



# WILDERNESS LODGE® LAKE MOERAKI

Directors: Anne Saunders and Dr Gerry McSweeney

Location: 30 km N of Haast, 90km S of Fox Glacier New Zealand  
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## **LAKE MOERAKI GUIDED NATURE ACTIVITIES**

Our guided activities change every day with our focus on nature discovery and fun.

The activities here, and at Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass, provide an insight into the New Zealand wilderness. We invite you to join us during your stay.

At Lake Moeraki we introduce you to the rainforests, the rivers, the lakes, the seacoast, the birds and wildlife of South Westland and explain why this area is unique.

Most trips are classified 'easy' (both technically and physically) and are suitable for the vast majority of our guests. We do run more challenging activities if there is sufficient interest. Please feel free to discuss the options. Our trips can be varied to allow for weather and tide and we carry safety gear and refreshments on longer trips.

All trips are offered under our Conservation Department Guiding Licence WC 14903 GUI. All walks depart at the specified time from reception unless otherwise arranged.

**Please book the night before for longer trips to help us with transport organisation.**

### **Thursday**

7.30am – 8.30am

**Complimentary - Easy kayaking in the sheltered waters of Lake Moeraki** In our safe and stable kayaks our Nature Guides equip you with life jackets and teach you to canoe before we venture up the Moeraki River. We enter a flood channel into an Amazon like forest then continue up the lake into a flax and kahikatea forest wetland that closely resembles the natural landscape that New Zealand's first settlers encountered 800 years ago. Lake Moeraki is home to a wide range of waterbirds the grey, mallard, scaup and paradise duck, little shag and black cormorant and the graceful black swan. **All Lodge guests welcome. Novice kayakers who have not kayaked before please meet at 7.20am for instruction.**

7.30am – 9.30am

**Breakfast – Red Dog Saloon**

9.15am - 1.15pm  
**HARD TRIP**

**Wilderness Rainforest, Seacoast and Fur Seal Adventure**

This is the Lodge's signature challenging activity. This is a dramatic walk into the wildest and most beautiful coast in this region. After a short drive south from the Lodge we begin with a rainforest walk by a stream beneath beech, rimu and kahikatea trees. We will get wet feet as we cross the stream 4 times, but this is just the first of many exciting challenges. Emerging onto Robinson Crusoe beach we then venture south on pebble beaches and among lava rocks of the coast. There is a scramble over volcanic boulders which will be physically demanding. Along the way we will explore the marine biology of the Tasman Sea, discover starfish, abalone (paua), sea urchins, mussels and fossick for rose quartz, greenstone and other gemstones. We stop at Grave Creek for refreshments near a waterfall. We then cautiously walk west to the edge of a fur seal resting colony which can contain up to 1,000 seals in winter. Elephant seals are occasional visitors to the colony. We return to our vehicle at Knights Point by climbing a steep 400-foot rainforest track with stunning views.

**Note that the track to the beach crosses a small stream four times so if you want to keep your feet dry borrow a pair of the Lodge's rubber boots but they are not really suitable for the seacoast walk so it is better to get wet shoes/boots and dry them out in our drying room at the Lodge on your return.**

**Walk Standard:** Hard – requires fitness **Walk Distance:** About 7km (4 miles) **Time:** 3 - 4 hours  
**Charge:** \$78 per person (minimum 2 persons). Children 12years and under are half price.  
**Charge covers:** Guide, conservation licence, morning tea. **Bring your camera and binoculars**

2.15pm - 5.15pm

**Walk the Historic Moeraki Rainforest track to the Moeraki Lagoon and kayak the Moeraki River to the Tasman Seacoast**

Our nature guide takes you on a 30 minute walk down the valley. We pass beneath giant rainforest trees to the historic huts once owned by a legendary white baiter prior to the road reaching Moeraki in 1965. Burglar Bill Robinson would catch white bait in the lower Moeraki River and then boat them to the head of Lake Moeraki where packhorses would carry them to the north to market. We walk into a dark and gloomy kahikatea forest dripping with perching plants (epiphytes) and pass the world's most epiphyte-laden tree (101 different plant species!) At the Moeraki Lagoon kayaks and lifejackets are waiting. We paddle down river beneath the forest and out into the Moeraki Lagoon. We paddle along secret waterways of flax filled with Bellbird, Pigeon and Tui birds. Between September and November this area is a hive of human activity for the whitebait season. We reach the Tasman beaches and walk the Tasman Seacoast where we enjoy refreshments and fossick for gemstones, shells and driftwood. We return to the Lagoon where our kayaks are transported back to the Lodge, 10 minutes away.

**Trip Standard:** Easy. Suitable for beginners on flat water **Trip Distance:** Walk 2km Canoe 3km  
**Time:** 3 hours **Charge:** \$78 per person (minimum 2 persons), Children half price.

7.00pm

**Welcome and Briefing**

7.15pm

**Dinner**

10.00pm – 10.45pm

**Complimentary - Glow-worms, “More-pork” Owls, Freshwater Crayfish & the Stars of the Southern Sky**

Join us after dinner for a short stroll under the star-studded southern sky to where a steep bank in the forest beside the highway twinkles with the lights of numerous glow-worms. Among the night sounds we are likely to hear from the forest in this first hour after dark is the clear two-syllable call of the ruru or “more-pork” owl while after rain nocturnal freshwater crayfish can be seen in pools beside the road. **All Lodge guests welcome. It is an easy road walk.**

## **Friday**

7.30am – 8.30am

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9.30am - 12.30pm

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**Time:** 3 hours **Charge:** \$78 per person (minimum 2 persons), Children half price.

1.30pm – 4.30pm

**Ship Creek Hector's Dolphin, Rainforest and Mataketake Lagoon Walk**

We drive 20km south and discover the Mataketake Wilderness on a network of easy paths and boardwalks. We first walk amongst pingao (Tane's eyebrows) plants covering sand dunes then enter an almost impenetrable dune forest. We emerge at the Mataketake Lagoon and lookout.

We wander a wild seacoast home to Hector's dolphin, the world's smallest marine mammal and look for gemstones and jade. We then walk amongst "floating forest" of kahikatea, New Zealand's tallest tree and enjoy refreshments beneath an ancient tree.

**Walk Standard:** Easy

**Walk Distance:** 5km (3 miles)

**Time:** 3 hours

**Charge: \$78 per person** (minimum 4 persons), **\$98 per person** (less than 4 persons), Children under 12 half price.

**Charge Covers:** Guide, conservation licence, refreshments. Courtesy transport provided.

5.30pm - 6.15pm

**Complimentary Freshwater ecology of the lower Moeraki River and feed our giant friendly eels**

Fed by an annual rainfall of 3600mm (140 inches) the lake, river & streams of the Moeraki Valley are teeming with aquatic life. Join our nature guide on a short forest walk downstream from the Lodge to feed large native long-finned eels and look for brown trout, freshwater shrimps and snails and other small freshwater fish and aquatic insects. **All Lodge guests welcome. Bring your camera.**

**Charge Covers:** Guide, conservation licence, kayaks and safety equipment, refreshments

7.00pm

**Welcome and Briefing**

7.15pm

**Dinner**

**Saturday**

7.30am – 8.30am

**Complimentary - Easy kayaking in the sheltered waters of Lake Moeraki** In our safe and stable kayaks our Nature Guides equip you with life jackets and teach you to canoe before we venture up the Moeraki River. We enter a flood channel into an Amazon like forest then continue up the lake into a flax and kahikatea forest wetland that closely resembles the natural landscape that New Zealand's first settlers encountered 800 years ago. Lake Moeraki is home to a wide range of waterbirds the grey, mallard, scaup and paradise duck, little shag and black cormorant and the graceful black swan. **All Lodge guests welcome. Novice kayakers who have not kayaked before please meet at 7.20am for instruction.**

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**Charge Covers:** Guide, conservation licence, refreshments. Courtesy transport provided.

1.30pm – 4.30pm

**Lake Moeraki kayak Safari to Glacier Beach and the Giant Matai Trees**

Our Nature Guide gives you instruction in our safe and stable kayaks. We then paddle upriver past tall rainforest to enter the shallow wetlands of Lake Moeraki. Across the glacial lake, which is 48 metres (160 feet) deep. We will spot black swan, scaup, cormorants, grey and paradise duck and see brown trout rising. We get to the far side of the lake and walk up into the luxurious rainforest, home to 1,000 year old Rimu and Matai trees festooned with vines and perching plants. We enjoy refreshments in the cool forest then return to our kayaks. We paddle alongside the rainforest to spot native pigeon and bellbird then shelter beside flax wetlands as we return to the Lodge.

**Standard:** Moderate kayak and easy walk.

**Time:** 3/3.5 hours

**Charge: \$78 per person** (minimum 2 persons), **\$98 per person** (less than 4 persons), Children under 12 half price.

**Charge Covers:** Guides, conservation licence, canoes and all safety equipment, morning/afternoon tea. You can enjoy lunch at the Lodge on your return.