

Sacred ancestors


combine cook and aspiring




season
oct thru mid jan


Price
12 days
price on application


access
fly-in, walk out


route
aspiring: sw ridge
grade 3+
cook: Linda glacier
grade 3
guide ratio 1:1
or 2:2


Maori name
Aspiring: Tititea
cook: aoraki


Bonus
1 day weather contingency
most technical gear provided



Join us for a 12 day expedition experiencing the Sacred Ancestors Mount Aspiring and Āoraki / Mount Cook. These peaks are located in two different national parks.

Mount Aspiring (3027m/9928ft grade 3+ SW ridge) is the only 3000m peak outside of Mount Cook National Park. It is called the Matterhorn of the South. On this program we prefer to guide the Classic South West ridge and the North Buttress, these are more technical routes guided on a 1:1 basis only. If conditions prevent us from climbing this route, the NW ridge can be accessed from the Bonar glacier by climbing up what is referred to as The Ramp. This involves up to 8-9 pitches of climbing on a snow / ice ramp which leads onto a ridge climb to the Summit snow cap. This involves snow and ice terrain up to the summit. Depending on conditions, your guide will usually short rope you up this.

Āoraki/Mount Cook (3763m/12,342 ft. grade 3 Linda Glacier route) is the highest point in Australasia. It is a serious mountain and not to be underestimated due to its comparatively low altitude. It is comparable in length and difficulty to Arguille Verte in Chamonix, France. The Linda glacier is the most common and easiest ascent route to the High Peak. The base hut for this ascent is Plateau hut (2200m). The climbing route ascends the Linda Glacier which is relatively straight forward apart from route finding through crevasses. At various points the Linda Glacier is threatened by ice fall from seracs. It is not a place to dabble!

From the top of Āoraki/Mount Cook, the view reveals a unique alpine setting. To the north: mountain upon mountain stretch beyond view. To the east: icefalls tumble to the valley floors, ultimately draining to the Pacific ocean. To the south are more peaks, ice plateaus and distant lakes, while to the west vast neves crack and plunge into valleys clad by dense rainforest, en route to the Tasman Sea. This is some of the most spectacular and challenging alpine terrain in the world. The Āoraki/Mount Cook region has peaks that rise from valley floors that sit at 700m, to well over 3000 metres above sea level. This is a deceptively large vertical gain, and one commonly underestimated. The peaks are sharp and steep, providing classic snow arêtes, ice faces and rock buttresses. They are flanked by fast moving, temperate glaciers which offer perpetually changing conditions, and are battered by ferocious weather systems which keep the best meteorologist guessing. The climbs and adventures to be found here will challenge and test the climber in many ways, but the rewards to be had cannot be categorized.

welcome to our sanctuary

We want to share with you our love for this land - Aotearoa (New Zealand) - The Land Of The Long White Cloud. In particular - Te Waipounamu (The Greenstone Isle), the South Island.

New Zealand has 14 national parks and more than five million hectares – a third of New Zealand – protected in parks and reserves. They embody an incredible variety of landscape and vegetation for so small a country. From the mangrove-fringed tidal inlets of Northland to the snow-capped volcanoes of the central plateau, from the forests of the Te Urewera to the majestic fiords, glaciers and mountains of the south,





this land is unique. Plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth can be found here.

There are unlimited opportunities for outdoor enjoyment, ranging from water skiing to snow skiing and snowboarding, from diving and snorkelling to mountain climbing, from kayaking to tramping and trout fishing. But most of all New Zealand's national parks offer the chance to enjoy an unspoiled primeval landscape, where humans have had only minimal impact.

Mount Cook National Park is a harsh land of ice and rock. Glaciers cover 40% of it. There are 19 peaks over 3,000 metres including of course New Zealand's highest mountain, Mt Cook or Aoraki as it is also known. The park is also part of Te Wahipounamu – South Westland World Heritage Area in recognition of its outstanding natural values.

The mountains are seen as ancestors by the Tangata Whenua – the Ngai Tahu people. Aoraki is sacred above all and Maori do not believe that it is appropriate to climb onto what is effectively the head of such an ancestor. Yet European immigrants and visitors alike have come to the area from the earliest times of settlement with the intention of climbing the unclimbed and their stories are the stuff of legends – given the primitive equipment available to these early climbers.

There is virtually no forest in the park. Instead the park is alive with the most wonderful alpine plants. In summer look for the striking Mount Cook buttercup, the large mountain daisies and watch out for the fearsome wild spaniard or spear grass! Birdlife is restricted to species that like an open habitat. Birds like kea and the well-camouflaged pippit. The braided riverbed of the Waitaki is home to the black stilt, one of New Zealand's rarest birds.

The World Heritage Convention includes a means of identifying sites around the world that have sufficient 'outstanding universal cultural or natural value' to merit their recognition as significant parts of our World Heritage. Countries that have signed the Convention (States Parties) pledge to identify and protect these sites, together with others that represent their national heritage.

The credibility of the World Heritage Convention stems from countries' regular reporting on the condition of sites, measures taken to preserve them and on their efforts to raise public awareness of their cultural and natural heritage.

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Welcome to Mount Aspiring National Park and its wonderful mixture of remote wilderness, high mountains and beautiful river valleys. It is a walker's paradise and a must for mountaineers. The views are endless and unforgettable. Mt Aspiring National Park straddles the southern end of the Southern Alps. The closest towns are Wanaka, Queenstown, Glenorchy and Te Anau. It is one of New Zealand's larger parks at 355,543 hectares and it lies alongside the largest, Fiordland National Park. The park is part of Te Wahipounamu - Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area. Ancient Maori trails led through parts of what is now park. Travellers passed through in search of pounamu (greenstone), much valued as a material for tools, weapons and ornaments. After European settlement many of the valleys were farmed and exploited for minerals such as scheelite. Remnants of these activities can still be found in and around the park. Tourism development began in the late 1880s. Even then it was possible to take a guided trip into the Routeburn Valley.

The park spans a large area, from the Haast River in the north to the Humbolt Mountains in the south. Large valleys, carved out by ancient glaciers, dissect high mountain ranges. Mt Aspiring itself is the only peak over 3000 metres outside Mount Cook National Park. One of the most unusual areas in the park is the Red Hills 'mineral belt' in the southwest. Here the concentration of magnesium in the soil is so high that only a few hardy plants survive. Beech forests dominate below the bush line. Each beech species favours slightly different growing conditions so while you might find red beech in sunny, frost-free situations, you will find silver or mountain beech at higher altitudes,



happily surviving winter snow falls. Ribbonwoods are among the first to colonise open areas (caused by slips and avalanches); these are among New Zealand's few deciduous trees. Above the bushline are snow tussock grasslands and herbfields with mountain buttercups, daisies, and ourisias.

Rifleman, bellbird, South Island robin, yellow crowned parakeet, mohua (yellowhead), tomtit, South Island fantail and New Zealand pigeon are common bush birds. Towards evening, native bats and moreporks (small owls) may be seen and heard. Blue ducks and paradise shelducks live in the valley. Introduced animals include whitetail deer in the lower Routeburn valley, red deer throughout the forested areas and chamois about the mountaintops. Possums, rats and stoats are widespread. Introduced brown and rainbow trout are found in the lower Route Burn and brown trout are present in Lake Howden.

The park's alpine areas are home to the threatened rock wren and the high-profile kea. These mischievous mountain parrots have been known to take an unhealthy interest in visitors' packs and tents.

sample itinerary

day one-five

Meet your guide in Wanaka at our office 8:30am. Check equipment. Drive to Raspberry flat helicopter staging area (approx 1 hour down the magnificent Matukituki Valley). Dress for alpine landing, then fly into Bevan Col (the start of the glacier). Here we fit crampons, work on skills such as self-arresting, rope management, cramponing. We rope together for glacier travel, and walk over the glacier for approximately two hours to Colin Todd hut (1800m) or camp if the weather is fine. Mid summer rewards us with light until 9-10pm.

You've heard of an alpine start, now it's your turn. We wake EARLY, have breakfast, and start out by the light of our headlamps. By the time the sun rises, we're well into our adventure, and have gained a good amount of elevation. Then terrain and views become progressively more impressive. Finally, the summit ! (1220m of vertical ascent).

Rest day or further skills or move out of the national park.

Walk down from the Bonar glacier through the snowline to French Ridge hut or via Bevan Col depending on conditions.

Walk lower down through the bush line to the Matukituki Valley floor and meander along the river back towards the Raspberry flat car park and road end. We drive back to Wanaka feeling exhilarated.

day six-twelve

Meet your guide in Wanaka. Check equipment. Drive to Mount Cook Village (2.5 hours). Fly into Plateau hut.

Ascent of smaller peak in the Grand Plateau area, e.g. Dixon, Anzac peaks. Practice cramponing and climbing skills.

Either option on an extra early start (1am) to ascend Mount Cook and return to hut; or start later (5am) and ascend half way up the Linda to bivvy under the Bowie ridge

Ascend Mount Cook from bivvy or rest day

Walk out via Cinerama Col to Mount Cook village. Return to Wanaka.

experience required

Clients should be extremely fit and be strong enough to complete a very long day at a constant pace over technical ground with some reserve. A good knowledge and execution of all cramponing techniques is required.

access

The flights into Bevan Col in Mount Aspiring National Park, and Plateau hut in Mount Cook National Park are included in the price.



egress

We walk out of both parks. If you prefer to fly, flights out can be arranged by your guide at the time.

bonus extras

- ▲ Weather is always a consideration in the high mountains. We provide an optional extra 1 day weather contingency for FREE, to increase your chances of a successful ascent, just in case we have bad weather at the start of your trip and we are unable to fly in. This means that your 12-day expedition ascent could start a day later. We recommend you allow some flexibility with your travel arrangements.
- ▲ You will notice that most of your technical equipment is included the price of your ascent, making the “extras” affordable.

logistics

grading	Mount Aspiring: SW ridge 3+ Aoraki/Mount Cook: Linda glacier route Grade 3 or European grade AD
duration	12 days + 1 day weather contingency
price	price on application
access	Flights included into both parks
season	October through mid-January
guide-client ratio	1:1 or 2:2
prerequisites	Clients should be extremely fit and be strong enough to complete a very long day at a constant pace over technical ground with some reserve. A good knowledge and execution of all cramponing techniques is required
accommodation	hut or bivvy
bonus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ 1 day weather contingency ▲ technical equipment provided

The trip price includes: * Package includes, air access, meals and energy snacks, technical equipment, hut and landing fees, guide fees, and 15% Goods and Services Tax.

grading system

Standard NZ grading system is used for alpine routes in normal conditions.

grade 1	Easy scramble. Use of rope generally only for glacier travel.
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grade 2	Steeper trickier sections may need a rope.
grade 3	Longer steeper sections generally. Use of technical equipment necessary. Ice climbs may require two tools.
grade 4	Technical climbing. Knowledge of how to place ice and rock gear quickly and efficiently a must. Involves a long day.
grade 5	Sustained technical climbing. May have vertical sections on ice.
grade 6	Multiple crux sections. Vertical ice may not have adequate protection. Good mental attitude and solid technique necessary. May require a bivvy on route and be a long way from civilisation.
grade 7	Grade 7 and beyond is possible but not yet established in the region.

about aspiring guides

- ▲ Since 1990... our website has details on our team.
- ▲ **We are about action.** We will spend as much time in the mountains as possible actually climbing peaks and developing skills. You don't gain judgment, skills and safe practices in the classroom.
- ▲ We are **specialists** in alpine guiding and instruction courses.
- ▲ Our trips offer the 'wilderness' approach to the mountains. We retain the option to stay in alpine huts ... with fine weather we will base ourselves from alpine camps (often combined with an overnight bivouac). This factor alone offers a greater perception and awareness of the mountain environment.
- ▲ Our **specialist** guides are NZMGA / IFMGA certified. They have impressive backgrounds with inspiring futures. They are friendly and personable; focused on delivering a safe, enjoyable and informative trips. In order to gain these qualifications guides must undergo rigorous training and assessment on climbing skills, instructional skills, avalanche training and assessment, wilderness first aid, rescue training and much more. The qualification takes many years (5-7) to attain and ensures you are receiving a professional service.
- ▲ We maintain a maximum guide to client ratio of 1:4 to reduce our impact on an area and give participants the best possible attention by the guide.
- ▲ Our activities are based in the Mount Aspiring, Westland, Cook, Fiordland National Parks, one of the most scenic and unspoilt alpine regions in the world. There are numerous peaks and routes of various difficulties making this an ideal training ground for any of the world's mountain ranges.
- ▲ The most important attributes in mountaineering are a solid climbing standard and mountain awareness; sound judgement of your own ability; good preparation and decision-making skills

we care about you

We want to maximise your chance of having a mountain experience that is successful and enjoyable therefore offer a bonus one day weather contingency on all fly-in ascents. Our philosophy here at Aspiring Guides is such that we aim to cover all aspects of a mountaineering trip with you. This includes preparatory housekeeping matters too: let us know what you do/don't like eating, any allergies/medical conditions, and any special requests. We recognise that the world of mountaineering presents a challenge right from the start; namely; getting the detailed information, selecting the right option and having faith in the guiding company you decide to invest your time and money with.

location and itinerary

We will meet you in Wanaka at the scheduled appointment time, usually 8:30am on day one. The Aspiring Guides office is situated at 99 Ardmore Street, Wanaka on the main thoroughfare and only 50 metres from the shores of Lake Wanaka. Wanaka is the gateway to the Mount Aspiring National Park, and the Southern Alps. Our office staff can offer



advice with accommodation and shuttle reservations, and of course, local attractions. Wanaka is very popular during the winter and summer months. Please arrange your accommodation as early as possible.

booking and cancellations

NZ\$500 deposit per person confirms your booking. Full payment must be made 60 days before commencement date. If the balance is not received by the specified date, we reserve the right to cancel your booking and your deposit will be forfeited, unless a delay in your payment has been agreed by a director of Aspiring Guides Limited. Should you cancel your booking for any reason you will receive a full refund less a cancellation fee: more than 60 days NZ\$200 per person, between 60 and 30 days NZ\$500 per person, between 29 and 15 days 75% of the total course or trip fee. Cancellation less than 15 days or during your trip no refund will be given.

weather

weather

How does the one day weather contingency work?

Aspiring Guides is the only NZ Guiding Company that offers this bonus to its clients. Instead of a wasted day doing other activities with your guide (inside or outside) as the weather permits, you can defer your trip for one day and not waste any precious guiding time. You will start the next day with the full number of days allocated for the trip still available. While one day may not be the cure for all bad weather situations, sometimes an extra day at the start of your trip can make all the difference.

The one day Weather Contingency applies only to the start date of your trip. This means your trip could start a day late if you choose to use this option.

Once a trip begins there is no additional weather contingency days allowed. There are also no refunds for bad weather. Check out our excellent website for current mountain and weather conditions. See also our booking terms and conditions.

What happens if the weather is bad?

The mountains are immune to human plans and expectations. We need to make our plans flexible to allow for inclement weather and other unfavourable conditions. When the weather is bad in the mountains we will make a decision whether to attempt entering the mountains on each given day. We do not believe that entering the high country soaked to the skin and a bad forecast is a good idea. Your guides are very experienced and will attempt to the best of their ability to make the best decision they can. In the unlikely event adverse weather prevents a trip from immediately moving into the mountains, you have the opportunity to carry out sub alpine adventures and skill development activities until the conditions improve. This decision will be made by your guides to optimise and make valuable use of your time. Fortunately there is a lot which can be achieved during bad weather from Wanaka. Some of the best rockclimbing in New Zealand is 15 minutes drive from our office. These cliffs are set up with sport climbing routes as well as quality 'natural' lines providing an ideal venue for ropes skills training, developing rescue techniques, and even for working on your rock climbing skills.

In the unlikely event of weather and/or conditions preventing ascents of Mount Aspiring and/or Mount Cook from happening, an alternative venue/ascent will be recommended. Any additional expenses (helicopter, transport) will be added to your account. Your guide remains employed for 12 days wages, whether or not you want to continue with alternative activities.

In the unlikely event of a trip being held up longer than anticipated in the mountains, for any reason, AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF NZ\$450 PER GUIDE PER DAY IS CHARGED (this is a cost price and will be divided between the trip participants). Your guide is working until you return to our offices at the trip finish.



What weather can I expect on my trip?

In summer the general mountain climbing season runs from November through to mid May with the warmest month being January with 16 hours of daylight on the longest day. Temperatures can remain high during this period by day and drop to - 5 degrees Celsius overnight.

In November and December we can expect more snow cover on the routes, and as temperatures warm up into the summer months of January and February, we traditionally experience more settled weather and mixed climbing conditions such as snow, rock and ice). March and April bring late summer conditions which are mainly a combination of rock and ice routes. Generally we experience our first alpine snowfall mid May onwards.

meals and snacks

Energy snacks and nutritious meals are an essential ingredient in helping you perform to your highest standard. We provide excellent meals and plenty of it. We cater for your specific dietary requirements.

maps and guidebooks

We have maps and guide books available for purchase in our office. Alternatively, we can post these to you.

valuables and luggage

Additional luggage and valuables can be securely stored at our office during your trip.

insurance

We strongly recommend that all our clients carry travel insurance which covers you while travelling to and from NZ, luggage mishaps, and in case you have to cancel your trip. The New Zealand Accident Compensation System (ACC) will cover most of the expenses relating to an evacuation and/or medical treatment/rehabilitation in the unlikely event of an accident occurring. This service may not apply to evacuation costs for personal medical conditions. You are not entitled to bulk payments for compensation and you cannot claim damages for costs under the ACC act (no legal action can be made in NZ). Whilst our focus is on safety we will not be responsible for any evacuation or medical costs resulting from any accident. Likewise equipment damage or loss remain your responsibility. Some insurance companies can provide adventure activities' cover - if you wish to investigate this option further, please contact our office for information.

communication and messages

Our climbing trips and courses are in radio and satellite phone communications with our Operations/Safety base and the Department of Conservation local office that manages the Mt Aspiring National park area. We obtain weather information and coordinate helicopters through these channels. In some circumstances mountain radio links are available for the relay of any urgent messages.



fitness & health

To make the most of your adventure it is advisable to be fit enough to partake in the activities with enough stamina to get the most participation and enjoyment. We have two editorials on our website (Online Magazine) on how to prepare for mountaineering. Your guide places special focus on fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly.

how to book

To register for a trip, you can book online through our excellent website. Your deposit of NZ\$500 may be paid by Visa or Mastercard, or bank transfer (NZ only). The forms required can be found on our website. Our booking terms and conditions are detailed on our online booking form on our website. Balance of payment is required 60 days before your trip start.

We will send an appointment email approximately 4 weeks before your trip is due to commence. We will provide final information and ask for more information from you, e.g. dietary requirement, trip objectives and/or concerns, height and weight, fitness and any equipment rental required.

You can fly to Wanaka from Christchurch on a twice daily service (www.airnz.co.nz). Alternatively if this connection is not possible from Christchurch, fly to Queenstown, which is 1.5 hours by shuttle from Wanaka and costs NZ\$35 - http://www.time2.co.nz/transport/wanaka_connexions. Wanaka Connexions also shuttle from Christchurch and Dunedin to Wanaka. Direct Trans-Tasman flights are now available to Queenstown, Dunedin and Christchurch. Intercity express coachlines provide a service from Christchurch to Wanaka departing 7:45am and arriving at Wanaka 2:10pm. (contact 0800-100-663 or www.intercitycoach.co.nz).

We look forward to sharing your aspirations....and the opportunity of climbing with you in the future,

the team @ aspiring guides

