



Upper Wilkin experience

explore lakes & waterfalls


season
oct - may


price
\$ 1,750 p.p.


access
fly in / jetboat out


location
Mt Aspiring National Park -
World heritage area


grade
moderate


Group size
max 5; min 2


Trek dates: 2011-2012
4 days

2011

Oct 29 - Nov 1

Nov 14-17

Dec 5-8; 19-22

2012

Jan 8-11; 20-23; 30-2 Feb

Feb 13-16; 27-1 Mar

Mar 19-22; Apr 6-9

The Upper Wilkin Experience is not an ordinary hiking trip. It places you in the heart of Mt. Aspiring National Park where the fantastic landforms and flora offer challenges far out of the ordinary. This trip is designed for walkers of all abilities. There is no need for experience and the fitness level is moderate. Families and novices are welcome. There are no heavy packs to carry and all equipment is provided. Some parts of the tracks are demanding, offering stimulating hiking opportunities for more ambitious hikers. It is a Fly In/Jet Boat Out trip.

Take a short flight into the remote Wilkin Valley. From our base at Top Forks Hut, stroll in the forest, swim in the crystal clear river, and relax, relax, relax. This area is one of New Zealand's great treasures. We lunch at the feet of Castor, Pollux, Mercury, Vesta, Juno, and Apollo. If the native flora is your interest, the primordial plant associations will amaze you. Eighty percent of the Native plant species are found nowhere else in the world! This is an experience you will never forget.

We guide **2-5 discerning clients** on the wildest back country trekking and hiking in New Zealand. We operate primarily in Mount Aspiring National Park out of Wanaka or Queenstown. We are professional mountain guides, not tour operators. Because we guide **small groups**, we can take you, not on the great walks, but the best walks ... where no-one else can go.

We stay at **pre-placed camp sites** instead of crowded huts. This means you only carry a **light pack**. We rarely see other parties. All you need is appropriate clothing, a good pair of walking shoes or hiking boots (and a spirit of adventure). You will welcome the comfort of our fantastic home away from home. Our astonishing food is only outdone by the mountain scenery. Join a trek, or book out your private trek on or around the dates listed below.

The Mount Aspiring National Park is a majestic and **seldom travelled** area, literally off the beaten track. The surrounding peaks and huge tracts of unmodified native bush, give a feeling of timelessness. This is the basis of the area's reputation as having some of the most dramatic and undiscovered trekking in NZ. The park forms part of the Te Wahipounamu **World heritage site**. Many people do not realize that New Zealand does not have any large predators, no bears, no fox or wolf. There are no snakes in New Zealand. There are absolutely no animals which will harm you.

New Zealand is a truly unique country. Due to its geographic isolation many plants and animals have evolved which exist no where else on earth. The only way to appreciate this biodiversity and get a sense of how glaciation shaped the Southern Alps is to walk through the densely forested valleys, relax by the crystal clear rivers and endure the trek up to a high alpine pass.

Maori walked through what is now Mount Aspiring National Park in search of pounamu (greenstone). They discovered routes through the Southern Alps which would take them from the west coast into the interior. Towards the end of the 19th century the European settlers came "exploring". They were looking for pastoral land, mineral deposits (mostly GOLD) and also routes through to the West coast. We now follow in the footsteps of Maori and the Pakeha surveyors as we trek through this stunning mountain wilderness.

- Remote Alpine Lakes
- Spectacular views of hanging glaciers
- Native flora and fauna
- Good wholesome Food
- Kea mountain Parrot
- Light pack
- Air and water support
- Hiking Challenges for all abilities

itinerary

day one	Upper Wilkin Camp Day. We meet with transport and guide at 8:30 a.m. and travel 45 minutes to the small village of Makarora. Here we board a small fixed wing aircraft and fly into the heart of Mount Aspiring Park. A leisurely 2-hour walk brings us to the Top Forks Hut. The walking is not difficult but it is exciting with numerous river crossings and your first taste of wilderness travel. The afternoon is spent exploring this marvellous valley.
day two	Alpine lakes. This day is spent discovering the three alpine lakes known as Diana, Lucidus, and Castilia. The trail climbs gradually as it weaves through native beech forest until breaking out above tree line. The hiking to final lake, Lake Castilia is some of the most rugged (and rewarding) terrain you will ever encounter. This day can be as long as you like, from 1 hour to 6 hours.
day three	Waterfall Flat. The hike to Waterfall Flat climbs from dense forest into the high alpine. It is a magnificent climb as the trail rises through Snow-Bridge Gorge, a deep canyon surrounded by glaciers and waterfalls. The trail is challenging until it opens out into the incomparable Waterfall Flat. Surrounded by high peaks and flowing rivers, this seldom visited valley is a unique New Zealand paradise. 6-7 hours return.
day four	Jetboat. We head down river to the Kerin Forks to meet the jetboat. This is a gentle downhill grade for 6-7 hours along the north bank of the great Wilkin River. The track is varied with numerous river crossings. A thrilling 1-hour jetboat ride brings us to our van and the return to Wanaka about 4:30pm.

trek dates 2011-2012 or book your own private trek

2011		2012				
October	November	December	January	February	March	April
29-1 nov	14-17	5-8 19-22 19 - 23	8-11 20-23 30-2 feb	13-16 27-1 mar	19-22	6-9

logistics

duration	4 days (if you preferred a longer trek, consider the Gillespie/Rabbit Pass 8 day trek)
price	NZ\$1,750 per person (min 2 – max 5)
access	Fly in and walk out
season	Oct - May
guide-client ratio	1:5 maximum; 1:2 minimum
prerequisites	Easy/Moderate Grade. This trip requires a moderate level of fitness. There is some off trail and a good uphill section. The trail is sometimes rough and muddy. Not suitable for children under 12.
accommodation	Hut for night one, Tent or bivouac camping options for the other nights
maps	F38 Wilkin

The trip price includes: *Guide and permit fees, group camping equipment, all trip related meals and energy foods, flight, jetboat,, ground transfers ex Wanaka and NZ Goods and Services tax.*

difficulty scale

Easy/Moderate Grade. This trip requires a moderate level of fitness. There is some off trail and a good uphill section. The trail is sometimes rough and muddy. Not suitable for children under 12.

Easy	Moderate	Hard
Average level of fitness. Age 12+. 5-6 hours each day. Light packs. Previous hiking recommended	Formed tracks perhaps rough or slippery. 6-8 hours each day. Long ascents/descents. Light packs. Previous hiking recommended.	High level of fitness and good balance. Max 8+ hours each day. Off trail, loose rock & insecure terrain in places. Occasional exposure where falling is a possibility if care is not taken. Previous hiking experience required. Large ascents/descents can be expected. Light packs.

we care about you

We want to maximise your chance of having a mountain experience that is successful and enjoyable. Our philosophy here at Aspiring Guides is such that we aim to cover all aspects of a trekking 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 have a sound environmental policy (small groups, avoidance of machine prepared tracks, zero waste, operated and owned locally). We are professional mountain guides not tour operators. We take you, not on the great walks, but the best walks.



location and itinerary

The trip starts 8:30am on day one, although we will meet you the evening before at your accommodation to check through your gear and finalise last minute details. The Aspiring Guides office is situated at Level One, 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 on 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 (a list will be emailed during the initial stages of booking).

booking and cancellations

NZ\$500 deposit per person confirms your booking. Full payment must be made 60 days before commencement date. 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

New Zealand is famous for its changeable weather. The mountains here are characterized by long sunny fine periods mixed with sudden and sometimes heavy rain or snow. Our experienced guides are well equipped to provide the best possible trip and have many years experience in judging the conditions. Travel in bad weather is an art in itself, the temperate rain forest here is absolutely beautiful in the rain. By using Wild Walks you give yourself the best chance of a successful dealing with whatever the weather may throw at you. It is very rare for trips to be cancelled due to weather; in the unfortunate event that this happens, there is a 50% cancellation fee. Once a trip begins there are no refunds. The trekking area of our website has detailed information on weather.

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 requirement.

insurance

Injuries are covered by the New Zealand Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). ACC pays for the majority of costs incurred in evacuation and treatment of injured people. They do not cover you in case of illness. For more information concerning what ACC covers check out <http://www.acc.co.nz/claims/am-i-covered/index.htm>. We recommend that you have travel insurance that will cover you in being repatriated to your home country. Most standard travel insurance policies that cover lost deposit or cancellation fees will cover you in case you are somehow prevented from participating in the trip.

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 appointment information and ask for more information from you, e.g. dietary requirement, objectives and/or concerns, fitness and any equipment rental required.

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

the team @ aspiring guides

