

NELSON LAKES – NZ

TRAVERS – SABINE WALKING CIRCUIT



Departs daily on Demand Nov to April

Cost from AU\$960 (group discounts available on request)

Explore the inner reaches of the Nelson Lakes National Park. This challenging but extraordinary 80km circuit reaches deep into park amidst soaring mountains, remote lakes (including the emerald beauty of Blue Lake) and an alpine pass, the Travers Saddle.

We stay in Department of Conservation huts, with the exception of the last night spent in luxury at St Arnaud's Alpine Lodge, and offer a fully catered, fully guided experience.

Important Footnote:

This trek is for active trampers – age is no barrier but it is a challenging five-day walk. The accommodation is Department of Conservation huts - these are comfortable but must be shared with other walkers. Clients must carry their own pack containing clothing and bedding. Guides carry all food and cooking utensils.

Pack cartage available.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Lakehead to John Tait Hut (5 hours)

Pick up at accommodation in Blenheim and transfer to St Arnaud and Nelson Lakes National Park. Briefing and final gear check before starting the walk. A water taxi will transfer us to the southern end of Lake Rotoiti and we begin walking on the river flats of the lower Travers Valley. We follow the track through forest and clearings until reaching the Travers Swingbridge. The valley soon narrows with glimpses of Mt Travers as the track nears Hopeless Creek.

The track gradually climbs through beech forest until John Tait Hut (30 bunks) is reached on a grassy clearing.

Day 2 - John Tait Hut to Travers Hut (4 hours)

The track continues to climb for a km until we pass a sidetrack to the Travers Falls. The 20 metre falls drop into a sparkling clear pool and are well worth the visit. From the falls, we continue onward towards our destination - the 16-bunk Upper Travers Hut. The track climbs steeply to Cupola Creek chasm, leaving the river in its gorge below.

Finally the track emerges from the trees on to an extensive, tussock-covered flat where Upper Travers Hut nestles beneath the east face of Mt Travers.

OUTDOOR TRAVEL'S NEW ZEALAND WALKING HOLIDAYS

Day 3 - Upper Travers Hut to West Sabine Hut (6-9 hours)

Travers Saddle is an alpine pass and today we cross this stunning divide. Cross the Travers River near the hut and follow the snow poles through dense alpine shrubs. Leaving the boulder-strewn valley, the route steepens and zigzags up a scree slope before continuing more gently to the saddle with panoramic views. From the saddle (1787m), the descent is steep, crossing tussock and scree, through stunted beech forest before emerging into a gully.

Descend to the valley floor and head to West Sabine Hut (35 bunks).

Day 4 - Rest Day or Optional Side Walk to Blue Lake (7 hours)

This is a worthwhile day walk from the main circuit. Head upstream from West Sabine swingbridge. After two hours, the valley broadens and the track passes through forest destroyed by an avalanche in 1980. Climb steeply in two stages to a high basin containing the enchanting Blue Lake. Return to West Sabine Hut for the evening.

Day 5 - West Sabine Hut to Sabine Hut (5 hours)

Our final leg! Cross the West Sabine River on a swingbridge and turn right. The track sidles down the valley following the river and crosses three long, open flats. Leave the river behind where it enters a gorge in the lower valley, climbing then descending to rejoin the river. Easy walking from there to Sabine Hut on the edge of Lake Rotoroa. We will be collected by water taxi to transfer down the lake and return by van to St Arnaud and the Alpine Lodge.

Accommodation: Alpine Lodge at St Arnaud - www.alpinelodge.co.nz

Day 6 – Transfers

Enjoy final breakfast with group before transferring to Blenheim. Arrive Blenheim late morning to connect with flights, ferries or be delivered to your accommodation.

Also available in this area are the Nelson Lakes National Park Walk, Queen Charlotte Walk, Abel Tasman Walk plus access to the nearby wine growing region of Blenheim / Marlborough – an ideal base for cycling & wine tasting. Call us for details of see our website www.outdoortravel.com.au

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