

Guest Information Book



Godley Head Guided Walking Tour

WWW.ADVENTUREBYNATURE.CO.NZ



ADVENTURE
BY NATURE

Welcome to the Godley Head Guided Walking Tour!

Godley Head is an exciting and wild place at the far end of the Port Hills overlooking Lyttelton Harbour and Christchurch. On this unforgettable tour, you can expect spectacular views of Lyttelton Harbour, Christchurch and beyond. The area is rich in history and scattered with remnants of New Zealand's WWII defences. This is a must-do location for anyone visiting Christchurch.

Duration:

- Full-day: 7 - 7 ½ hours
- Half-day: 3 - 3 ½ hours (morning or afternoon)

Transport: Minivan or luxury car (private tours)

Start/Finish location: Christchurch City Centre

Food:

- Full-day: Picnic lunch, morning tea & afternoon tea
- Half-day: Morning or afternoon tea

Pick-up/drop-off time:

- Full-day: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
- Half-day: 8:30 am - 12:00 pm or 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Min/Max numbers: 2 – 8 pax

Total walking distance: 6.5 km-9 km (4- 5.6 miles) (*less for half-day tour)

Time spent walking: 3-4 hours walking (*less for half-day tour)



Full-Day Godley Head Tour Itinerary

You will be picked up from your accommodation or from one of our designated pick-up points.

Driving east from Christchurch City, we pass through local suburbs and industrial areas before heading through New Zealand's 2nd longest road tunnel to Lyttelton. Also known as "The Gateway to Christchurch", this charming and historic port township is the South Island's largest port. You will have time to have a look around this quirky little town before we drive up the newly restored Evans Pass Road. A scenic lookout at the top of the pass gives impressive views of Lyttelton Harbour and the coastal suburb of Sumner. After a short drive back down to Sumner Beach, we'll stop for morning or afternoon tea. From Sumner, we drive to Taylors Mistake Beach, one of Christchurch's hidden gems, where our walk will begin.

From Taylors Mistake Beach, we will head east along a well-established track that hugs the coastline, leading us into Boulder Bay and then onto Godley Head. This area is dotted with World War II-era remnants, including bunkers, gun emplacements, and old military buildings, making it a fascinating and picturesque spot for photos and a picnic lunch.

After lunch, we will continue west along the track on the southern side of Godley Head, overlooking Lyttelton Harbour and Banks Peninsula, before descending back down to Taylors Mistake. An alternative route back to the city will complete your Christchurch and Godley Head tour.

Tour starts – Christchurch

- *Travel to next location – 30 minutes*



1. **Lyttelton** – Sightseeing, 20 minutes

- *Travel – 30 minutes*



2. **Sumner Beach** – Morning or afternoon tea, sightseeing, 20 minutes

- *Travel - 10 minutes*



3. **Te Onepoto/Taylor's Mistake** – Guided walk, picnic lunch, 4-5 hours

- *Travel - 45 minutes*

Tour finishes – Christchurch

Half-Day Godley Head Tour Itinerary

You will be collected from your accommodation, at our pick-up point in Christchurch, or from Lyttelton Port at 8:30 am for a morning tour or 1:00 pm for an afternoon tour.

Driving east from Christchurch City, we pass through local suburbs and industrial areas before heading through New Zealand's 2nd longest road tunnel to Lyttelton. Also known as "The Gateway to Christchurch", this charming and historic port township is the South Island's largest port. You will have time to have a look around this quirky little town before we drive up with the newly restored Evans Pass Road. A scenic lookout at the top of the pass gives impressive views of Lyttelton Harbour and the coastal suburb of Sumner. A short drive from summer is a beach called Taylor's Mistake, one of Christchurch's hidden gems. Our walk starts from Taylor's Mistake.

From Taylor's Mistake beach, we head east on a well-established track that hugs the coast, dropping into Boulder Bay where we'll enjoy some morning or afternoon tea. Here we'll wander past unique baches (small beach houses) built into the rocks before we make our way back to Taylor's Mistake. For groups with more energy, we can head back via the historic Scott's Hut further up the hill.

An alternative route back to the city will complete your half-day guided tour of Christchurch and Godley Head.



Godley Head walking track.

Local Information – Christchurch, Lyttelton Harbour & Awaroa/Godley Head.

About Christchurch (Ōtautahi)

Christchurch, known as Ōtautahi in te reo Māori, is New Zealand's oldest city, founded in 1850. Its origins trace back to the Canterbury Association, a colonial group established in England in 1848 with the goal of creating a planned settlement based on English social structures. The first European settlers arrived on the First Four Ships, landing in Lyttelton between December 1850 and January 1851. The city was named after Christ Church, Oxford, reflecting the heritage of its founders, particularly John Robert Godley.

Over the years, Christchurch has evolved into a vibrant urban centre renowned for its stunning gardens, parks, and rich cultural heritage. Despite facing significant challenges, such as the devastating earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, the city has shown remarkable resilience and continues to thrive as a key destination in New Zealand.

Major Cities in New Zealand (2023):

- **Auckland:** 1,571,700
- **Christchurch:** 369,000
- **Wellington:** 202,700
- **Hamilton:** 160,900
- **Tauranga:** 136,700
- **Dunedin:** 126,300

Formation:

The Canterbury Association was established in London in 1848 by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley, among others. It aimed to create a model settlement in New Zealand based on the principles of systematic colonisation.

The Association's vision was to establish a planned settlement in Canterbury, modelled on the English social structure and featuring a network of towns and rural districts. The plan aimed to attract settlers of high social standing and wealth, with an emphasis on the Anglican Church.

The Canterbury Association purchased land from the New Zealand Company in the Canterbury region, including the area around present-day Christchurch. Surveying of the land began in 1849 in preparation for the arrival of settlers.

First Four Ships:

The Canterbury Association organised the immigration of the First Four Ships, which arrived in Lyttelton, the port for Christchurch, between December 1850 and January 1851. These ships brought the initial wave of European settlers to the Canterbury region.

1. **Charlotte Jane:** The Charlotte Jane was the first of the First Four Ships to arrive in Lyttelton, the port for Christchurch, on December 16, 1850. It carried approximately 150 passengers, mostly from Scotland. The arrival of the Charlotte Jane marked the beginning of organised European settlement in Canterbury.
2. **Randolph:** The Randolph arrived in Lyttelton on December 16, 1850, just a few hours after the Charlotte Jane. It carried around 140 passengers, also primarily from Scotland.
3. **Cressy:** The Cressy arrived in Lyttelton on December 27, 1850, with approximately 240 passengers. Like the Charlotte Jane and the Randolph, most of its passengers were from Scotland.
4. **Sir George Seymour:** Sir George Seymour was the last of the First Four Ships to arrive in Lyttelton, reaching the port on January 17, 1851. It carried around 240 passengers, primarily from England.

- Families of these first four ships are prominent in Canterbury society today.
- Christchurch and Dunedin have more social structure than other areas of New Zealand
- What High School students attend in Christchurch is of extreme importance. An interesting local quirk is asking, “What high school did you go to?” during the first meeting. This doesn’t happen in other areas of NZ

Dubbed the “Garden City,” Christchurch is renowned for its abundant green spaces, meticulously maintained parks, and botanical gardens, including the sprawling Hagley Park, which provides a tranquil retreat for outdoor recreation and leisure activities.

The Avon River, meandering gracefully through the heart of the city, offers opportunities for punting, kayaking, and leisurely strolls along its picturesque banks, providing residents and visitors with a serene escape amidst urban surroundings.

The Christchurch Cathedral

The Christchurch Cathedral, formally known as the Cathedral Church of Christ, was built between 1864 and 1904 in the heart of Christchurch, New Zealand. It is a notable example of Gothic Revival architecture, designed by the English architect Sir George Gilbert Scott.

The cathedral features a distinctive spire rising to a height of approximately 63 meters (207 feet), making it one of the tallest structures in Christchurch. Its Gothic architecture includes pointed arches, intricate stonework, and decorative elements typical of the style.

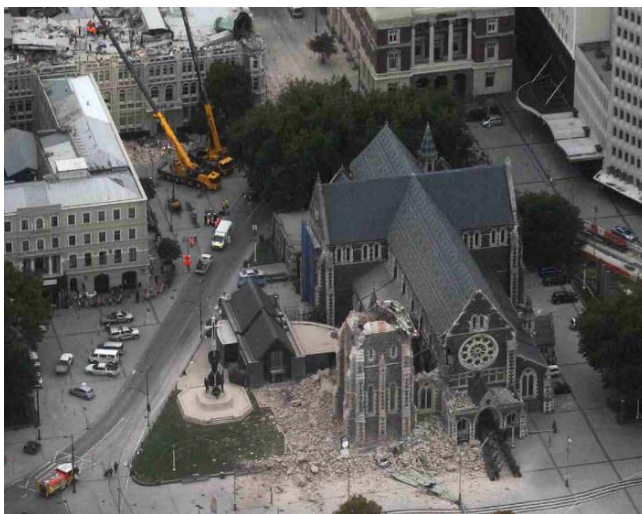
The cathedral suffered significant damage during the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, particularly the collapse of its spire and extensive damage to its structure. These earthquakes had a profound impact on Christchurch and its built environment, including the cathedral.

Following the earthquakes, debates and discussions ensued regarding the future of the cathedral. Various proposals were put forward, including restoration, demolition, or rebuilding. The decision-making process involved considerations of heritage preservation, engineering feasibility, and financial resources.

Construction of the cathedral began in 1864 but was interrupted several times due to funding issues, labour shortages, and the effects of the New Zealand Wars. It took 40 years to complete, with the final sections finished in 1904.

At its peak, the cathedral's spire stood approximately 63 meters (207 feet) tall, making it one of the tallest structures in Christchurch at the time.

In addition to its spire, the cathedral also featured a bell tower with a peal of 13 bells, including a Bourdon bell weighing over 6,000 kilograms (13,000 pounds). These bells were used for various purposes, including marking the hours and special occasions.



As of recent years, plans for the restoration or redevelopment of the Christchurch Cathedral have been ongoing. Following the Government's decision in 2024 not to provide further funding towards the reinstatement of the cathedral, construction is now be paused while all options are being considered.



Treaty of Waitangi – Te Tiriti o Waitangi (signed 6th February, 1840)

The Treaty is a broad statement of principles on which the British and Māori made a political compact to found a nation state and build a government in New Zealand. The document has three articles. “In the English text, Māori leaders gave the Queen 'all the rights and powers of *sovereignty*' over their land. In the Māori text, Māori leaders gave the Queen 'te kawanatanga katoa' or the complete *government* over their land.”
(<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/treaty>)

It is common now to refer to the intention, spirit or principles of the Treaty. The Treaty of Waitangi is not considered part of New Zealand domestic law, except where its principles are referred to in Acts of Parliament.

Māori History of Ōtautahi

The Māori name Ōtautahi translates to “The Place of Tautahi” or “The Place of Tautahi’s People.” Tautahi was a significant rangatira (chief) of the Ngāi Tahu iwi (tribe) who played a prominent role in the region’s early history. The name Ōtautahi honours his legacy and the ancestral connections of Ngāi Tahu to the land where Christchurch now stands.

According to stories, Tautahi is an important figure in the migration stories of the Ngai Tahu people. Te Waka o Aoraki is the name given to the migration story from their ancestral homeland to Te Ika-a-Māui (North Island) and then down to Te Waipounamu (South Island). This migration, known as Te Waka o Aoraki, is a foundational aspect of Ngāi Tahu people’s identity and history.

The Māori name for the North Island of New Zealand is “Te Ika-a-Māui,” which translates to “The Fish of Māui.” According to Māori mythology, the North Island is said to be the fish that Māui, a legendary figure in Māori culture, caught while fishing with his magical hook.

The Māori name for the South Island of New Zealand is “Te Waipounamu,” which translates to “The Greenstone Waters” or “The Waters of Greenstone.” This name reflects the significance of pounamu (greenstone or jade) in Māori culture and the abundance of this precious stone found in the rivers and mountains of the South Island.

Hawaiki: In Māori tradition, Hawaiki refers to the legendary homeland from which the ancestors of the Māori people are believed to have originated. It is considered a mythical place, often described as a distant island or land across the ocean. According to oral tradition, Māori ancestors migrated from Hawaiki to Aotearoa (New Zealand) many centuries ago in voyages by waka (canoes). While the exact location of Hawaiki remains unknown, it holds deep cultural and spiritual significance in Māori cosmology. It serves as the ancestral homeland of all Māori tribes, including Ngāi Tahu.

Whakaraupō/ Lyttelton Harbour Information

Whakaraupō, or Lyttelton Harbour, was shaped by volcanic activity between 11 and 6 million years ago. Over time, this ancient landscape has been filled with water due to rising sea levels, creating the stunning harbour we see today. The fine silt, ground by glaciers in the Southern Alps, was blown by northwest winds and deposited on the volcanic slopes, resulting in rich, fertile soils. Erosion from the Southern Alps also shaped the Canterbury Plains, linking Banks Peninsula with the South Island.

The name Whakaraupō means "harbour of the raupō reed," a vital resource for Māori. Raupō is a well-known and easily recognisable wetland plant. Traditionally, raupō stalks were used for thatching walls and roofs, and the down was used to stuff bedding. The leaves were used for canoe sails and kites, while bundles of the stalks made temporary rafts. The starchy rhizomes were an important food, and the yellow pollen was gathered and baked into a sweet, light cake.



Māori have inhabited this region since around 1250 AD, with a strong focus on moa hunting. In 1770, James Cook mistook Banks Peninsula for an island, marking a significant moment in its history. Fast forward to 1850, when the first four ships brought immigrants from Great Britain to Lyttelton, setting the stage for a diverse community. Remarkably, the world's first rail tunnel through volcanic rock opened here in 1867, followed by a road tunnel in 1964.

Ōtamahua / Quail Island

Ōtamahua, known as Quail Island, has its own unique history. The name means "place children gather sea bird eggs," and it honours the now-extinct native quail. This island also features King Billy Island, or Aua, where large schools of yellow-eyed mullet can be seen in summer. Historically, the island served as a quarantine station beginning in 1875, later becoming New Zealand's only leprosy quarantine colony from 1906 to 1925. In the early 1900s, dogs and ponies were trained here for Scott and Shackleton's Antarctic expeditions.

After being leased for farming from 1934 to 1975, the island transformed into a recreational reserve. Visitors can explore the ship graveyard, which holds the remains of eight vessels, including the Mullogh, an iron steamer, and the Darra. The Darra, built in 1886, was primarily used to transport immigrants and goods. It was beached at Quail Island in 1951, and in 1953, attempts by the army to destroy the remains only resulted in a hole, now accessible by paddling.

For those seeking adventure, the island offers a delightful two-hour loop track, a thirty-minute walk to the summit for breathtaking views, and facilities for camping on Swimmer's Beach.



Ripapa Island

Ripapa Island is steeped in history as well. It was originally a pā, or fortified village, built by Ngāi Tahu chief Taununu in the early 1800s. The island witnessed several battles between rival Ngāi Tahu hapū, and by 1832, it was abandoned after being overrun by Te Rauparaha. In 1872 and 1873, pacifist protesters from Parihaka were held on the island without trial, marking a significant chapter in its history. Construction of Fort Jervis began in 1885, and the fort was later upgraded for World War I. Today, Ripapa Island holds Tōpuni status, meaning the Rapaki hapū has a say in its management.

Taylor's Mistake (Te Onepoto)

The te reo Māori name, Te Onepoto, means short or little beach. The name "Taylor's Mistake" originated from an incident involving a man named Edward Taylor, who was the first European settler to own land in the area. The story goes that in the mid-19th century, Edward Taylor was surveying the coastline for potential land to purchase. He mistook the bay near what is now known as Taylor's Mistake for the nearby Pigeon Bay, which he intended to buy. However, upon realising his mistake, he continued to call the area "Taylor's Mistake." Over time, the name stuck, and it became the official name for the bay and the surrounding area.

There are almost 50 small century-old seaside baches remaining on the coastal strip between Hobsons Bay to the north, and Boulder Bay to the south. Some are cave baches, with Whare Moki being considered the oldest surviving example in New Zealand. Most of the baches were, in 1995 or 2016, recognised as heritage assets by either Heritage NZ or by the Christchurch City Council under the Resource Management Act.



Godley Head/Awaroa

Awaroa, with its rugged landscape, never served as a site for Māori settlement. The absence of fresh water sources, combined with the relentless exposure to gusty winds, rendered it an inhospitable environment for habitation. This stark setting, characterised by its dramatic natural features, did not offer the essentials for a thriving community.

In 1865, a lighthouse was erected at Awaroa, serving as a beacon for navigators along the coastline. However, this structure was later relocated to allow for the establishment of a fort, which would play a pivotal role in the region's defence. From 1939 to 1945, the fort was at the heart of military operations, serving as a strategic point for counter-bombardment against potential naval attacks. At the peak of these military endeavours in 1942, around 400 dedicated personnel were stationed at the fort, contributing to a larger operation that engaged over a thousand individuals in the broader defence strategy. Interestingly, despite the significant military presence, the fort never had to fire a shot in anger.

A remarkable incident unfolded in 1941 when a German ship stealthily deposited ten mines in the precarious waters just 3 to 10 kilometres from the harbour entrance. This covert operation took place under the cover of a fierce storm and the cloak of darkness.

Fortunately, the mines remained inert and undiscovered—a fact we learned only after the war ended, when a German logbook was seized, revealing the chilling details of this maritime manoeuvre. The fort eventually closed in 1957. Yet, the army continued to use the site for exercises until it was formally handed over to the Department of Conservation (DOC) in 1983.

In a turn of events in 2011, the gun emplacement building was damaged during the devastating Christchurch earthquake, leading to a temporary closure as repairs were carried out. During this restoration period, the interior of the gun emplacements was transformed by the talented Christchurch street artist Wongi Wilson, whose vibrant artwork not only paid homage to the site's military past but also brought a fresh and lively element to this historical landmark.

Boulder Bay is a small cove located directly north of the army camp, facing New Brighton. It takes its name from the large number of boulders strewn along the water's edge. It has been home to a small, tight-knit community of holiday homes (baches/cribs) from as early as the 19th century.

Keep an eye out for wildlife along this walk. There are a variety of seabirds, including white-flippered penguins, nesting along this coastline. If you are lucky, you may spot a pod of rare Hector's dolphins, some seals or even a whale.



What You May Spot Along the Way

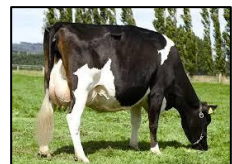
Livestock – Sheep Breeds

- **Romney** – White face, sturdy build. Most popular sheep breed in New Zealand, valued for both wool and meat. Found in lowland farms and hills throughout Canterbury.
- **Merino** – Smaller frame, often horned rams. Extremely fine, soft wool used in high-end clothing. Found in high country stations.
- **Perendale** – White face, thick wool, medium build. Hardy and good for mixed terrain. Common in hill country; bred from Romney and Cheviot sheep breeds.
- **Coopworth** – Similar to Romney, slightly larger with heavy fleece. Dual-purpose for wool and meat. Find them throughout Canterbury plains.



Livestock – Cow Breeds

- **Friesian (Holstein-Friesian)** – Large black-and-white dairy cow. High milk production. Dominant on dairy farms.
- **Jersey** – Smaller, light brown with a gentle face. Produce rich, creamy milk (high butterfat). Found on specialist dairy farms, often mixed with Friesians.
- **Hereford** – Red body with white face and underbelly. Beef cattle. Graze on hill country farms or finishing on Canterbury Plains.
- **Angus** – All black or red, solid build. Premium beef breed. Frequently found on hill farms and in mixed livestock operations.



- **Belted Galloway** - This breed is known for its distinctive white belt that encircles the black or sometimes red body. Known for their hardiness and ability to thrive in cold and rugged environments. Produce high-quality beef.



Other Wildlife

- **Pūkeko (Australasian Swamphen)** – Bright blue with red beak and long red legs. Common near roadside wetlands and drains.



- **Pūtangitangi (Paradise Shelduck)** – Large, striking duck; males are black, females have a white head. Frequently seen grazing in paddocks and flying in pairs.



- **Pīwakawaka (New Zealand Fantail)** – Small, friendly bird with fanned tail. Often seen fluttering near rest areas or forest edges.



- **Kāhu (Harrier Hawk)** – Large brown bird of prey seen gliding low over fields. Commonly spotted while driving.



- **Black Swan** – Elegant with red bill, native to Australia but naturalised in New Zealand. Seen on lakes like Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere and roadside ponds.



- **Papango (New Zealand Scaup)** – Small diving duck, black (male), or brown (female). Seen on lakes and braided rivers.



- **Karoro (Southern Black-backed Gull)** – Large gull, common along coastlines and in fields (paddocks).



Introduced Animals Commonly Seen

- **European Rabbits** – Often seen on roadsides, pastures, and high-country hills. Especially noticeable in dry, open areas.
- **Hedgehogs** – Nocturnal but sometimes seen in grass verges or rural gardens.
- **Deer (Farmed or Wild)** – Only Red deer are farmed in New Zealand due to the fact they grow large quickly compared to Fallow deer. Farmed deer are visible behind high fences. Both Red deer and Fallow deer are found in the wild (rare in lowlands, but possible in high country).



Wild Rabbit



Hedgehog



Fallow Deer -
Buck



Red Deer - Hind

Godley Head Tour - Maps



Full route Christchurch – Lyttelton – Sumner Beach – Taylors Mistake - Christchurch.



