

# EVENTS FOR ALL SEASONS

Before planning a trip to stunning southern New Zealand, check out the fantastic range of fun, serious, artistic, sporting and cultural events on offer around the Southern Lakes and Central Otago regions – all easily accessible from Queenstown Airport!

## **2019**

### **Wanaka Rodeo – 2 January**

A rip-roaring good time, the annual Wanaka Rodeo is a great day out for all the family. See the cow-guys and gals of the rodeo strut their stuff against Lake Wanaka's gorgeous landscape. From Bareback Bronc to Ladies Barrel Racing and Bull Riding, this event is not to be missed. Located at the Isuzu Arena, just off State Highway 6 on the Wanaka-Hawea Highway, the show is situated near the beautiful Hawea River with stunning views of the Southern Alps. There's nothing quite like the setting of this classic, iconic event!

[www.wanakarodeo.co.nz](http://www.wanakarodeo.co.nz)

### **Glenorchy Races – 5 January**

Held annually on the first Saturday after New Year, Glenorchy Race Day is a true southern Kiwi experience and has become an iconic local event since its inception more than 40 years ago. Races range from the Walk Trot Gallop, Relay Race and highly entertaining Double Banking Race to the Open Gallop, Quarter Mile Sprint and the hotly contested Stockman's Race. Although anyone with a horse can register, the races are not for the faint hearted or inexperienced - many local horse trekking staff and stockmen/women enter each year so the competition is fierce! [www.queenstownNZ.co.nz](http://www.queenstownNZ.co.nz)

### **Cromwell Wine and Food Festival – 5 January**

On the first weekend of January the Wine & Food Festival is held in the picturesque grounds of Cromwell Heritage Precinct. This festival showcases wines from the Cromwell Basin of which there are over 30 vineyards. Many do not have cellar doors and this festival is a great opportunity to sample the distinctive pinot noir, pinot gris and other wines of this highly acclaimed wine growing area. Local 'foodies' have stalls alongside each wine tasting stall and you can sample many regional delicacies such as, whitebait, paua patties, rabbit sausages, cheeses and much, much more. The festival runs from 3pm till 8pm and you can sit back and enjoy good music from local musicians, good food and good wine in a beautiful setting amongst historic stone buildings on the edge of Lake Dunstan surrounded by the majestic hills of Central Otago. <http://www.centralotagoz.com/>

### **Lake Hayes A&P Show – 12 January**

The 103<sup>rd</sup> annual Lake Hayes A&P Show is a surefire family-pleaser, giving visitors a taste of rural life and the chance to mingle with locals on their home turf. It's an interactive day for all the family with entertainment, sheep shearing, side shows, baking and country fair candy floss. [www.lakehayesshow.com](http://www.lakehayesshow.com)

### **Fat Freddy's Drop @ John Davies Oval – 14 January**

Getting high on hope, Fat Freddy's Drop are releasing a brand new single 'Trickle Down' on July 20. Freddy's annual summer roady around New Zealand in Jan 2019 gets a super-charged tune up with the addition of DJ legend Norman Jay MBE direct from London with more to be announced. With fresh tour destinations added to the menu, Freddys are about to serve up one massive summer tour.

[www.eventfinda.co.nz](http://www.eventfinda.co.nz)

### **Gibbston Valley Winery Concert - 19 January**

Supertramp's Roger Hodgson, James Reyne & Mark Seymour formerly Australian Crawl and Hunters & Collectors Toni Childs perform their greatest hits live against the stunning backdrop of the Kawarau River at Gibbston Valley Station, next to one of Central Otago's most acclaimed vineyards.

<https://www.gibbstonvalley.com/nz/experience/summer-concerts/>

### **Red Bull Defiance – 19-20 January**

Red Bull Defiance is a unique race format that combines running, kayak and mountain bike endurance disciplines, with the creative element of undisclosed special stages. Designed by Braden Currie, New Zealand's foremost adventure and multisport racer, the course has been designed to test athletes over two challenging days, racing alongside the worlds' best multisport and endurance athletes. A two-person team race, the course will see athletes competing over 8 exclusive high-country stations in the Wanaka region in either elite or sports category divisions. Red Bull Defiance will challenge both mentally and physically a field of local and international competitors. <http://redbulldefiance.co.nz/>

### **The Big Easy – 26 January**

Calling all mountain bikers! The Big Easy isn't as easy as its name may suggest, but it certainly is big fun! 48kms of rugged terrain across the Pisa Ranges of Cardrona and downhill to historic Luggate, through a stock underpass and cross country to the Albert Town Tavern, this race covers a vast landscape of fierce beauty and is the most fun you can have whilst competing. Starting at Snow Farm in the stunning Cardrona Valley only 20 minutes' drive from Wanaka, passing right by the iconic Luggate Hotel and ending at riverside Albert Town Tavern, this is a great event for spectators and supporters as well!

[www.highlandevents.co.nz/the-big-easy](http://www.highlandevents.co.nz/the-big-easy)

### **FATBOY Slim – 1 February**

UK big beat pioneer Fatboy Slim aka Norman Cook (Beats International, The Housemartins) is returning to Aotearoa in early 2019 for a five-date nationwide tour. The creator of such room-shaking hits as 'Right Here Right Now', 'Praise You' and 'Rockafeller Skank' - along with Beats International's fabulous sampledelic classic 'Dub Be Good To Me' - and iconic videos featuring the likes of Christopher Walken, Fatboy Slim's live show is 100% guaranteed to set fire to dance floors across New Zealand this summer.

### **Shotover Moonlight Marathon – 16 February**

The Shotover Moonlight Mountain marathon & Trail Runs are based in the diverse terrain of the Ben Lomond Station near Queenstown. They start beside the famous Shotover River competitors run along sheep tracks, historic gold mining water races and high-country mustering routes. The course finishes near picturesque Moke Lake where competitors can relax and reflect on their huge personal achievement and celebrate with fellow competitors and supporters. [www.shotvoermoonlight.co.nz](http://www.shotvoermoonlight.co.nz)

### **Challenge Wanaka – 16 February**

One of the world's toughest and most scenic long-distance swim-bike-run triathlon courses, Challenge Wanaka is a favourite with local teams and international stars alike taking on the half or full ironman distance. Set against the stunning alpine backdrop of New Zealand's Southern Alps and Mt Aspiring National Park - Te Wahipounamu World Heritage Area - this is New Zealand's largest triathlon festival. Events are included for all ages and abilities and Lake Wanaka caters for over 2,000 participants, 10,000 spectators and a global audience of millions. [www.challenge-wanaka.com](http://www.challenge-wanaka.com)

### **GODZone – 10-17 February**

Chapter 6 of GODZone will be held in the wider Southern Lakes District with activities being focused around the adventure capital of the world, Queenstown. GODZone is the ultimate expedition adventure racing experience. The event format is the same used at previous Chapters of GODZone – with unsupported teams travelling approximately 500km across New Zealand's wilderness for up to seven days. GZ Pure represents the most technically challenging adventure race in the world. The GZ Pursuit event takes the existing GODZone concept and makes some subtle changes that creates an exciting new racing experience and opens the door to a wider range of expedition adventure racers.

[www.godzoneadventure.com](http://www.godzoneadventure.com)

### **Rail Trail Duathlon & Mountain Bike Race – 23-24 February**

Since February 2000, the annual 150km Otago Central Rail Trail Duathlon has been on the last weekend of February. 2019 is the 20th anniversary of the legendary Otago Central Rail Trail Duathlon. The event is

organised and managed by the Combined Lions Clubs of Central Otago who hold a license from DOC. The OCRT Duathlon is a non-profit event with all officials working in a voluntary capacity. Any surplus from each year's event is committed through the Combined Central Otago Lions Clubs to projects associated with the Otago Central Rail Trail, to maintain, develop and promote this unique recreational facility.

<https://www.railtrailduathlon.com/>

### **New Zealand Golf Open – 28 February – 3 March**

The NZ Golf Open is held at two spectacular golf courses near Arrowtown - Millbrook Resort and The Hills. The New Zealand Open incorporates a unique Pro-Am format that brings together a prestigious blend of Professional and Amateur golfers. The New Zealand Open is the country's premier golf event, as well as a tier one event on the PGA Tour of Australasia. Tickets for the public go on sale 25th November. The tournament is played across two courses with a minimum field of 144 professional golfers playing alongside 144 amateur golfers. [www.nzopen.co.nz](http://www.nzopen.co.nz)

### **Motatapu Off-Road Adventure Race – 9-10 March**

The Motatapu is New Zealand's premier mountain bike and off-road running event which starts in Lake Wanaka and takes competitors deep into the stunning wilderness of the Motatapu Valley down into Arrowtown. From recreational runners, riders and walkers to elite athletes, the Motatapu offers a challenge for everyone with a 47km Mountain Bike, 42km Off Road Marathon, 49km Adventure Run or 15km Miner's Trail – all through the magnificent landscapes of the Motatapu and its surrounding valleys.

[www.motatapu.org.nz](http://www.motatapu.org.nz)

### **Wanaka A&P Show – 8-9 March**

The Wanaka A&P Show is one of New Zealand's largest agricultural and pastoral events, attracting more than 35,000 people each year. Run over two days and set on picturesque Showgrounds overlooking Lake Wanaka, the Show includes traditional features such as equestrian and livestock events, home industry displays, wool classing and more than 400 trade stalls from around the country. Home of the Beef + Lamb NZ Golden Lamb Awards, aka the Glammies. [www.wanakashow.co.nz](http://www.wanakashow.co.nz)

### **Gibbston Wine and Food Festival – March TBC**

Food and wine lovers can sample the 'best of the best' at the annual Gibbston Wine and Food Festival, a harvest celebration which showcases the famous winemaking region's finest wines, wine celebrities, local produce and talented chefs. Learn how wine and food can enhance each other at master classes run by industry leaders, try grape stomping, or simply sit back, relax and enjoy the stunning wine, food and lineup of entertainment on offer. The event is held at Queenstown Gardens. [www.gibbstonwineandfood.co.nz](http://www.gibbstonwineandfood.co.nz)

### **Mountain Bike National Championships – March TBC**

The Mountain Bike National Championships is New Zealand's premier national mountain bike event, attracting New Zealand's top cross country and downhill mountain bikers. The event is an opportunity to showcase mountain bike, which aids the growth of New Zealand's cycling culture.

The event includes two days of intense racing for men's and women's Elite, U23, U19, Masters, Seniors, U17, U15 and U13 grades, in both cross country and downhill disciplines.

<http://www.bikewanaka.org.nz/events>

### **Queenstown Bike Festival – Date TBC**

Grab your bike and helmet and head to Queenstown the Queenstown Bike Festival. It's an exciting 13-day event for all ages and abilities and it gives you the chance to check out Queenstown's world-class cycle tracks, trails, roads and spectacular lake and alpine scenery.

Whether you're a biking novice, recreational cyclist or serious biker there's plenty of action. Events range from the spectacular Slopestyle, Mega Avalanche and Dirtmasters Downhill to the Tour de Wakatipu, kids' mini cross, Coffee to Grape wine trail ride, and bike movies and parties.

[www.queenstownbikefestival.co.nz](http://www.queenstownbikefestival.co.nz)

### **Festival of Colour – 2-7 April (Wanaka)**

The Festival of Colour is the flagship arts event for the Southern Lakes region. With seven successful festivals under their belt, they are still fresh and stylish and punch well above their weight. They have established an outstanding track record with sell-out seasons of music, theatre and dance performances and deservedly known as the 'best little arts festival in New Zealand'. <https://www.festivalofcolour.co.nz/>

### **Highlands Festival of Speed – 6-7 April**

Set in Highlands Motorsport Park, a 4.5 km international-standard circuit located near Cromwell, the Festival of Speed is not all about motor racing. Expect fantastic Central Otago wines, fine food, good music and a fun Fashion in the Field competition which creates a fun festival atmosphere for all ages.

The weekend schedule sees race competitors hit the track on Friday for practice and qualifying sessions. Public viewing is available from the top terrace with the purchase of a Museum ticket. Saturday has a full schedule of race action as well as all the family entertainment options and the motor show. Sunday's wine and food festival rounds off the entertainment line-up. [www.highlands.co.nz](http://www.highlands.co.nz)

### **Lake Hawea Contact Epic – 16 April**

The longest and most scenic mountain bike race in New Zealand, the Contact Epic is aptly named indeed! Once a year, passionate mountain bikers descend upon Wanaka and Lake Hawea to test their skills, endurance and daring at the Contact Epic.

No frills, old school, no excuses, the Contact Epic takes mountain bikers on a 125km adventure to circumnavigate Lake Hawea through usually inaccessible locations that blow the mind and challenge the spirit. If that's too tough there are easier 95km and 35km options available. [www.lakehaweaeptic.co.nz](http://www.lakehaweaeptic.co.nz)

### **Clyde Wine and Food Harvest Festival – 21 April (Easter Sunday)**

The festival is Central Otago's biggest celebration of locally produced wines and is held every year on Easter Sunday just before the major grape harvest.

Leading the wines is Pinot Noir, the wine that put Central Otago on the world wine map and with more than 20 wine labels at the festival there is a great opportunity to taste the subtle differences which vary according to growing conditions - what the French call terroir. There are also other wine varieties available. The festival also includes a food produce and general market, live music, children's entertainment, and an art exhibition. It starts at 10.30 and ends at 4.30pm.

### **Akarua Arrowtown Autumn Festival – 23-28 April**

The Arrowtown Autumn Festival provides a superb reason to get out and enjoy the slowing pace of autumn and the magnificent colours of the season. The region focuses on its gold mining history and celebrates its heritage in the streets of Arrowtown with a street parade and a programme of community-based events.

[www.arrowtownautumnfestival.org.nz](http://www.arrowtownautumnfestival.org.nz)

### **The Routeburn Classic – 27 April**

The Routeburn Classic is an 'adventure run' over New Zealand's world famous Routeburn Track. Staged in late April it is an exclusive event and limited to 350 lucky athletes. The track is 32 Kilometers long and climbs to 1127 meters above sea level. Set in a New Zealand National Park and inside a World Heritage Area in Fiordland on the south west of New Zealand's South Island. The event encompasses changing terrain from lush native bush to an exposed alpine environment.

<http://goodtimeevents.net/events/routeburn/>

### **Wanaka Autumn Arts School – April TBC**

Diverse, creative and imaginative, the annual Wanaka Autumn Arts School develops skills in all areas of the arts. With classes in photography, writing, sculpture, quilt making, wood carving, book making, painting, drawing, textiles and many more, the school brings together creative minds from all over the world to teach, learn and share against the magnificent golden backdrop of a classically breath-taking Lake Wanaka autumn. [www.autumnartschool.net.nz](http://www.autumnartschool.net.nz)

### **LUMA Southern Lights Project – 31 May – 3 June**

Lighting up in unexpected places and adding a splash of magic to the Queenstown Gardens, LUMA features a wide range of light-themed art, light installations, interactive activities and even a pop-up bar and open-air cinema. <http://luma.nz/>

### **Michael Hill International Violin Competition – Date TBC**

Witness the world's top talents on the launch pad when sixteen breath-taking young artists compete in this internationally-renowned major violin competition. Queenstown audiences can experience the thrill of the hunt up close and even cast their vote for the Michael Hill Audience Prize. Flexible attendance options cater to the classical to suit all tastes. [www.violincompetition.co.nz](http://www.violincompetition.co.nz)

### **Ski field dates (subject to weather conditions) and on-mountain events**

The five ski areas around the region host a variety of on-mountain events during winter. For event details refer to their websites.

Coronet Peak **early June – early October** [www.nzski.com](http://www.nzski.com)

The Remarkables **mid-June – late September** [www.nzski.com](http://www.nzski.com)

Cardrona **early June - mid October** [www.cardrona.com](http://www.cardrona.com)

Treble Cone **late June – late September** [www.treblecone.com](http://www.treblecone.com)

Snow Farm (cross-country skiing and snowshoeing) scheduled **TBC** [www.snowfarmnz.com](http://www.snowfarmnz.com)

### **Queenstown Winter Festival – 20-23 June**

Visit Queenstown at the end of June and experience the electric atmosphere of the town's annual American Express Queenstown Winter Festival! Tens of thousands of locals and visitors come together along the waterfront each year for the iconic opening night party and fireworks display to mark the start of New Zealand's ten coolest days.

Winter Festival has grown into the Southern Hemisphere's biggest winter celebration and is a true showcase of Queenstown's unique culture and community, with street parades, fireworks, entertainment, live music, comedy, loads of family fun, and plenty of mountain mayhem. It attracts more than 45,000 people from around the world who come to celebrate the arrival of winter in true Queenstown style.

[www.winterfestival.co.nz](http://www.winterfestival.co.nz)

### **Snowboxx: Winter musical festival – July TBC**

### **NZ Mountain Film Festival – 28 June-6 July**

National and international filmmakers come together to showcase their work in the highly acclaimed NZ Mountain Film Festival. The festival is recognised as one of the world's premier mountain film festival events. Films that do well here often go on to succeed in other international film festivals such as Banff Mountain Film Festival, Sundance Mountain Film Festival, Kendal Mountain Film Festival and Vancouver Mountain Film Festival. [www.mountainfilm.net.nz](http://www.mountainfilm.net.nz)

### **Peak to Peak – August TBC**

Ski/Snowboard - mountain bike - kayak - run/walk - road bike all on the same day! Queenstown's famous Peak to Peak that links the two ski mountains in Queenstown is the South Island's biggest winter multisport event and attracts multisport competitors from around New Zealand. The hotly contested race is 44km long and competitors must ski, mountain bike, paddle, run, and road bike from the top of The Remarkables to the top of Coronet Peak. Competitors include individuals, veterans, mixed teams, corporate groups and school teams. [www.southerntraverse.com/Peak2Peak](http://www.southerntraverse.com/Peak2Peak)

### **Audi quattro Winter Games – September TBC**

The sixth Audi quattro Winter Games NZ take place in New Zealand's Southern Alps. Winter Olympic, Paralympic and X Games stars are heading to Queenstown, Wanaka and Naseby once again for the first major championships of the season. Audi quattro Winter Games NZ are one of the world's top winter sports competitions and the only one in the southern hemisphere. They're also New Zealand's largest recurring sports event. Free to watch, this is your chance to see the worlds best compete for glory in

freeskiing, snowboarding, alpine ski racing, cross-country skiing and curling. Then enjoy the on-mountain WGNZ music festival featuring some of NZ's top live bands and DJs.

### **Winter Pride – 30 August – 8 September**

Winter Pride, a festival in a small town with a bold heart that celebrates love, community, diversity, visibility and inclusion. It is a festival that encourages locals and visitors alike to come together and celebrate their diversity. [www.winterpride.co.nz](http://www.winterpride.co.nz)

### **Merino Muster – September TBC**

Snow Farm's headline event of every season – the Merino Muster draws national and international competitors to Lake Wanaka and the Cardrona Valley for New Zealand's high cross-country ski adventure. From absolute beginners to the elite national team, competitors revel in the naturally sculpted back country of Snow Farm for both its stunning beauty and its challenging and exhilarating trails.

For the more relaxed athlete there is the 7 km course around Merino Glen which most people manage on their first day of Nordic skiing. The 21 km course travels around Merino Glen and then out around River Run and back on The Loop. For the experienced cross-country skier there is the 42 km Marathon which covers the 21km course and then heads out through Hanging Valley and then back around the Loop for a second time. [www.merinomuster.com](http://www.merinomuster.com)

### **Alexandra Blossom Festival – September TBC**

The Central Otago town of Alexandra shines in spring weather with blossom-lined streets and orchards in full bloom.

The Alexandra Blossom Festival is full of fun and entertainment with events like the Race Around the Clock – adrenalin-charged competitors run, swim, kayak, ride horses or pedal mountain bikes to conquer the steep terrain and icy river which makes up the course to Alexandra's unique, illuminated clock on the hill. The festival includes other local highlights such as The Grand Procession, complete with strikingly decorated floats and Float Princesses who each vie for the title of Festival Queen and the Mardi Gras, Party in the Park, "Thunder" Sunday (drag racing), Garden Tours and Wool On - a creative fashion and design competition featuring the use of high quality local wool in garments ranging from felted accessories to glamorous gowns. [www.blossom.co.nz](http://www.blossom.co.nz)

### **Queenstown JazzFest – October TBC (Labour Weekend)**

JazzFest has grown from humble beginnings back in 1978 to become one of Queenstown's most popular music events. Enjoy the world-class line-up of international, national and local artists who showcase their talents across all genres of jazz as they take part in over 40 different free events and ticketed concerts around Queenstown and Arrowtown on community stages and at official JazzFest venues. From smooth blues to big band swing, dixieland to funk bands, traditional jazz to ground breaking contemporary concepts, there is something for everyone, young and old. [www.queenstownjazzfest.co.nz](http://www.queenstownjazzfest.co.nz)

### **Deans Bank 10 Hour – October TBC (Wanaka)**

### **Wanakafest – October TBC**

Every spring, the people of Wanaka get together to create a festival for everyone. Local artisans, artists, entertainers and businesses join forces to put on a weekend of merriment and fun! The freshest ingredients; the most delectable dishes; the finest wines and spirits and beer; live music; a festival atmosphere; and the very best Wanaka's creatively epicurean community has to offer.

[www.wanakafest.co.nz](http://www.wanakafest.co.nz)

### **Alexandra Basin Wine Growers New Release – October TBC**

The annual New Release Tasting showcases over 50 New Release wines, offering a great opportunity for winelovers to sample new release wines from local producers, and hear from expert guest speakers.

[www.centralotagonz.com](http://www.centralotagonz.com)

### **Highlands NZ Endurance Championship - November TBC**

This is the must-attend motor racing event of the year - a weekend of full-on high adrenaline action with big name drivers in high performance race cars converging on New Zealand's only world class motor racing facility near Cromwell.

The event sees the final of the Australian GT Championship played out right here in NZ with a line-up of cars including Lamborghinis, Ferraris, Aston Martins – the list goes on. This is the event of a lifetime set in a sensational location. [www.highlands.co.nz](http://www.highlands.co.nz)

### **Queenstown Marathon – November TBC**

An international running festival incorporating 42km, 21km, 10km and 3km kids run options. Set between the backdrop of the world-renowned Crown and Remarkable mountain ranges, it takes in the highlights of the Queenstown Lakes region including Millbrook Resort, Arrowtown, Lakes Hayes, Shotover River, Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown Gardens and finishes in the heart of Queenstown.

[www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz](http://www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz)

### **The Pioneer MTB – November TBC**

The Pioneer is an awe inspiring seven-day mountain bike stage race through New Zealand's pristine Southern Alps. [www.thepioneer.co.nz](http://www.thepioneer.co.nz)

### **Kepler Challenge – December TBC**

Not for the fainthearted, the Kepler Challenge Mountain Run is New Zealand's premier mountain running event which follows the 60 km Kepler Track (rated one of the country's top walks) through the Fiordland National Park. The race has been held annually since 1988 and draws competitors from throughout New Zealand and around the world. Around 450 runners enter the event with nearly all completing the demanding course.

The concurrent 27km Luxmore Grunt event follows the same route as far as the Luxmore Hut, then returns via the same route back to the Control Gates. [www.keplerchallenge.co.nz](http://www.keplerchallenge.co.nz)

### **Arrowtown Long Lunch – December TBC**

The historic gold mining village of Arrowtown will celebrate the start of summer with its annual Arrowtown Long Lunch. Along with live music and entertainment, tables featuring differently themed cuisine of local cafes and restaurants will span the length of Arrowtown's picturesque main street for diners to enjoy alfresco dining at its best. Profits from the event will be donated to Cure Kids to help fund vital medical research into life-threatening illnesses that affect many of our children. [www.arrowtownlonglunch.co.nz](http://www.arrowtownlonglunch.co.nz)

### **Rhythm and Alps – 29-31 December**

Rhythm and Alps, one of the biggest parties in the South Island, is held at Robrosa Station in the Cardrona Valley and is the sister act to Gisborne's Rhythm and Vines extravaganza. The festival is based in a spectacular setting between Cardrona Ski Resort and the Pisa Plateau and caters for up to 5,000 campers. The line-up features some great international and Kiwi acts. [www.rhythmandalps.co.nz](http://www.rhythmandalps.co.nz)

### **New Year's Eve Celebrations – 31 December**

New Year's Eve goes off with a bang around the region with spectacular lakeside fireworks displays, live music and entertainment in the streets. Ring in the New Year at the Queenstown lakefront, Wanaka lakefront, Lake Hawea Hotel or The Branding country music festival.