

## MARLBOROUGH WINE COUNTRY

5 days / 4 nights self-guided cycling tours in the Sauvignon Blanc region around Blenheim



Renowned as one of the world's top 10 wine regions, what better way to experience the dramatic transformation of the fruit of the vine into a bottle of wine than on a Wine Trail tour by bicycle? On our leisurely cycling journey of just 20-30km per day, each day's end sees your baggage transported ahead to your accommodation base and a choice of superb dinner venues.

**Departs:** Daily all year round from Blenheim.

**Duration:** 5 Days / 4 Nights

**Cost:** AUD\$1665 per person twin share Single room surcharge \$750

**Includes:** A selection of characterful 4 - 5-star hotels or boutique lodge accommodation all with private bathrooms, 4 breakfasts, multi-gear cycle hire with panniers and helmet hire (bring your own if you prefer), luggage transfers between accommodation, road maps, route and local tourist information.

Additional accommodation can be arranged in Blenheim or along the route at extra cost – ask for details.

**Fitness:** This tour is easy to moderate and suitable for anyone with a reasonable level of fitness, who is used to cycling.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**

## **Suggested itinerary:**

### **Day 1. Arrival in Blenheim**

Blenheim in the heart of New Zealand's Marlborough district is a busy country town full of interesting shops and cafes. An hour's stroll will take you from historical buildings to modern architecture. Pollard Park nearby has wonderful gardens, a nine-hole golf course, tennis courts and a fitness trail.

Hotel d'Urville is a fine and elegant boutique hotel situated within the historic Public Trust Building in the centre of Blenheim. We suggest you spend the afternoon exploring the local area. For an excellent evening meal in a delightful setting, the d'Urville Wine Bar and Brasserie may be just the perfect place.

### **Day 2. Blenheim to The Bell Tower**

We suggest you start your first cycling day in a leisurely fashion. Your destination today is a boutique lodge, situated amidst stunning scenery overlooking Marlborough's vineyards. En route, why not cycle to the Wither Hills Walkway and enjoy a brisk walk to the Lookout. From here you have an excellent view over Blenheim and the Wairau Plains. Then cycle half way back, turn left into New Renwick Road and after a couple of kilometres, left again into Ben Morven Road, which starts off very flat but gradually takes you to the elevated site of Fran Maguire's pottery studio. Fran is an artist with a passion for clay and food, which is reflected in her brightly coloured, unique tableware. Visit Villa Maria Estate on Paynters Road before turning left into New Renwick Road where you can visit Matua Marlborough and Fromm Winery, which are two well-established vineyards.

We suggest you take a late lunch at the Tuscan style Highfield Estate Winery with its tower and commanding views across the valley. Then make your way to The Bell Tower Boutique Lodge on Dog Point early afternoon ready to be spoiled. Cycling: approx 25km

### **Day 3. The Bell Tower to Old Saint Mary's Convent**

Wake to the calls of a host of native songbirds. Enjoy a delicious breakfast and prepare yourself for a day of quality wine tasting. Cycling from The Bell Tower Boutique Lodge, turn left into Dog Point Road, then right onto Hawkesbury Road and left to Middle Renwick Road. On your left is Waihopai Valley Road, where you can explore Grove Mill winery with its award winning wines, extensive wine library and gallery. Seresin Estate in Bedford Road is another exciting and stylish winery. Only the grapes grown on the estate are used in the production of the wine. Framingham Wine Company on Conders Bend Road is a 'must see' with Rex Brooke Taylor being a terrific host.

Then turn right onto Highway 6 and make your way to Cellier le Brun with its unique underground cellars. It is a perfect place to have lunch before you go back along Highway 6 to Forrest Estate, which is run by John & Brigid Forrest who produce and market their own diverse range of wines.

Perhaps call in at the well-known Hunter's winery on Rapaura Rd before continuing on to the charming and character-full Old Saint Mary's Convent built in 1901. We suggest you choose Gibbs Restaurant for your dinner venue tonight. Your hosts will be happy to assist with a reservation and transport. Cycling: approx 20km

### **Day 4. Old Saint Mary's Convent to The Peppertree**

Your route today will offer at least four other vineyards of note. At the family owned Allan Scott Winery in Jackson Road taste premium award winning wines in a unique setting. Just opposite is the winery that took New Zealand's Sauvignon Blanc wine from "curiosity to respectability" - Cloudy Bay. Then turn left into Old Renwick Road and left again into Hammerichs Road to visit Drylands Estate, which offers state-of-the-art wine production. Saint Clair, back on the corner of Rapaura and Selmes Road is a good place for lunch, before the final stop for the day, which could be 'Price's Traditional Country Preserves'.

If today is your last day's cycling, follow the route map via Dwers & Thompsons Roads to Spokesman Cycles in Blenheim, where you can leave your bikes (by 4.30pm please). Here you can ring Werner at the Peppertree and ask him to transfer you to his gracious Edwardian villa.

Alternatively, cycle to 'The Peppertree' via the scenic route. From Thompsons Road go straight ahead into Murphy's Road, which leads into Batty's Road. Then turn left into Alabama Road until you reach State Highway 1, where you turn right and cycle approximately 1km (this short section of road can be busy). The Peppertree entrance will be on your right hand side. Enjoy your last evening at this historic homestead.

There are many good restaurants to choose locally or let your hosts Heidi and Werner know that you would like to have dinner at their place. Cycling: approx 25km

## Day 5. Departure from Blenheim

Enjoy a country style breakfast in the rich ambience of the dining room and stroll around the lovely garden before your tour ends. If you dropped your bikes off at Blenheim yesterday, the shuttle will collect you and your luggage around mid morning and transfer you to a location of your choice in the Blenheim town centre.

If you cycled to 'The Peppertree' yesterday, you will need to return your bikes in Blenheim by 4.30pm and collect your transferred luggage.

**Weather and cycling conditions** - as New Zealand has an Oceanic climate the weather conditions can change rapidly throughout the day. Summers can be very hot and sun block is an essential item. Winters are the opposite and good clothing should be carried or worn.

Your bike comes with panniers for easy storage. If you experience any adverse weather conditions during your journey assistance is always available. Any of the local pubs, accommodation or services will only be too happy to assist. Strong wind can be quite common and in this case you can contact your next accommodation to see if they are available to come and collect you from your current location.



**Outdoor Travel** offer many guided cycling or walking trips in New Zealand including the spectacular and iconic Otago Rail Trail and the Milford Sound Track, the Routeburn Walk or Grand Traverse, Hollyford Track walk, the Abel Tasman walk or sea-kayaking, Queen Charlotte Walk and the Tongariro Crossing on the North Island.

In Europe inn-to-inn guided or self-guided cycling holidays are available in most destinations including France, Italy, Spain, UK, Germany, Switzerland Croatia, Greece and Turkey.

New for Europe are Bike & Barge or Bike & Boating cycling cruises which are available on canal or river systems or island hopping off the coast of Denmark, Croatia, Greece and Turkey. Inland destinations include the Loire Valley, Champagne, Burgundy or Provence regions of France, along the Saar & Moselle in Germany, the Danube through Austria, the Venice Lagoon, the popular routes between Amsterdam and Bruges or Brussels or the two-week adventure between Paris & Bruges through the WW1 Battlefields and memorials in Northern France, Belgium & Holland.

**Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:**

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