

Queenstown & Wanaka



If Queenstown didn't exist, someone would have to invent it. With a cinematic background of mountains and lakes you actually have seen in the movies, and a 'what can we think of next?' array of adventure activities, it's little wonder that the South Island's premier tourist town tops many travellers' Kiwi itineraries. This Disneyland of derring-do will prompt a hundred synonyms for 'exciting' and 'thrilling' for your travel journal, but lurking in and around the tangle of bungy cords are experiences that will last longer than a shriek-inducing 10 or 20 seconds.

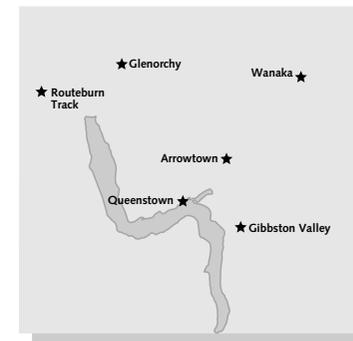
Venture out on the Greenstone and Routeburn Tracks for extended outdoor thrills amid arguably New Zealand's most stunning scenery, or sample world-beating wines in world-beating surroundings in the Gibbston Valley. If you listen really closely, you might even hear the screams of glee across the road at bungy's birthplace, the Kawarau River.

Slow down (slightly) in Wanaka, Queenstown's junior sibling, now offering its own menu of outdoor adventure, and a growing restaurant and bar scene. Explore Mt Aspiring National Park to reinforce you're only a short drive from diving into true NZ wilderness.

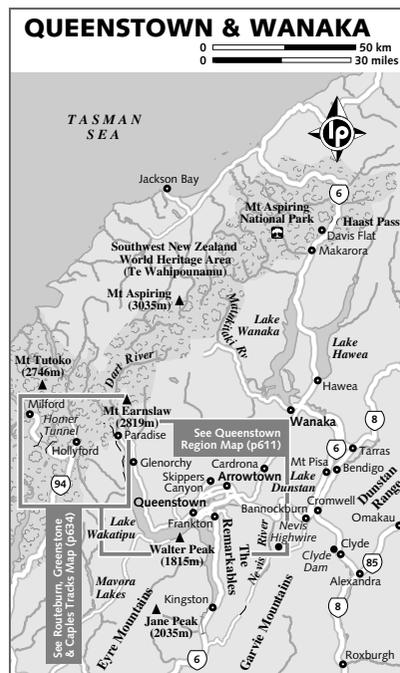
Slow down even more in sleepy Glenorchy, a scenic reflection of Queenstown and Wanaka before the adventure groupies moved in for summer. And in little Arrowtown, keep on slowing down to consider the town's gold-mining over dinner in a quiet arcade bistro. The following day there'll be plenty of opportunity to jump back into the region's cavalcade of fun.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sampling superb wines amid the dramatic scenery at **Gibbston Valley** of the region's up-and-coming wineries (p622)
- Relaxing and dining in **Arrowtown** (p628) after the last of the day-trippers have left
- Doing things you've only dreamed about in **Queenstown** (p615), NZ's (and maybe the world's) adrenaline-rush capital
- Slowing down after Queenstown's thrills by walking the peaceful **Routeburn Track** (p633)
- Exploring Lake Wakatipu's upper reaches by horseback, kayak and jetboat (p631) from sleepy and stunning **Glenorchy**
- Watching a flick at Wanaka's **Cinema Paradiso** (p642) and looking forward to pizza at intermission
- Barhopping and dining in cosmopolitan **Queenstown** (p624)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 03 ■ www.queenstown-nz.co.nz ■ www.queenstown-vacation.com



QUEENSTOWN REGION

Surrounded by the soaring indigo heights of the Remarkables, crowned by Coronet Peak, and framed by the meandering coves of Lake Wakatipu, it's little wonder that Queenstown is a show-off. The town wears its 'Global Adventure Capital' badge proudly, and most visitors take the time to do crazy things they've never done before. But a new Queenstown is also emerging, with a cosmopolitan restaurant and arts scene and excellent vineyards. Go ahead and jump off a bridge or out of a plane, but also make time to slow down, and experience Queenstown without the adrenaline. And once you've eased up, look forward to more of the same in historic Arrowtown or beautiful Glenorchy.

QUEENSTOWN

pop 8500

No-one's ever visited Queenstown and said, 'I'm bored'. Looking like a small town, but displaying the energy of a small city, Queenstown offers a mountain of activities. If your 'Things to Do' list contains bungy-jumping, caving, rafting, sledging, jetboating, skiing, skydiving and hang gliding, trained operators are waiting on your call right now.

Maximise bragging rights with your souvenir T-shirt in the town's atmospheric restaurants,

Climate

Summer (December to February) has long days with temperatures up to 30°C, but January also sees the region's highest rainfall. This elevated region gets crisp winters (June to August) with daytime temperatures around 5°C to 10°C, dipping to freezing or below at night, and lots of mountaintop snow. Autumn (March to May) is pleasant with relatively warm temperatures (15°C to 20°C), while spring (September to November) is slightly cooler.

Getting There & Around

Air New Zealand links Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch to Queenstown, with connections to Wanaka. Qantas flies to Auckland and Rotorua from Queenstown. Bus and shuttle companies crisscross Otago from Dunedin to Queenstown and Wanaka. Several divert south to Te Anau and Invercargill, and others migrate north to Christchurch or travel through the Haast Pass and up the West Coast. The major operators include InterCity, Atomic Shuttles, Naked Bus, Tracknet, Wanaka Connexions and K Bus.

QUEENSTOWN & WANAKA FACTS

Eat A mighty Fergburger in Queenstown (p625)

Drink Wanaka Beerworks' (p636) fine Brewski lager. (Right, now for some exercise...)

Read *Walking the Routeburn Track* by Philip Holden for a wander through the history, flora and fauna of this tramp, along with a good dose of Kiwi culture and some inspiring photos

Listen To the silence as you kayak blissfully around Glenorchy and Kinloch (p631)

Watch Art-house movies and eat Kiwi-as Peanut Slab ice cream at Arrowtown's quirky Dorothy Browns boutique cinema (p630)

Swim at The northern arm of Lake Wakatipu with its blue waters and tranquil setting

Festival Warbirds over Wanaka (p639), a spectacular international air show amid spectacular mountain and lake scenery

Tackiest tourist attraction The yellow American school bus with an outrageous Monster Truck makeover at the Cardrona Adventure Park (p644)

laid-back cafés and bustling bars. Be sure to also find a lakeside bench at sunrise or dusk and immerse yourself in one of NZ's most beautiful views. It's a pretty good option for an alfresco afternoon picnic as well.

Confident Queenstown is well used to visitors with international accents, so expect great tourist facilities, but also great big crowds, especially in summer and winter. Autumn (March to May) and spring (October to November) are slightly quieter, but Queenstown's a year-round destination. The town's restaurants and bars are regularly packed with a mainly young crowd that really know how to enjoy themselves on holiday. If you're a more private soul, drop in to see what all the fuss is about, but then get and about by exploring the sublime wilderness further up the lake at Glenorchy.

History

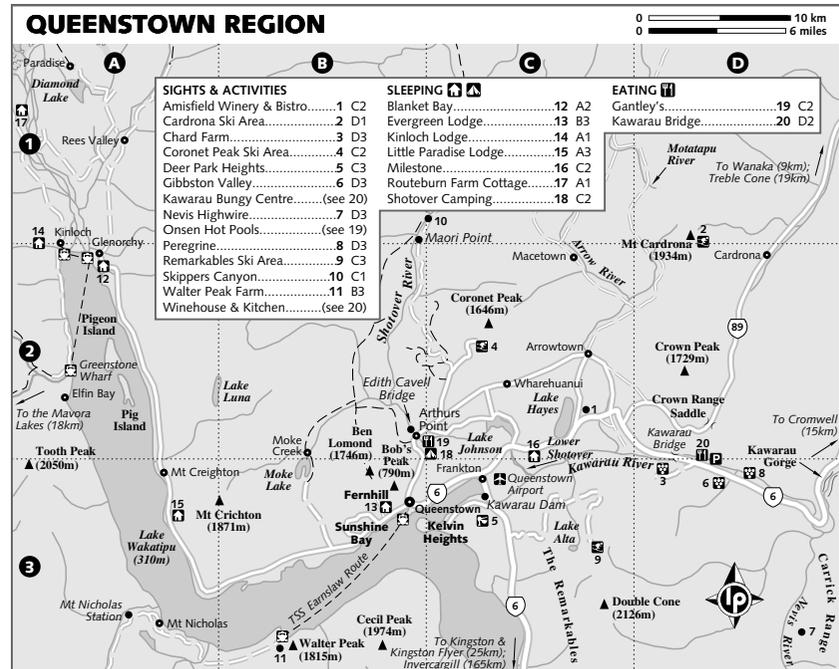
The region was deserted when the first Pakeha (white person) arrived in the mid-1850s, although there is evidence of previous Maori settlement. Sheep farmers came first, but after two shearers discovered gold on the banks of

MAORI NEW ZEALAND: QUEENSTOWN & WANAKA

Kiwi Haka (p626) perform nightly atop the Queenstown gondola, and Te Maori (p614) perform during the day at the Kiwi Birdlife Park. Two Queenstown galleries worth checking out for contemporary Maori art and design are Kapa (p627) and toi o tahuna (p627). For active travellers, Kawarau Jet operates highly rated jetboat cultural tours with Maori guides (p616).

the Shotover River in 1862, a deluge of prospectors followed. Within a year Queenstown was a mining town with streets, permanent buildings and a population of several thousand. It was declared 'fit for a queen' by the NZ government, hence Queenstown was born. Lake Wakatipu was the principal means of transport, and at the height of the boom there were four paddle steamers and 30 other craft plying the waters.

By 1900 the gold had petered out and the population was a mere 190. It wasn't until the





QUEENSTOWN IN...

Two Days

Start your day with a breakfast burrito at **Halo** (p625) before heading to Shotover St to book your adrenaline-charged activities for the next day. Spend the rest of the day visiting **Williams Cottage** (p613), **Skyline Gondola** (p614) and **Kiwi Birdlife Park** (p614), before the exciting **Shotover Jet** (p616) or a lake cruise on the **TSS Earnslaw** (p620). Wind up with a walk through **Queenstown Gardens** (p618) to capture dramatic views of the Remarkables at dusk. Have a sunset drink at **Dux de Lux** (p626) or **Monty's** (p626), before dinner at the **Fishbone Bar & Grill** (p624), or **Wai Waterfront Restaurant & Wine Bar** (p624). The evening's still young so head to **Minibar** (p626) or **Bardeaux** (p625). Devote the next day to bungee jumping, skydiving, white-water rafting or perusing the art galleries in Church Lane. Enjoy dinner at **Winnies** (p624), and stay on for the live music or DJs.

Four Days

Follow the two-day itinerary, then head to **Arrowtown** (p628) to wander the enigmatic **Chinese settlement** (p628), browse the local shops and eat a gourmet lunch. The following day drive along the shores of Lake Wakatipu to tiny **Glenorchy** (p631). Have lunch at **Glenorchy Café** (p632) and then strap on your hiking boots and head into **Mt Aspiring National Park** (p636) to do some wonderful short tramps in the vicinity of the **Routeburn Track** (p633). If you'd rather exercise your arms, go kayaking across the lake at **Kinloch** (p631).

1950s that Queenstown became a popular holiday destination. In recent years Queenstown has wrestled with rising water levels in Lake Wakatipu and, in 1999, a third of the town was severely flooded. To thwart a repeat occurrence, there was an initial proposal to permanently lower lake levels. Instead, the town has decided to raise floor levels and put other flood-mitigation measures in place.

Orientation

Queenstown's town centre is compact and pedestrian-friendly, with most tourist facilities along Shotover St, Beach St and the Mall. The airport is 8km east of town; see p628.

Information

EMERGENCY

Ambulance, fire service & police (☎ 111)
Queenstown Medical Centre (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 0500; www.qmc.co.nz; 9 Isle St; ☎ 8.30am-8pm)
 Emergency care and a pharmacy.

INTERNET ACCESS

Most hostels also offer internet access.
Café (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9888; 50 Shotover St) Has laptop access including wi-fi.
Internet Laundry (Map p614; 1 Shotover St) Surf as you wash.
Internet Depot (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8581; 26 Shotover St)

MONEY

ATMs and banks are scattered throughout town.

POST

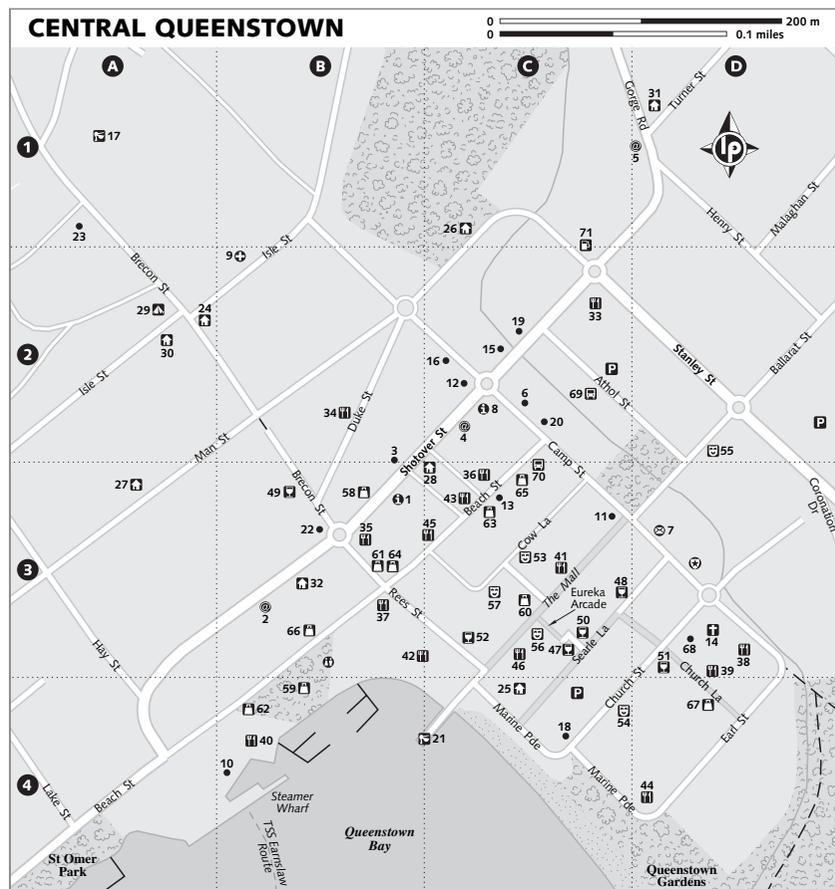
Post office (Map p614; 13 Camp St)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Department of Conservation (DOC) visitor information centre (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7935; queenstownvcc@doc.govt.nz; 38 Shotover St; ☎ 8.30am-5pm May-Nov, to 6pm Dec-Apr) Hut tickets and weather and track updates; on the mezzanine floor above Outdoor Sports.
Info & Track Centre (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9708; www.inforack.co.nz; 37 Shotover St) Info on transport to trailheads.
Queenstown i-SITE (Map p614; ☎ 0800 668 888, 03-442 4100; www.queenstown-vacation.com; Clocktower Centre, cnr Shotover & Camp Sts; ☎ 7am-7pm Dec-Apr, to 6pm May-Nov) Also check www.queenstown-nz.co.nz.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Kiwi Discovery (Map p614; ☎ 0800 505 504, 03-442 7340; www.kiwidiscovery.com; 37 Camp St) Tramping packages, ski transport and equipment hire.
Real Journeys (Map p614; ☎ 0800 656 503, 03-442 7500; www.realjourneys.co.nz; Steamer Wharf, Beach St) Huge range of lake trips and tours.
Sight Seeing Shop (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7640; sightseeing.shop@xtra.co.nz; cnr the Mall & Camp St)
Station (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5252; www.thestation.co.nz; cnr Camp & Shotover Sts) Houses AJ Hackett Bungee.



Sights

Hop on the **Skyline Gondola** (Map p612; ☎ 03-441 0101; www.skyline.co.nz; Brecon St; adult/child/family return \$21/10/49; ☎ 9.30am-6.30pm) for fantastic views of Queenstown, the lake and mountains. At the top there's a café, restaurant with regular Maori cultural shows, and souvenir shops. Walking trails include the **loop track** (30 minutes return) or you can try the Luge (p618). To walk to the summit, take the upper, left-hand gravel track from the trailhead on Lomond Cres for an hour's uphill hike.

The **Kiwi Birdlife Park** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8059; www.kiwibird.co.nz; Brecon St; adult/child/family \$30/15/33; ☎ 9am-7pm Oct-Mar, to 6pm Apr-Sep, shows 11am, 1.30pm & 3pm) is your best bet to spy a kiwi. There are also 10,000 native plants and scores of birds,

including the rare black stilt, kea, morepork and parakeets. Stroll around the sanctuary, watch the conservation show and tiptoe quietly into the darkened kiwi houses. The conservation shows also incorporate a cultural show by the Te Maori performers. Kids under 15 get in free with a paying adult.

Williams Cottage (Map p614; cnr Marine Pde & Earl St; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat) is Queenstown's oldest home. An annex of Arrowtown's Lake District Museum & Gallery (p628), it was built in 1864 and remains close to its original condition including 1930s wallpaper. The cottage and its 1920s garden are now home to the very cool Vesta shop (p627) and café (p625).

Around the corner is the **Church of St Peter** (Map p614; www.stpeters.co.nz; cnr Church & Camp Sts;

INFORMATION		ENTERTAINMENT	
DOC Visitor Information Centre.....1	B3	Last Resort.....	26 C1
Destination Glenorchy.....(see 20)		Lomond Lodge.....	27 A3
Ecafé.....	2 B3	Queenstown Accommodation Centre.....	28 C3
Info & Track Centre.....	3 B2	Queenstown Lakeview	
Internet Depot.....	4 C2	Holiday Park.....	29 A2
Internet Laundry.....	5 C1	Southern Laughter.....	30 A2
Kiwi Discovery.....	6 C2	Turner Lodge.....	31 D1
Post Office.....	7 D3	YHA Queenstown Central.....	32 B3
Queenstown i-SITE.....	8 C2		
Queenstown Medical Centre.....	9 B2	EATING	
Real Journeys.....	10 B4	@thai.....(see 68)	
Sight Seeing Shop.....	11 C3	Alpine Supermarket.....	33 C2
Station.....	12 C2	Chop Chop.....	34 B2
		Fergburger.....	35 B3
		Fishbone Bar & Grill.....	36 C3
		Food Hall.....(see 65)	
		Habebes.....	37 B3
		Halo.....	38 D3
		Inspire Restaurant & Bar.....	39 D3
		Juice Stop.....	40 B4
		Kappa Sushi Cafe.....	41 C3
		Patagonia.....	42 B3
		Sombrero's.....	43 C3
		Vesta.....	44 C4
		Vudu Cafe.....	45 C3
		Wai Waterfront Restaurant & Wine Bar.....(see 10)	
		Winnies.....	46 C3
		SHOPPING	
		Alpine Sports.....	58 B3
		Arts & Crafts Market.....	59 B4
		Central Otago Wine Experience.....(see 13)	
		Goddess.....	60 C3
		Kapa.....	61 B3
		Kathmandu.....	62 B4
		Koha.....	63 C3
		Out There Clothing.....	64 B3
		Play It Again.....	65 C3
		rookies.....	66 B3
		Vesta.....(see 44)	
		toi o tahuna.....	67 D4
		TRANSPORT	
		Air New Zealand.....	68 D3
		Athol St Bus Terminal.....	69 C2
		connectabus.....	70 C3
		Fuel.....	71 C1
		Gravity Action.....(see 15)	
		Minibar.....	50 C3
		Monty's.....	51 D3
		Surreal.....	52 C3
		Winnies.....(see 46)	
		DRINKING	
		Bardeaux.....	47 C3
		Barmuda.....	48 C3
		Barup.....(see 48)	
		Buffalo Club.....	49 B3
		Eichardt's House Bar.....(see 25)	
		InterCity.....(see 8)	
		Info & Track Centre.....(see 3)	
		InterCity.....(see 8)	
		Kiwi Discovery.....(see 6)	
		Snowrental.....(see 20)	
		TSS Earnslaw.....(see 10)	
		Underwater Observatory.....	21 C4
		Vertigo.....	22 B3
		Williams Cottage.....(see 44)	
		Zoom.....	23 A1
		SLEEPING	
		Dairy.....	24 A2
		Eichardt's Private Hotel.....	25 C4

☎ services 10am Wed, 10.30am Sun), another oasis of calm. The gift of a faithful parishioner, this pretty wood-beamed building has a beautiful organ and colourful stained glass. Take a look at the cedar-wood lectern, which was carved by Ah Tong, a Chinese immigrant in the 1870s.

Underwater Observatory (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6142; Queenstown Bay Jetty; adult/child/family \$5/3/10; ☎ 9am-5pm) has six giant windows showcasing life under the lake. A feeder attracts NZ long-finned eels and when you pop a coin into a vendor, food pellets attract huge brown and rainbow trout. The highlights are the scaup (diving ducks), which dive down and swim right past the windows.

In Kelvin Heights, **Deer Park Heights** (Map p612; ☎ 0800 843 333; www.thedeerpark.co.nz; adult/child \$75/35) has 13 different species including deer, bison and llama on an estate overlooking the lake. The grounds are open daily during daylight

hours (\$20 per car), or you can visit on guided trips to see *Lord of the Rings* locations and hand feed the animals.

Activities

Combination tickets for a variety of Queenstown's more heart-stopping activities are available from **Queenstown Combos** (☎ 0800 423 836, 03-442 7318; www.combos.co.nz).

Some activities operators have an office where you can book but for most, head to Queenstown i-SITE or one of Queenstown's travel agents (p613).

BUNGY JUMPING

Queenstown is famous for bungee jumping, and **AJ Hackett Bungee** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7100; www.bungee.co.nz; Station, cnr Camp & Shotover Sts) is the sport's adventurous advocate. Once you've done one AJ Hackett jump, receive a 20% discount on subsequent jumps. Patrons over

65 years old jump free. Prices for the following include transport out of town and gondola rides where relevant.

The historic 1880 **Kawarau Bridge** (Map p611; adult/child \$140/110), 23km from Queenstown, became the world's first commercial bungy site in 1988 and allows you to leap 43m. Next door, the **Kawarau Bungy Centre** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 1177; SH6; adult/child/family \$20/10/50; ☎ 8am-5.45pm) has a Secrets of Bungy theatre and museum.

Atop Queenstown's gondola, the 47m-high **Ledge Bungy** (Map p612; per person \$154) is the only place you can bungy after dark.

The gold-standard jump is truly awe-inspiring/terrifying/crazy (choose one) 134m-high **Nevis Highwire** (Map p611; per person \$220), where you jump from a pod suspended over the Nevis River. AJ Hackett's Thrillology (per person \$425), combines the Kawarau, Ledge and Nevis jumps.

BUNGY VARIATIONS

Shotover Canyon Swing (☎ 0800 279 464, 03-442 6990; www.canyonswing.co.nz; per person \$169, additional swings \$49) is touted as the world's highest rope swing (109m). If you can't force yourself to jump, it can release you in a variety of creative ways. From there it's a 60m free fall and a wild swing across the canyon at 150km/h.

Same, same but different is the **Ledge Sky Swing** (Map p612; adult/child \$120/80), at AJ Hackett's Ledge Bungy site. Free fall in a harness before soaring through the air on a huge arc. The cost includes the gondola ride.

JETBOATING

The Shotover and Kawarau are Queenstown's most popular rivers to hurtle along; the lengthier and more scenic Dart River is

less travelled (see p631). Trips depart from Queenstown or go via minibus to the river and awaiting jetboat.

Shotover Jet (☎ 0800 746 868; www.shotoverjet.co.nz; adult/child \$109/69) does half-hour trips through the rocky Shotover Canyons, with lots of thrilling 360-degree spins. **Kawarau Jet** (Map p614; ☎ 0800 529 272, 03-442 6142; www.kjet.co.nz; Queenstown Bay Jetty; adult/child \$89/49) do one-hour trips on the Kawarau and Lower Shotover Rivers, and a special cultural 1½-hour trip (adult/child \$125/65) with Maori guides.

Skippers Canyon Jet (☎ 03-442 9434; www.skipperscanyonjet.co.nz; adult/child \$95/48) incorporates 30-minute spins in the narrow gorges of Skippers Canyon in its three-hour trips which cover the region's gold-mining history.

WHITE-WATER RAFTING

The choppy Shotover and calmer Kawarau Rivers are both great for rafting. Trips take four to five hours with two to three hours on the river. There's generally a minimum age of 13 years.

Companies include **Queenstown Rafting** (☎ 0800 723 8464, 03-442 9792; www.rafting.co.nz), **Extreme Green Rafting** (☎ 03-442 8517; www.nzraft.com) and **Challenge Rafting** (☎ 0800 423 836, 03-442 7318; www.raft.co.nz); prices start around \$165.

Family Adventures (☎ 03-442 8836; www.familyadventures.co.nz; adult/child \$150/110) offers gentler (Class I to Class II) trips on the Shotover suitable for children three years and older, and include swimming and a barbecue.

RIVER SURFING & WHITE-WATER SLEDGING

Hang onto a body board and 'surf' down the Kawarau River with **Serious Fun** (☎ 0800 737 468, 03-442 5262; www.riversurfing.co.nz) or **Mad Dog River Boarding** (☎ 03-442 7797; www.riverboarding.co.nz). Trips take about four hours (1½ hours in the water), cost around \$140 and run from September to June.

Frogz Have More Fun (☎ 0800 437 649, 03-441 2318; www.frogz.co.nz) lets you steer purpose-built, buoyant sledges down the challenging Kawarau River (\$285) and the more mellow Roaring Meg (\$135).

CANYONING

Canyoning.co.nz (☎ 03-441 3003; www.canyoning.co.nz; per person \$145) runs half-day trips in the nearby 12-Mile Delta Canyons incorporating waterslides, rock jumps and abseiling – even a zipline. Canyoning in the remote Routeburn

S...L...O...W D...O...W...N IN QUEENSTOWN Brett Atkinson

When you're surrounded by some of the world's most spectacular scenery, does it really make sense to experience it in a brief burst of a few terror-stricken seconds? Surely you're better off choosing an activity that's equally thrilling, and is one where you can soak up Queenstown's beauty? We all have our own reasons for not tackling the Nevis Highwire bungy, but that's my story, and I'm sticking to it OK?

A few seconds after taking off, I know I've made the right decision. My Argentinean pilot Gerard surfs the tandem hang glider on the slipping and sliding thermals surging around Queenstown's Coronet Peak, and before me is Lake Wakatipu. Still thrilling as hell, and I'll take a spectacular 20 minutes in the air over a sub-10-second injection of adrenaline any time.

And yes, it really does feel like you're flying.

Valley (\$195) is possible with **Canyoning.co.nz** and with **Routeburn Canyoning** (☎ 0800 222 696, 03-441 4386; www.gycanyoning.co.nz; per person \$215).

FLYING, GLIDING & SKYDIVING

Tandem Paragliding (Map p612; ☎ 0800 759 688, 03-441 8581; www.paraglide.net.nz; per person \$185) takes off from the top of the gondola, while **Flight Park Tandems** (☎ 0800 467 325; www.tandemparagliding.com; from 1140m/1620m \$175/199) offer spectacular views from Coronet Peak.

More relaxed paraflights take you 200m above the lake with **Queenstown Paraflights** (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 2242; www.paraflights.co.nz; Queenstown Bay Jetty; solo per adult/child \$95/80, tandem \$85/65). Soar with **Skytrek Hang Gliding** (☎ 0800 759 873; www.skytrek.co.nz; per person \$210) from Coronet Peak or the Remarkables. See boxed text, above.

Extreme Air (☎ 0800 727 245; www.extremear.co.nz; day/month \$195/2200) can train you at its paragliding and hang-gliding school.

Fly by Wire (☎ 0800 359 299, 03-442 2116; www.flybywire-queenstown.co.nz; per person \$155) lets you control a high-speed plane/guided missile on a leash at speeds of up to 170km/h.

Skydive with **NZONE** (☎ 0800 376 796, 03-442 5867; www.nzone.biz; from \$245) and free fall up to 200km/h before remembering your parachute.

SKIING

The Remarkables (p89) and Coronet Peak ski fields (p89) are the region's key snow-sport centres (see Map p611). Tune into 99.2FM from 6.45am to 9am to hear snow reports.

Churn up the snow with **Nevis Snowmobile Adventure** (☎ 03-442 4250; www.snowmobilenz.com; adult/child \$560/400); three-hour trips include a helicopter flight over the Remarkables.

For serious skiers, check out **Heli Ski Queenstown** (☎ 03-442 7733; www.flynz.co.nz; from \$795), **Harris Mountains Heli-Ski** (☎ 03-442 6722; www.heliski

.co.nz; from \$745) or **Southern Lakes Heliski** (☎ 03-442 6222; www.southernlakesheliski.co.nz; from \$645).

Ski equipment hire companies:

Gravity Action (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5277; 19 Shotover St)

Green Toad (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5311; 48 Camp St)

Outdoor Sports (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8883; Shotover St)

Snowrental (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 4187; 39 Camp St)

MOUNTAIN BIKING

There's excellent mountain biking around Queenstown. **Fat Tyre Adventures** (☎ 0800 328 897; www.fat-tyre.co.nz; from \$195) takes small tours off the main trails. Tours cater to different abilities with day tours, multiday tours, helibiking and single track riding. Bike hire and trail snacks are included.

If you're not keen on strenuous uphill pedalling, choose an operator who'll take you and your bike to a suitable high point. **Gravity Action** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5277; www.gravityaction.com; 19 Shotover St; from \$109) ventures into Skippers Canyon, while **Vertigo** (Map p614; ☎ 0800 837 8446, 03-442 8378; www.vertigobikes.co.nz; 4 Brecon St) has guided downhill trips on a purpose-built track from the gondola (two rides for \$149). Both operators have helibiking options.

Places to hire bikes:

Gravity Action (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5277; 19 Shotover St; per half-/full day from \$40/50)

Queenstown Bike Hire (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6039; cnr Marine Pde & Church St; per day from \$30)

Vertigo (Map p614; ☎ 0800 837 8446, 03-442 8378; www.vertigobikes.co.nz; 4 Brecon St) has full suspension bikes (per half-/full day \$70/99) if you're really serious.

TRAMPING & CLIMBING

Pick up a free copy of *Queenstown Walks and Trails* from the **DOC visitor information centre** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7935; queenstownvc@doc.govt.nz; 38 Shotover St) for local tramping tracks

QUEENSTOWN ON A BUDGET

A visit to Queenstown doesn't have to break the budget. Play **Frisbee golf** (p618) in the Queenstown Gardens, or hire a bike or **kayak** (p618) at the lakefront. Catch the bus to Arrowtown to the quirky boutique cinema **Dorothy Browns** (p630), or spy on the diving ducks at the **Underwater Observatory** (p615). Head to the **Mediterranean Market** (p625) for supplies for a lakeside picnic, or peruse the stalls at Queenstown's Saturday morning **arts & crafts market** (p627).

ESPRESSO, LATTE OR DECAF?

Got your head around what's on offer in Queenstown yet? The number of ways to explore the great outdoors can be a little overwhelming, so here's a handy ready reckoner based on your desired thrill level.

- **Espresso** – Launch yourself into the extreme thrills of the Shotover Canyon Swing (p616) or the Nevis Highwire (p616). Expect to be babbling like an adrenaline-pumped travelling fool for a few hours afterwards.
- **Latte** – Combine tangible thrills with a more leisurely look at the stupendous scenery around you with a mountain-top departure on a mountain bike (p617) or hang glider (p617).
- **Decaf** – Ride a jetboat (p616) through the twisting and turning ravines of the Shotover River (it feels life-threatening, but it's actually very safe), or paddle a leisurely kayak (p631) on the beautiful upper reaches of Lake Wakatipu at Kinloch.

ranging from easy one-hour strolls to tough eight-hour slogs.

The peaceful **Queenstown Gardens** (Map p612) has a number of walking trails to follow. You can also haul yourself up to **Bob's Peak**, where the gondola lands. It's not a particularly scenic walk but the views at the top are excellent. Another short climb is up 900m **Queenstown Hill** (Map p612; two to three hours return); access is from Belfast Tce.

For a spectacular view, climb 1746m **Ben Lomond** (Map p612; six to eight hours return), accessed from Lomond Cres. It's a difficult tramp requiring high-level fitness and shouldn't be underestimated; consult DOC on this and the region's other tramps.

Guided Nature Walks (☎ 03-442 7126; www.nzwalks.com; adult/child from \$98/55) offers excellent walks in the area, including a Walk and Wine option and helihikes. **Encounter Guided Day Walks** (☎ 03-442 8200; www.ultimatehikes.co.nz; ☞ Oct-Apr) offers day walks on the Routeburn Track (adult/child \$145/85), the Milford Track (adult/child \$165/95) and Mt Cook (adult/child \$110/70), as well as multiday tramps.

For climbers, **Runway** (☎ 03-450 2119; www.runway.co.nz; per person \$149) has 12 routes on Queenstown Hill. Each has permanent rungs, pegs, rails, ladders and cables. **Alpine Climb** (☎ 03-442 8883; www.independentmountainguides.co.nz) offers full-day instruction classes (\$350), five-day trips up Mt Earnslaw (\$2550) and rock-climbing day trips (\$350).

For outdoor gear:

Alpine Sports (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7099; 39 Shotover St) Hires out packs, sleeping bags, tents, avalanche safety kits and more.

Small Planet Sports Co (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6393; 17 Shotover St) New and used outdoor equipment.

HORSE TREKS

Ride through stunning scenery on a 324-hectare working farm with **Moonlight Stables** (☎ 03-442 1240; www.moonlightcountry.co.nz; adult/child \$95/50). **Shotover Stables** (☎ 03-442 7486; www.shotoverstables.net; adult/child \$65/40) offers gentle rides with bush trekking and a river crossing.

FISHING

The rivers and lakes around Queenstown are home to brown and rainbow trout. All companies practise catch-and-release. Half-day guided trips start at \$175.

Some fishing companies:

Born to Fish (☎ 03-248 8890; www.bornstofish.co.nz) Guided fly-fishing, lessons and multiday trips. Prices drop for two or more patrons.

Fly Fishing (☎ 03-442 5363; www.wakatipu.co.nz) Helifishing, lake trolling, lure fishing and fly-fishing.

Stu Dever Fishing Charters (☎ 03-442 6371; www.fishing-queenstown.co.nz) Salmon and trout fishing from the 34ft launch *Chinook*. Owner Stu can arrange for your catch to be cooked at a local restaurant.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Hop into a three-wheeled cart on the **Luge** (Map p612; ☎ 03-441 0101; www.skyline.co.nz; Brecon St; 2/3/5 rides \$14/18/25) at the top of the gondola. Nail the 'scenic' run once, and then you're allowed on the advanced track with its banked corners and tunnel.

Frisbee Golf (Map p612; www.discgolf.co.nz) has a marked course in Queenstown Gardens. Tees are indicated by numbered arrows on the ground and targets have numbered circles. BYO frisbee. Nearby is the **Queenstown Ice Arena** (Map p612; ☎ 03-441 8000; adult/child \$15/10, skate hire \$3; ☞ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Thu, 9am-9pm Fri, 10.30am-5pm Sat & Sun).

The **Central Otago Wine Experience** (Map p614; ☎ 03-409 2226; www.winetastes.com; 14 Beach St; tasting cards \$20; ☞ 10am-10pm) has more than 80 wines to try. A \$20 tasting card provides samples of around eight to 10 different wines.

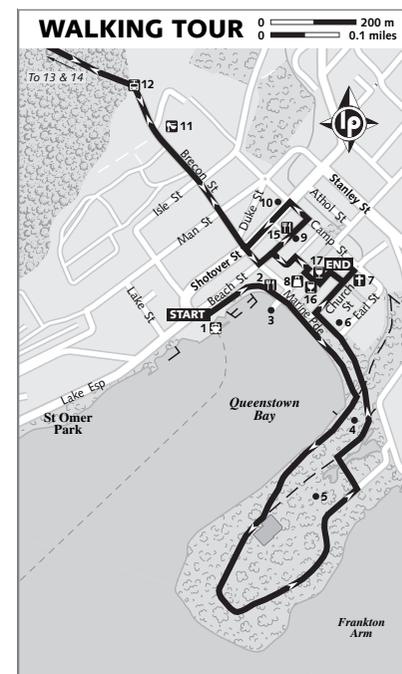
You can also golf, minigolf, quad bike, sail, kayak, dive and more. See the Queenstown i-SITE or any booking agencies. For a paddle on the lake, rent a kayak at **Queenstown Bike Hire** (Map p614; cnr Marine Pde & Church St).

Slow down by easing into **Hush Spa** (Map p612; ☎ 03-4009 0901; www.hushspa.co.nz; cnr Gorge & Robins Rds; 30/60min massage from \$65/120; ☞ 9am-9pm Tue-Fri, to 7pm Sat) for a massage, aroma stone therapy or a deep bath soak. Call the **Mobile Massage Co** (☎ 027 442 6161; www.queenstownmassage.co.nz; ☞ 9am-9pm) for an in-room massage (one hour \$95).

Onsen Hot Pools (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 5707; www.onsen.co.nz; 160 Arthurs Point Rd; adult/child \$40/10; ☞ 11am-10pm) has private hot tubs with mountain views.

Walking Tour

From Beach St, start your walk round the harbourfront, watching for the **TSS Earnslaw** (1; p620) chugging into Queenstown Bay. Stop at **Patagonia** (2; p625) for coffee, ice cream or hot chocolate, before heading out on the jetty to the **Underwater Observatory** (3; p615) to see what lies beneath. Continue along the beach to **Queenstown Gardens** (4; opposite) to soak up the quiet or try **Frisbee Golf** (5; opposite). Complete the garden's loop trail and return up Marine Pde to **Williams Cottage** (6; p613) for a little history, retail therapy and lunch. Take a right on Church St to see the pretty **Church of St Peter** (7; p614), and then zigzag through the lanes to the Mall to explore some local **boutiques** (8; p627). Next, visit the **Central Otago Wine Experience** (9; above), as much to appreciate the local Pinot as to steel your nerves for your visit to the **Station** (10; p613) to book your bungee jump for the next day. Head to Brecon St and visit the **Kiwi Birdlife Park** (11; p614) to spy the elusive, long-beaked balls of feathers and then hop on the **Skyline Gondola** (12; p614) for a peaceful (and steep) ride up Bob's Peak. Admire the quite remarkable view before negotiating the graceful but exciting corners on the **Luge** (13; opposite). Brave souls can glide back down with **Tandem Paragliding** (14; p617). From the gondola's base, it's a stroll downhill back into town for dinner at **Fishbone Bar & Grill** (15; p624), followed by drinks in Eureka Arcade at **Bardeaux** (16; p625) or **Minibar** (17; p626). You're on your own now.



WALK FACTS

Start Beach St
Finish Bardeaux
Distance 3.5km
Duration Three to four hours

Queenstown for Children

While Queenstown is brimming with activities, many of them have age restrictions that may exclude the youngest in your group. Nevertheless, you shouldn't have any trouble keeping the youngsters busy.

For a high that will make sugar rushes seem passé, take wilder kids on the **Shotover Jet** (p616). For older kids, consider a tamer variation on the classic bungee jump with the **Ledge Sky Swing** (p616) or go tandem with them on **Queenstown Paragliding** (p617). At **Kawarau Bungy Centre** (p616) kids can watch people plunging off the bridge, experience a virtual jump and explore the bungy museum. For tiny tots who don't want to miss out on the fun, **Zoom** (Map p614; ☎ 0800 124 224; Brecon St Hill; child \$10; ☞ 11am-5pm Wed-Sun) is a bungy

trampoline that safely bounces them 8m into the air.

The **Skyline Gondola** (p614) offers a slow-moving activity from dizzying heights. At the top of the hill lies a wonderfully curvy **Luge** (p618) suitable for ages three and up.

Kids who are aspiring Dr Doolittles will love the **Kiwi Birdlife Park** (p614). Its conservation shows are especially geared to the younger crowd. **Queenstown Gardens** (p618) is a great place to let your children stretch their legs, and has a good beachside **playground** (Map p612) near the entrance on Marine Pde. Also in the park, **Queenstown Ice Arena** (p618) is great for a rainy day. If you've got your own transport, the kids can get up close and personal with the spectacular outdoor menagerie at **Deer Park Heights** (p615) across the lake in Kelvin Heights.

Several places in town hire out child-size **mountain bikes** (p617). **Queenstown Bike Hire** (p617) hires out pogo sticks (\$5 per day), foot scooters (\$5 per day) and baby buggies (\$15 per day), plus toboggans (\$10 per day) in winter. **Rookies** (p627) hires out snowsuits for children aged one to 14 years, while most ski-hire shops (p617) have gear for tykes.

Consider also lake cruises on the **TSS Earnslaw** (right), steam-train excursions on the vintage **Kingston Flyer** (right) and 4WD tours of narrow, snaking **Skippers Canyon** (right). Family rafting trips are run by **Family Adventures** (p616).

For more ideas and information (including a good list of baby-sitters) pick up a free copy of *Kidz Go!* from the i-SITE. The mini-magazine's got an excellent guide to how old children should be for the wide range of activities around Queenstown, and if they're fussy eaters, there's a summary of kids' menus available around town.

Tours

AERIAL SIGHTSEEING

For a bird's-eye view, join a flightseeing tour. **Actionflite** (☎ 03-442 9708; www.actionflite.co.nz; per person \$295) To see the sights upside down, take a 15-minute aerobatic flight.

Air Fiordland (☎ 0800 103 404, 03-442 3404; www.airfiordland.com; from \$330) Includes wine tasting.

Milford Sound Scenic Flights (☎ 03-442 3065; www.milfordflights.co.nz; adult/child from \$310/184) Will take you south to Milford.

Over the Top Helicopters (☎ 03-442 2233; www.flynz.co.nz; from \$195) Includes champagne and glacier landings.

Sunrise Balloons (☎ 0800 468 247, 03-442 0781; www.ballooningnz.com; adult/child \$345/225) Cruise the lake and mountain breezes in a hot-air balloon.

FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE TOURS

Nomad Safaris (☎ 03-442 6699; www.nomadsafaris.co.nz; adult/child \$140/70) Runs four-hour tours, with tasty home baking and the chance to pan for gold. More adventurous off-road adventures in the surrounding foothills (adult/child \$140/70) are on offer, and for \$245 you can even get behind the wheel. Smaller 4WD options include quad-bike tours (adult \$195).

Off Road Adventures (☎ 03-442 7858; www.offroad.co.nz; adult/child \$139/70) Does similar tours, with a *Lord of the Rings* tour taking in filming locations.

Skippers Canyon Heritage Tours (☎ 03-442 5949; www.queenstown-heritage.co.nz; adult/child \$150/70) Skippers Canyon is reached by a narrow, winding road built by gold panners in the 1800s. This scenic but hair-raising 4WD route runs from Arthurs Point towards Coronet Peak and then above the Shotover River, passing gold-rush sights. Join a four-hour tour brimming with gold-mining stories and including a picnic. Specialist wine tours are also available.

STEAM TRAIN

Board this heritage steam train in Kingston, 45km from Queenstown on the southern tip of Lake Wakatipu. Originally steaming between Kingston and Gore from 1878 to the mid-1950s, the **Kingston Flyer** (☎ 0800 435 937, 03-248 8848; www.kingstonflyer.co.nz; return fare adult/child/family \$44/22/110, incl Queenstown shuttle adult/child/family \$110/55/275; 🚗 twice daily Oct-May) now travels a 14km stretch to Fairlight.

LAKE CRUISES

The stately, steam-powered **TSS Earnslaw** (Map p614) is more than a century old and continues to churn across Lake Wakatipu at 13 knots. Once the lake's major means of transport, it originally carried more than 800 passengers. Climb aboard for the standard 1½-hour Lake Wakatipu tour (adult/child \$40/15) or take a 3½-hour excursion to the high-country **Walter Peak Farm** (Map p611; adult/child \$62/15) for sheep-shearing demonstrations, live music and the top-see 'Tup Bloke' pageant. Other tours include barbecue lunches, dinner or horse trekking. Book through **Real Journeys** (Map p614; ☎ 0800 656 503; www.realjourneys.co.nz; Steamer Wharf, Beach St).

MILFORD SOUND

Day trips via Te Anau to Milford Sound take 12 to 13 hours and cost around \$220/110 per

adult/child, including a two-hour cruise on the sound. Bus-cruise-flight options are also available, as is pick-up from the Routeburn Track finish line. Operators include:

Great Sights (☎ 0800 744 487; www.greatsights.co.nz)

InterCity (☎ 03-442 8238; www.intercity.co.nz).

Kiwi Discovery (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7340; www.kiwi-discovery.com)

Real Journeys (Map p612; ☎ 0800 656 503, 03-442 7500; www.realjourneys.co.nz; Steamer Wharf, Beach St)

The **BBQ Bus** (☎ 03-442 1045; www.milford.net.nz; adult/child \$169/95) takes smaller groups (up to 22 people) and you can look forward to sausages and marinated beef kebabs.

To save on tour travel time and cost, consider visiting Milford from Te Anau (p646).

WINERY TOURS

A guided tour of the region's vineyards means being able to enjoy a drink without having to get behind the wheel.

Appellation Central Wine Tours (☎ 03-442 0246; www.appellationcentral.co.nz; from \$139) Runs tasty tours including an all-day excursion (\$185) that also dips into local cheeses. See the boxed text p622.

Queenstown Wine Trail (☎ 03-442 3799; www.queenstownwinetrail.co.nz; adult from \$106) Offers informative, unhurried tours; choose from a five-hour tour with tastings at four wineries or a shorter tour (\$126) with lunch included.

OTHER TOURS

Hop on a **Double-Decker Bus Tour** (☎ 03-441 4421; adult/child \$38/17; 🚗 tours depart Queenstown 9.30am & 1.30pm) to historic Arrowtown (p628), taking in Gibbston Valley Wines and Lake Hayes. You'll have 50 minutes to look around Arrowtown.

Festivals & Events

PBT Gibbston Festival (☎ 03-441 8919; Gibbston)

Wine buffs should time their visit with this annual festival, which is held at a different winery each year in mid-March.

Queenstown Winter Festival (www.winterfestival.co.nz) This festival in late June/early July provides wacky ski and snowboard activities, live music and the top-see 'Tup Bloke' pageant.

New Zealand International Film Festival (www.enzedff.co.nz) In late October.

Sleeping

Queenstown has endless places to stay, but many visitors seeking accommodation. Midrange travellers won't find much choice; consider a top-end place or go for one of

the excellent budget options and spend up on activities. Places book out and prices rocket during the peak summer and ski seasons; book well in advance at these times. Rooms with guaranteed lake views often have a surcharge.

The **Queenstown Accommodation Centre** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7518; www.qac.co.nz; 30 Shotover St) has a range of holiday homes and apartments on its books (and its website), with prices ranging from around \$200 to \$500 per week. There is often a minimum-stay period.

BUDGET Camping

Shotover Camping (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 9306; www.shotoverholidaypark.co.nz; 70 Arthurs Pt Rd; sites \$32, dm \$25, d \$70-120; 📶) High above the Shotover River, this family-friendly park is 10 minutes' drive from the hustle and bustle of Queenstown. Fall out of your campervan straight onto the famous Shotover Jet (p616).

Queenstown Lakeview Holiday Park (Map p614; ☎ 0800 482 735, 03-442 7252; www.holidaypark.net.nz; Brecon St; sites \$32, d \$100-120; 📶) A short stroll from the gondola, this park has a big open field to camp in and great facilities. A few larger trees would soften the slightly spartan ambience for campers, but there are also flasher motel units and lodges.

Creeksyde Top 10 Holiday Park (Map p612; ☎ 0800 786 222, 03-442 9447; www.camp.co.nz; 54 Robins Rd; sites \$38, d \$65-158; 📶) In a garden setting, this pretty spot has accommodation ranging from basic tent sites to self-contained motel units. An ecofriendly green tinge is added with a disciplined approach to recycling and a commitment to increase plantings of native trees.

Hostels & Lodges

Black Sheep Lodge (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 7289; www.blacksheepbackpackers.co.nz; 13 Frankton Rd; dm/d incl breakfast \$25/60; 📶) This place keeps younger social types happy with a spa, a pool table and a truckload of DVDs. Rooms are basic but it's a friendly affair that will provide plenty of R&R before your next Queenstown outdoor adventure. Kick off a big night in the on-site bar.

Sallywags Travellers Guesthouse (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 7083; 27 Lomond Cres; dm/d \$26/64) Feeling more like a home than a hostel, this place has a relaxed atmosphere, a well-equipped kitchen and a conversation-inducing lounge. Rooms are comfortable and the shared bathrooms are tops. The long-time resident owner has loads

RIVER WATER OR PINOT NOIR? YOU CHOOSE

More gung-ho visitors to Queenstown might be happiest dangling off a giant rubber band, but as they're submerged in the icy Kawarau River, they'll be missing out on some of Central Otago's most interesting vineyards just up the road. A glass of the area's outstanding Pinot Noir, or a mouthful of river water? Mmm...tough choice.

On a spectacular river terrace near the Kawarau Bridge, AJ Hackett's original bungy partner Henry van Asch has set up the **Winehouse & Kitchen** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 7310; www.winehouse.co.nz; mains \$15-30; 🕒 10am-5pm). A beautifully restored wooden villa includes a garden café and the opportunity to try van Asch's Freefall and Rock Ferry wines, as well as his own van Asch label.

Almost opposite, a winding and scenic road leads to beautiful **Chard Farm** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 6110; www.chardfarm.co.nz; 🕒 11am-5pm), and a further 700m along is **Gibbston Valley** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 6910; www.gvines.co.nz), the area's largest wine producer. Try its Pinot Noir and take a tour of the impressive wine cave. There's also a 'cheesery' and a restaurant.

A further 4km along SH6, **Peregrine** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 4000; www.peregrinewines.co.nz; 🕒 10am-5pm) produces excellent Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris, and hosts occasional outdoor concerts during summer, sometimes featuring international names. See www.gibbstonvalley.co.nz for more information on the attractions of this compact wine-growing area with its own unique microclimate.

Further west near the shores of Lake Hayes, the **Amisfeld Winery & Bistro** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 0556; www.amisfeld.co.nz; small plates \$16.50; 🕒 11.30am-8pm Tue-Sun) is a regular winner of *Cuisine* magazine's Best NZ Winery Restaurant gong. The highly regarded eatery serves tapas-sized plates just made for sharing with a few friends on the sunny deck, and Amisfeld's Pinot Noir has been awarded internationally.

Ask at the Queenstown i-SITE for maps and information about touring the Gibbston Valley, or join a wine tour (p621) to keep safe.

of local knowledge. It's up a steep hill but has some of the best views in town. Call for free pick-up on arrival.

Butterfli Lodge (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 6367; www.butterfli.co.nz; 62 Thompson St; dm/d \$27/64; 🏠) This smaller hostel sits amid a quiet hillside suburb. Commandeer the barbecue on the deck and take in beaut views as you turn your steaks and sausages. Rooms don't have a huge amount of character, but are modern and well maintained.

YHA Queenstown Lakefront (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 8413; www.yha.co.nz; 88-90 Lake Esplanade; dm/d from \$27/72; 🏠) This friendly alpine lodge has staff well versed in Queenstown's myriad activities. Rooms are basic but clean; some rooms and the dining area have lake and mountain views. It's somewhat rambling but facilities are good, with a well-equipped kitchen and loads of board games, DVDs and books. Queenstown's nightlife is a 10- to 15-minute lakeside stroll away.

YHA Queenstown Central (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7400; www.yha.co.nz; 48a Shotover St; dm/f \$30/100) This well-run YHA has lots of different room options; some have lake views, others have private patios. The hostel's crowning glories are

the kitchen and lounge, both with panoramic views of the lake. The atmosphere is calm and family-friendly, but if you're after a wilder time, some of Queenstown's best bars and clubs are just a short shimmy away.

Also recommended:

Bungi Backpackers (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 8725; www.bungibackpackers.co.nz; 15 Sydney St; dm \$21-24, d \$51; 🏠) Relaxed hostel with hammocks and a grassy volleyball court. A spa pool and complimentary veggie soup add a touch of away-from-home comfort.

Southern Laughter (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8828; www.southernlaughter.co.nz; 4 Isle St; dm \$24, d & tw \$56-58; 🏠) Funky hostel with various kitchens scattered throughout the sprawling complex. Look forward to retro B&W pics of old Queenstown and visits from backpacker-bus types in town to see the new Queenstown.

Alpine Lodge (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 7220; www.alpineodgebackpackers.co.nz; 13 Gorge Rd; dm \$24-26, d \$58; 🏠) Friendly, smaller hostel with international staff who've experienced every adventure activity on offer around town.

Last Resort (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 4320; 6 Memorial St; dm \$25-27; 🏠) Supercentral, smaller hostel with a tiny brick and timber bridge crossing a bubbling brook in the backyard; just a minute from where most transport will drop you off.

Turner Lodge (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7220; www.turnerlodge.co.nz; 2 Turner St; dm/s \$25/65, d \$80-99; 🏠) Twins, doubles, singles and dorms combine in a 1970s ski-lodge ambience with a dusting of good value.

Hippo Lodge (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 5785; www.hippolodge.co.nz; 4 Anderson Heights; dm \$26-27, s/d from \$40/65; 🏠) Well-maintained, relaxed hostel with good views and a correspondingly high number of stairs. Pitch a tent for \$16 per person.

MIDRANGE

Queenstown Motel Apartments (Map p612; ☎ 0800 661 668, 03-442 6095; www.qma.co.nz; 62 Frankton Rd; d \$100-145; 🏠) This well-run spot combines newer units with spa bathrooms, trendy décor and private mini-gardens, and older 1970s-style units that represent good value for larger groups of budget travellers.

Colonial Village Motels (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 7629; www.colonialvillage.co.nz; 136 Frankton Rd; s/d \$110/130) Older-style motel units with gorgeous lake views have been spruced up with classy bed linen and mini-kitchens. Expect a bit of daytime road noise, but after dark it is considerably quieter.

Milestone (Map p611; ☎ 03-441 4460; www.themilestone.co.nz; Ladies Mile, RD1; s/d \$125/165; 🏠) This welcoming B&B is 10 minutes' drive from Queenstown, but with ponds, waterfalls and 300 roses set on 4 acres, it feels wonderfully remote. The charming house is filled with antiques, and for \$50 per person the friendly Turnbull family will prepare you dinner, complete with local wines. A self-contained cottage is also available at the same good-value rate.

Lomond Lodge (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8235; www.lomondlodge.com; 33 Man St; d \$130-155; 🏠) The décor is a bit old-fashioned, but the owners have plenty of ideas to make the most of your stay in Queenstown. Share your own ideas with fellow travellers in the communal kitchen and at the garden barbecue. Larger family apartments (\$250 for up to four people) are also available.

our pick **Coronation Lodge** (Map p612; ☎ 0800 420 777, 03-442 0860; www.coronationlodge.co.nz; 10 Coronation Dr; d \$145-165; 🏠) Right beside the Queenstown Gardens, this recently opened lodge has plush bed linen, cosy wooden floors, Turkish rugs, and Sky television. In a town that's somewhat lacking in good mid-range accommodation, Coronation Lodge is highly recommended. Two larger rooms have kitchenettes.

Alexis Motor Lodge & Apartments (Map p612; ☎ 03-409 0052; www.alexisqueenstown.co.nz; 69 Frankton Rd; d \$160; 🏠) With energetic family owners, this modern hillside motel with self-contained units is an easy 10-minute walk to town along the lakefront. Molly the dog (always) and Louis the cat (sometimes) are dependable walking partners. Ask for an end unit with snap-happy views.

Chalet Queenstown B&B (Map p612; ☎ 0800 222 457, 03-442 7117; www.chalet.co.nz; 1 Dublin St; d \$160-210) This Swiss-style lodge features patchwork blankets, homemade muesli and freshly baked croissants. All five rooms have TV and en suite bathrooms. When you're fully relaxed, venture out on a free mountain bike.

Also recommended:

Little Paradise Lodge (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 6196; www.littleparadise.co.nz; Glenorchy-Queenstown Rd; s \$45, d \$120-140; 🏠) Wonderfully eclectic, this slice of arty paradise is the singular vision of the Swiss owner. Each rustic room features wooden floors, quirky artwork and handmade furniture. Outside the fun continues with a natural swimming pool and well-crafted walkways along a nearby hillside. Breakfast and boat hire both go for 10 bucks. The lodge is on the Queenstown-Glenorchy bus route; see p633 for bus info.

Comfort Inn Melbourne Lodge (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 8431; www.mmlodge.co.nz; 35 Melbourne St; s/d from \$65/99) Choose from cheaper rooms with shared bathrooms in Melbourne House or splash out a little more for an en suite room at Melbourne Lodge next door.

Bella Vista (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 4468; www.bellavista motels.co.nz; 36 Robins Rd; s/d \$110/160) Identical to the rest of Bella Vista's Kiwi empire, but clean and good value.

TOP END

Earnslaw View Apartments (Map p612; ☎ 0800 226 652, 03-442 7629; www.earnslawviewapartments.co.nz; 21 Earnslaw Tce; d from \$270) Thoroughly modern self-contained accommodation for the thoroughly modern self-contained family (\$435 for up to six people). The stunning lake and mountain views have been around for much longer.

Dairy (Map p614; ☎ 0800 333 393, 03-442 5164; www.thedairy.co.nz; 10 Isle St; s \$380-410, d \$410-440, all incl breakfast; 🏠) Once a corner-store, the Dairy's now a luxury guesthouse with 13 rooms packed with classy touches like designer bed linen, silk cushions and luxurious mohair rugs. Rates also include freshly baked afternoon tea. From June to September five-night packages are great value for skiers (per person \$650 to \$750).

Central Ridge Boutique Hotel (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 8832; www.centralridge.co.nz; 4 Sydney St; d incl breakfast \$200-400) Visitors rave about the breakfasts but there's plenty more to be effusive about, like pre-dinner canapés with Central Otago wines, underfloor heating and spacious, modern bathrooms. With only 14 rooms here, you're guaranteed a winning way with personal service.

Evergreen Lodge (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 6636; www.evergreenlodge.co.nz; 28 Evergreen Pl, Sunshine Bay; d \$695; (P) (Q)) Handcrafted wooden furniture from a local Queenstown artisan combines with 21st-century accoutrements like DVD players and wireless internet in the four pristine rooms at this modern lodge. Add in a supremely private location with unfettered views of the Remarkables, complimentary beer and wine, and a sauna and gym, and you've got a very relaxing escape from Queenstown's international hoi polloi.

Eichardt's Private Hotel (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 0450; www.eichardtsotel.co.nz; cnr Marine Pde & Searle Lane; d \$1375-1595) Originally opened in the 1860s, this re-opened and restored boutique hotel enjoys an absolute lakefront location. Each of the five giant suites has a fireplace, lake views and a blend of antique and modern décor. King-size beds, heated floors and lake-sized bath tubs provide the ideal welcome after a tough day cruising the vineyards of Central Otago.

Eating

Queenstown's town centre is peppered with busy eateries. Many target the tourist dollar, but dig a little deeper and you'll discover local favourites covering a surprising range of international cuisines. At the more popular places, it's wise to make a reservation for weekend dining.

RESTAURANTS

@thai (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 3683; 3rd fl, 8 Church St; mains \$15-25; ☎ noon-10pm) Multiple recommendations from locals adds up to a 'must-try' and @thai doesn't disappoint, with excellent service and authentically zingy and zesty flavours. Take a seat at the bar and try the coconut prawns as you decide on your mains.

Winnies (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8635; 1st fl, 7 the Mall; pizza \$15-25; ☎ noon-late) Winnies' cool and sassy international team serve up a global array of pizzas with a Thai, Mexican or Moroccan accent. Occasional live music and DJs keep the

energy levels up long after you've finished your last slice. Part-bar and part-restaurant, Winnies always seems busy. Guess why.

Chop Chop (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6464; Level 2, Sofitel, Duke St; mains \$15-25; ☎ 11.30-3pm & 5.30pm-late) This self-described 'Western-style noodle bar' does healthy and relatively authentic variations of meals you enjoyed on your tropical trawl through Southeast Asia. There's a subtle Zen ambience with long shared tables, and a good range of Asian-food-friendly aromatic wines like Pinot Gris. Surprisingly – for a Sofitel – service can occasionally be hit and miss. Takeaways are also available.

Sombrero's (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8240; 1st fl, Beech Tree Arcade, Beach St; mains \$15-30; ☎ 5.30pm-late) Requisite grab bag of Mexicans-R-Us décor, but the service is warm and friendly. The good-value combination plates would feed an entire mariachi band and the margaritas are big enough to fill the Rio Grande. Get pleasantly lost in the big range of Mexican beers and daggy retro furniture.

our pick Fishbone Bar & Grill (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6768; 7 Beach St; mains \$20-35; ☎ 5.30pm-late, open for lunch in summer) Queenstown's more than a few miles inland, but that doesn't stop Fishbone from sourcing the best of NZ seafood. Everything from scallops to snapper is treated with a light and inventive touch. You'll see a steady stream of contented customers leaving the quirkily nautical space every night.

Gantley's (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 8999; Arthurs Point Rd; mains \$30-40; ☎ 6.30pm-late) An atmospheric dining experience in a historic 1863 stone-and-timber house at Arthurs Point. The contemporary NZ cuisine and highly regarded (and award-collecting) wine list are worth the journey. Reservations are essential; a courtesy bus is run to and from town for à la carte diners.

Inspire Restaurant & Bar (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 0064; Spire Hotel, Church Lane; mains \$35-40; ☎ 6.30pm-lateTue-Sat) Getting rave reviews for its innovative treatment of local produce (like minted carpaccio of merino lamb), the coolly elegant Inspire is in The Spire, one of Queenstown's classiest hotels. There's only room for 24 lucky diners so you'll need to book.

Wai Waterfront Restaurant & Wine Bar (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5969; Steamer Wharf, Beach St; mains \$35-50; ☎ 11am-10pm) Small and intimate, Wai (meaning 'water' in Maori) is white-linen classy with lake and mountain views. It's known for lamb and seafood, and the Oyster Bar does the world's favourite bivalve in 17 different

ways. The seven-course degustation menu (\$115 without wine and \$175 with wine) is a splurge-worthy opportunity for a great culinary adventure. Think about it seriously. It's actually less than you'll spend on another round of outdoor adventure activities, and will last a lot longer.

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

our pick Juice Stop (Map p614; ☎ 03-409 0498; Steamer Wharf; juices \$5-7; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, from 9am Sat & Sun; (V)) The place to go if you've overindulged the night before. Restore your chi with juices, smoothies and a healthier-than-thou range of organic and herbal teas. Before you head off for bungy or boating, fuel up on regular soup specials and superior sandwiches – try the free-range chicken with hummus.

Patagonia (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9066; 50 Beach Rd; coffee & chocolate \$5-7; ☎ 10am-10pm; (Q)) Delicious hot chocolate, homemade choccies, and Queenstown's best ice cream. What more do you want? How about a lakefront location and free wi-fi? Patagonia's open until 10pm so it's your best bet for a late-night coffee.

Vesta (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5687; cnr Marine Pde & Earl St; mains \$6-10; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat) Sometimes it's a good thing when you can't work out exactly what something is. In the case of Vesta, just examine the evidence: a gloriously overgrown 1920s-style garden, a gallery and gift shop specialising in NZ design, and a compact wee café serving coffee and cake just made for mid-afternoon recharging. To confuse things, Vesta is housed in Williams Cottage (p614), Queenstown's oldest home, and now an interesting museum.

Kappa Sushi Cafe (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 1423; level 1, 36a the Mall; sushi \$6-10, mains \$13-29; ☎ noon-2.30pm Mon-Fri, 6pm-late Mon-Sat) Queenstown's best Japanese eatery is also its most casual. Scarily fresh tuna and salmon feature in good-value bento boxes for lunch. Later at night linger longer with excellent tempura and Japanese beer and sake. In summer watch the passing parade in the Mall from the upstairs deck.

Vudu Cafe (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5357; 23 Beach St; breakfast \$6-15, lunch & dinner \$8-25; ☎ 8am-late; (Q)) If you can tell how good a café is by the range of cool reading material on offer, then the funky Vudu comes up trumps. Breakfast is robust good value with buttermilk pancakes and breakfast quesadillas, and a sly sophistication creeps in later in the day with goodies like eggs with spinach and haloumi.

Habebes (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9861; Wakatipu Arcade; meals \$7-12; ☎ 10am-5pm; (V)) Yummy hole in the wall with wholly healthy options including salad, soups and falafel wraps. Ask for takeaway and experience Remarkable lakeside views just outside.

Food Hall (Map p614; ☎ O'Connells Shopping Centre, Beach St; mains \$8-12; ☎ 11am-10pm) Passable Indian, Thai, Turkish and Japanese under the requisite fluoro lights. Ask for takeaway and head down to the lakefront for superior views.

Fergburger (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 1232; 42 Shotover St; burgers \$9-15; ☎ 9am-5am) Just maybe NZ's best burgers and the preferred fuel of busy travellers and guidebook writers. Later at night (and early in the morning) a social ambience ensues with a background of mega-tasty burgers like the Bun Laden (falafel) and the Codfather (blue cod). Ignore the bad puns and dive in.

Halo (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 1411; Camp St; mains \$12-16; ☎ 7am-10pm) Stylish and sunny place that effortlessly blurs the line between breakfast, lunch and dinner. The breakfast burrito will set you up for a day's adventuring, and come back at night for a Caribbean jerk chicken burger and a glass of local wine. It's beside St James Church.

SELF-CATERING

Mediterranean Market (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 4161; cnr Gorge & Robins Rds; ☎ 8am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun) The place to fill up a basket for a lakeside picnic. There are fresh pastas, sauces, Asian cuisine, good local produce and a fantastic deli and bakery. Have coffee and cake at the attached café while you make your mind up.

Around the corner, the well-stocked **Freshchoice** (Map p612; 64 Gorge Rd; ☎ 7am-midnight) is Queenstown's big supermarket. In town, the **Alpine Supermarket** (Map p614; cnr Stanley & Shotover Sts; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Fri, 9am-9pm Sat & Sun) has most staples, and next door there's a handy bottle store.

Drinking

Drinking is almost a competitive sport in Queenstown, and there's a good range of options for after-dark carousing. At the time of writing a blanket closing time of 4am for all bars had been introduced, but some owners were challenging this edict.

Bardeaux (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8284; Eureka Arcade, 11 the Mall; ☎ 6pm-4am) Down a narrow alleyway, this small, low-key wine bar is all class. Under a low ceiling await plush leather armchairs

and a fireplace made from Central Otago's iconic schist rock. No beanies, rugby jerseys or work boots allowed.

Eichardt's House Bar (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 0450; Marine Pde; ☎ noon-late) Get a taste of this flash hotel in its chic yet cosy bar. Treat yourself to a slickly crafted cocktail or a glass of Pinot. Miraculously the plush leather sofas get more comfortable after each drink.

Monty's (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 1081; Church St; ☎ 11am-late) A rustic stone building with a patio that's a good place to meet overseas folk working in Queenstown. If you're planning on doing the same, buy them a Monteith's beer and ask them to introduce you to the people that really matter around town.

Dux de Lux (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9688; 14 Church St; ☎ 10.30am-late; ♪) More stylish than the Dux in Christchurch, this Queenstown offshoot is microbrewery heaven with its own Wakatipu Wheat Beer. The vego-tinged menu has beer matches, and there's usually an eclectic range of bands and DJs that even shy travellers will eventually dance to.

Surreal (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 8492; 7 Rees St; ☎ 11am-late) With funky music, low lighting and red-velvet booths, this is a private spot for a quiet drink. Happy hour from 10pm.

Winnies (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8635; 1st fl, 7 the Mall; ☎ noon-late; ☑) A deservedly popular place with a laid-back ambience, retractable roof, and a pool table and patio. Also a popular dining spot and has wi-fi. Fire up your webcam and contact your envious mates back home.

Minibar (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 3212; Eureka Arcade, 11 the Mall; ☎ 4pm-4am) A cool name for a cool bar. More than 100 local and international beers are poured in this compact space; don't worry there's still plenty of room for cocktails and wine.

Buffalo Club (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 4144; 8 Brecon St; ☎ 3pm-late) Lit by candles and an enormous campfire in the middle of the room, this is a popular after-work hang-out. Pool tables and sports on the big-screen TV make it a low-key spot to kick off the night. Happy hour from 5pm.

Barmuda (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7300; Searle Lane; ☎ 3pm-3am) A huge open fire makes Barmuda's courtyard the place to be in cooler weather. In summer live jazz on Friday and Saturday nights is sometimes on the cards.

Barup (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7067; cnr Searle Lane & Eureka Arcade; ☎ 5pm-4am) Take the stairs up (no surprises there...) to this intimate cocktail bar

that's removed from the ground-level hustle and bustle downstairs around Eureka Lane.

Entertainment

Pick up the *Source* (www.thesourceonline.com), a free weekly flyer with a gig guide and events listings. Also check the posters at **Play It Again** (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 8940; O'Connell's Shopping Centre, Beach St) for local events. Live music and clubbing are a nightly affair and most Queenstown venues stay open until the wee hours on weekends. Most DJ and live-music gigs are free, though you will encounter inexpensive cover charges in some nightclubs.

LIVE MUSIC

Dux de Lux (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9688; 14 Church St) Lots of live bands and DJs with everything from reggae to drum 'n' bass.

Buffalo Club (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 4144; 8 Brecon St) DJs and live bands.

Winnie's (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8635; 1st fl, 7 the Mall) Acoustic shows, jazz and Latin beats for all the Brazilian travellers in town.

Pig & Whistle (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9055; 41 Ballarat St) Covers bands playing songs you can unashamedly sing along to.

NIGHTCLUBS

Surreal (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 8492; 7 Rees St) DJs with retro, open mic and break beats.

Subculture (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7685; downstairs, 12-14 Church St) Skilful locals and out-of-towners toy with turntables to make drum 'n' bass, hip-hop, dub and reggae noises that get the crowds moving.

Debajo (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6099; Cow Lane) With a Latin accent and an established reputation for House beats and wicked cocktails.

Tardis Bar (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 8397; Skyline Arcade) A good dance bar with regular DJs playing hip-hop, dancehall and dub. Like Dr Who's phone booth it's surprisingly roomy inside.

Revolver Bar (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 8911; 54 Shotover St) Occasionally hosts gigs from well-known NZ bands and solo artists.

HAKA

Kiwi Haka (Map p612; ☎ 03-441 0101; www.skyline.co.nz; Brecon St; adult/child \$47/26 incl gondola; ☎ from 5.30pm) To see traditional Maori dancing and singing, see this group at the top of the gondola. There are multiple 30-minute shows nightly but bookings are essential.

The Te Maori group at the Kiwi Birdlife Park (p614) perform as part of a combined cultural and conservation show.

CINEMA

Reading Cinemas (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9990; www.readingcinemas.co.nz; 11 the Mall; adult/child \$14/9) Mainly Hollywood blockbusters, but occasional art-house and Kiwi flicks too. Tickets on Tuesdays cost \$9.

Shopping

Queenstown is a good place to shop for souvenirs and gifts. Start exploring and you're likely to discover some unusual goods. Lots of shops specialise in outdoor and adventure gear; prices are competitive and there's a good range. Begin your shopping along the Mall, Shotover St and Beach St. Also try the area around Church Lane joining Church St and Earl St for an expanding array of galleries.

CLOTHING

Goddess (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 6696; 18 the Mall) Stocks original designer clothing for women with everything from hats to frocks to accessories.

Out There Clothing (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 3029; www.otclothing.co.nz; 27 Beach St) A NZ label with functional clothing that leaves you looking outdoorsy *and* stylish as you snowboard, mountain bike, or just sit in a bar. The T-shirts screenprinted with Maori proverbs are simple and unique.

rookies (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8153; 49 Beach St) If you forgot the kids' snowsuits, rent or buy clothes from rookies to keep them cosy. There's also kids' designer clobber for warmer seasons available.

OUTDOOR GEAR

Alpine Sports (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 7099; 39 Shotover St) Long-standing outdoor outfitters with plenty of gear to get you ready for camping, hiking, skiing or climbing.

Kathmandu (Map p614; ☎ 03-409 0880; Steamer Wharf, 88 Beach St) A well-known and good-value NZ chain with regular sales making things even cheaper. Join its 'Summit Club' for extra discounts.

DESIGN, MUSIC & ART

Vesta (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5687; cnr Marine Pde & Earl St) In the historic surroundings of Williams Cottage, this shop has contemporary home-

wares, jewellery, gift cards, baby clothes, perfumes and accessories. Most of it is designed and made in NZ.

Kapa (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 4401; 29 Rees St) Has an array of quirky and eclectic NZ design infused with a healthy dose of contemporary Maori culture.

Koha (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8887; 18 Beach St) Meaning 'gift' in Maori, everything for sale here is from NZ including jewellery, beauty products and designer clothing. Excellent for authentic and unique gifts.

toi o tahuna (Map p614; ☎ 03-409 0787; Church Lane) Exclusively NZ art, with around half the work from contemporary Maori artists. Ask gallery owner Mark Moran for the free guide to 'Galleries & Artist Studios in the Wakatipu' – proof that Queenstown's definitely about more than just leaping off bridges wearing a giant rubber band.

Play It Again (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 8940; O'Connell's Shopping Centre, Beach St) Has CDs and DVDs including a good Kiwi music section.

Follow your nose to **Central Otago Wine Experience** (Map p614; ☎ 03-409 2226; www.winetastes.com; 14 Beach St; ☎ 10am-10pm) to understand what makes the local wines special.

On Saturdays there's a good **arts & crafts market** (Map p614; www.marketplace.net.nz; ☎ 9am-4.30pm Nov-Apr, 10am-3.30pm May-Oct) at Earnslaw Park on the lakefront beside Steamer Wharf.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Air New Zealand (Map p614; ☎ 0800 737 000; 03-441 1900; www.airnz.co.nz; 8 Church St) has direct daily flights between Queenstown and Auckland (from \$139), Wellington (from \$149) and Christchurch (from \$89) with connections to Wanaka. **Qantas** (☎ 0800 808 767; 03-379 6504; www.qantas.co.nz) has flights to Auckland (from \$139), Christchurch (from \$100), and Rotorua (from \$179).

BUS

Book seats for **InterCity** (☎ 03-442 4100; www.intercity.co.nz) trips in the i-SITE. It offers daily bus services from Queenstown to Christchurch (\$80), Te Anau (\$35), Milford Sound (\$80), Dunedin (\$42) and Invercargill (\$50), plus a daily West Coast service to the glaciers (\$116) via Wanaka (\$32) and Haast Pass (\$67). Buses leave from the Athol St bus terminal (Map p614). Note that some buses may be branded Newmans.

Naked Bus (www.nakedbus.com) travels to the West Coast, Te Anau, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill.

The **Bottom Bus** (www.bottombus.co.nz) does a loop service around the south of the South Island (see p670). Book at the **Info & Track Centre** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9708; 37 Shotover St).

Shuttles charge around \$20 to \$25 to Wanaka, \$40 to Dunedin, \$30 to Te Anau and \$50 to Christchurch. Book at iSITE.

Atomic Shuttles (☎ 03-349 0697; www.atomictravel.co.nz) Travels to Wanaka, Christchurch, Dunedin, Grey-mouth and Invercargill.

Catch-a-Bus (☎ 03-479 9960) Heads to Dunedin.

K Bus (☎ 03-358 8355; www.kbus.co.nz) Services to Twizel (for Mt Cook), Christchurch and Wanaka.

Wanaka Connexions (☎ 03-443 9122; www.time2.co.nz) Offers regular services to Wanaka.

TRAMPERS' & SKIERS' TRANSPORT

Backpacker Express at the **Info & Track Centre** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9708; www.infotrack.co.nz; 37 Shotover St) arranges transport to and from the Routeburn, Greenstone, Caples and Rees-Dart Tracks, all via Glenorchy. It costs \$18 per ride (so \$18 to Glenorchy and another \$18 to the Routeburn trail head) or \$20 per sector if you don't prebook.

Kiwi Discovery (Map p614; ☎ 0800 505 504, 03-442 7340; www.kiwidiscovery.com; 37 Camp St) can also arrange transport to the tracks.

Bus services between Queenstown and Milford Sound via Te Anau can be used for track transport. See p653 for information on the tramper-servicing company TrackNet.

For the ski slopes, catch a return shuttle to Coronet Peak or the Remarkables for about \$25, and to Cardrona for \$38 and Treble Cone for \$45. Most offer transport and lift deals and kids' rates:

Gravity Action (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 5277; 19 Shotover St)

Info & Track Centre (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9708; www.infotrack.co.nz; 37 Shotover St) Travels to Cardrona only.

Kiwi Discovery (Map p614; ☎ 0800 505 504, 03-442 7340; www.kiwidiscovery.com; 37 Camp St)

Snowrental (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 4187; 39 Camp St)

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Queenstown Airport (Map p611; ☎ 03-450 9031; www.queenstownairport.co.nz; Frankton) is 8km east of town. **Super Shuttle** (☎ 0800 748 885; www.supershuttle.co.nz) picks up and drops off in Queenstown (from \$12). **Connectabus** (☎ 03-442 4471; www.connectabus.com; cnr Beach & Camp Sts) runs to the airport (\$6.50) hourly from 7.15am to 11.15pm. **Alpine Taxis** (☎ 03-442 6666) or **Queenstown Taxis** (☎ 03-442 7788) charge around \$25.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Connectabus (☎ 03-441 4471; www.connectabus.com) has three colour-coded routes. Catch the blue route for accommodation in Fernhill (\$5.50) and the red or green routes for accommodation in Frankton (\$5.50). The green route continues on to Lake Hayes (\$6.50) and Arrowtown (\$7.50). A day pass (\$13.50) allows travel on the entire network. Pick up a route map and timetable from the i-SITE. Buses leave from the corner of Camp and Shotover Sts.

ARROWTOWN

pop 1700

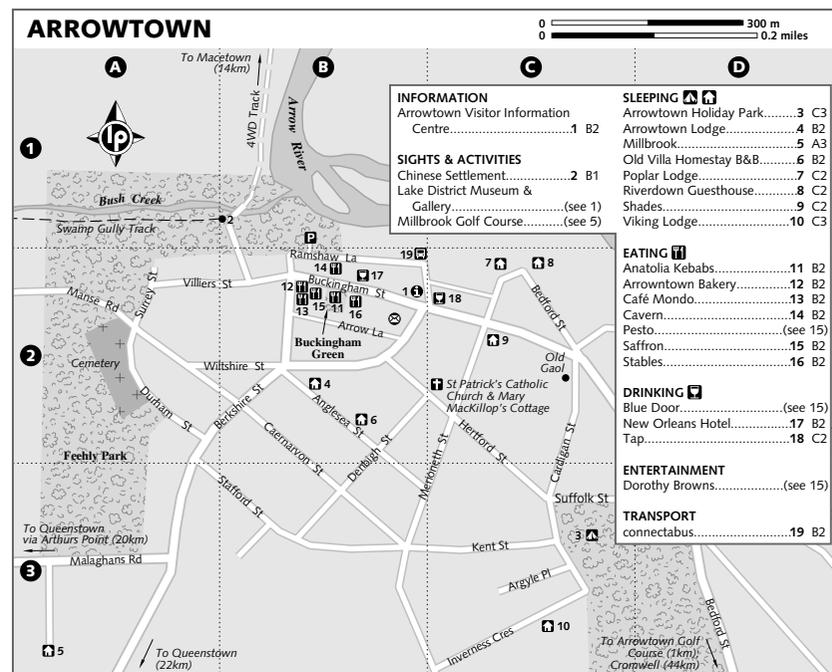
Beloved by day-trippers from Queenstown, exceedingly quaint Arrowtown sprang up in the 1860s following the discovery of gold in the Arrow River. Today the town retains more than 60 of its original wooden and stone buildings, and has pretty, tree-lined avenues, excellent galleries and an expanding array of fashionable shopping opportunities.

The only gold being flaunted these days is on credit cards, and surrounded by a bonanza of daytime tourists, you might grow wary of the quaint historical ambience. Instead take advantage of improved public transport to the town, and use it as base for exploring Queenstown and the wider region. That way you can enjoy Arrowtown's history, charm and excellent restaurants after dark when the tour buses have decamped back to Queenstown.

Sights & Activities

The **Arrowtown visitor information centre** (☎ 03-442 1824; www.arrowtown.com; 49 Buckingham St; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) shares premises with the **Lake District Museum & Gallery** (www.museumqueenstown.com; adult/child \$6/1; ☎ 8.30am-5pm), which has exhibits on the gold-rush era. Younger travellers will enjoy the Museum Fun Pack (\$5), which includes activity sheets, museum treasure hunts, stickers and a few flecks of gold.

Arrowtown has NZ's best example of a gold-era **Chinese settlement** (admission by gold coin donation; ☎ 24hr). Interpretive signs explain the lives of Chinese 'diggers' during and after the gold rush, while restored huts and shops



make the story more tangible. Subjected to significant racism, the Chinese often had little choice but to rework old tailings rather than seek new claims. The Chinese settlement is off Buckingham St.

Try your luck **gold panning** on the Arrow River. Rent pans from the visitor information centre (\$3) and head to the northern edge of town. This is also a good spot for **walking**. Pick up **Arrowtown Walks** (\$1) from the visitor information centre; you'll find routes and history on walks to Macetown (14km, seven hours) and **Tobins Track** (one hour). **Historic Buildings of Arrowtown** (\$5) has self-guided walks in the township.

Arrowtown Golf Course (☎ 03-442 1719; www.arrowtown.nzgolf.net; green fees \$60, club hire \$30) is picturesque and challenging. Flasher golfers should head to **Millbrook** (☎ 03-441 7010; www.millbrook.co.nz; Malaghans Rd; green fees \$155-165, club hire \$55), and in late November/early December the **New Zealand Golf Open** (www.nzga.co.nz) is held at the private 'Hills' course of NZ retail magnate Michael Hill. Queenstown and Arrowtown are very busy across the weekend. Book ahead.

Sleeping

Arrowtown has accommodation from budget to top end, but during summer rooms fill up fast.

Arrowtown Holiday Park (☎ 03-442 1876; www.arrowtownholidaypark.co.nz; 11 Suffolk St; sites \$30, d \$50-110) Mountain views come as standard, even if you're paying more for the flash new studio units. Amenities blocks are equally pristine.

Viking Lodge (☎ 03-442 1765; www.vikinglodge.co.nz; 21 Inverness Cres; d \$90-130; ☎) These older A-frame units have a comfortable and family-friendly stamp. If the kids still have energy after a day's travelling, wear them out even more in the swimming pool or on the playground.

Shades (☎ 03-442 1613; www.shadesofarrowtown.co.nz; cnr Buckingham & Merioneth Sts; d \$100-150) A garden setting gives these bungalow-style cottages a relaxed air. Family units (\$200 to \$240) are good value if you're travelling with the whole clan.

Old Villa Homestay B&B (☎ 03-442 1682; www.arrowtownoldvilla.co.nz; 13 Anglesea St; s/d \$110/140) Freshly baked bread and homemade preserves welcome

visitors to this heritage-style villa with a garden just made for summer barbecues. Two en suite double rooms come trimmed with fresh sprigs of lavender. One of the rooms has an additional single bed if you've got an extra travelling companion.

Arrowtown Lodge (☎ 03-442 1101; www.arrowtownlodge.co.nz; 7 Anglesea St; d incl breakfast \$180; (P) (Q)) From the outside the guest rooms look like heritage cottages, but inside they're cosy and modern. The family owners are superfriendly and the breakfast is hearty.

Millbrook (☎ 0800 800 604, 03-441 7000; www.millbrook.co.nz; Malaghans Rd; d \$395-630; (P) (Q) (R)) Just outside Arrowtown, this enormous resort is a town unto itself. At the end of the day enjoy a massage in the spa, and take your pick from four restaurants.

Budget travellers should head to cosy **Poplar Lodge** (☎ 03-442 1466; www.poplarlodge.co.nz; 4 Merioneth St; dm/s/d \$24/55/65). A couple of self-contained units (\$95 to \$105) are also available. **Riverdown Guesthouse** (☎ 03-409 8499; 7 Bedford St; s/d \$53/66; ☎ closed May-Oct) is a hostel-meets-homestay that would be a B&B if the friendly host provided breakfast. Bookings recommended.

Eating

For its size, Arrowtown has a good range of restaurants. For cheaper eats, head to the Arrowtown Bakery or Anatolia Kebabs in the main drag.

Arrowtown Bakery (☎ 03-442 1587; Buckingham St; gourmet pies \$5 (☎ 7am-7pm) Once the Arrowtown Bakery has lured you with yummy aromas, you'll be powerless. We can recommend the smoked fish or satay chicken pies. Don't blame us if you order a second.

Café Mondo (☎ 03-442 0227; Ballarat Arcade, Buckingham St; breakfast \$7-15, lunch & dinner \$12-25; ☎ 8am-late; (Q)) In a courtyard, this relaxed place is an excellent spot for a relaxed breakfast. Have coffee and a snack if you're in a hurry, or linger with a wine from a range of local tipples. There's a good kids menu too.

Stables (☎ 03-442 1818; 28 Buckingham St; mains \$15-32; ☎ 11am-9pm) With courtyard tables adjoining a grassy square, Stables is a good spot to share a tasting platter (\$29.50) with your closest travelling companion. Have a local Brewski beer from Wanaka, or a glass of Central Otago wine. Later at night, step inside the 1860s stone building for a more intimate dining experience.

Pesto (☎ 03-442 0885; 18 Buckingham St; mains \$17-30; ☎ 5pm-late) This candlelit restaurant serves

Italian food with a contemporary spin. It's Saffron's slightly rowdier, younger, family-friendly sibling, and the culinary expectations are kept high with good pasta and gourmet pizzas.

Cavern (☎ 03-409 8946; Ramshaw Lane; mains \$20-25; ☎ 3pm-late Wed-Sat) A modern interior provides respite from Arrowtown's occasional 19th-century heritage overkill, and a well-priced, innovative menu provides a respite from Arrowtown's more expensive eateries.

Saffron (☎ 03-442 0131; 18 Buckingham St; lunch \$12-28, dinner \$30-50; ☎ noon-late) One of the South Island's best restaurants Saffron has grown-up food including duck cassoulet and a trio of curries featuring pork, duck and king prawns. The ambience is more sophisticated compared to Pesto.

Drinking

Blue Door (☎ 03-442 0415; 18 Buckingham St; ☎ 3pm-late) Low ceilings, stone-layered walls and candlelight make this an intimate place for a pint or a Pinot.

Tap (☎ 03-442 1860; 51 Buckingham St; ☎ 11am-late) The Tap dates back to the gold rush. Inside there are wines, a pool table, pub grub and liquid gold on tap. Sit outside and slow down to Arrowtown's languid pace.

New Orleans Hotel (☎ 03-442 1860; 51 Buckingham St; ☎ 11am-late) With looks transplanted more from the Wild West than the Deep South, this heritage pub is a good escape from Arrowtown's growing array of expensive designer shops.

Entertainment

Dorothy Browns (☎ 03-442 1968; www.dorothybrowns.com; Ballarat Arcade, Buckingham St; adult/child/student \$15/5/10) This theatre, bar and bookshop all rolled into one is the kind of place you wish your home town had. Buy an international magazine and tuck into a tub of gourmet ice cream before taking in an art-house flick. Dorothy Browns is down an alley and upstairs.

Getting There & Away

From Queenstown, **connectabus** (☎ 03-441 4471; www.connectabus.com) runs regular services (7.15am to 10pm) on its green route to Arrowtown (adult/child \$7.50/4.50). If you're planning a day trip to Arrowtown, a day pass (adult/child \$13/6.50) is a little cheaper. The bus also stops at Millbrook.

The **Double-Decker Bus Tour** (☎ 03-441 4421; adult/child \$38/17) does a three-hour round-trip

tour to Arrowtown twice daily. **Arrowtown Scenic Bus** (☎ 03-442 1900; www.arrowtownbus.co.nz) has three services daily (return \$25).

AROUND ARROWTOWN

Fourteen kilometres north of Arrowtown lies **Macetown**, a ghost town reached via a rugged, flood-prone road (the original miners' wagon track), which crosses the Arrow River more than 25 times. Four-hour trips are made from Queenstown by 4WD vehicle, with gold panning included. The main operator is **Nomad Safaris** (☎ 03-442 6699; www.nomadsafaris.co.nz; adult/child from \$140/70).

GLENORCHY

pop 220

Set in achingly beautiful surroundings, post-age-stamp-sized Glenorchy is the perfect low-key antidote to the hype and bustle of Queenstown. An expanding range of adventure operators will get you active on the lake and in nearby mountain valleys by kayak, horse or jetboat, but if you prefer to strike out on two legs, tiny Kinloch just across the lake is the starting-off point for some of the South Island's finest tramps. Glenorchy lies at the head of Lake Wakatipu, a scenic 40-minute (68km) drive northwest from Queenstown.

Information

At the time of writing the DOC visitors centre at Glenorchy was closed but you can buy hut passes and get track information at the **Glenorchy visitor information centre** (☎ 03-441 0303; www.glenorchy-nz.co.nz; Oban St). Located in the general store as you enter town, this place is well stocked with information about all the activities in the area. Its website is an excellent resource.

Also check out the **Destination Glenorchy** (Map p614; ☎ 03-441 3003; 39 Camp St) booking office in Queenstown, and see www.glenorchy.com.

There is a petrol station in Glenorchy but you'd be wise to fill up with cheaper fuel before you leave Queenstown.

Activities

Almost all organised activities offer shuttles to and from Queenstown for a small surcharge.

TRAMPING & SCENIC DRIVING

The DOC leaflet *Glenorchy Walkway* (free) details an easy waterside walk around the

outskirts of town that's pretty but not thrilling. For something more demanding, pick up *Great Wilderness Walks* (free) from the visitor information centre. It's got tramps from two hours to two days, taking in Routeburn Valley, Lake Sylvan, Dart River and Lake Rere. For track snacks or meals, stock up on groceries in Queenstown.

Those with sturdy wheels can explore the superb valleys north of Glenorchy. **Paradise** lies 15km northwest of town, just before the start of the Dart Track. Keep your expectations low: Paradise is just a paddock, but the gravel road there runs through beautiful farmland fringed by majestic mountains. You can also explore the Rees Valley or take the road to Routeburn, which goes via the Dart River Bridge. Near the start of the Routeburn Track in Mt Aspiring National Park is a day hut and the short **Double Barrel** and **Lake Sylvan** tramps.

If you'd rather just be a passenger, you can visit the Rees Valley with **Mountainland Rovers** (☎ 03-441 1323; www.mountainlandrovers.co.nz; 37 Mull St; adult/child \$149/96), which runs 4WD tours into the remote wilderness. It also picks up from Queenstown.

Rural Discovery Tours (☎ 0800 738 687; www.rdtours.co.nz; adult/child \$180/90) runs half-day tours of a high country sheep station in a remote valley between Mts Earnslaw and Alfred.

JETBOATING & KAYAKING

Dart River Safaris (☎ 0800 327 8538, 03-442 9992; www.dartriver.co.nz; Mull St; adult/child \$199/99) journeys by jetboat into the heart of the spectacular Dart River wilderness, followed by a short nature walk and a 4WD trip down a back road to Paradise. The round trip from Glenorchy takes three hours. A longer 2½-hour jetboat ride up the Dart (adult/child \$229/129) ups the excitement level, and you can combine a jetboat ride with a river descent in an inflatable three-seater 'funyak' (adult/child \$279/179); from Glenorchy it's seven hours return. For all trips add a couple of hours if you're departing from Queenstown.

Kayak Kinloch (☎ 03-442 4900; www.kayakkinloch.co.nz; \$35-99) runs excellent guided trips exploring the lake. Trips depart from Queenstown, Glenorchy or Kinloch and have a minimum age of 13.

Dart Wilderness Adventures (☎ 03-442 9939; www.glenorchy-nz.co.nz/activities.html#jetboating; Oban St; adult/child \$209/104.50) also jetboats along the Dart River from Glenorchy, giving a

three-hour, 70km round trip that includes historical commentary, a nature walk and a barbecue lunch. Shuttles are available from Queenstown.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

An extreme way to take in the scenery is with a 45-second free fall from 11,800ft. **NZSKYDIVE** (☎ 0800 586 749, 03-409 0363; www.nzskydive.com; 8900ft/11,800ft \$245/295) offers the heart-stopping chance to jump out of a plane above Glenorchy. Book at Queenstown's **Info & Track Centre** (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 9708; www.infotrack.co.nz; 37 Shotover St).

For horsey types, **Dart Stables** (☎ 0800 474 3464, 03-442 5688; www.dartstables.com; Coll St) offers a two-hour ride (\$115), a full-day trot (\$225), and a 1½-hour Ride of the Rings trip (\$155) for Hobbit types. If you're really keen, consider the overnight two-day trek with a sleepover in Paradise (\$545).

High Country Horses (☎ 0508 595 959, 03-442 9915; www.high-country-horses.co.nz) also runs two-hour rides (\$105) and full-day rides (\$225).

For all horse-riding trips add a couple of hours ex -Queenstown.

Sleeping & Eating

At the base of the Kinloch Lodge there's a DOC campsite (\$7) which has basic lakeside facilities.

Glenorchy Hotel (☎ 03-442 9902; www.glenorchy.nz.com; Mull St; dm \$22, d \$85-115) Attached to a pub, the rooms here are surprisingly comfy. The backpacker unit is bright and basic and a popular base for returning trampers.

Glenorchy Holiday Park (☎ 03-441 0303; www.glenorchy-nz.co.nz; 2 Oban St; unpowered/powerd sites \$30/35, dm/cabins \$25/50) Set up camp in a field surrounded by basic cabins and handy barbecues. Out front is a small shop and the handy Glenorchy visitor information centre. There are mountain bikes for hire (\$40 per day) and \$15 buys a packed lunch if you're heading out for a day walk.

our pick **Kinloch Lodge** (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 4900; www.kinlochlodge.co.nz; Kinloch Rd; dm \$27-31, d \$72-110, r \$165-185; ☑) Across Lake Wakatipu from Glenorchy, this excellent retreat is a great place to unwind or prepare for a tramp. Rooms in the bunkhouse are comfy and colourful, with an outdoor hot tub and an indoor DVD-packed lounge; both just right for putting your feet up after a long tramp. The 19th-century Heritage Rooms are small but plusher. A café, bar and good restaurant

(mains \$15-30; open 8am-8pm) are on site, and if you're eating outside, look forward to stunning lake views and the attention of just maybe the South Island's friendliest dogs. Kinloch is a 26km drive from Glenorchy, or you can organise a five-minute boat ride (\$10) across the lake. Kinloch Lodge can also arrange track transfers to various trail-heads. Even if you're not a tramping type, it's worth staying at least a night to soak up the relaxed ambience.

Glenorchy Lodge (☎ 03-442 9968; wakatipu@xtra.co.nz; Mull St; d \$100-125) New owners and a new name have given this comfy place (formerly Glen-Roydon Lodge) a new lease of life. Take in mountain views from private balconies before retiring downstairs to the cosy Foxy's Café for excellent coffee.

Routeburn Farm Cottage (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 9901; elfinbay@countrynet.co.nz; Routeburn Rd; d \$105) The rural Routeburn Farm is 6km from the start of the Routeburn Track, 21km from Glenorchy. The three-bedroom self-contained cottage is often let out to farm hands so reservations are essential.

Mt Earnslaw Motels (☎ 03-442 6993; mtearnslaw@xtra.co.nz; Mull St; d \$120) This cute row of units is older from the outside but redone inside, creating cosy, well-priced rooms with big, comfy recliners, a small kitchen and an enormous bed.

Glenorchy Lake House (☎ 03-442 7084; www.glenorchylakehouse.co.nz; Mull St; d \$295-380) Newly opened in late 2007, the three rooms at this luxury lakefront B&B feature Egyptian cotton sheets, flat-screen TVs and luxury toiletries. Good luck tearing yourself away from the inner glories to get active out and about in the Wakatipu area. Once you return, recharge in the spa or with a massage.

Blanket Bay (Map p611; ☎ 03-442 9442; www.blanketbay.com; Glenorchy Rd; r \$1450-2750; ☑) Excessively discreet world-class resort that's a home away from home to the rich and famous. With a stunning view, this alpine lodge is all native timber and local schist stone. Apparently the plush rooms have privacy worthy of a few Hollywood A-listers.

Glenorchy Café (GYC; ☎ 03-442 9958; Mull St; breakfast & lunch mains \$10-15, pizza \$20; ☎ 8am-late May-Oct, dinner Nov-Apr) This funky spot with cool jazz and excellent gourmet pizzas on tap is proudly overseen by Latté, the local feline. The laid-back furred one instils the friendly GYC team with a relaxed vibe.

Getting There & Away

With sweeping vistas and gem-coloured waters, the sealed Glenorchy to Queenstown Rd is wonderfully scenic. Its constant hills are a killer for cyclists. Pick up the *Queenstown to Glenorchy Road* leaflet from the Queenstown i-SITE for points of interest along the way.

Backpacker Express at the **Info & Track Centre** (Map p614; ☎ 03-442 9708; www.infotrack.co.nz; 37 Shotover St) provides transport to Glenorchy from Queenstown (adult/child \$30/25), leaving Queenstown at 8am and returning from Glenorchy at 3pm. An overnight option (adult/child \$25/20) which leaves Queenstown at 12.30am and returns from Glenorchy at 10.30am is also available.

LAKE WAKATIPU REGION TRAMPS

The mountainous region at the northern head of Lake Wakatipu has some gorgeous, remote scenery, best viewed while tramping along the famous Routeburn and lesser-known Greenstone, Caples, and Rees-Dart Tracks. For shorter tracks, see the DOC brochure *Lake Wakatipu Walks and Trails* (\$1). Glenorchy is a convenient base for all these tramps.

Ultimate Hikes (☎ 03-442 8200; www.ultimatehikes.co.nz) has a three-day guided tramp on the Routeburn (\$1050/1190 low/high season); a six-day Grand Traverse (\$1425/1575), combining walks on the Routeburn and Greenstone Tracks; and a one-day Routeburn Encounter (\$145), which is available from mid-October to April. All prices include return transport, accommodation and all meals.

Track Information

For details of accommodation, transport to and from all trail heads and DOC visitor information centres, see Queenstown (p613) and Te Anau (p646).

DOC staff advise on maps and sell hut and Great Walks passes; before setting out, it's essential that you contact them for up-to-date track conditions. It's also advised that you book your intentions but be sure to let DOC know when you return. For more details on all these tracks see Lonely Planet's *Tramping in New Zealand*.

Routeburn Track

Passing through a huge variety of landscapes with fantastic views, the three- to four-day

Routeburn Track is one of the most popular rainforest/subalpine tracks in NZ. Increased pressure on the track has necessitated the introduction of a booking system; reservations are required throughout the main season (October to April), either through DOC visitor information centres, or online via greatwalksbooking@doc.govt.nz or www.doc.govt.nz. The **Great Walks huts pass** (per night adult/child \$40/free) allows you to stay at Routeburn Flats Hut, Routeburn Falls Hut, Mackenzie Hut and Howden Hut; various 'family' passes are also available. A **camping pass** (per night adult/child \$10/free) allows you to pitch a tent only at Routeburn Flats and Lake Mackenzie.

Outside the main season, passes are still required; huts cost \$10/free per adult/child per night. Camping is free in the off season. Note that the Routeburn Track is often closed by snow in winter and stretches of the track are very exposed and dangerous in bad weather; always check conditions with DOC.

There are car parks at the Divide and Glenorchy ends of the Routeburn, but they're unattended, so don't leave any valuables in your car.

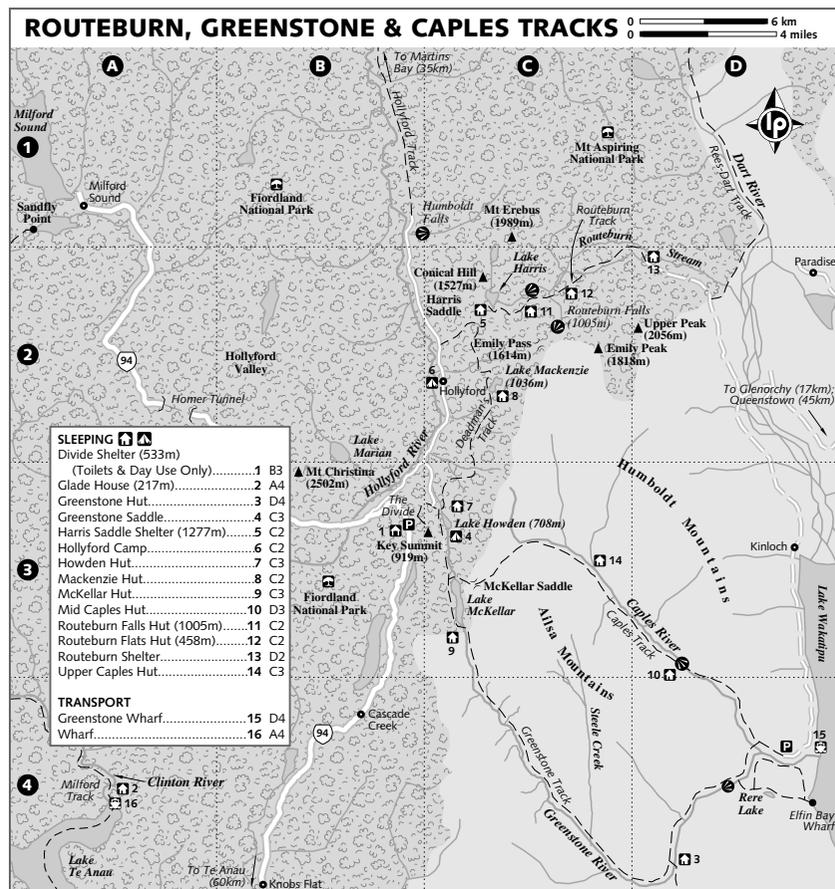
The track can be started from either end. Many people travelling from Queenstown try to reach the Divide in time to catch the bus to Milford and connect with a cruise on the sound. En route, you'll take in breathtaking views from Harris Saddle and the top of nearby Conical Hill, from where you can see waves breaking at Martins Bay. From Key Summit, there are panoramic views of the Hollyford Valley and the Eglington and Greenstone River valleys.

Estimated walking times:

Route	Time
Routeburn Shelter to Flats Hut	1½-2½hr
Flats Hut to Falls Hut	1-1½hr
Falls Hut to Mackenzie Hut	4½-6hr
Mackenzie Hut to Howden Hut	3-4hr
Howden Hut to the Divide	1-1½hr

Greenstone & Caples Tracks

Following meandering rivers through lush, peaceful valleys, these two tracks form a loop that many trampers stretch out into a moderate four- or five-day tramp. Basic huts en route are Mid Caples, Upper Caples, McKellar and Greenstone. All are \$10 per person per night, and Backcountry Hut Passes must be purchased in advance.



You can camp (free) but not on private land; check with DOC for where not to pitch your tent. Both tracks meet up with the Routeburn Track; you can either follow its tail end to the Divide or (if you've prebooked) pursue it back to Glenorchy.

From McKellar Hut you can tramp two or three hours to Howden Hut on the Routeburn Track (you'll need to book this hut from October to April), which is an hour from the Divide.

Access to the Greenstone and Caples Tracks is from Greenstone Wharf; nearby you'll find unattended parking. The road from Kinloch to Greenstone Wharf is unsealed and rough; during the summer season **Backpacker Express** (☎ 03-442 9939) and Kinloch

Lodge (p632) usually run a boat across the lake from Glenorchy.

Estimated walking times:

Route	Time
Greenstone Wharf to Mid Caples Hut	3hr
Mid Caples Hut to Upper Caples Hut	2-3hr
Upper Caples Hut to McKellar Hut	5-8hr
McKellar Hut to Greenstone Hut	5-7hr
Greenstone Hut to Greenstone Wharf	4-6hr

Rees-Dart Track

This is a difficult, demanding four- to five-day circular route from the head of Lake Wakatipu, taking you through valleys and over an alpine pass, with the possibility of a side trip to the Dart Glacier if you're suitably equipped and

experienced. Access by vehicle is possible as far as Muddy Creek on the Rees side, from where it's two hours to 25-Mile Hut.

Park your car at Muddy Creek or arrange transport with Queenstown's **Info & Track Centre** (Map p612; ☎ 03-442 9708; www.infotrack.co.nz; 37 Shotover St). Most people go up the Rees track first and come back down the Dart. The three basic DOC huts (Shelter Rock, Daleys Flat and the Dart) cost \$10 per person and Backcountry Hut Passes must be purchased in advance.

Estimated walking times:

Route	Time
Muddy Creek to Shelter Rock Hut	6hr
Shelter Rock Hut to Dart Hut	5-7hr
Dart Hut to Daleys Flat Hut	6-8hr
Daleys Flat Hut to Paradise	6-8hr

WANAKA REGION

With overgrown valleys, unspoiled rivers and tumbling glaciers, the Wanaka region is crowned with the colossal Mt Aspiring (Tititea), the highest peak outside the Mt Cook region. Enter this area from the north via Haast Pass, and you encounter the region's beautiful twin lakes, Wanaka and Hawea, two expansive freshwater siblings wedged between awesome hills and cliffs. From the south via Cardrona, stunning valley views and mountain vistas are on tap. The Wanaka region, and especially the activity-filled town of Wanaka itself, is seeing more and more travellers, but it's still a quieter alternative to pumpin' Queenstown. And once you've sampled a few closer-to-Wanaka action activities and told tall stories in the town's pubs and bars, get off the tourist trail by exploring the Mt Aspiring National Park, or the forested wilderness around Makarora.

WANAKA pop 3500

Beautiful scenery, tramping and skiing opportunities, and an expanding roster of adrenaline-inducing activities have transformed the lakeside town of Wanaka into a year-round tourist destination. Travellers come here as an alternative to Queenstown, and while some locals worry their home is starting to resemble its hyped-up Central Otago sibling across the Crown Range, Wanaka's lakefront area retains a laid-back, small-town feel. It's definitely not a sleepy hamlet anymore though, and new

restaurants and bars are adding a veneer of sophistication. Note that Wanaka wakes up in a big way for New Year's Eve.

Wanaka is located at the southern end of Lake Wanaka, just over 100km northeast of Queenstown via Cromwell. It's the gateway to Mt Aspiring National Park and to the Treble Cone, Cardrona, Harris Mountains and Pisa Range Ski Areas.

Information

DOC Wanaka visitor information centre (☎ 03-443 7660; Ardmore St; ☎ 8am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-4pm Sat & Sun, closed noon-12.30pm) In an A-framed building on the edge of town, this is the place to inquire about tramps, and there's a small museum (admission free) on Wanaka geology, flora and fauna.

DubDubDub (☎ 03-443 4440; 48 Helwick St) Has good deals for wi-fi laptop toters.

Lake Wanaka i-SITE (☎ 03-443 1574; www.lake.wanaka.co.nz; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm, to 7pm in summer) Off Ardmore St, on the waterfront.

Wanaka Medical Centre (☎ 03-443-7811; 21 Russell St; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, clinics at 9am & 5pm Sat & Sun) Patches up adventure sports mishaps.

Wanakaweb (☎ 03-443 7429; 1st fl, 3 Helwick St) Get online here.

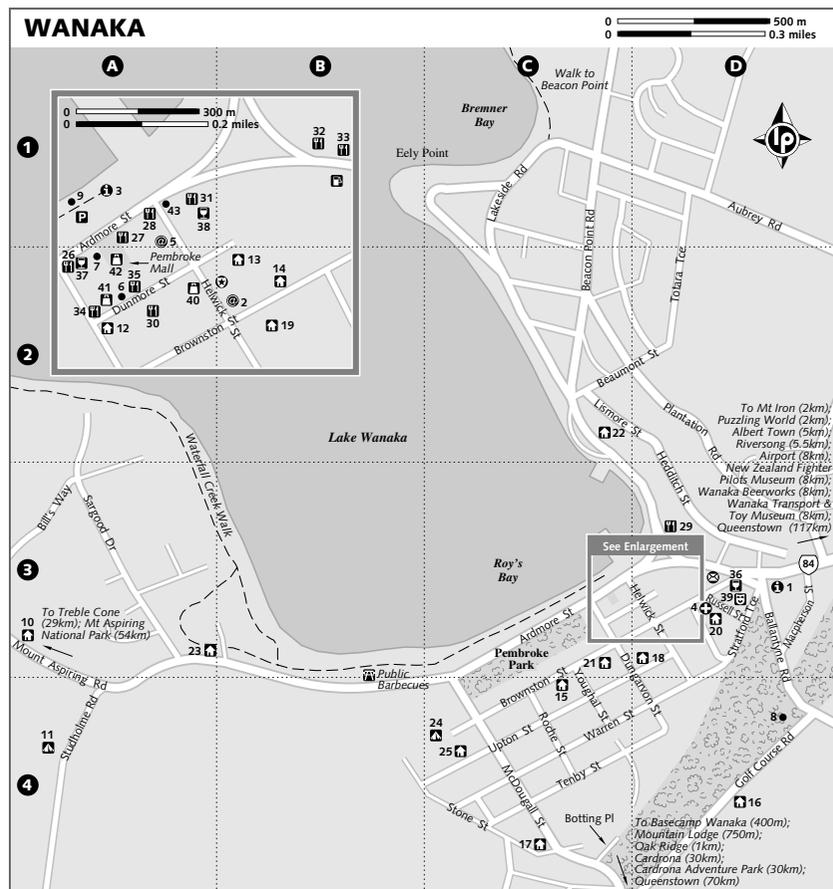
Sights

With an emphasis on the stunning outdoors, Wanaka isn't brimming with conventional sights, but you can keep busy on a rainy day.

Puzzling World (☎ 03-443 7489; www.puzzlingworld.com; adult/child \$10/7; ☎ 8am-5.30pm) has a 3-D Great Maze and lots of 'now-you-see-it, now-you-don't' visual foolery to keep kids of all ages bemused, bothered and bewildered. It's en route to Cromwell, 2km from town.

The poignant and interesting **New Zealand Fighter Pilots Museum** (☎ 03-443 7010; www.nzfpm.co.nz; Wanaka Airport; adult/child/family \$10/5/25; ☎ 9am-4pm) is dedicated to NZ combat pilots, the aircraft they flew and the sacrifices they made. There is a well-preserved collection of Hawker Hurricanes, de Havilland Vampires and vintage Soviet fighter planes, and at the time of writing several excellent interactive displays were planned.

More light-hearted is the neighbouring **Wanaka Transport & Toy Museum** (☎ 03-443 8765; www.wanakatransportandtoy.com; 5H6; adult/child/family \$8/4/20; ☎ 8.30am-5pm), the end result of one man's obsessive collecting. Among the 40,000 items, watch for a Cadillac Coupe de Ville, a mysteriously acquired MiG jet fighter,



and toys that you're guaranteed to remember with a wry smile from rainy Saturday childhood afternoons.

Afterwards toast the past and future at **Wanaka Beerworks** (☎ 03-443 1865; www.wanaka-beerworks.co.nz; SH6; ☎ 9am-4pm, tours 2pm) with this small brewery's three award-winning products: a Vienna lager, a German-style black beer and our favourite, the hops-laden 'Brewski' Bohemian pilsener. Bookings are recommended for brewery tours.

Activities

Wide valleys, alpine meadows, more than 100 glaciers and sheer mountains make **Mt Aspiring National Park** an outdoor enthusiast's paradise where many of the following activities are pos-

sible. Protected as a national park in 1964 and later included in the Southwest New Zealand (Te Wahipounamu) World Heritage Area, the park now blankets more than 3500 sq km along the Southern Alps, from the Haast River in the north to its border with Fiordland National Park in the south.

WALKING

While the southern end of Mt Aspiring National Park is well trafficked by visitors and includes popular tramps such as the Routeburn Track (p633), there are great short walks and more demanding multiday tramps in the Matukituki Valley, close to Wanaka; see the DOC leaflet **Matukituki Valley Tracks** (\$1). The dramatic **Rob Roy Valley Track** (three to four hours return)

INFORMATION		Golfside B&B.....16 D4		Tuatara Pizza.....33 B1	
DOC Wanaka Visitor Information Centre.....1 D3		Harpers.....17 C4		White House Café & Bar.....34 A2	
DubDubDub.....2 B2		Holly's.....18 D3		Yohei.....35 A2	
Lake Wanaka Mountain View		Matterhorn South.....19 B2			
i-SITE.....3 A1		Purple Cow Backpackers.....21 C3		DRINKING ☑	
Wanaka Medical Centre.....4 D3		Wanaka Bakpaka.....22 C2		Barluga.....36 D3	
Wanakaweb.....5 A1		Wanaka Homestead.....23 A3		Red Rock.....(see 33)	
		Wanaka Lakeview		Speight's Ale House.....(see 37)	
		Holiday Park.....24 C4		Trout.....37 A2	
		Wanaka YHA.....25 C4		Uno.....38 A1	
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		EATING ☑		ENTERTAINMENT ☑	
Good Sports.....6 A2		Ardmore St Food Company.....26 A2		Cinema Paradiso.....39 D3	
Green Toad.....7 A2		Botswana Butchery.....(see 36)			
Lakeland Adventures.....(see 3)		Café Gusto.....(see 29)		SHOPPING ☑	
Wanaka Golf Club.....8 D4		Doughbin Bakery.....27 A1		Gallery Thirty Three.....40 A2	
Wanaka Kayaks.....9 A1		Kai Whakapai.....28 A1		Good Sports.....(see 6)	
		Missy's Kitchen.....29 D3		Mainly Tramping.....41 A2	
		Bay View Motel.....(see 11)		Originz.....42 A2	
		Bella Vista Motel.....13 B2			
		Brook Vale.....14 B2		TRANSPORT	
		Fern Lodge.....15 C4		Adventure Rentals.....43 A1	
				Alpine Coachlines.....(see 6)	
				InterCity.....(see 3)	

takes in glaciers, waterfalls and a swing bridge, yet is a fairly easy route. The **West Matukituki Valley** track goes on to Aspiring Hut (four to five hours return), a scenic, more difficult walk over mostly grassy flats. For overnight or multiday tramps, continue up the valley to **Liverpool Hut** for great views of Mt Aspiring, or over the very difficult **Cascade Saddle** to link up with the Rees-Dart Track (p634), north of Glenorchy.

Many of these tramps are subject to snow and avalanches and can be treacherous. Register intentions and seek advice from DOC in Wanaka before heading off. Also purchase hut passes. Tracks are reached from Raspberry Creek at the end of Mt Aspiring Rd, 54km from Wanaka; for details of shuttle services, see p643.

For walks closer to town, pick up the DOC brochure **Wanaka Walks and Trails** (\$1). This includes the easy lakeside stroll to **Eely Point** (20 minutes) and on to **Beacon Point** (30 minutes), as well as the **Waterfall Creek Walk** (one hour return) east along the lakeshore.

The fairly gentle climb to the top of **Mt Iron** (549m, 1½ hours return) reveals panoramic views. Fit folks after a view can undertake the taxing, winding 8km tramp up **Mt Roy** (1578m, five to six hours return), starting 6km from Wanaka on the Mt Aspiring Rd. The high track crosses private land and is closed from October to mid-November for lambing. From Roys Peak, continue along the **Skyline Track** (five to six hours) to Cardrona Rd, 10km south of Wanaka. Don't do this in winter; low cloud eliminates views and makes it treacherous.

To the north of Wanaka, the **Minaret Burn Track** (six to seven hours) in the Mt Alta Conservation Area is suitable for walking and mountain biking. Pick up a map (50c) at DOC.

Many outfits offer guided walking tours around Wanaka, some into Mt Aspiring National Park:

Alpinism & Ski Wanaka (☎ 03-442 6593; www.alpinismski.co.nz; half-/full day \$130/195) Day walks and overnight tramps.

Eco Wanaka Adventures (☎ 03-443 2869; www.eco-wanaka.co.nz; half-/full day from \$80/150) Day, half-day and multiday trips.

Wild Walks (☎ 03-442 4476; www.wildwalks.co.nz; 3 days from \$790) Multiday tramps.

JETBOATING, RAFTING & RIVER SLEDGING

Lakeland Adventures (☎ 03-443 7495; www.lakeland-adventures.co.nz; adult/child \$85/44), at the i-SITE, offers one-hour jetboat trips across the lake that include an exciting ride in the winding Clutha River. **Pioneer Rafting** (☎ 03-443 1246; www.ecoraft.co.nz; half-day rafts per adult/child \$135/75, full-day \$185/95) has ecorafting on the high-volume Clutha with Class II to III rapids, gold panning and bird-watching. Try white-water sledging with **Frogz Have More Fun** (☎ 0800 338 738, 03-443 9130; www.frogz.co.nz; \$135-285; ☎ Oct-May) and steer a hydrospeed sledge through the currents. Trips range from relaxed on the Clutha to challenging on the Kawarau.

CANYONING & KAYAKING

Adventurous souls will love canyoning, a summertime-only activity staged by **Deep**

Canyon (☎ 03-443 7922; www.deepcanyon.co.nz; from \$215; ☽ mid-Nov–Apr) and involving climbing, swimming and waterfall-abseiling through confined, steep and wild gorges. Transport to the canyon, lunch, instruction and equipment are included. If you're a supremely confident adventure junkie, consider the Leaping Burn trip (\$440).

Alpine Kayak Guides (☎ 03-443 9023; www.alpinekayaks.co.nz; half-/full day \$135/190; ☽ Nov–May) paddles down the Hawea, Clutha and Matukituki Rivers. Kids can join a more leisurely half-day Grandview trip (adult/child \$115/79), and if you really get a taste for paddling, sign up for a full-day kayaking basics course (\$280).

Wanaka Kayaks (☎ 0800 926 925; www.wanakakayaks.co.nz; ☽ summer only), opposite Subway on the beach, rents kayaks (\$10 to \$25) and offers guided lake tours (from \$60 per person).

Hire kayaks from **Lakeland Adventures** (☎ 03-443 7495; www.lakelandadventures.co.nz), off Ardmore St, on the waterfront, for \$10 per hour.

SKYDIVING & PARAGLIDING

Skydive Lake Wanaka (☎ 03-443 7207; www.skydivenz.com; adult \$279-369) does jumps from 11,800ft and a scary 15,000ft; the latter lets you fall for 60 seconds. Count on another \$180 or so for video evidence for the folks back home. **Wanaka Paragliding** (☎ 0800 359 754; www.wanaka.paragliding.co.nz; adult \$180) will take you on tandem flights at 800m from Treble Cone. Count on around 20 minutes soaring the Central Otago thermals.

ROCK CLIMBING & MOUNTAINEERING

Mt Aspiring National Park is a favourite playground of mountaineering and alpine-climbing companies. **Aspiring Guides** (☎ 03-443 9422; www.aspiringguides.com; 5 days from \$2495), **Adventure Consultants** (☎ 03-443 8711; www.adventure.co.nz; 5 days from \$2490) and **Alpinism & Ski** (☎ 03-443 6593; www.alpinismski.co.nz; 5 days from \$2300) all offer beginners courses and multiday guided ascents of Mts Aspiring, Tasman and Tutoko.

Wanaka Rock Climbing & Abseil Adventures (☎ 03-443 6411; www.wanakarock.co.nz) has an introductory rock-climbing course (half-/full day \$110/190), a half-day abseiling intro (\$110), and bouldering and multipitch climbs for the experienced.

Before you hit the mountains, learn the ropes on the indoor and outdoor climbing walls at **Basecamp Wanaka** (☎ 03-443 6411; www.basecampwanaka.co.nz; 50 Cardrona Valley Rd; adult/child

\$15/10; ☽ 10am–6pm, to 9pm Tue–Wed). Climbing gear can also be hired.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Many tracks and trails in the region are open to cyclists. DOC produces *Mountain-Biking Around Wanaka* (50c), describing mountain-bike rides ranging from 2km (the steep Mt Iron track) to 20km (West Matukituki Valley).

For spectacular guided mountain biking, contact **Freeride NZ** (☎ 0800 746 369 8943; www.freeridenz.com), which does full-day trips (from \$185) including helibiking options. If you're happiest on two wheels, jump on a three-day (\$1050) or eight-day (\$2750) expedition.

Rent bikes from **Lakeland Adventures** (☎ 03-443 7495; www.lakelandadventures.co.nz; half-/full day \$25/\$35).

FISHING

Lakes Wanaka and Hawea (16km away) have excellent trout fishing, and the surrounding rivers are also popular angling spots. Numerous guides are based in Wanaka, including **Hatch** (☎ 03-443 8446; www.hatchfishing.co.nz; 2 adults half-/full day \$425/650) and **Riversong** (☎ 03-443 8567; www.wanakaflyfishingguides.co.nz; 2 adults half-/full day \$350/550). Hatch also runs adventure fishing trips incorporating hiking (\$590 per day), and for \$60 per hour, the expert team at Riversong offer tuition in the dark art of fly-fishing.

Lakeland Adventures (☎ 03-443 7495; www.lakelandadventures.co.nz; up to 3 people \$295) offers guided trout fishing on Lake Wanaka.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

For skiers after untouched powder and exclusive views, there are companies offering heliskiing (p91). More easily reached slopes include **Treble Cone** (p89), **Cardrona** (p89), **Snow Farm New Zealand** (for cross-country skiing, p89). Hire gear at **Green Toad** (☎ 03-443 4315; 6 Pembroke Mall, Ardmore St).

Wanaka Golf Club (☎ 03-443 7888; www.wanakagolf.co.nz; Ballantyne Rd; green fees \$55, club hire from \$20) has a view-filled 18-hole course.

Good Sports (☎ 03-443 7966; www.good-sports.co.nz; Dunmore St) hires out sports equipment, including bikes, camping and hiking accessories, fishing rods and water-sports gear.

Tours

AERIAL SIGHTSEEING

The following companies are all based at Wanaka Airport. Book trips through the i-SITE.

Aspiring Air (☎ 0800 100 943, 03-443 7943; www.aspiringair.com) A range of scenic flights, including a 50-minute flight over Mt Aspiring (adult/child \$185/120), a Milford Sound fly-past and landing (\$355/215) and a sprint around Mt Cook and the glaciers (\$380/215).

Classic Flights (☎ 027 220 9277; www.classicflights.co.nz; from \$195) Runs sightseeing flights in a vintage Tiger-moth. 'Biggles' goggles provided, but BYO flowing silk scarf.

Wanaka Flightseeing (☎ 0800 105 105, 03-443 8787; www.flightseeing.co.nz) Offers similar flights at similar prices, with an 'early bird', early morning discount of \$30 on some flights in summer.

All the following offer 20-minute flights around Wanaka for about \$160 and 55-minute tours of Mt Aspiring and the glaciers for about \$450.

Alpine Helicopters (☎ 03-443 4000; www.alpineheli.co.nz)

Aspiring Helicopters (☎ 03-443 7152; www.aspiringhelicopters.co.nz)

Wanaka Helicopters (☎ 03-443 1085; www.helicopterflights.co.nz)

OTHER TOURS

Book at the i-SITE.

Clean Green Photo Tours (☎ 03-443 7951; www.cleangreen.co.nz; 2hr/half-day/full day \$250/350/750) Gives you expert hints and tips as you capture Central Otago's stunning scenery.

Lake Wanaka Cruises (☎ 03-443 1230; www.wanakacruises.co.nz; from \$60) Similar tours to Lakeland Adventures aboard a catamaran; with overnight options.

Lakeland Adventures (☎ 03-443 7495; www.lakelandadventures.co.nz) Has 2½-hour trips to Stevensons Island (adult/child \$70/40) and a 3½-hour trip with a guided bushwalk on Mou Waho (\$90/45). To explore the lake under your own steam, kayaks (from \$10 per hour) and aqua bikes (\$15 per 20 minutes) are also available.

Ridgeline (☎ 0800 234 000; www.ridgelinenz.com) Runs tours (3½ hours, \$135) combining a 4WD farm safari and wine tasting at the beautiful Rippon Vineyard.

Wanaka Sightseeing (☎ 03-443 1855; www.wanakasightseeing.co.nz; full-day winery tour \$290, Lord of the Rings tour from \$299) Buses you out on various Central Otago tours, including a full-day winery excursion with lunch provided. For any lingering *Lord of the Rings* fans, there are exhaustive tours of filming sights where you can dress up like a hobbit and sometimes hang out with Ian Brodie, author-cum-guru of the *The Lord of the Rings: Location Guidebook*.

Festivals & Events

Rippon Festival (☎ 0508 747 766; www.ripponfestival.co.nz) Music fans should diary this popular festival held

in early February at the lakeside Rippon Vineyard. Dance and dub beats feature with the occasional high-profile international act. If the music doesn't relax you (highly unlikely), the wine certainly will. Rippon's riesling is great for summertime picnics.

Warbirds Over Wanaka (☎ 0800 496 920, 03-443 8619; www.warbirdsoverwanaka.com; Wanaka Airport; 3-day admission adult/child \$140/25, 1st day only \$40/10, each of last 2 days \$60/10) Every second Easter (even-numbered years), Wanaka hosts this huge and incredibly popular international air show attracting 100,000 people.

Wanaka Fest (www.wanakafest.co.nz) Held mid-September, this festival is a five-day event with the feel of a small-town fair. Street parades, live music and wacky competitions get the locals saying giddy to the warmth of spring.

Sleeping

Like Queenstown, Wanaka is bursting with hostels and luxury accommodation, but good midrange options are a bit harder to find. Across summer, and especially around New Year, prices and demand increase considerably. During winter the town is hit with an influx of international snowboarders.

BUDGET Camping

Wanaka Lakeview Holiday Park (☎ 03-443 7883; www.wanakalakeview.kiwholidayparks.com; 212 Brownston St; sites/cabins/d \$30/44/84) Grassy sites set amid established pine trees with a kid's playground and lots of space to set up camp. Rooms range from basic cabins to en suite flats.

Aspiring Campervan Park (☎ 0800 229 8439, 03-443 6603; www.campervanpark.co.nz; Studholme Rd; sites \$37; ☐ ☑) Trimmed grass sites, trees and pretty views add up to a relaxing spot. Great facilities include a barbecue area with gas heaters and a spa and sauna, all at no additional cost. Campervans only please; no tents.

Hostels & Lodges

Wanaka YHA (☎ 03-443 7405; www.yha.org.nz; 181 Upton St; sites \$20, dm \$24-27, d/tr \$57/89; ☐) Friendly and cosy, this relatively small YHA has a number of small buildings connected by boardwalks. The open-plan kitchen and lounge is comfortable and has games, videos and local info. Rooms are spick-and-span clean, and there's good storage for skis, too.

Fern Lodge (☎ 0800 555 556; www.fernlodge.co.nz; 122 Brownston St; dm/s \$24/25, d \$50-110) Rooms at this sprawling reader-recommended spot run from straightforward dorms to flasher lodge

rooms with Sky TV, spa baths and ritzy gas kitchens. The common theme throughout is excellent value for money.

Matterhorn South (☎ 03-443 1119; www.matterhornsouth.co.nz; 56 Brownston St; dm \$24-27, s & d \$50-85, tr & q \$100-115; 📍) Right at the edge of central Wanaka, this friendly spot has clean, good value dorms and studios, and a sunny TV and games room. There's a shared country-style kitchen and a private garden to rest up in after a day's outdoor adventuring. The triple and quad en suite rooms are excellent value.

Wanaka Bakpaka (☎ 03-443 7837; www.wanakabakpaka.co.nz; 117 Lakeside Rd; dm \$25-27, s \$45, d \$62-39; 📍) New owners, new kitchen, new outdoor areas. Do you spot a common theme here? An energetic brother-and-sister team are steadily upgrading this friendly hostel high above the lake with stunning views. The colourful rooms are good value and the outlook from the lounge will inspire you to (finally) get your diary up to date.

Purple Cow Backpackers (☎ 03-443 1880; www.purplecow.co.nz; 94 Brownston St; dm \$26-28, d \$72-78; 📍) Warmed by a wood stove, the lounge at this ever-popular hostel holds commanding lake and mountain views; that's if you can tear yourself away from the regular movie nights. There are four-and six-bed dorms and a small array of nice doubles with en suites. Outdoor patios and bike hire will get you breathing in crisp mountain air.

Altamont Lodge (☎ 03-443 8864; www.altamontlodge.co.nz; 121 Mt Aspiring Rd; s/d \$40/60; 📍) At the quieter end of town, natural wood gives this place a ski-lodge ambience. A lounge with a big fire, tennis courts, and a spa pool provide plenty of off-piste action. It's often booked by big groups so reserve ahead. Bed linen costs an additional \$5 per stay.

Also recommended:

Holly's (☎ 03-443 8187; www.hollybackpacker.co.nz; 71 Upton St; dm \$25-27, d \$62; 📍) A family-run low-key hostel that's a good antidote to busier places around town. Showing a bit of wear and tear, but a friendly spot. Bikes are for hire (half-/full day \$10/20).

Mountain View Backpackers (☎ 03-443 9050; www.mtnview.co.nz; 7 Russell St; dm/d \$27/62) A newly renovated characterful house with a big lawn and warm, comfortable rooms.

MIDRANGE

Aspiring Lodge (☎ 03-443 7816; www.aspiringlodge.co.nz; cnr Dunmore & Dungarvon Sts; d \$105-170) Older but well-maintained motel units trimmed with

natural wood and with easy access to lakefront bars and restaurants. The following morning the motel's helpful team will have plenty of ideas for local activities.

Harpers (☎ 03-443 8894; www.harpers.co.nz; 95 McDougall St; s/d incl breakfast \$110/140) The garden (with pond and waterfall no less...) is a labour of love at this friendly B&B in a quiet location down a long driveway. Legendary breakfasts are served on a sunny deck with expansive views. You'd be wise to factor a leisurely second cup of breakfast coffee into your day's plans.

our pick Riversong (☎ 03-443 8567; www.riversongwanaka.co.nz; 5 Wicklow Tce, Albert Town; d \$110-160) On the banks of the Clutha River in the nearby hamlet of Albert Town, Riversong has two rooms in a lovely heritage B&B surrounded by established fruit trees. The well-travelled owners may well have the best nonfiction library in NZ, and if you can tear yourself away from the books there's excellent trout fishing just metres away. Dinner including wine is available for \$55 per person. Riversong is down a no-exit road so it is very quiet.

Brook Vale (☎ 0800 438 333, 03-443 8333; www.brookvale.co.nz; 35 Brownston St; d \$135-150; 📍) Self-contained studio and family units with a few classy touches and patios that open onto a grassy lawn complete with a gently flowing creek. You'll also find a barbecue, a spa and a swimming pool for those sunny Central Otago days.

Also recommended:

Bella Vista Motel (☎ 0800 235 528, 03-443 6066; www.bellavistamotels.co.nz; 2 Dunmore St; d \$110-150; 📍) By now you'll know the standard Bella Vista look, but you'll also recognise the top location and good-value facilities.

Golfside B&B (☎ 03-443 4581; www.golfsidebandb.co.nz; 56 Golf Course Rd; r \$120-180; 📍) Stately B&B in expansive gardens with classily elegant rooms. On the outskirts of town with lake views through the pines and across the golf course.

Bay View Motel (☎ 0800 229 843, 03-443 7766; www.bayviewwanaka.co.nz; Studholme Rd; r \$140-180; 📍) Original units date back 40 years, but the switched-on owners have modernised the interiors nicely with TVs and DVD players to keep up with the sterling views outside.

TOP END

Mountain Lodge (☎ 03-443 7400; www.mountainrange.co.nz; Heritage Park, Cardrona Valley Rd; r \$225-305, cottages \$285-315; 📍) In quiet surroundings en

route to Cardrona, this subtly elegant lodge has everything you need if the nearby Treble Cone ski field is closed. Hot tub, luxury bath products, CD/DVD and book library; come to think if it, some of those might be pretty good in summertime too.

Wanaka Homestead (☎ 03-443 5022; www.wanakahomestead.co.nz; 1 Homestead Close; d \$225-305, cottages \$295-525; 📍) Warm wooden interiors, Oriental rugs and local artwork punctuate this boutique lodge that's won awards for its ecofriendly approach to sustainability. Despite the focus on green good deeds, it's still very luxurious, with underfloor heating and an under-the-stars hot tub. Choose from rooms in the main lodge or in self-contained cottages that sleep up to seven.

Eating

Wanaka has a surprising range of places to eat, drink, and generally celebrate the fact that you're on holiday.

RESTAURANTS

our pick White House Café & Bar (☎ 03-443 9595; 33 Dumore St; mains \$15-21; ☎ 11am-late; 📍) It looks like a Greek townhouse miraculously airlifted from Santorini, and inside this long-running local favourite you can linger over plates of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cuisine with lots of vegetarian options. Polished wooden floors and Turkish rugs do nothing to break the delicious spell. In summer, relax under endless Central Otago blue skies seemingly also imported straight from the Med.

Tuatara Pizza (☎ 03-443 8186; 72 Ardmore St; pizzas \$15-28; ☎ 6pm-late) Rustic furniture including retro sofas might make you think they don't take their gourmet pizzas seriously. Think again and try the venison and cranberry or the roast pumpkin and blue cheese.

Relishes (☎ 03-443 9018; 99 Ardmore St; mains \$15-30; ☎ 8am-9pm) A café by day, this place whips out the white tablecloths at night and becomes a classy restaurant with a good wine list. Try the antipasto platter (\$26) with local salmon and toast the lakefront setting.

Missy's Kitchen (☎ 03-443 5099; Level 1, 80 Ardmore St; mains \$30-35; ☎ 4pm-late) A dramatic upstairs dining room with equally spectacular lake views serves up local beef, lamb, and salmon in innovative and award-winning ways. Make the night linger longer with a cocktail at the bar. The list of local beers and wine is worth coming back a second night.

Botswana Butchery (☎ 03-443 6745; Post Office Lane; mains \$30-45; ☎ 5pm-late) It's a humble name for Wanaka's classiest eatery. In a dining room trimmed with dark wood and leather, Asian-inspired dishes like lemongrass-infused seafood dumplings go head to head with Botswana Butchery's signature aged beef steaks. Definitely food for grown-ups, as is the serious Central Otago-skewed wine list. Just come with a few imbibing partners, as surprisingly few are available by the glass. Downstairs in Post Office Lane there's a growing range of bars to explore after dinner. Let us know what you discover.

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

Soulfood Store & Cafe (☎ 03-443 7885; 74 Ardmore St; mains \$7-15; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, to 3pm Sat & Sun; 📍) Park yourself in a rustic wooden booth and stay healthy with organic soups, pizza, pasta and muffins. Not everything's strictly vegetarian, and breakfast with free-range eggs breaks the spell in a tasty way. The attached organic food store is a good spot for a pre-picnic stock-up including freshly baked breads.

Yohai (☎ 03-443 4222; Spencer House Mall, 23 Dunmore St; snacks \$8-12; ☎ 7.30am-6pm; 📍) Tucked away in a shopping arcade, this funky Japanese-inspired eatery does interesting local spins on sushi (how about venison or lamb?), and superlative juices and smoothies. Very cool music too, and a good range of vego options.

Kai Whakapai (☎ 03-443 7795; cnr Helwick & Ardmore Sts; meals \$10-30; ☎ 7am-late) The wait staff have occasional piercings and dreadlocks at this eclectic spot with a sunny sprawl of outdoor tables. The quirky Kiwi decor showcases Kiwi comfort food throughout the day – try the steak baguette – and then morphs into a more sophisticated wine bar later at night. It's also a top spot to try the fine products from Wanaka Beerworks on tap.

Ardmore St Food Company (☎ 03-443 2230; The Waterfront, 155 Ardmore St; meals \$12-18; ☎ 8am-4pm) Cosmopolitan lakefront café with everything from muffins the size of Mt Aspiring to quirkily dubbed breakfasts like Green Eggs and Ham (bacon, eggs and pesto if you're wondering...). There's a concise but considered list of local wines and boutique beers, and the attached deli is a good place to pick up gourmet goodies for a lakeside picnic.

Café Gusto (☎ 03-443 6639; 1 Lakeside Rd; mains \$15-20; ☎ 8am-5pm) The most common answer to the question 'Who's got the best coffee in town?',

Gusto provides robust meals like breakfast burrito with jalapeno peppers or smoked salmon and scrambled eggs. Both will set you up for the most active of days, and after you've kayaked/mountain biked/rafted/hiked (tick as many as you like), come back in the afternoon and recount the experience over excellent cakes and (reputedly) Wanaka's best coffee.

Around the waterfront where Pembroke Mall meets Ardmore St, you'll find a small enclave of cheaper spots for takeaway food. Dubbed 'Curry in a Hurry' by locals Sagun does good Indian food, and the **Doughbin Bakery** (motto: 'Baking at sparrow's fart since Adam was a cowboy') specialises in McGregor's fine pies. With a motto like that, you just know they're going to be fresh.

SELF-CATERING

The **New World supermarket** (Dunmore St; ☎ 8am-8pm) is well stocked for self-caterers.

Drinking

Barluga (☎ 03-442 5400; Post Office Lane; ☎ 4pm-late) In the up-and-coming Post Office Lane area, Barluga's leather armchairs and coolly retro wallpaper at first make you think of a refined gentleman's club. Wicked cocktails and killer back-to-back beats soon break the illusion.

Uno (☎ 03-443 4911; 99 Ardmore St; ☎ 4pm-late) Slick and contemporary wine bar that's the perfect place to watch the sun go down. It's a pretty good spot to head back to after dinner as well.

Red Rock (☎ 03-443 5545; Level 1, 68 Ardmore St; ☎ 5pm-late) With terracotta-red walls, decks to admire the moon from, and weekend DJs and occasional live gigs from around 10pm, this is a friendly place to get cosy up in cowhide-covered booths. It's popular in winter with the snowboarder crowd, but in summer the lakefront bars get busier.

Trout (☎ 03-443 2600; 151 Ardmore St; ☎ 11am-late Wed-Sun, 3pm-late Mon & Tue) The best of the busier beer barns down on the lakefront, this place is more the new Trout than the old trout. It's a slick designer Kiwi pub with the full range of Monteith's West Coast beers on tap.

Next door, the **Speight's Ale House** (☎ 03-443 2920; 155 Ardmore St; ☎ 11am-late) is same, same but different, with Dunedin's Speight's brews on tap and a more rustic Kiwi ambience. Mountain and lake views come as standard at both competing brew bars, and the food is a notch above everyday pub grub.

Entertainment

Ourpick Cinema Paradiso (☎ 03-443 1505; www.paradiso.net.nz; 1 Ardmore St; adult/child \$13/9; ☎) Deservedly one of Wanaka's biggest attractions, and just maybe a NZ national treasure. Sit yourself down in an old lounge chair or sofa in this eccentric cinema. Doors open one hour before film screenings, giving you time to order your beer, wine, coffees, homemade ice cream or still-warm giant cookies. Dinner including pizza and Thai curry can also be pre-ordered and is served during intermission. Shows include Hollywood blockbusters and a surprisingly eclectic and international mix of art-house flicks.

Shopping

For its size, Wanaka has a good number of interesting shops.

Originz (☎ 03-443 4488; Pembroke Mall) This gift shop is filled with local crafts including cards, soaps, clocks, candles, paintings and pottery. You'll find unique, reasonably priced objects and it's all proudly made in NZ. A good place for unusual gifts that are easy to transport home. It's off Ardmore St.

Gallery Thirty Three (☎ 03-443 4330; 33 Helwick St) Exhibitions of pottery, glass and jewellery. It's pricey, but even if you're not planning to buy, it's an interesting look at what local artists are up to.

Mainly Tramping (☎ 03-443 2888; Spencer House, Dunmore St) Upstairs in the mall, this shop is filled with clothes, boots, tents, skis and everything else you need to get out and about.

Good Sports (☎ 03-443 7966; www.good-sports.co.nz; Dunmore St) Similar items to hire and buy.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Air New Zealand (☎ 0800 737 000; www.airnz.co.nz) has daily flights between Wanaka and Christchurch (from \$99). **Aspiring Air** (☎ 0800 100 943, 03-443 7943; www.aspiringair.com) has daily flights between Queenstown and Wanaka (\$155, 20 minutes) in small, twin-engine planes.

BUS

The bus stop for **InterCity** (☎ 03-443 7885; www.intercity.co.nz) is outside the i-SITE on the lakefront. Wanaka receives daily buses from Queenstown (\$32), which motor on to Franz Josef (\$86) via Haast Pass (\$44). For Christchurch (\$68) you'll need to change at Tarras, and for Dunedin (\$45) at Cromwell.

Naked Bus (www.nakedbus.com) travels to Queenstown, Christchurch, Cromwell and the West Coast.

The town is well serviced by door-to-door shuttles and buses, nearly all of which can be booked at the iSITE. **K Bus** (☎ 03-358 8355; www.kbus.co.nz), **Wanaka Connexions** (☎ 03-443 9122; www.time2.co.nz) and **Atomic Shuttles** (☎ 03-349 0697; www.atomictravel.co.nz) all service Christchurch (\$50 to \$60) and Queenstown (\$20 to \$30). Wanaka Connexions and **Catch-a-Bus** (☎ 03-479 9960; www.catchabus.co.nz) head to Dunedin (\$50); Atomic Shuttles goes to Fox (\$40) and Franz Josef (\$45) Glaciers and on to Greymouth (\$80). The majority pick up near the i-SITE; inquire when you book.

Getting Around

Alpine Coachlines (☎ 03-443 7966; www.good-sports.co.nz; Dunmore St), operating from Good Sports, meets and greets flights at Wanaka Airport (\$10), and in summer has twice-daily shuttles for trampers (one-way/return \$49/30) to Mt Aspiring National Park and Raspberry Creek. See it also for winter transport to Treble Cone.

Wanaka Taxis (☎ 03-443 7999; www.wanakataxis.com) also looks after airport transfers.

Mount Aspiring Express (☎ 0800 186 754; www.wanakashuttles.co.nz) has daily services to Raspberry Creek at Mt Aspiring National Park (one-way/return \$30/50) from October to May. Mount Aspiring Express will also drop you at the Mt Roy trailhead (\$10).

Adventure Rentals (☎ 03-443 6050; adventurerentals@xtra.co.nz; 20 Ardmore St) hires cars and 4WDs.

MAKARORA

pop 40

At Makarora you've left the West Coast and entered Otago, but the township still has a West Coast frontier feel. Visit the **DOC visitor information centre** (☎ 03-443 8365; www.makarora.co.nz; SH6; ☎ 8am-4.45pm daily Nov-Apr, 8am-4.45pm Mon-Fri May-Oct) at the Makarora Wilderness Resort for conditions and routes before undertaking any regional tramps.

Activities

TRAMPING

Short tramps in this secluded area include the **Bridal Track** (1½ hours one-way, 5km), from the top of Haast Pass to Davis Flat, and the **Blue Pools Walk** (30 minutes return), where you can see huge rainbow trout.

Longer tramps go through magnificent countryside but shouldn't be undertaken lightly. Alpine conditions, flooding and the possibility of avalanches mean you must be well prepared; consult with DOC before heading off. DOC's *Tramping Guide to the Makarora Region* (\$5) is a worthwhile investment.

The three-day **Gillespie Pass** tramp goes via the Young, Siberia and Wilkin Rivers; this is a high pass with avalanche danger. With a jetboat ride down the Wilkin to complete it, this rates alongside the Milford Track as one of the great tramps. The **Wilkin Valley Track** heads off from Kerin Forks Hut, at the top of the Wilkin River, and on to Top Forks Hut and the picturesque **Lakes Diana, Lucidus** and **Castalia** (one hour, 1½ hours and three to four hours respectively from Top Forks Hut).

Jetboats go to Kerin Forks, and a service goes across the Young River mouth when the Makarora floods; inquire at **Wilkin River Jets** (☎ 0800 538 945, 03-443 8351; www.wilkinriverjets.co.nz; adult/child \$90/45) or at DOC.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The lush Siberia Valley provides one of NZ's great outdoor adventures. The **Siberia Experience** (☎ 0800 345 666, 03-443 8666; www.siberiaexperience.co.nz; adult \$290) is a thrill-seeking extravaganza combining a half-hour scenic small-plane flight, a three-hour bush walk through a remote mountain valley and a half-hour jetboat trip down the Wilkin and Makarora Rivers in Mt Aspiring National Park. To avoid getting lost, keep your eye on the markers as you descend from Siberia Valley. It's also possible to join the trip in Wanaka.

Wilkin River Jets does a superb 50km, one-hour jetboating trip (adult/child \$90/45) into Mt Aspiring National Park, following the Makarora and Wilkin Rivers. It's cheaper than Queenstown options, and also offers trips including helicopter rides or tramping.

Southern Alps Air (☎ 0800 345 666, 03-443 4385; www.southernalpsair.co.nz) does trips to Mt Cook and the glaciers (adult/child \$370/180) and landings at Milford Sound (\$355/230).

Sleeping & Eating

The nearest DOC camping grounds are on SH6 at Cameron Flat, 10km north of Makarora, and at Boundary Creek Reserve, 18km south of Makarora on the shores of Lake Wanaka; both charge \$6/3 per adult/child.

Makarora Wilderness Resort (☎ 03-443 8372; www.makarora.co.nz; SH6; powered sites \$30, dm \$25, d \$60-110; 📍 🚰) In scrubby bush are self-contained chalets, basic cabins and backpacker doubles and dorms. They've all got a snug, alpine feel, and there's a café, outdoor pool, grocery store and petrol station. Campervan travellers are also welcome, and later at night the café effortlessly assumes the role of Makarora's pub.

Larrivee Homestay (☎ 03-443 9177; www.larriveehomestay.co.nz; off SH6; d \$100, additional guests \$20) This rustic two-bedroom self-contained cottage sleeping up to four is situated down a side road between DOC and the tourist centre. Surrounded by native bush and with a library full of books, it's a good spot to take the foot off the travel accelerator for a few days.

Getting There & Away

InterCity (☎ 03-442 8238; www.intercity.co.nz) and **Atomic Shuttles** (☎ 03-349 0697; www.atomictravel.co.nz) both travel through Makarora en route to Haast and the West Coast.

HAWEA

pop 1600

The small town of Hawea, 15km north of Wanaka, is mostly a collection of holiday and retiree homes with spectacular lake and mountain views. From **Lake Hawea** look out at the indomitable Corner Peak on the western shore and out to the distant Barrier Range. Separated from Lake Wanaka by a narrow isthmus called the Neck, Lake Hawea is 35km long and 410m deep, and home to trout and landlocked salmon. The lake was raised 20m in 1958 to facilitate the power stations downriver.

Lake Hawea Motor Inn (☎ 0800 429 324, 03-443 1224; www.lakehawea.co.nz; 1 Capell Ave; dm \$25, d \$120-140) has unbeatable views across the lake and an on-site restaurant.

On the lakeshore is the spacious and relatively peaceful **Lake Hawea Holiday Park** (☎ 03-443 1767; www.haweaholidaypark.co.nz; SH6;

sites \$24, d \$40-80), a favourite of fishing and boating enthusiasts.

CARDRONA

The sealed **Crown Range Road** from Wanaka to Queenstown via Cardrona is much shorter than the route via Cromwell, but it's a narrow, twisting-and-turning mountain road that needs to be tackled with care, especially in poor weather. It's certainly not advisable at night.

With views of lush valleys, foothills and countless snowy peaks, this is one of the South Island's most scenic drives. The road passes through tall, swaying tussock grass in the **Pisa Conservation Area**, which has a number of short walking trails. There are plenty of **rest stops** to drink in the view; particularly good ones are at the Queenstown end of the road, as you switchback down towards Arrowtown.

The unpretentious looking **Cardrona Hotel** (☎ 03-443 8153; www.cardronahotel.co.nz; Crown Range Rd; d \$135-185) first opened its doors in 1863. Today you'll find lovingly restored, peaceful rooms with snug, country-style furnishings and patios opening onto a garden. There's a deservedly popular pub with a good **restaurant** (mains \$15-20; 🍷 lunch & dinner), and a garden bar that just might be NZ's best.

The hotel is located near the turn-off for the **Waiorau Snow Farm** (☎ 03-443 0300; www.snowfarmnz.com). From December to April you can ride mountain bikes or hike along these trails; bikes can be hired for \$40/50 per half-/full day.

Also situated nearby is **Backcountry Saddle Expeditions** (☎ 03-443 8151; Crown Range Rd; adult/child from \$70/50), which runs horse treks through the Cardrona Valley on Appaloosa horses.

Alternatively, the altogether less-placid **Cardrona Adventure Park** (☎ 0800 102 122; www.adventurepark.co.nz; monster trucks from \$140, quad bikes from \$75, go-karts from \$50; 🕒 10am-5pm) is a rambunctious and noisy collection of monster trucks (including a self-drive option), quad bikes and off-road go-karts.

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