

Biking About. New Zealand's Dazzling Lakes

January 9-20, 2023, AT Trip No. 2307
AMC-AT Leaders: Merri Fox, Janis Stahlhut



Like a Siren's song, New Zealand calls to every adventure traveler with its seductive promise of pristine landscapes and alpine vistas. Historically thought of as a tramping and thrill-seeker's paradise, bicycling has lately staked its claim on the *Land of the Long White Cloud* with a national network of on and off-road trails. We will primarily make use of The *Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail* to take us from the highest mountains in Aoraki National Park, featuring Aoraki Mt Cook, through a geo-park of natural and hydro-harnessing wonders, around brilliant glacial lakes and rivers, and lush vineyards, with an ever-changing view dominated by the glorious Southern Alps. The second part of our trip enjoys the trails and other delights of quaint Wanaka (one of New Zealand's premiere alpine resort towns) and the historic gold-rush village of Arrowtown.





Our bike rides for this easy-moderate trip travel on low traffic quiet roadways and bike trails that take us gently off road to explore the South Island's pristine region nestled between Alps and oceans.

Bookending our bike itinerary are two of New Zealand's most striking and dynamic cities: Christchurch and Queenstown.

Itinerary

Day/Date/Key times	Activity/Logistics	Meals/Lodgings
CHRISTCHURCH		
Day 1: Sun, 9 January Arrive Christchurch. 5pm: group welcome introductions & trip briefing in hotel lounge-bar	<i>Please arrange your own transport into the city from the airport. AMC Leaders will assist you in this.</i> For those who wish to stretch their legs after their long flight, our hotel is located in the heart of Christchurch's dining, art and culture precinct. Enjoy any of the shops and sites as our group gathers and gets settled in the hotel.	Breakfast/lunch on your own Group Dinner after briefing (included in trip price) Lodging: 4 star twin/double hotel rooms with en-suite bathrooms, centrally located in Christchurch.
Day 2: Mon, 10 January 	Morning: We will enjoy a guided walk (2 hours) around the city center, taking in post-earthquake restoration projects, Hagley Park and the Avon River promenade. Afternoon: Transfer (30 minutes) to Godley Head, overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Lyttleton Harbor. Hike (2 hours) along the coast to Taylors Mistake beach and on to Sumner, finishing with a swim and refreshments at a seaside cafe-bar. 20 minutes return to the lodging.	Breakfast: available at hotel from 6am. Lunch and dinner: you are on your own to explore Christchurch's wide selection of urban eateries. Lodging: 2 nd night in Christchurch lodging.
LAKE TEKAPO		
Day 3: Tuesday, 11 January  <i>Dark skies over Lake Tekapo</i>	At 9am, after checking out of the hotel: we will transfer (2 hour) to the small town of Fairlie for a walk and lunch. At 1pm the drive continues another hour to Lake Tekapo. 3pm: Alps to Ocean ride #1 , we will ride from Lake Tekapo to Lake Pukaki (20 miles/2 hours), then return by van to our lodging. In the evening, you can soak in Lake Tekapo's hot pools or visit the University of Pennsylvania's night-sky observatory atop nearby Mount St. John.	Breakfast: available at hotel from 6 am. Lunch: we will stop in Fairlie. Dinner: the hotel has a nice restaurant, or there is any number of local choices. Lodging: Lake Tekapo, twin/double hotel rooms with en-suite bathrooms.
Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail: Off-road trails are usually wide and smooth (firm gravel or sealed surface), with some gentle climbs rewarded with long descents. These trails are predictable, i.e. no nasty surprises. On-road sections generally follow quiet roads with little traffic but at times may include sections with moderate traffic levels (up to 100 vehicles a day). Riding surfaces will be a combination of paved, sealed, gravel, packed or "loose" shingle, and grass/dirt.		
AORAKI/MOUNT COOK VILLAGE		
Day 4: Wed, 12 January	At 10am, after checking out of the hotel: we will have a 20 minute transfer to where yesterday's ride ended and the start of the A20 Trail ride #2 : Lake Pukaki to Lake Ohau (30 miles/3-4 hours). On an easy off-road track, we follow the Lake Pukaki shoreline with Aoraki/Mt Cook as a backdrop. The trail passes through an expansive area of dry grasslands	Breakfast is available at the hotel from 7 am. Lunch: choose a local eatery in Twizel. Dinner: 1 Mt Cook dinner will be a group dinner, the other



 <p><i>Mackenzie Landscape</i></p>	<p>characteristic of the Mackenzie landscape, and into the high country town of Twizel. We will find a selection of local cafes and bistros for our lunch.</p> <p>After lunch, we continue our ride to Lake Ohau Village (18 miles), with the stunning Ben Ohau Range on our right shoulder.</p> <p>At the end of the ride it's a scenic one-hour drive to Mount Cook Village, nestled at the foot of NZ's highest mountains.</p>	<p>self-provisioned.</p> <p>Groceries are available at a small general store in Mount Cook Village. You can store things in your room refrigerator for packed lunches.</p> <p>Lodging: Mount Cook Lodge, twin/double rooms with en-suite bathrooms, small refrigerators, and tea-coffee making facilities.</p>
<p>Day 5: Thurs, 13 January</p> 	<p>A free day, with short and long hiking options in Aoraki Mount Cook National Park. An opportunity to visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Museum and the National Park Visitor Center, and to book a scenic flight around NZ's highest mountains. For breakfast, lunch and dinner Mount Cook Village has a small general store and various eateries to suit a range of budgets.</p> <p><i><Photo, Aoraki Mount Cook, by Pablo Heimplatz on Unsplash</i></p>	<p>Breakfast/Lunch: self catered from locally purchased groceries or local eateries.</p> <p>Dinner: 1 Mt Cook dinner will be a group dinner, the other self-provisioned.</p> <p>Lodging: 2nd night at Mount Cook Lodge</p>
<h2>OMARAMA</h2>		
<p>Day 6: Fri, 14 January</p> <p>At the end of today's ride (and tomorrow's) there will be time to visit Omarama's hot pools for a soak, sauna and/or therapeutic massage.</p>	<p>9am: One-hour transfer from Mount Cook village to Lake Ohau Village, where day 4's ride ended.</p> <p>Ride #3: We continue on the A2O Trail, climbing to Lake Ohau Lodge. The Trail traverses the lower slopes of the Ohau Range, with stunning views back across the basin to the Ben Ohau Range. There is plenty of clean drinking water available from the various streams that flow down from the mountains.</p> <p>We then have a rolling descent to an historic woolshed before finishing our day at Omarama (32 miles), finishing at our lodging.</p>	<p>Breakfast/Lunch: self-catered from locally purchased groceries, packed lunch.</p> <p>Dinner: self cater or dine out</p> <p>Lodging: Omarama, twin/double motel units with en-suite bathrooms and small kitchens.</p>
<p>Day 7: Sat, 15 January</p>  <p><i>Soak in the view and unwind in Omarama's hot pools.</i></p>	<p>Ride #4 follows the A2O Trail from our lodging in Omarama to Kurow (43 miles/6-7 hours). The off-road trail takes us east down the Waitaki Valley and along the edge of Lake Benmore. After a short on-road climb up to Otematata saddle with views of Lake Aviemore and the valley beyond, we head downhill all the way to Otematata.</p> <p>The next section has an interesting hydro history as we ride over three important dams: the massive Benmore Hydro Dam (it's a steep road up to the dam, so you may need to walk the last 800 meters), the Aviemore Dam, and the Waitaki Dam.</p> <p>Those preferring a shorter ride can go ahead in the support vehicle then ride the Otematata to Kurow section (28 miles/4-5 hours).</p> <p>Van return to Omarama lodging.</p>	<p>Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner: Self-cater or dine out</p> <p>Lodging: 2nd night at Omarama.</p>  <p><i>Hot pools open until 10pm!</i></p>



WANAKA

Day 8:

Sun, 16 January



After breakfast a scenic one-hour 30 drive leads through sparsely populated high-country, across Lindis Pass to the alpine resort town of Wanaka.

Ride #5 follows the shoreline of Lake Wanaka to the Clutha River, then runs along the riverbank to Albert Town before looping back to Wanaka. (12.5 miles/2-3 hours with stops for overlooks along the way).

< Photo by Tyler Lastovich on Unsplash

Breakfast: Self-cater

Lunch: self cater or enjoy a local café en-route

Dinner: choose amongst local eateries to suit your taste and budgets – to be determined

Lodging: Wanaka, twin/double rooms in 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments, each with 1 or 2 bathrooms and full kitchens.

Day 9:

Mon, 17 January



A free day in Wanaka. Local activity options include biking, hiking, sea-kayaking and numerous other activities

< Photo by Timothy Chanon on Unsplash

Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner: Supermarket available near the lodging and numerous eateries to suit a range of budgets. Dinner to be determined.

Lodging: 2nd night in Wanaka

ARROWTOWN & QUEENSTOWN

Day 10:

Tues, 18 January



From Wanaka a spectacular one-hour drive leads over the Crown Range to Queenstown valley and Arrowtown. **Ride #6** follows the Queenstown Trail around Lake Hayes and Speargrass Flat, looping back to end in Arrowtown. (12.5 miles/2-3 hours with overlook stops). This is one of the most scenic short loops in New Zealand's Great Rides' network. The lake is often very calm, producing incredible reflections of the mountain ranges that surround it.

The former gold-rush town of Arrowtown is today one of NZ's most attractive communities - especially for those staying overnight when the day-trippers have departed.

< Photo by Casey Horner on Unsplash

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner:

Self-cater or choose amongst local eateries to suit your taste and budgets.

In Arrowtown there are several excellent dining options near the lodging and a well-stocked general store for those preferring to self-cater.

Lodging: 2 nights at Arrowtown motel with 1 and 2 bedroom with private bathrooms in each room, all units include kitchens.

Day 11:

Weds, 19 January



View from the historic Shotover River Bridge

After breakfast: **ride #7** (14 miles/3 hours with overlook stops) follows the Queenstown Trail along the Arrow River through the vineyards of the Gibbston Valley, past NZ's famous bungy-bridge, to finish in a rustic country café-bar for lunch.

A 20 minute drive takes us to Queenstown. The afternoon is free to enjoy Queenstown's many attractions and activities before the drive back to Arrowtown and an end-of-tour group meal at a local restaurant.

Breakfast: Self-cater or café.

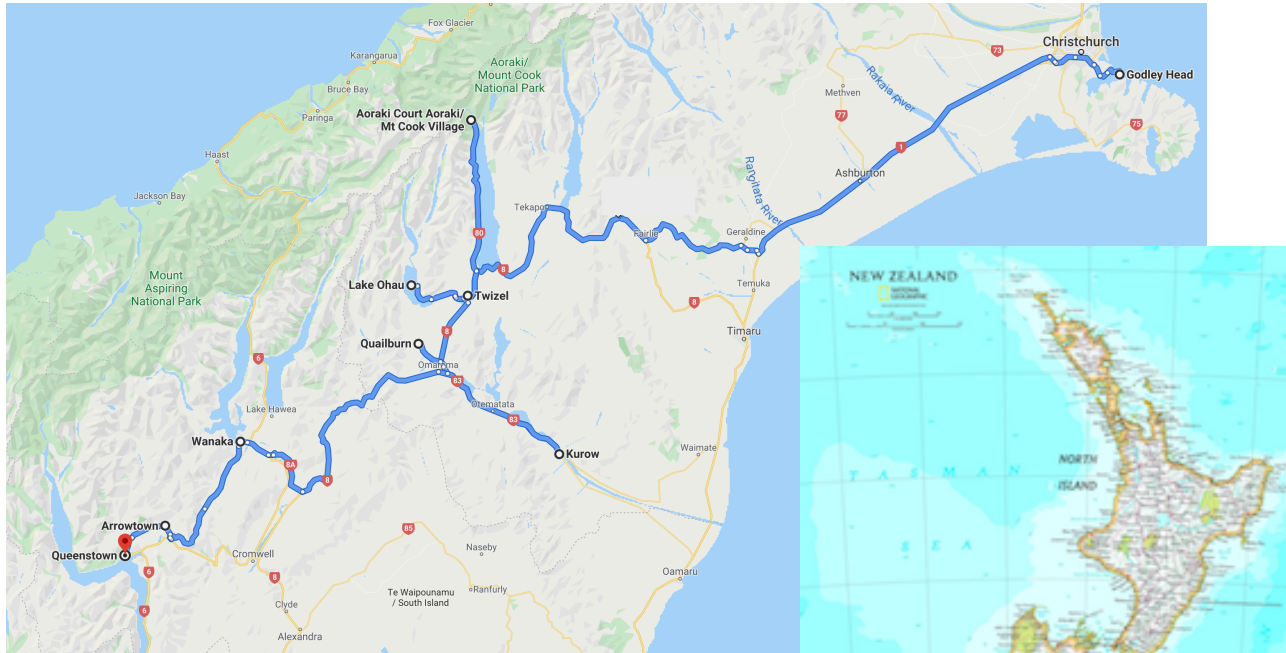
Lunch: at the end of our morning ride we will visit a local rustic café-bar in Gibbston Valley.

Group Dinner: Farewell group meal at an Arrowtown restaurant.

Lodging: 2nd night at Arrowtown motel



Day 12: Thurs, 20 January	A free morning to walk around picturesque Arrowtown before mid afternoon departure transport (5 min) for Queenstown Airport, where the trip ends. <i>Please schedule departures accordingly.</i>	Breakfast: Self-catered or café Lunch: in Arrowtown, or at the airport cafe
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Accommodations & Meals

The trip price is based on double occupancy rooms in a combination of twin/double bed hotel rooms with en-suite bathrooms (Christchurch, Lake Tekapo); twin/double bed motel units with en-suite bathrooms and small kitchens (Mount Cook, Omarama, Wanaka); and 1 bedroom/1 bathroom and 2 bedroom/1 bathroom motel units with full kitchens (Arrowtown). Lodging ratings differ between countries. We will use 3 and 4 star accommodations, by New Zealand's *Qualmark* standard. We do our best to assure that accommodations meet a basic standard of cleanliness, comfort, amenities, and convenience. Private en-suite bathrooms are generally the norm, though some apartment style accommodations may share a bathroom between multiple bedrooms. In many facilities, especially those of a historic nature, rooms may vary in terms of size or amenities. Every attempt is made to assign rooms equitably; if a room is lacking at one location efforts will be made at other locations to assign a nicer room. Single supplements may be available. Please inquire as to price and conditions. If you have a special circumstance please talk to the leaders before applying for the trip.

We will have four group dinners including a welcome and farewell dinner. All other meals will be on your own, though we encourage group dining. Leaders will join you and help make recommendations and arrangements. Many of our accommodations have full or partial kitchens so



New Zealand tourism's official mark of quality, *Qualmark* is applied to all accommodations types and tourism businesses. This means they have been independently assessed as professional and trustworthy and graded one star (acceptable), two stars (good), three stars (very good), four stars (excellent), and five stars (exceptional, among the best in New Zealand).

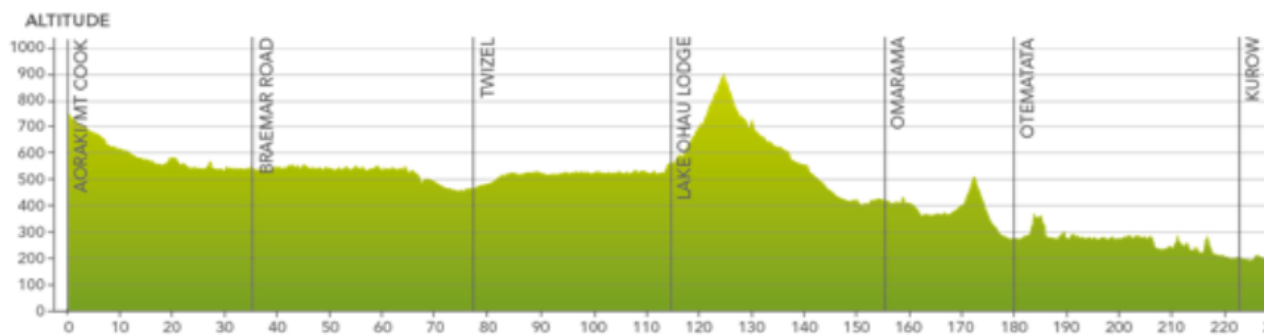


that you may choose to self-cater meals from groceries purchased along the way. On most days you will be able to make coffee, tea and breakfast from your personal groceries, as well as prepare a packed lunch for our bike rides. You will be able to transport your lunch and spare groceries between locations, in the support vehicle. *Please be mindful of outside temperatures and the potential for spoilage in choosing groceries that will accompany you in the van.* There are also a variety of restaurants and eateries in the towns where we stay. Please refer to the Itinerary for specific days and arrangements.

Activity Rating, Fitness Level and Biking Experience

The trip is rated *easy-moderate* (3-4 on a 6 scale), and the trails we will ride are classified Easy and Intermediate. Please see the Itinerary for daily distances and ride descriptions. Descriptions of the AMC activity rating system can be found in the AMC AT Terms & Conditions document. We will ride at a leisurely pace, stopping for snacks, lunch, and points of interest. Participants on this trip should be comfortable and competent on a bike for the conditions described, and have an appropriate level of fitness for the distances and elevations described. Some rides can be shortened by riding in the van to a different start point.

Participants must be experienced in riding on both quiet and moderate-traffic roadways and gravel/shingle trails, and have a level of endurance appropriate to the daily mileage and elevations shown in the Itinerary. Day 8 at Lake Ohau includes a steep ascent/descent on single and a rough shingle surface. You have the option to opt out of riding this section. It is lightly technical but ultimately “doable” for anyone who has experienced a bit of off-road (unpaved road) biking. The steepest section, about 800m, can be walked with your bike. The direction of traffic in New Zealand is on the left side of the road. This will take a little getting used to, but the roadways will be quiet and lightly trafficked. We will proceed cautiously through small towns or intersections, remaining alert and attentive.



Alpine to Ocean elevations in meters and kilometers. (1km = .62 mi, 1m = 3.28 ft)

Equipment

We will use hybrid style bikes appropriate for both the paved and gravel surfaces we will encounter. They have grippy yet smooth rolling tires with a comfortable handlebar position. The latest style 1 x 10 gearing (which could evolve by 2022) is easy to use and ideal for cycling at an enjoyable pace. Flat pedals are standard. Though we do not advise clipless pedals, if you feel that is best for you, please discuss it with the leaders prior to the trip. If you feel you must bring your own bike, please talk to the leaders before applying for the trip. Though in general this is an easy itinerary, e-bikes are



available as an upgrade. They must be reserved in advance with the leaders. (See pricing under Not Included in Trip Price.) Those upgrading to e-bikes should be comfortable with the distances and terrain and capable of completing the ride without battery power if necessary.

Please bring your own helmet. Without a helmet you will not be allowed to ride. No special equipment is needed. The bikes are equipped with a handlebar bag and a rack on the rear tire to which you can securely attach an additional small pack or bag (of your own). You will have access to a day pack from the support vehicle along the way. If you use a camelback-type hydration system, be sure to contain it in a pack that secures tightly to your body with a chest and waist strap.

You will need sturdy soled shoes and clothing that will be comfortable in a variety of conditions and temperatures. The season will be late summer, but we will be alternately in alpine and high plains areas. For our free day at Mount Cook/Aoraki you will want sturdy walking/hiking shoes (which can also double as your bike shoes), a warm layer, and rain gear (which may also be needed on our ride days). Our luggage/support vehicle will be a mid-size van. Please restrict your luggage to a small-mid size suitcase or duffle bag and a day bag. A packing list will be provided as we get closer to our departure.

Trip Price: AMC Members \$4,995, Non-members \$5,095

See the membership page at <https://www.outdoors.org/get-involved/join-appalachian-mountain-club-today> for current information on how to join the AMC including membership fees.

Price includes:

- 11 nights lodging accommodation and 4 group dinners.
- 7 days standard bike-hire.
- Trail-notes and maps.
- All necessary vehicle transport and luggage transfer (except airport transfer from Christchurch airport to hotel on Day 1) through to Queenstown International Airport (day 12), including a local tour manager/guide/driver.
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance (trip does NOT include travel insurance for cancellation, interruption, lost or damaged baggage, trip delay, etc. **We strongly recommend all participants purchase trip and airline ticket insurance.**
- Two CPR and Wilderness First Aid certified AMC Adventure Travel trip and bike leaders.
- Professional tour manager, managing luggage transfers, driving, and overseeing navigation.

Not included in Trip Price:

- International air travel to Christchurch, New Zealand and return from Queenstown. *Though your airfare is not included in the trip price, the leaders will assist you in choosing a flight that fits your needs and delivers you on time for our introductions and trip briefing on **Sunday, January 9, 2023.** As you will cross the International Date Line during your flight, you will lose one calendar day. A very long layover may add another day to your travel and arrival time.*
- Home to airport and Christchurch airport to hotel transfers.
- Trip insurance for cancellation, interruption, lost or damaged luggage, travel delays, airline tickets, etc. **We strongly suggest participants purchase trip and airline ticket insurance.**
- Extra bike rental days or e-bike upgrade (\$40 per day, must be reserved in advance).
- Museum and attraction entries or admissions; optional excursions such as a flight to see Mt Cook/Aoraki at Aoraki National Park, kayaking, etc.
- Meals other than 4 group dinners as designated in Itinerary.
- Personal groceries and items.
- Single room occupancy (please inquire for price and conditions).



Application & Payment

To apply, please complete and submit a Participant Application package, which will be supplied to you on request, with a **registration deposit of \$1,500 (+\$100 if you are not an AMC member at the time you apply)**. All applications will be screened, including contacting references you will be asked to provide. Trip leaders may conduct a brief phone (Zoom) interview with you. A spot on the roster is not assured until this process has been completed and you have been notified of a roster position. You will also be asked to complete an online (google) registration form that provides leaders with an accurate database of participant key information and emergency contacts. Once the trip is declared a 'go', there will be a \$100 non-refundable cancellation fee, and the cancellation policy stated below will apply.

When your roster spot is confirmed, your check will be deposited into the trip account for secure keeping and to avoid any check time limits imposed by your bank. Once the trip has reached its minimum number of screened participants to assure financial viability, you will receive a Letter of Acceptance and Trip Go Declaration. At that time, your deposit will be subject to the Cancellation Policy. All efforts are being made to delay cancellation penalties as long as possible while we await safe travel clearances. If you feel you must cancel once you have been accepted onto the trip roster, please contact us immediately.

A second payment of \$2,000 is due when the trip is declared a go. Final payment is due no later than August 1, 2023. If you join the trip after the trip is declared a Go, your deposit will be \$3,500 for members (\$3,600 for non-members), or after August 1, 2023 \$4,995 (\$5,095 if not an AMC member). Please make payments by check payable to the "Appalachian Mountain Club", write New Zealand 2023 on the memo line, and mail the complete application package to the address shown on the Participant Application.

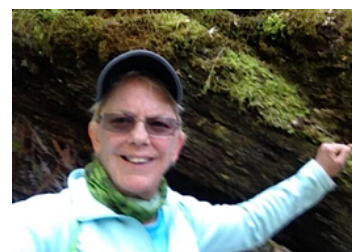
Please review the AMC Adventure Travel Program Terms and Conditions below. By submitting an application for this trip, you agree to the Terms and Conditions of the Program, including the Cancellation Policy.



Your AMC Leaders

Merri Fox retired from Pratt & Whitney after 35 years, where she worked as a Digital Technology project manager and Financial business systems analyst. Because she loves sharing her favorite outdoor destinations, over the past 22 years she has led hiking, snorkeling and cultural excursions in Belize, Paris, Hawaii, Arizona, the Tetons, Switzerland, California, Utah, New Zealand, and the Virgin Islands. Merri leads AMC hikes in CT, weekend trips, and is a volunteer manager at AMC Fire Is camp. She lives with husband Rance in NW Connecticut, where she enjoys gardening, cooking, and entertaining guests.

Janis Stahlhut, a lifelong outdoors enthusiast, has been an AMC-AT leader since 2009. She has led AT hiking and biking trips in the NE US, Alaska, Europe, South America, New Zealand, Australia, and Fiji (kayaking and swimming with whales). Janis had a career in marketing and public policy for global telecommunications firms before semi-retiring as an exercise programming specialist. She is now fully retired and enjoys writing, practicing healing energy techniques, golf, and activity-based travel. Follow her travels and trips at www.jasjourneys.wordpress.com.



Leader Contact information:

Merri Fox, fmerri99@gmail.com, 860-485-1697; Janis Stahlhut, jstahlhut@icloud.com, 203-820-9275. If telephoning, please call between the hours of 9am and 9pm.



Terms & Conditions

AMC Adventure Travel offers domestic and international trips throughout the year. Experienced volunteer leaders create, plan, and lead each excursion, fostering a dynamic and active group environment. Though each trip is unique, all strive to fulfill AMC's mission of promoting stewardship and appreciation of the natural world.

By booking a trip with us, you agree with the following terms and conditions:

Cancellation Policy

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the premise that your cancellation may not raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. After notification that the trip will run as scheduled, the minimum cancellation fee specified in the prospectus will apply. The prospectus in some cases may also specify a schedule of cancellation fees in relation to the date of cancellation. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed instead, unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant. Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced penalty. The cancellation fee will generally not be determined until after the trip. Failure to make trip payment(s) in a timely manner will be considered a cancellation.

On rare occasions AMC Adventure Travel may need to cancel all or a portion of a trip due to force majeure [e.g. terrorism, local health conditions, natural disaster, changes in local regulatory environment, etc.] In the event of such a cancellation, your trip fee will be refunded less any trip expenses already incurred plus any non-cancellable future trip expenditures. AMC Adventure Travel is not responsible for additional expenses incurred by you in preparing for the trip, including nonrefundable air tickets, visa fees, gear, and medical expenses.

Leaders' Right to Change Itinerary

While the itinerary in the prospectus is what the leaders have planned at the time of writing, various factors may require changes for reasons of group ability, safety, transportation or lodging availability, and unforeseeable circumstances such as weather considerations, natural disasters in the areas to be visited, or recommendations of governmental agencies. The leaders reserve the right to make such changes as necessary, both before and during the trip.

Leaders' Expectations of Participants

When you participate in this activity, you should be in proper condition for the challenges outlined in the prospectus and equipped with the appropriate gear as stated. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety.

Prior to your acceptance as a participant in this trip, you will be asked to discuss your capabilities and experiences with the leader. The leader may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities.

It may happen on any trip that a participant is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it is of the group or of the individual. Examples of conditions that might result in an individual being unable to participate in one or more activities of the trip include illness, injury, lack of proper gear, or fitness. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run in a manner supportive of and consistent with the conservation, recreational, and educational principles and mission of the Club. Trip leaders encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles, and local regulations and customs.

This trip is designed so that everyone may experience adventure through shared participation in activities and tasks in an organized group environment. AMC travelers are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants will be considerate of others sharing this experience.



You should enjoy traveling and be comfortable traveling in areas, which are unfamiliar to you. You should recognize that you may find yourself in closer quarters or be less comfortable than you are used to at home. You should make it a priority to help others on the trip and contribute to their having a great time.

Trip Price

The price for this excursion is based on quotes or estimates obtained at the time the trip was submitted to the Adventure Travel Committee for approval. The final price of the trip will be adjusted in accordance with the best final arrangements we can make. Trip participants will share any savings we achieve, as well as any cost increases we incur. Refunds, if any, are issued after the trip's accounting is complete.

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a nonprofit basis. Leaders are not compensated except for their travel and administrative expenses associated with the trip. A program fee is assessed toward AMC Adventure Travel programs and administrative expenses. The price for a non-member to join a trip is \$100 over the member trip price. See the membership page on outdoors.org for current information on membership fees and how to join the AMC.

The trip fee includes limited emergency medical and evacuation insurance coverage, which is required by the AMC. Participants must have their own primary medical insurance. The fee **does not** include insurance for travel delay, interruption, or cancellation, or for baggage loss. If these possibilities concern you, individual travel insurance is recommended. More information about included emergency medical and evacuation insurance, as well as about optional and recommended travel insurance, is available on our website's trip resources page.

While participant airfare is generally not included in the trip price, leaders may assist participants in making suitable reservations. At a minimum, participants will be told when and where they must join the group for the official start of the trip's planned activities. Once your air tickets are purchased, they are your responsibility – do not make any non-refundable travel plans until told to do so by the leaders.

Travel Documents

Domestic flights may only accept REAL-ID driver's licenses and identification cards for TSA airport security checkpoints. International travel requires a passport that is valid for up to several months after the completion of your trip; check with your host country's travel website for current requirements. If your international destination requires a health certificate, visa, or visa-waiver, you are responsible for obtaining these documents prior to departure.

Safety

Participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events. Procedures, and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with volunteer leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to, adverse weather and environmental conditions, delayed medical care in remote locations, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. There may be participant and leader drivers on domestic trips and their state DMV driving record will be verified prior to the trip. When you apply for acceptance onto a trip, please carefully read and sign the Adventure Travel Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity agreement and call the leader if you have any questions.

AMC Activity Rating System

AMC activities are rated using a scale of six levels described below. Consult with the trip leader or trip prospectus for details including the intended group pace and equipment requirements. Use this link for more information including charts on moving time, distance, and more: [AMC Activity Rating System](#):

1. **Accessible:** Suitable for stroller, wheelchair, or other wheel assisted travel. Paved, hardened gravel, or ADA listed terrain or approach. The distance travelled and anticipated timing of the activity are detailed in the activity description. This rating is employed across activities and is not broken out in each of the tables below. Please direct any inquiries for reasonable accommodation to the trip leader in advance of the trip.
2. **Relaxed:** Suitable for most active participants with full mobility and participants new to the activity



described. Expect to be actively on the move for about 3 hours/day. You may be on the trail, slopes or water for a longer time, but there will be plenty of rest breaks.

3. **Easy:** Reasonable fitness for the expected activity is needed, but the trip is designed for those new to the activity. Expect to be active up to 4 hours/day. A bit more active time than the relaxed rating, but with generous breaks.
4. **Moderate:** Fitness level and/or past experience to sustain the activity at a moderate pace is required. Expect to be active up to 4-6 hours per day. Reasonable breaks in the action.
5. **Vigorous:** Suitable for those with recent similar experience and/or demonstrated proficiency, such as being active in sports or often (regular) engagement in vigorous physical activity. Ability to perform at the expected level for back-to-back days for multi- day trips. Expect to be active up to 5-6 hours per day, with brief breaks.
6. **Strenuous:** Most physically demanding. Fitness for the specific activity is required with direct experience in the activity highly recommended and potentially mandatory (see the activity description). Expect to be active 6+ hours per day for back-to-back days if it is a multi-day trip. Breaks will be shorter/fewer than for other levels of trips.

