Mount Tutoko (2,723m/8,934ft) is the highest peak in the Darran Mountains, located in Fiordland National Park, in the southwestern corner of the South Island of New Zealand. Mount Tutoko is close to the Tasman Sea and is bounded on all sides by complete wilderness.

Lush rainforest surrounds the peak and the climbing routes are remote, varied and somewhat technical. The views from Tutoko are truly spectacular in this granite wonderland. The Milford Track meanders through the same mountain range.

The North West Ridge of Tutoko is accessed from the Ngapunatoru Plateau and the route usually takes a full day of climbing from a tent camp. We fly into Ngapunatoru Plateau from sea level at Milford Airport. Camping on the edge of the huge plateau is a unique experience on its own!

From the tent camp, we traverse steep snow slopes to gain access to the ridge proper. Often a second camp is made here to allow for a full day on the ridge. The summit day is a mixture of scrambling and simple rock steps that lead to final summit headwall which has a crux of about 14 by New Zealand rock standards.

The final headwall leads directly to the summit. Incredible views await to the nearby Tasman Sea and Mount Aspiring, Aoraki Mount Cook and the rest of the Southern Alps.

Alternatively, if conditions permit and your previous climbing experience is adequate there is the option to climb from Turners Biv up the South East Ridge. This is a much more demanding route and almost always involves an open bivouac on route making it a committing undertaking. Both these routes are rewarding, technical climbs. The main requirements are being positive on your feet and have good endurance, as an ascent of Tutoko averages around 14 hours return.

**PREREQUISITE SKILLS**

Climbers wishing to attempt Mount Tutoko 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 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**

Due to the technical nature of the climb, we only guide Mount Tutoko on a 1:1 guide to climber ratio.

**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, instructional 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.

**SAMPLE ITINERARY**

An example of how the trip can run:

- **Day 1**: Meet your guide in Wanaka or Queenstown, check gear, drive to Milford Sound (4–5 hours) and afternoon walk or climb, stay at Homer Hut.
- **Day 2**: Morning flight into the Ngapunatoru Plateau. Acclimatisation day, consolidate skills or ascend a practice peak/or alternatively move camp closer to the NW Ridge.
- **Day 3**: Traverse off the Plateau and around to the base of the NW Ridge. Tent camp.
- **Day 4**: Summit day, start early (3–4am) and climb up the ridge to the summit. Descend back to the tent camp.
- **Day 5**: Contingency day, or alternative activity such as rock climbing.
- **Day 6**: Fly out from Ngapunatoru Plateau. Head back to Wanaka/Queenstown via Te Anau.

A map of Mount Tutoko and its surrounding valleys.
CLIMBING SEASON
We guide Mount Tutoko from January through to the end of March as conditions allow. 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 which result in a combination of rock and ice routes, however cooling temperatures can bring snow falls to the Alps. The days begin to get noticeably shorter at this time of year.

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, 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 can delay for up to two days subject to your guides’ schedule. We recommend you allow some flexibility with your travel arrangements to create this advantage. When booking your trip, please specify the dates you are available.

ACCOMMODATION DURING THE TRIP
Adventure Consultants will provide your 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 is at your expense. 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 will be spent in tents or bivvies for climbing Tutoko where you will be more exposed to the elements.

If our schedule requires us to overnight in huts either side of the trip we utilise the New Zealand Alpine Club owned Homer Hut which has dormitory style accommodation and if in Wanaka or Te Anau we accommodate you in dormitory style backpackers with shared bathroom facilities. You may decide to upgrade to single accommodations in Wanaka or at Te Anau at your own expense, should you require.
GROUND & AIR TRANSPORT

A bonus of booking with Adventure Consultants is that return ground transport from Wanaka to the trip venue, plus access and egress flights are included in the trip fee.

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

EQUIPMENT

Climbing in the Southern Alps requires good personal gear due to the potential weather conditions. Our focus is on having the essential clothing and equipment, whilst keeping pack weights as light as possible for your comfort and ease of travel.

An equipment list is provided upon booking your trip, or you can download one on our website. We carry a good range of modern rental equipment. If you will be renting equipment from us, please advise your requirements in advance to ensure correct sizing and availability. If you intend on buying any equipment items, we are happy to advise on recommended brands and models, and of key importance; their suitability to the type of activity. We offer our clients discounted prices on a selection of climbing equipment and clothing and can arrange for the equipment to be available upon your arrival.

Your guide will go through an equipment checklist with you prior to the trip. These will vary subject to seasonal weather and route conditions. All group equipment including ropes and stoves will be organised by your guide.

GUIDE BOOKS & MAPS

The Darran Mountains: An Alpine and Rock Climbing Guide by Craig Jefferies offers a good insight into the variety of peaks and routes in this mountain range.

It is useful to have your own map for navigation exercises. Your guide will advise you of the relevant 1:50,000 topographic maps required when the trip begins. The above book and maps can be purchased from our office in Wanaka.
COMMUNICATION & MESSAGES

Our guides are in radio/cell/satellite phone communication with our operations base and the Department of Conservation headquarters throughout the trip. This assists us with schedule and weather forecast updates, helicopter coordination 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 climbing experience we encourage you to work on your fitness prior to the trip. You will find that training with a 15kg + pack on is the best preparation for the mountains, with the aim of getting ‘pack fit’ and 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 if you are on any medication. 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 insurance to protect yourself in the case of injury or mishap prior to/or whilst on our trips. Whilst 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 Corporation (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 are not 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 from our base 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 and at a cost of $35 each way), check www.alpineconnexions.co.nz for details. Bus services also 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.

HOW TO FIND US

Your Mount Tutoko trip begins at 9.00am on Day 1 at our office at 20 Brownston Street. You will need to arrive in town the night prior to the trip commencing. Please give us a call to confirm your arrival in town.

You will find some of New Zealand’s best sport climbing in the Matukituki Valley, the gateway to the Mount Aspiring region and just a 10-minute drive from our offices. Two ski resorts provide plentiful winter activity and all year-round fishing, boating and numerous other recreational activities abound.

PRICE

The price for our 6-day guided ascent is NZ $6,850 for 1:1 guiding.

All prices are subject to change without notice.

The price includes:

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

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 one of our trips, we require a completed registration form with a deposit of NZ$1,000 per person.

BALANCE

The balance payment is due 60 days prior to the trip 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 one of our guided ascents of Mount Tutoko, please complete our online booking form and forward your deposit payment at https://www.adventureconsultants.com/expeditions/new-zealand-ascents/mt-tutoko/book-now.

CONTACT US

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Celebrating on the summit of Mount Tutoko. Photo: Dean Staples.
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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