

Canterbury's High Country River Runs - itinerary

DAY ONE

AT, D

Pick up from home, and your high-country excursion begins. Starting with a flight into Christchurch, we board our bus and travel to our Resort. But before we get to Methven, we will visit a wonderful couple, the owners of Rockwood Station. Settled in 1852 by Henry Phillips and his family, it is now owned and farmed by Henry's great-great-grandson. The current homestead was built in 1910 in the Art Nouveau style and is bordered by 100 acres of native bush and the Rockwood Stream. The Homestead main rooms have been redecorated and surrounded by a beautiful woodland garden that dates to the 1850s and includes English trees, Rhododendrons, the original 1850s Cob house, family graves and prolific birdlife. Some of the original garden features remain. An Arboretum has recently been established. Once we have spent some time enjoying South Island hospitality, we will then take the short drive to Methven.

DAY TWO

B, MT, L, D

Dress warmly today and put on your flat shoes suitable for a short walk or two; We head south, crossing the Rangitata to the Peel Forest district and stopping at the quirky Green Man Café for morning tea and a chance to meet our local guides, Steve & Jenny Deans. Cuppa complete, we take a short- guided walk-through part of the iconic Peel Forest visiting 'The Big Tree'. We then travel further up the valley to the historic Mt Peel Church of the Holy Innocents. Seven years and \$1.6 million, the earthquake-damaged church has been restored. John Barton Arundel Acland built the church in 1868 and gifted it to the community. The church has gravestones that tell part of its history. Author Dame Ngaio Marsh is buried here. She was friends with Acland's grandfather, Sir Hugh Acland, a prominent surgeon. Invited for lunch at our guides' home we will enjoy a look around their home and a fascinating collection of paintings. After lunch, our next destination is Rangiatea Farm Garden & Jewellery Store a must-visit destination in Ashburton, offering a

unique experience for those who appreciate nature, history, and art. Our visit includes talk about the farm, garden, and minerals in the area, followed by a leisurely walk around the stunning Rangiatea Farm Garden. The store and gallery are home to an impressive collection of agates sourced from the farm, beautifully crafted into jewellery pieces that are suitable for both men and women. From here we will head back to our accommodation before freshening up for our lovely meal off-site at Terrace Downs. With the natural beauty of the South Island's High Country, this is a stunning venue to visit.

DAY THREE

B, MT, L, D

After a hearty cooked breakfast, we set our sights on the extensive, braided river system of the Rangitata. We are travelling to reach arguably New Zealand's most famous High-Country Station, Erewhon, a picturesque 35,000-acre sheep & beef property nestled right amongst the Southern Alps. This Country provided a magnificent backdrop for The Lord of the Rings movie. The station includes a Clydesdale Horse Stud, and the horse team are used regularly on the station to do the cultivating work and heavy wagon transport. Weather permitting, we will take a short wagon ride, and see a display of an 8-horse team. Now that's horsepower!! The afternoon will see us making our way back down the valley to arrive at Lake Heron Station, a fourth-generation, 19,000 ha High Country Station. Here we will be hosted for lunch, with a talk and insight into daily life on this large property, the homestead, gardens, and world-class fine merino wool production.

DAY FOUR

B, MT, L

Once we are packed and have finished breakfast, the shores of Lake Coleridge beckon. We will take in the magnificent scenery at the intake, one of Trust Powers Hydro Lakes, surrounded by snow-dusted mountains. The afternoon will see us making our way back down the valley to arrive at Middle Rock Station, as seen on Country Calendar. Here we will be hosted for lunch and a transported tour of some of the property. We will hear a little of the Station history and life in the river valley while we dine. This visit will be sure to entertain and an excellent way to bring our trip to a close. We will enjoy a scenic drive back to Christchurch airport.