

## DUNEDIN DAYOUT

Dunedin is a city of character. It's large enough to provide a host of attractions for visitors, yet small enough to be really visitor-friendly. Because everything is easily accessible, you can see a lot in a dayout We'd recommend spending at least five days to discover the joys of the city and the Otago Peninsula. Many visitors want to stay longer when they discover what Dunedin has to offer.

### There's something for everyone:

- Fascinating, historic Victorian and Edwardian architecture, including imposing mansions, a castle, churches and public buildings
- a lively cafe and pub scene - thanks to its large student population
- a vigorous cultural centre with a superb museum and modern art gallery
- rewarding walks only a few minutes drive from the heart of the city
- a great variety of outdoor recreation, from first class golf courses to scuba diving
- beautiful beaches and swimming at Moana Indoor Pool or St Clair outdoor heated, salt-water pool
- New Zealand's first Botanic Gardens, including an extensive aviary, and a Town Belt of impressive native and exotic trees girding the city
- Taieri Gorge Railway adventure - more than a train trip
- special attractions such as the iconic Speight's Brewery
- wonderful wildlife and heritage sites of Otago Peninsula (see separate section)

## HERITAGE

Fighting amongst Scottish Presbyterians in the 1840s led to the establishment of the Free Church of Scotland. One of its ministers was the **Reverend Thomas Burns**, nephew of poet Robert Burns. He worked with **Captain William Cargill**, NZ Company agent and Scottish nationalist, to found a new Edinburgh - Dunedin - in the southern hemisphere.

In 1848 the **John Wickliffe** and the **Philip Laing** brought 340 settlers to Otago. Building a settlement on difficult terrain meant hardships for the early pioneers. Most persevered, and, although the Scots were joined later by Irish and English settlers, the Scottish character of the colony prevailed. It was seen not just in the system of free education, established early by the founders, but also in the consumption of whisky - and New Zealand's only distillery.

Today the city celebrates a Scottish week, has a butchery with haggis as a specialty and a shop that makes traditional kilts.

## Gold and Prosperity

When gold was discovered inland at Gabriel's Gully, near Lawrence, in 1861, the character of early Dunedin was transformed. Wealth flowed into the city: prosperous merchants commissioned mansions worthy of their status; splendid churches and ornate, Victorian public buildings reflected the boom times. Dunedin became the 'Commercial Capital of New Zealand' and many national businesses had their start here.

## Town and Gown

Today it's education that enlivens the city. Dunedin nurtures its students, known affectionately as scarfies. They, in turn, appreciate studying in the only place in the country that could be called a university city. Otago University was also the first to offer fellowships to artists, writers and musicians, and the Hocken Library's collection of early New Zealand paintings and manuscripts attracts scholars from far afield.

## MUSEUM

### Otago Museum - 1877

*Open daily (except Good Friday and Christmas Day) 10am - 5pm.*

*Entry by donation, except for the Discovery Gallery which charges an admission fee.*

Don't miss Dunedin's magnificent collection of treasures from the Pacific and around the world, and the new landmark gallery, **Southern Land, Southern People**, opened in 2002.

### Southern Land, Southern People

The new gallery explains 'the origins of Otago's challenging landscape and environment, how people discovered and explored it, how they utilised its natural resources, and how its challenging nature rubbed off on the people in the form of "southern character".'

After entering the gallery under a canoe sculpture and a dome of the southern sky, you follow a timeline, illustrated by superb exhibits. A schist wall, a giant eagle skeleton, a plesiosaur fossil found at Shag Point, Moa's Ark, Maori artefacts, goldmining and farming exhibits, a toilet bowl made by McSkimmings at their Benhar factory - these are just a few of the fascinating displays.

### Other Collections

The museum has a particularly fine collection of ancient Greek pottery and ancient Egyptian artefacts, including a mummy.

Its **Tangata Whenua Gallery** holds a very important collection of Maori carvings from the Ngati Porou meeting house near Hicks Bay, and, closer to home, artefacts

excavated from the 600 year old settlement at the Shag River mouth.

The **Pacific Culture Galleries** display extensive exhibits from Polynesia and Melanesia.

The **Nature Galleries** highlight Otago's natural history; the **Maritime Gallery** has the skeleton of a Fin whale lording it over an impressive collection of models of ships, including the ill-fated Cook Strait ferry, *Wahine*.

A highlight for many visitors amidst a treasure trove is the **Animal Attic**. Make sure you go to the top storey to see this collection of animals displayed as they would have been in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Here, too, you see the splendid timbered ceiling of the Victorian museum.

### Discovery World

Ostensibly for children, it's a hands-on experience to discover the world of science and technology. All those who are children at heart will find it fun.

## WALKS

### ❖ Tunnel Beach - 45 minutes - 1 hour return

*Closed 1 August - 31 October during the lambing season - the walkway crosses private farmland.*

*Turn left off Blackhead Road into Tunnel Beach Road.*

Don't miss this walk: as well as spectacular coastal views, it's of historical and geological interest.

There's quite a steep descent - and climb up again - over cliff tops to the tunnel entrance. As you go downhill, you get great views of sea stacks, rock arches and headlands sculpted by wind and pounding surf.

Steps take you down through the narrow tunnel to a beach strewn with huge sandstone blocks, carved into interesting shapes by the forces of nature. If you visit at high tide, spray reaches the tunnel exit and it's hard to imagine anyone having a picnic here. Yet picnics were the reason for the tunnel's existence.

John Cargill, son of Otago Settlement co-founder Captain William Cargill, had the tunnel dug in the 1870s to give his family access to the beach. An early photo shows a young couple standing at the tunnel exit - he in suit, stiff collar and hat, she wearing a long dress and wide feather-trimmed hat, tied securely with ribbons. We recommend sturdy footwear, and warm clothing!

❖ **Ross Creek Reservoir - 40 minutes return**

*Start at Malvern Street, just after the Leith Valley Touring Park. (If you stay there, the walk starts across the bridge.)*

This walk is a small gem: only a 10 minute drive from the city centre and you are walking through bush filled with birdsong. And there's the bonus of doing a circuit of one of the two remaining 19<sup>th</sup> Century dams still in use.

The track takes you uphill with Ross Creek on one side and an impressive rock face on the other to the reservoir. As you follow the path around it, you can enjoy the surrounding trees and glimpses of the jetty and attractive valve tower. Marker posts dotted around the track are a puzzle: they're connected to orienteering courses in the area.

❖ **Upper Leith Walkway - 40 minutes return**

This walkway, passing beside the Waters of the Leith connects with the Ross Creek Reservoir track. You can start by walking through the Woodhaugh Gardens from George Street, or walk up Duke Street from George Street until you come to the track signs.

❖ **Baldwin Street**

*Travelling north along North Road in North-East Valley, you come to a signpost on your right.*

It claims Baldwin Street as the steepest street in the world. Listed as such in the Guinness Book of Records, the street has a gradient of 1 in 2.86 in its steepest section.

Each February as part of Dunedin's Festival, runners compete in the **Baldwin Street Gutbuster**, a race up and down with a record time of 1 min 56.06 secs. **You** don't have to hurry, and you can have a drink of water at the fountain at the top and a rest on a bench before you descend!

**ARCHITECTURE**

**Olveston - 1904-1906**

*Open daily. Visit by one hour guided tour only. Tours at: 9.30 and 10.45am, 12 noon, 1.30, 2.45 and 4pm. Phone (03) 477-3320 to reserve for a tour.*

Visit this grand mansion designed by leading British architect Sir Ernest George for a trip back to Edwardian times and an insight into the life of wealthy Dunedin businessman, David Theomin. After his death, his daughter Dorothy lived in the house, carefully preserving all its treasures. She bequeathed it to the city of Dunedin.

A visit to the gardens of Olveston is free and allows you to admire the double brick Jacobean-style building with a plaster and Moeraki gravel finish and Oamaru stone facings. Although the exterior has considerable architectural detail, it doesn't prepare you for the wealth of treasures inside.

Your tour takes you to 15 of the 35 rooms. Of these the Great Hall is particularly impressive with its oak staircase made in Britain. The floors, too, covered with Persian rugs, are mostly oak. The furniture is in the style of Sheraton and Chippendale

with Hepplewhite chairs. Adorning the rooms are Oriental ceramics, jade, silver, bronze, brass and ivory pieces, a collection of weapons and many fine paintings. The fascinating kitchen, scullery, butler's pantry and servants' bell call board add another dimension to the story of the everyday lives of the family of a very prosperous early Dunedin merchant.

### Knox Curch - 1876

Another Gothic design by Robert Lawson, it was built for the more liberal Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists. Its outstanding features are a graceful 50m spire (only a few metres less than that of First Church) and a wonderful use of timber in the interior, including a handsome gallery.

## **DUNEDIN - GARDENS**

### Dunedin Botanic Gardens

*Open daily, dawn to dusk.*

*Winter Garden: Alpine House, Information Centre, Cafe and Shop, open 10am - 4pm.*

Opened in 1869, these are the country's oldest botanic gardens and are well worth a visit

There's a great mix of formal gardens and wilder bush-clad slopes. In November, the rhododendron dell in the Upper Gardens is superb and not to be missed! There are more than 3000 rhododendrons in a woodland setting. Also in the upper part of the Gardens are an aviary, native plants, the arboretum and the geographical plant collections. The lower slopes have interesting rock gardens and plenty of seats from where you can enjoy views of the more formal beds, the pond and the fine, mature trees.

### Woodhaugh Gardens

*Open all year. Only a few minutes by car from the centre city. Enter from George Street or Duke Street.*

The Waters of the Leith flow alongside this reserve. It has vast expanses of lawn combined with native forest, including centuries-old kahikatea trees. A duck pond and play areas for children are added attractions for a family picnic, or take a pleasant walk through the bush paths.

### Glenfalloch Woodland Garden

*Portobello Road, Otago Peninsula, 9km from the city.*

The garden is best in spring when its many azaleas and rhododendrons are blooming, but it's a very pleasant spot for morning or afternoon tea or a glass of wine in a setting of mature trees. And there's an historic house for added interest.

Entry by donation.

### Private Gardens

If you're interested in seeing some of Dunedin's splendid private gardens, the Information Centre has a very good brochure giving details of opening times and admission fees.

## **EXCURSION**

### Taieri Gorge Railway

An exciting and memorable rail journey which takes you over the fertile Taieri Plains and through the remote Taieri Gorge to Pukerangi in Central Otago. The spectacularly rugged scenery and the thrill of negotiating several narrow tunnels and high viaducts, combined with an informative commentary on the history of the area, make this a very enjoyable, worthwhile experience.

Daily, except Christmas Day

- In summer, departs Dunedin Railway Station at 2.30pm; returns there at 6.30pm. In late December and early January and on some Sundays there's a morning excursion at 9.30; returns 1.30pm.
- In winter departs Dunedin at 12.30pm; returns 4.30pm.
- Links to a coach that takes you to Queenstown.
- Links to the Middlemarch to Clyde Rail Trail for those who want to do some mountain biking.
- For precise dates and up-to-date fares, see:

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

### Some history

Despite the discovery of gold in the 1860s, roads into Central Otago were almost non-existent and only the most hardy ventured there in wagons. Pioneers started building a railway in 1879. They lived and worked in harsh conditions, building the track by pick, shovel and dynamite. It took 42 years to complete, with the last section between Alexandra and Cromwell being opened in 1921.

Eventually roads were built inland, taking passengers and freight away from the railway. In 1980 the Cromwell to Clyde section had to be closed because of the new Clyde Dam and in 1990 the NZ Railways officially closed the Central Otago line. The Dunedin City Council and citizens combined to raise funds to buy the line through to Middlemarch and, later that year, the 60km Taieri Gorge became New Zealand's longest private railway and one of Dunedin's most popular attractions.

### The Journey

You travel in refurbished vintage carriages of the 1920s or new air-conditioned, purpose-built, panoramic carriages. Snacks and alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are available.

There are several stops en route to enjoy the scenery, to take photos, and to look more closely at the viaducts with their impressive iron and stone structures. Riding on the outside viewing platforms, looking far down at the tea-coloured Taieri River as it wends its way through a gorge that is mostly inaccessible by road, is also an exhilarating experience. Sometimes it's possible to ride with the engine driver, too.

The excellent commentary really adds to the journey. At the end of it, you've gained a fascinating insight into railway history, goldmining, farming and the determination of Otago pioneers, engineers and citizens.

### Port Chalmers

12km from Dunedin, Otago's deep water port has historic associations: the country's first shipment of frozen meat was exported from here in 1882; Sir Robert Falcon Scott, remembered by a memorial erected in 1914, and two other famous Antarctic explorers, Shackleton and Byrd, stopped here; 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings - Holy Trinity 1876, St Mary's Star of the Sea 1878 and Iona Presbyterian Church 1883 are notable early churches, and Chicks Hotel survives from about 1864.

## DUNEDIN - PICNIC/BEACHES/ PARKS

### St Clair Beach

A popular beach for surfers - even on cold winter days - and for families in summer. At the south end of the beach is the St Clair Saltwater Pool. Recent refurbishments should ensure this heated pool retains its popularity with locals and visitors.

### St Kilda Beach

St Kilda Beach is a continuation of St Clair's. There's good parking overlooking the Pacific Ocean and an extensive playground for children. The Otago Railway and Locomotive Society operates steam trains in adjacent Kettle Park at weekends and public holidays.

### Brighton Beach

A small, attractive beach. You can hire boats at weekends for a paddle on the stream flowing into the sea here.

### Taieri Mouth Beach

A long sandy beach stretching south from the mouth of the Taieri river. Fishermen still go to sea from Taieri Mouth, continuing a tradition started in the 1840s when two whaling stations operated from Moturata Island, the island close to the river mouth.

### Aramoana

A small collection of mainly holiday cribs at the northern end of the harbour. The beach is good for swimming and surfing, and a big sand hill provides fun for children.

Aramoana gained national prominence twice in recent years. Formidable protest stopped a proposal to build an

aluminium smelter there.

The tiny settlement will also go down in our country's history as the site of a massacre when 13 people were gunned down in 1990. A memorial column remembers those who died.

### Long Beach

Rock climbers enjoy perfecting their techniques on the cliffs here. Exciting stuff if you don't look down at the sea swirling below you!

### Murdering Beach

A pleasant beach despite its name which recalls conflict between Maori and sealers in 1817. The sealers wiped out an entire village as a reprisal for the deaths of three of their men.

## PICNICS

### Chingford Park

This park among the houses of North-East Valley was once part of the farm of successful businessman, P.C. Neill. He rode a horse to his office everyday, followed by a bulldog named Caesar.

The park has sweeping lawns and some fine trees, but only the substantial stables remain of his estate's buildings.

### Bethunes Gully

*Signposted off Norwood Street in North-East Valley.*

An open grassed area surrounded by bush, with a small stream. The Mt Cargill Walk starts here.

### Woodhaugh Gardens

see. under Gardens.

## Lake Waihola

*40 km S of Dunedin on SH1*

A reserve on the lake shore has several picnic tables. It's a popular place for rowing, power boating and water skiing.

## Carey's Bay

A small settlement on the north side of the Otago Harbour, a few kilometres beyond Port Chalmers. Its old pub and the fishing boats tied up at the jetty make this a picturesque spot.

### **SPORT/ADVENTURE**

Dunedin with its harbour, beaches and hills offers a great choice of easily accessible outdoor recreation.

- **Golf**

Chisholm Park and St Clair Golf Clubs welcome visitors. Both courses have spectacular coastal views.

- **Surfing**

St Clair, St Kilda and Smalls Beaches and Aramoana.

- **Canoe/Kayak**

Otago Harbour and Andersons Bay Estuary.

- **Mountain Biking**

Signal Hill; Otago Peninsula (Karetai Road, Buskin Road, Paradise Road).

- **Windsurfing**

Ravensbourne Yacht Club; North End Rowing Club;

Vauxhall Yacht Club; Macandrew Bay.

- **Yachting**

Otago Harbour

- **Rock Climbing**

Long Beach; Mihiwaka; Scott's Memorial (Port Chalmers); Regent Theatre Climbing Wall.

- **Diving**

Aramoana Mole; Cape Saunders; Seal Point; Harington Point.

- **Archery**

Chingford Park

- **Horse Riding**

Hare Hill Horse Treks Deborah Bay (near Port Chalmers)

[www.horseriding-dunedin.co.nz](http://www.horseriding-dunedin.co.nz)

Bums'n'Saddles Horse Treks - Green Island Bush Road, Blackhead

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