the Wilderness Week costs. Vegetarian meals and special diets can also be catered for on request. Lodge rooms are warm and attractive and all have their own bathrooms and tea and coffee making facilities.

The Wilderness Weeks start from either Christchurch Airport (Arthur's Pass) or Hokitika Airport (Lake Moeraki) with guided discovery tours on Day One on the drive to the Lodges. During the 6 days at each Lodge, Gerry McSweeney and his team of nature guides will take you to many special places. The trips accommodate a range of fitness levels. Less fit people and photographers can travel slowly. Those keen to range further afield on more energetic walks/canoe trips will also be accommodated. At the end of the week you will be taken back to either Hokitika (from Lake Moeraki) or Christchurch (from Arthur's Pass). Those from Southland or Otago who wish to travel to the Lake Moeraki Lodge direct through the Haast Pass will qualify for a discount because they will miss out on the nature drive from/to Hokitika.

#### **CHARGES:**

**NZ\$ 1975 per person share twin** (where you are prepared to share your Lodge room with your partner or with someone else)

**NZ\$ 2450 per person per person single occupancy** (where you require your own Lodge room for the week)

We understand that this is a significant charge for a holiday within New Zealand. It is however an extraordinary holiday on a par and probably well beyond anything you might do on an overseas holiday. Your accommodation and meals are of a 5 star standard. Check the section "Image Gallery" on our website [www.wildernesslodge.co.nz](http://www.wildernesslodge.co.nz) to see just how beautiful the rooms are at the Lodges. You will stay in two of the most magnificent and wild parts of New Zealand. During the Week we will explore a great range of very special places around our Wilderness Lodge base. Above all, the weeks will be specially guided by leading nature guides. You will learn a huge amount in the company of a group of like-minded fun seeking people.

#### **WHAT DOES THIS COVER?**

1. **The six-day Nature Discovery programme from each Lodge, the cost and inclusions in the programme are attached below in our general information sheet.** The programme will be varied to make the most of weather conditions, fitness levels and the groups interests.
2. **We have asked you to give your first and a second preference for a departure date.** We have a minimum group size of 6 on any departure date. If we don't make that number we want to be able to offer you an alternative date rather than cancel your week altogether. Closer to the date of your first preference week we will keep you closely posted on numbers so the cheapest air fares can be obtained well in advance.
3. **Included in the Wilderness Week Charge are:**

- 5 nights share twin or single occupancy Lodge accommodation in our lovely Rainforest Rooms (Lake Moeraki) or Mountain View Rooms (Arthur's Pass). All rooms have private bathrooms, tea/coffee making facilities, fruit, flowers and are modern and stylish.
- 4 course restaurant meals on all 5 nights with a diversity of menus and allowance made for any with special food needs.
- Full Lodge breakfasts every day
- Restaurant lunches or picnic lunches in the field from Day One to Day Six.
- Morning and afternoon refreshments in the field or around the Lodges.
- An extensive nature discovery guided programme as outlined guided by our naturalists and operated under our Conservation Department guiding concession or on our own land.
- Nature Discovery Transfers from either Hokitika or Christchurch to the Lodges as outlined. This operates under our Passenger Service Licence No 222871.
- GST at 12.5%
- A conservation contribution of \$100 to the Wilderness Lodge Nature Protection Programme

**4. Not included in the Wilderness Week Charge**

- Air/land transport from your home to Hokitika (Lake Moeraki WW) or Christchurch (Arthur's Pass WW)
- Your accommodation in Hokitika or Christchurch if this is required before the start or at the end of the Wilderness Week.
- Alcoholic drinks (apart from drinks we provide at the special wine tasting and some treats along the way)
- Souvenirs

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**BOOKING FORM** PLEASE DETACH AND EMAIL TO US OR POST TO PO BOX 33 ARTHUR'S PASS 8091 CANTERBURY.

1. Name	Address	Email Address	Phone No	Fax No

**2. Is there anyone else we should send this information to who you think might like to join you on this trip or come on a future trip?.....**

**3. Your Age?.....(APPROX ONLY)**

**4. How would you rate your fitness level?**  
 .....

**5. Do you have any medical condition that might limit your participation in the weeks that you might wish to discuss privately with us?.....**

(We appreciate that the above three questions are personal but they will remain confidential to us and are only asked so that we can give you a better experience and ensure that the weeks are carried out in utmost safety)

**6. WILDERNESS WEEK PREFERENCE (Please indicate)**

**Arthur's Pass**

1st.....

2nd.....

**Lake Moeraki**

1st.....

2nd.....

**7. Any Special Interests you have in coming on a Wilderness Week that we can perhaps help with?**

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### **8. Payment Required**

**50% deposit to book the week enclosed \$.....** (please enclose a cheque made out to Wilderness Lodges NZ Ltd or enclose your credit card details and expiry date for us to debit this amount. A receipt will be posted to you).

***"My credit card details for payments are:"***

Card Type.....Number.....Expiry Date.....

### **9. NOTE Deposit is fully refundable if cancellation is made up to 30 days prior to arrival or if the week you want is cancelled because we do not reach minimum numbers.**

You will be invoiced for the balance 50 % that is payable 14 days before the Wilderness Week commences. We will also send a list of suggested equipment/clothing, reading list and other background.

We recommend that you have a comprehensive travel insurance policy to cover health, loss of baggage etc.

We look forward to hearing from you. It will be a very exciting week.

Kind wishes

**Anne Saunders and Dr Gerry McSweeney.**

**February 2008**

Managing Directors  
 Wilderness Lodges NZ Ltd  
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 Phone ++64 3 318 9002

[www.wildernesslodge.co.nz](http://www.wildernesslodge.co.nz)

Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki: World Heritage from the Alps to the Tasman Sea ; seals, penguins, ancient rainforests and lakes.

Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass: Wild Heart of the Southern Alps; alpine flowers, tussock grassland, beech forest and merino sheep.