

## KAIKOURA - WALK

### KAIKOURA PENINSULA WALKS

*The Kaikoura Peninsula is about 5 kms to the south of the town. With the sea on your left, follow the main street until you come to the carpark at the end of the road - you travel along the Esplanade, Avoca Street and Fyffe Quay. There is no public transport to the beginning of the walkway, and you will need to organise transport from South Bay, unless you retrace your steps.*

#### ❖ WALK 1

##### Cliff-top Walk. (Carpark to South Bay) 1-1.5 hours

The track zig-zags up from the carpark. The view from the top of the cliffs is superb: open farmland stretches before you; snow-covered mountains appear to rise up out of the sea; the rugged coastline to north and south is spectacular, and below the cliffs the large tidal platforms chiselled out of soft sandstone by the sea, are home to seals and seabirds.



You can't see whales from the cliffs, but you can observe the progress of the whale-watching catamarans. When they are scarcely moving, you know those on board are watching a whale oxygenating

or feeding. Concentrations of seabirds indicate a feeding frenzy on small fish herded by dolphins or bigger fish.

As you follow the signposts across the cliff tops, watch for evidence of ancient Maori pa sites. The steep cliffs and large flat areas of the peninsula were ideal for fortifications

and lookouts. The pas were built on hilltops and surrounded by heavy stakes driven into the ground and trenches. Today sheep graze on the hillsides, but you can still see where the trenches were dug out.

#### ❖ WALK 2

Shoreline Walk: (Carpark to Whalers Bay) 45 minutes

- (Carpark to South Bay) 1.5 - 2 hours

At **lowtide** you can walk around the base of the cliffs and look closely at the interesting geological formations and the wildlife. Seals rest on the tidal platforms or reefs, which are also popular feeding grounds for red-billed and black-backed gulls, white-fronted terns, oystercatchers, herons and shags. Occasionally, you can see little blue penguins.

At Whalers Bay there is a track to the top of the cliff where early whalers had a lookout. On sighting a whale, they rushed down the track to their boats moored in the bay.

#### ❖ WALK 3

##### Combined Shoreline and Clifftop Walks

Depending on the tide, (always check the time of lowtide beforehand) you can walk along the cliffs one way and return by the shore or vice versa. For a shorter walk, go as far as the Whalers Bay track along the clifftops and return to the carpark by the shore. This gives you the best views.