

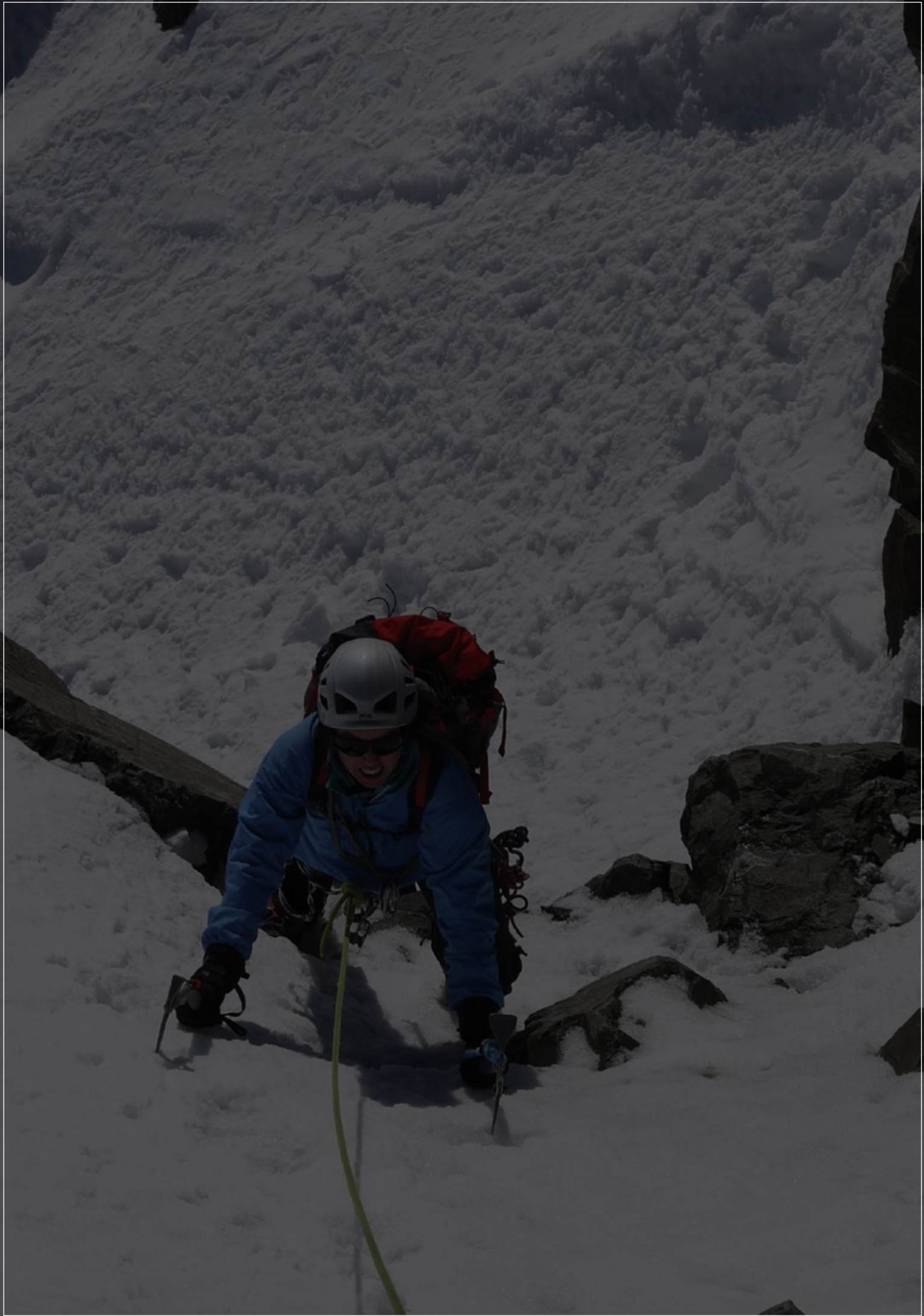


# AORAKI MOUNT COOK

3,754M / 12,316FT

2022 TRIP NOTES









# AORAKI MOUNT COOK GUIDED ASCENT

## 2022 TRIP DETAILS

**Dates:** On demand throughout November and December

**Duration:** 6 days

**Departure:** ex Wanaka, New Zealand

**Price:** NZ\$6,300 per person

*Climbers prepare to climb the Summit Rocks at dawn. Photo: Tom Mannering*

Aoraki Mount Cook (3,754m/12,316ft) is an impressive peak with 5 sides, 6 faces and 7 main ridges. The mountain has a vertical rise from valley to summit of over 2,500m/8,000ft. There is no easy route to the top and gaining the summit is a significant achievement.

## THE ROUTE

Our Aoraki Mount Cook guided ascent operates over a 6-day period which enables us to fly into Plateau Hut at the base of the mountain, from where the climb is staged. We aim to make the ascent during the most favourable period for weather and conditions, and on occasion will make a high bivvy, which puts us close to the summit the following day.

The usual route that we climb on Aoraki Mount Cook is the Linda Glacier route. We must first weave through the crevasse field on the lower part of the glacier before turning to head into the upper reaches. Progress is made to the head of the glacier and onto the sustained snow/ice face of the Linda Shelf, where the ground becomes increasingly steep. From the Linda Shelf, we climb a moderately steep (55 degree) snow and ice gully and gain the ridge near the top of Zurbriggen's Ridge. After this, we must tackle the Summit Rocks for several pitches up rock that is often

iced up. Having negotiated the pitches of mixed climbing through the summit rocks, we revert to straight snow and ice climbing again to ascend the final summit ice cap through to the highest point in New Zealand!

We allow 16–22 hours for the return trip from Plateau Hut and hence an early morning alpine start is necessary on the day of the summit climb. Fitness and route conditions will be factors that determine the exact timing. Climbers attempting Aoraki Mount Cook should come prepared for a very physical and demanding climb. It may only have the ultimate elevation of 3,754m/12,316ft, but it is still a challenging ascent. The Linda Glacier route is the most commonly climbed and is a classic mountaineering adventure, requiring good technical skills and stamina.

Other more technical routes are available on application to those with the necessary experience, such as the East Ridge or Zurbriggen's Ridge.





Map of Aoraki Mount Cook and the Grand Plateau.

## CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Aoraki Mount Cook is a topuni area of significant cultural value to Ngai Tahu Maori of the South Island of New Zealand. The summit of Aoraki is regarded as the head of one of their ancestors and is therefore tapu or sacred. Adventure Consultants respects the wishes of Ngai Tahu, hence we do not stand on the summit but remain a few metres from the top of the mountain.

*Kia tuohu koutou, Me he maunga teitei,  
Ko Aoraki anake.*

If you must bow your head, then let it be to the lofty mountain Aoraki.

## PREREQUISITE SKILLS

Climbers wishing to attempt Aoraki Mount Cook should be experienced mountaineers with a strong technical climbing background that includes familiarity with pitched climbing techniques, good rope skills, moderate rock, snow and ice climbing experience (up to 55 degrees, using two tools) and good glacier travel and crevasse rescue skills. Climbers must have excellent fitness and endurance, so you can move quickly and confidently through steep, difficult terrain even when tired.

If you are new to climbing with Adventure Consultants, please send us your climbing resume and/or guide's reference to establish your level of mountaineering experience.

## GUIDE RATIO

We guide Aoraki Mount Cook on a 1:1 basis due to the technical nature of the terrain.

## OUR GUIDES

Adventure Consultants guides are NZMGA and/or IFMGA qualified mountain guides. They are professional mountaineers and operate to the highest industry standards.

Being a great climber alone is not enough to work with us; our standards demand that trip leaders are great guides as well. You will find your guide friendly, approachable and focused on providing a safe and enjoyable trip in line with your objectives and comfort level.

Success with the highest margin of care is always a hallmark of our approach; promoting the realisation that even extreme pursuits such as high-altitude mountaineering can be undertaken safely.

Adventure Consultants employs only IFMGA or NZMGA qualified guides, the most advanced training and certification program in New Zealand and internationally. In order to gain these qualifications guides must undergo rigorous training and assessment on climbing skills, instructor skills, avalanche training and assessment, wilderness first aid, rescue training and much more. The qualification takes 5–7 years to attain and ensures you are getting a world-class professional service.





A climber makes his way through mixed terrain in the Summit Rocks of Aoraki Mount Cook. Photo: Mick Wheeler

## ITINERARY

- Day 1 Meet your guide in Mount Cook Village or in Wanaka for the drive to Aoraki Mount Cook National Park. Check gear and fly into the mountains to Plateau Hut in the early afternoon.
- Day 2 Acclimatisation day. Consolidate skills or ascend a practice peak such as Mount Dixon.
- Day 3 Summit day, start 1am, and finish 7pm! OR climb part of the route then bivvy out overnight.
- Day 4 Second day of the climb, rest day, contingency day or fly out on a back flight to Mount Cook Airport.
- Day 5 Weather contingency day
- Day 6 Weather contingency day, or alternative activity (such as rock climbing).

## CLIMBING SEASON

The New Zealand summer climbing season is typically from early November to early April. In November and December, we can expect more snow cover on the

routes and as temperatures warm up into the summer months of January and February, we traditionally experience more settled weather and mixed climbing conditions (snow, ice and rock). From March through April, late summer conditions exist, and daylight hours get shorter.

Winter conditions are less predictable and days shorter, however, for experienced climbers, the winter solitude will be incredibly rewarding.

The climbing season on Aoraki Mount Cook is a short one—November until early January. This period takes advantage of the good snow conditions that are usually present after a winter of heavy snowfalls. The Linda Glacier becomes cut off during the latter part of the season (usually by early January) when the crevasses become too wide to safely negotiate. If access to the mountain is restricted, or the avalanche hazard rating is high, we will offer an alternative route or peak.

## WEATHER

New Zealand has a maritime climate and the weather is always a consideration in the high mountains. For the climbing season (November to April) the average temperature ranges from around -5°C up to 20°C,



during the winter this can drop to -10°C or -15°C. There is no heating source in the huts, so you need to be prepared for cold overnight temperatures.

In the event conditions are not suitable to enter the mountains at the start of the trip, we may be able to delay for up to two days subject to your guide's schedule. We recommend you allow some flexibility with your travel arrangements to create this advantage.

## ACCESS TO THE MOUNTAIN

The benefit of flying in and out is that it alleviates the long walk in and the usual necessary recovery day, and it allows more time to be spent on actual climbing in the high mountains. Most importantly, it can allow us to take advantage of windows of fine weather which are typical of the maritime climate of New Zealand. Access and egress flights are included in the trip price.

## TRIP ACCOMMODATION

Adventure Consultants will provide accommodation from 9.00am on Day 1 until 5.00pm on Day 6. When in the mountains you will stay in mountain huts with shared bunkrooms and basic facilities. There are no

single rooms available and unlike European huts, you need to provide your own sleeping bag. Some mountain nights may be spent in tents or bivvys where you will be more exposed to the elements, but the final decision on this will be made by your guide after weighing up all the factors.

If our schedule requires us to overnight at Aoraki Mount Cook Village either side of the trip, we utilise the New Zealand Alpine Club facilities at Unwin Hut which has dormitory style accommodation and if in Wanaka, we accommodate you in dormitory style backpackers with shared bathroom facilities. You may decide to upgrade to single accommodation in Wanaka or at Aoraki Mount Cook Village at your own expense, should you desire.

## EQUIPMENT

Climbing in the Southern Alps requires you have the highest quality clothing and equipment due to the extremes of weather conditions. Our focus is on having the essential clothing and equipment while keeping your pack as light as possible.

Your guide will go through an equipment checklist with you at the beginning of your trip. Actual equipment



▲ Plateau Hut is base for our Aoraki Mount Cook ascents. Photo: Suze Kelly



▲ Abseiling through the Summit Rocks. Photo: Mark Austin



▲ Climbing the summit ridge. Photo: JB Huguex



taken may vary subject to seasonal weather and route conditions. All group equipment including ropes and cooking equipment will be organised by your guide.

We offer secure storage at our office for your luggage and valuables during the trip.

## COMMUNICATION & MESSAGES

Our guides are in radio/cell/satellite phone communication with our operations base and Department of Conservation headquarters throughout the trip. This assists us with schedule and weather forecast updates, helicopter co-ordination and safety back up. Urgent messages can be relayed via our office to the field if required. Each party carries a locator beacon for additional security.

## FITNESS & HEALTH

To make the most of your experience we encourage you to work on your fitness prior to the trip. Training with a 15kg/33lb+ pack is the best preparation for the mountains, with the aim of building your endurance. Your guide places special focus on fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly.

Our registration form requests that you advise us of any medical problems you may have and of any medications you are taking. Any information you supply will be treated as confidential.

## FOOD

We place emphasis on providing nutritious meals and a good supply of snack food throughout the trip. If you have any special dietary requirements, please advise us at the time of registration.

## INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you take out trip cancellation and travel insurance to protect yourself in the case of injury or mishap prior to/whilst on our trips.

While our focus is on safety and our track record supports this, the mountains do have hazards and there is always the potential for mishap. If you were injured whilst on the trip, the New Zealand Accident Compensation Commission (ACC) will pay rescue costs upon review of the circumstances and authorisation by the police. This service may not apply to evacuation costs for medical conditions. You may not be eligible for bulk compensation payments from ACC, and you are responsible for any medical or evacuation costs beyond the cover provided by ACC.





## TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

We commence our Aoraki Mount Cook trip from our office in Wanaka. Air New Zealand and Qantas/Jetstar provide daily services for flights from Christchurch, Auckland and Wellington to Queenstown. There are also direct international flights from most major Australian cities to Queenstown.

A shuttle service operates several times daily between Queenstown and Wanaka (approximately one hour driving time, at a cost of NZ\$35 per person each way), check <https://www.ritchies.co.nz/wanaka> for details. Bus services operate daily between Christchurch and Wanaka (approximately 6 hours travel time).

Wanaka has a range of accommodation from backpackers, youth hostels, motels and hotels to luxury lodges.

We are happy to assist with your accommodation and bus transfer arrangements.

**NOTE:** Adventure Consultants will provide food and accommodation while the trip is running which is from 9.00am on Day 1 until 5.00pm on Day 6. All food and accommodation outside this time will be at your expense.

## PRICE

The cost of Aoraki Mount Cook Guided Ascent is NZ\$6,300.

**NOTE:** Prices are subject to change without notice.

The price includes:

- Guide fees
- Hut fees
- All meals and snack foods whilst on the trip
- Group equipment such as ropes, tents and stoves
- Ground transport ex Wanaka
- Department of Conservation fees (37125-GUI)
- NZ Goods and Services Tax (15%)
- Aircraft access and egress

**NOTE:** In order to reserve a guide, we recommend that you book well in advance. This especially applies to high season (December through February).

## PAYMENT DETAILS

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:



**Bank:** Bank of New Zealand  
**For the Account of:** Adventure Consultants Limited  
**Account Number:** 02 0673 0043443 00  
**Account Type:** NZ Dollars

**NOTE:** All bank transfer charges are for the remitter's account.

We also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard and Amex) plus a 3% card charge.

## DEPOSIT

To confirm place on an Aoraki Mount Cook ascent, we require a completed registration form with a deposit of NZ\$1,000 per person.

## BALANCE

The balance payment of NZ\$5,300 is due 60 days prior to the course start date.

## CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

- Cancellations outside of 60 days incur a NZ\$500 cancellation fee.
- For cancellations made within 60 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain

50% of the full fee.

- For cancellations made within 30 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 75% of the full fee.
- For cancellations within 15 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.

We recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent if you wish to be covered against cancellation due to medical or personal reasons.

## HOW TO JOIN THIS TRIP

If you would like to join us on an Aoraki Mount Cook ascent, please complete our online booking form and forward your deposit payment at <https://www.adventureconsultants.com/expeditions/new-zealand-ascents/aoraki-mount-cook/book-now>.

If you require more information, please contact us at:

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▲ A climber on mixed ground in the Summit Rocks. Photo: Mick Wheeler





Aoraki Mount Cook at dawn from the Grand Plateau. Photo: Guy Cotter



Adventure Consultants is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants is a supporter of the dZi Foundation in Nepal for their 'Revitalise a Village' programmes.

Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.



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