

# Alpine Guides

Aoraki/Mount Cook, New Zealand

## Rarakiora/Mount Tasman Expedition

Summer 2010/11



*Mount Tasman from the west (Lendenfeld on left)*

**The jewel of the region. Every approach a sinous ice climb...**

**7 day Guidng Package for New Zeland's second highest peak**

**Dates to suit your travel plans**

**Climb with the Experts**

*Leading New Zealand Guiding Since 1966*

## Rarakiora / Mount Tasman - 3,497 metres

The spectacular peaks of the Aoraki/Mount Cook region have attracted climbers from all over the world for the last 100 years. The dramatic nature of these mountains provides a rare challenge. The combination of heavy glaciation, tremendous vertical scale and unpredictable weather means that they are not readily won,

To climb successfully here requires skill, fitness, patience, and a great respect for the mountains. However, the rewards are commensurate with the demands of attempting these mountains - the experience of standing on the summit of one of New Zealand's major peaks is a rare privilege. Above the clouds, between the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean, these mountains offer the opportunity to rise above life's complications, worries and frustrations.

Mount Tasman, at 3497 metres, is the second highest peak in New Zealand. It is one of the most striking ice summits in the world, presenting a challenge to all mountaineers.

This package has been designed to afford the best possible chance of climbing Mount Tasman. It describes the degree of difficulty involved, the routes, and the time required.

## Costs & Conditions 2010/11

Goods and Services Tax (GST) in New Zealand rises to 15% on 01 October. Trips booked and paid in full by 30 September will beat the pre-GST rise price

### 7 day Mount Tasman Expedition

Price to 30 September 2010: **NZ\$5,450 per person**

Price from 01 October 2010: **NZ\$5,550 per person**

**Our Guide ratio on Mount Tasman is 1:1**

**Season: November - April**

### Pricing includes the following:

- Guide fees on a one-to-one basis
- All meals including snacks and energy bars
- Hut fees and local accommodation
- Local road transport
- Cost of air access
- Selection of technical equipment (see equipment list on [page 8](#))

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We buy fresh produce for every program we run so you are guaranteed to eat well. Most dietary regimes can be catered for. Please make a note of what you like to eat on your booking form.

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### Conditions:

- A period of 7 days is covered in the cost, even though the climb may take only 4-6 days. You have the option of retaining your guide and completing another climb or returning to Mt Cook Village. This will be at the discretion of the guide, based on your ability and the prevailing conditions. No refund is due in this case.
- Extensions to the 7 days may be possible (depending on your guide's work commitments) - this will be an additional cost of **\$NZ650 per day, which includes food and hut fees.**
- If the period is involuntarily extended, the cost is an additional NZ\$575 per day.

## Experience Level Required

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The summit of Mount Tasman is not easily won. It is a classic mountain peak and an ice climber's dream. Every ridge to its summit is a sinuous ice climb that requires excellent mountaineering skills and technique.

Mount Tasman is a peak suitable for clients who have been on serious mountain terrain before. This means that familiarity with different cramponing techniques is essential for a safe ascent.

### Prerequisites:

- At least 20 days on crampons within the past 2 years
- Experience on 50° to 55° ice with two tools and sustained front-pointing
- Ascents of 5 or more alpine peaks involving snow and ice (NZ Alpine 2 to 3)
- Rope and belaying skills
- A high level of aerobic fitness - able to carry an 8 kg backpack 1,000 vertical metres in 2.5 hours

If you have any question about relevant experience please contact us.

## NZ Alpine Grades

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NZ Alpine grades work on a 1 through possible 7 scale, with 1 being the easiest. They also use + and – to further refine the system.

The scale is not just a measure of technical difficulty. It also attempts to include objective hazard, access and route length. Keep in mind that these grades are a general indication only. With the region's temperate maritime climate, conditions can change rapidly.

## Booking for Mount Tasman

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We will provide a guide to work around your travel plans (subject to availability). The first step is to contact us with your proposed dates.

Due to the serious nature of guiding Mount Tasman, only senior guides are employed for this assignment. There are a limited number of senior guides and therefore a limited number of Mount Tasman Expeditions available every season.

Booking early is essential.

## Reporting Details

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Unless otherwise arranged, the Expedition will start at 08:30 at Alpine Guides shop in Mount Cook Village, and finish at 17:00 on the last day of your trip.

A morning start makes most effective use of time, allowing you to fly into the mountains by lunch time.

Alternatively, we can arrange to start at 13:30, and finish at 12:00 noon on the last day, to better fit in with public bus services.

If you take the later start option it is less likely that you will be able to fly into the mountains on the first day. Ensure you choose the right start time on your booking form.

If you arrive in Aoraki/Mount Cook on the day before your trip begins, your guide will probably not be available. Our office staff will be happy to answer any questions you have. Your guide will look after equipment rental, and other gear requirements at the start of your trip. This takes on average 2 hours.

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See the "Pre-trip Information Notes" for more details on transport options.

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## Hazards

Mount Tasman is a technical peak. The ascent is via either the Silberhorn Arête or over Mount Lendenfeld, and up the North Shoulder. These routes are generally not exposed to objective danger although in some seasons ice cliffs can cut off the North Shoulder.

An attempt on Mount Tasman via either of these routes is a major commitment for both guide and client. The guide's primary concern is always for safety. Your guides appraisal of your competence and route conditions will determine whether the climb can be attempted, or an alternative ascent considered.

## Route Descriptions

The 2 guided routes are graded at 3+ (approx AD to D European).

The attempt on Mount Tasman requires more technical skill than Mount Cook. There is a total vertical gain of approximately 1,150 metres.

### Silberhorn Ridge Route (from Plateau Hut)

**NZ Alpine Grade 3+ | Season: November & December**



Leaving Plateau Hut (about 01:00) the route crosses the Grand Plateau, weaving through crevasses to Silberhorn Ridge. The ridge is moderately angled snow/ice, and is usually belayed to the top of Silberhorn peak.

The most technical section begins here, and most pitches will be belayed to the summit. Conditions will vary from snow/ice to "boiler plate" hard ice. Good crampon technique is essential.

The final ridge to the summit is exposed and very narrow, requiring concentration and care. The summit is an intersection of three ridges with room for sitting and taking in the magnificent views. The descent is by the same route. Total time is 15-18 hours return to Plateau Hut.

## North Shoulder Route (from Pioneer Hut)

NZ Alpine Grade 3+ | Season November to April



This approach is based from Pioneer Hut, at the head of the Fox Glacier. The route involves glacier travel to Marcel Col then short-roping or pitching up Mount Lendenfeld (a 3,000 metre peak in its own right), before descending to Engineer Col (normally reached by sunrise).

The North Shoulder is then pitched (4 - 5 pitches) and followed by short-roping, and pitching along the ridge. The last pitch ascends a knife-edge exposed ridge to the summit. The descent is by the same route. Total time is typically 15 to 18 hours return to Pioneer Hut.

## Access

A walk into Plateau or Pioneer Hut is a strenuous exercise of 1.5 days. Flying in makes best use of available good weather.

However, because this does not allow your guide to determine your ability and fitness, we may require a "training" before attempting Mount Tasman. This is at your guide's discretion and ensures that our standards of safety are maintained.

## Egress from the mountains

### Flying from Plateau Hut

It is possible to fly out from Plateau Hut if the weather allows - this costs an additional \$450 (approximately) by ski plane, or up to \$800 by helicopter. Costs will be reduced if the aircraft is shared with other climbers.

### Walking from Plateau Hut

The walkout alternative is a descent via Cinerama Col and the Boyes Glacier. This is an extremely rugged trip with one to 2 hours walking on nevé. A steep glacier descent is followed by approximately 300 meters of scree, 1,000 meters of boulder stream, and finally (at least) 2 hours walking over moraine. [Descent to the road end takes approximately 6-8 hours.](#)

## Flying/walking options from Pioneer Hut

The options available are:

**Option 1.** Fly back to Mount Cook. This cost may vary from \$450 to \$1,100, depending on flight logistics on the day. This cost can be reduced through sharing with other parties.

**Option 2.** (Requires 2 days) Fly to Fox Glacier Township from Pioneer Hut by helicopter (\$450) then travel by bus to Wanaka, where you will be picked up by Alpine Guides staff.

**Option 3.** Walk down to Chancellor Hut and fly to Fox Glacier Township via helicopter (\$250) then travel by bus to Wanaka, where you will be picked up by Alpine Guides staff.

**Option 4.** Walk back to Mount Cook via Graham Saddle. This requires 3 days.

- Day 1: 4-5 hours of glacier travel through West Hoe Pass to Centennial Hut, staying the night.
- Day 2: 8-10 hours crossing Graham Saddle and descending De la Beche ridge (a moderately difficult route) to De la Beche Hut. Excellent weather must be forecast for this crossing.
- Day 3: either a 1-hour walk out to the Tasman Glacier white ice for a helicopter pick up (approx. \$450 - \$700—dependent on logistics on the day), or 6-8 hours of walking over glacial moraine to the road end for a 4WD pick up (and a cold beer).

### Why is the flight out not included?

Simply, it builds flexibility into the program and keeps the overall cost down for our participants. It also gives an option for people who wish to walk out.

The cost of air transport depends on a host of logistical variables, including: party location, party size, aircraft available, weather and snow conditions, other parties flying in and out who can help share the cost, their location, and so on.

## What You Will Carry

Extra possessions not needed in the mountains will be securely stored at Alpine Guides base, or your Mt Cook Village accommodation.

When packing try to keep personal and non-essential items to a minimum. This reduces weight and saves room for important items, like food! Reduced weight is particularly important if you walk out at the end of the trip.

On the ascent, you will carry your personal equipment, some food, and emergency equipment - about 7 to 8 kg in total.

Your guide will check your gear when you begin your trip to ensure that you have all the right equipment - but not too much!

## Alternative Options

Flexibility of goals is important. After you book we will keep you informed if conditions change to the degree that a climb may not be possible.

If snow conditions, weather, level of experience or fitness preclude an ascent with an acceptable safety margin, your guide will recommend an alternative venue for your trip.

There are many other spectacular ascents to be made in the region. The following list names only a few:

- **Tasman Glacier area** - Mts. Walter, Green, Elie de Beaumont, Aiguilles Rouges
- **Fox Glacier area** - Mts. Haidinger, Lendenfeld, Tasman
- **Franz Josef area** - Minarets, Mt. De La Beche

**It is not possible to cancel your booking for a refund due to changing route conditions.**

## Equipment Checklist

Refer to the equipment check-list on page 8 for the specific gear list for the Mount Tasman Expedition and the items of clothing and personal kit you will need. **This is your gear/clothing reference list for this program. Use this list as the guide for your trip and no other.**

Use your discretion when selecting clothing Plan for colder conditions through to November, and warmer conditions from December through February.

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Please read our "Notes on Equipment and Clothing" for specific details on clothing and equipment items. Contact us if you have any questions.

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### Optional items

Not compulsory. Feel free to bring along any of the items optional listed, if you wish.

## The rest of the details...

You'll find answers to most questions in our additional detailed notes: [Pre-trip Information Notes](#), and [Equipment and Clothing](#).

These are designed to help you plan and prepare for your Alpine Guides trip. Download from our website using the links below.

### Pre-trip Information

Includes details on bus travel to Mount Cook, insurance, personal fitness, accommodation, and more...

[http://www.alpineguides.co.nz/download/notes/pretrip\\_info.pdf](http://www.alpineguides.co.nz/download/notes/pretrip_info.pdf) (600 Kb)

### Equipment & Clothing

What to look for when choosing clothing and equipment for mountaineering in New Zealand

<http://www.alpineguides.co.nz/download/notes/equipment.pdf> (750 Kb)



*Suzanne's view from the summit. Photo by Keith Scott*

# Equipment & Clothing Checklist

## Rarakiora/Mount Tasman Expedition

Use the check list below to ensure you bring along the gear specifically for your trip. Requirements will vary with the season, and your objectives. Please try to let us know what you need to rent as soon as possible **before** you arrive. Get in touch if you have any questions.

	Bring ✓	Borrow ✓
<b>1. Equipment provided free of charge</b>		
Ice Axe		
Ice Hammer		
Crampons - 12 point, semi automatic		
Belay Device		
Ice Screw x 2		
Snow stake		
Prusiks x 3 (1 long, 2 short), Sling x 2 (1 long, 1 short)		
Karabiners: large screw-gate x 3, snap-link straight-gate x 5		
Avalanche Transceiver (provided if required)		
Snow Shovel (provided if required)		

Use our gear free of charge, or bring your own

Calculate your approx. rental cost below - based on 7 days.

<b>2. Equipment and Clothing for rent</b>	Bring ✓	Rent ✓	Cost/day	x # days	Total
Mountaineering Boots			15		
Sleeping Bag - 3 season bag			15		
Backpack, 55-65 litres			7		
Helmet			3		
Harness			5		
Hiking Poles / each (optional)			5		
Storm Jacket			10		
Overtrousers (full length leg zip if possible)			10		
Gaiters			5		
<b>Total estimated rental cost</b>					

### 3. Required Personal Equipment (not available to rent)

- Headlamp
- Sunglasses - good quality wrap-around
- Water Bottles 2 x 1 litre widemouth (Nalgene)
- Waterproof pack liner
- Plastic survival bag (or bivouac bag)
- First Aid Kit - basic kit, incl blister tape
- Toiletries, including toothbrush sun screen and lip cream
- Leatherman or Swiss tool

### 4. Required Personal Clothing (not available to rent)

- Underwear (2 sets)
- Socks (3 pairs)
- Thermal underwear: 2 x tops, 1 x pants
- Mid-weight fleece jersey
- Warm jacket: down or fleece
- Warm hat / balaclava
- Climbing trousers: soft-shell are ideal. Light weight trekking pants (worn over thermals) are okay - they must be quick drying
- Waterproof warm gloves x 1 pair - leather gloves are good for rope work
- Light-weight (polypro) gloves x 1 pair
- Sun Protection: baseball cap or legionnaire hat scarf / neck gaiter (buff) and "glacier shirt"
- Hut footwear - running shoes or sandals / holey soles (must be lightweight)

### 5. Optional Gear - not required - but recommended

- Day pack approx 20 litre, useful for non-mountain activities
- Telescopic hiking pole - bring one
- Drinking mug. Supplied in huts - but you can bring your own
- Soft-shell jacket
- Shorts - worn over long johns is okay in summer
- Ski Goggles (for white-out conditions)

