

# Franz Josef Glacier – Discover New Zealand's Icy Face

The Franz Josef glacier in New Zealand offers a great gateway destination that works for wilderness lovers and those who are looking forward to extreme snow sports. Here you will find great vistas starting with a primeval rainforest to the unique wildlife of the country.



Franz Josef glacier is the only place in the world letting you plunge into fiords for pleasure. No wonder, it is termed as the adventure capital of the world. Whether it is on a heli-ride or trekking up the glaciers, you will experience the best scenic views of your life. When you are done with uphill climb, you can soak yourself into the hot pools. They will warm and relax your muscles. For the hiking, you can book trips that include all the equipment you will need. Lastly, walks consist of small groups of people that make them the best options for getting personally in touch with strangers who share the same interests with you. As you take the trips, you will learn interesting facts about the glaciers from the expert guides.

It gets hot in summer, which is a strange experience for people visiting the place for their first time. It is best for all visitors to wear their clothes in layers. As you ascend to the glaciers, the temperatures drop but they again rise while you descend to the glacier valley. Choose clothes made of polypro because you will get wet often and need to dry fast.



Visitors who can afford a helicopter ride have a choice of being flown right to the top of the glacier. On the way there, you can catch a panoramic view of the forests and sheets of ice. Otherwise, you can opt for guided walks to the glaciers. Since for most people, this is a hiking expedition, the walks offer the best experience. You can choose among a half-day walk, full day walk and a two-thirds of a day walk. You can also choose to join different teams taking on different difficulty levels of the walk.

For those seeking extreme adventure, it is possible to climb to the glaciers with your ice cleats and use the pre formed tracks. Most tour companies provide the ice cleats but for other equipment, you will have to rent it from the local shops. Alternatively, you can come with your equipment from home.



Safety should be your most important priority, especially if you will be hiking alone; Franz Josef glacier requires helmets and other protective gear. You cannot conquer its ice cliffs without things like appropriate boots, protective sunglasses, clips and ropes. You must avoid any gadget that will distract you. Phones, mp3 players are not required in the trip and should be left at the hotel where you are staying. You should also keep any document identification and keys away so that you do not lose them when you are out on the glaciers.

An hour into the glacier will give anyone a bit of a work out. There are guides who do a good job of ensuring that no hikers get to places where the ice is breaking or is too thin. While on the tour, it is best to keep your camera ready to take breathtaking shots of places where slow ice meets fast ice. There are ice tunnels that are big enough for people to crawl through from one side to another. The southern side has a lake whose waters show a cobalt blue color.

In the end, everyone on a hiking expedition at the Franz Josef glacier finds each experience unique and that is why so many backpackers visit the place annually. Even though the glacier is the biggest attraction, the place has many other charms that call upon your exploration on your next visit.

Date: 2013-02-25

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-franz-josef-glacier-in-new-zealand-offers-a-drenaline-trails-article2054>