

BEST WALKS & HIKES

FRANZ JOSEF GLACIER & FOX GLACIER



Roberts Point Track © Geoff Marks

Talk to the friendly and helpful staff at the Department of Conservation in Franz Josef to check on the latest track conditions and weather forecasts.

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LAND SAFETY CODE

Before you head out for your walk, follow these five essential steps for staying safe in Glacier Country to ensure you have a great trip.

1. Choose the right trip for you

Learn about the route and make sure you have the skills for it.

2. Understand the weather

It can change fast. Check the forecast and change your plans if needed.

3. Pack warm clothes and extra food

Prepare for bad weather and an unexpected night out.

4. Share your plans and take ways to get help

Telling a trusted person your trip details and taking a personal locator beacon (PLB) can save your life. Leave a date and time to raise the alarm if you have not returned using the Outdoors Intentions Form.

5. Take care of yourself and each other

Eat, drink and rest, stick with your group and make decisions together.



More information about the code:
<https://www.adventuresmart.nz/land/the-land-safety-code/>

BEST SHORT WALKS →

Glacier Country has lots of short walks suitable for all ages and abilities. Here are some of our favourites with some great photo points.



Minehaha Walk (Fox Glacier)
1.2km, 20min loop

This delightful short walk follows a stream through the rainforest. It is a great introduction to the forest for children. Glow worms can be seen in the forest after dark, remember to take a torch.



Moraine Walk (Fox Glacier)
4km, 1h 30min return via same track

An easy, short side trip off the main Fox Glacier South Side walkway/cycleway through lush rainforest takes you over ancient glacial moraines. Continue up the main cycleway for views of Fox Glacier.



Lake Matheson (Fox Glacier)
4.4km, 1h 30min loop (viewpoint 45min return)

One of NZ's best short walks. An easy track through the forest leads to spectacular mountain views which are often reflected in Lake Matheson. Dawn and dusk offer the best chance to capture photographs of the reflections.



Peters Pool 1.1km, 25mins return and, Sentinel Rock 900m, 20min return (Franz Josef)

Peters Pool provides amazing reflective views of the Franz Josef Glacier valley and mountains. It is a short, easy walk on a wide track, a great option for children. The short climb to Sentinel Rock, provides impressive views of the glacial valley and Waiho River.



Callery Gorge Walk (Franz Josef)
5.2km, 1h 20min return via same track

The crystal clear, blue waters of Callery Gorge make this a must do walk for photographers. Impressive views of the gorge await those who reach the bridge at the end. This is an easy walk starting from the town centre of Franz Josef.



Lake Wombat (Franz Josef)
3.8km, 1h 30min return via same track

This short, easy walk on a fern-lined track leads through lush rainforest to the idyllic Lake Wombat - it is a perfect option for families with children. This walk offers good opportunities for bird watching if you stop quietly along the way.



Ökārīto Trig Walk (Ökārīto)
4.2km, 1h 30min return via same track

This walk is a must do for photographers! The panorama of the Southern Alps including Aoraki Mount Cook is probably the best in NZ, taking in views of Westland Tai Poutini National Park from the mountains across extensive rainforest to the lagoons and beaches of the coast.

HALF DAY WALKS ↓

Allow up to half a day for these walks. They require moderate fitness but are on well-formed and easy to follow trails.



Three Mile Track / Ökārīto Coastal Walk (Ökārīto)
9.8km, 3h 30min loop

This lovely half day walk includes a diverse variety of landscapes from native forest to wetlands. If tides allow, a section also follows the rugged coastline. A side trip to the viewpoint at the Ökārīto Trig is highly recommended for panoramic views of the Southern Alps.
Note: Walking along the beach to or from the Three Mile Lagoon is only recommended at low tide. Check tide times at the car park.



Lake Gault (Fox Glacier)
8km, 3hours

Another great walk for photographers. This newly built track climbs gently through ancient podocarp forest and provides panoramic views of Aoraki Mount Cook and the Southern Alps which, on a clear and calm day, are perfectly mirrored in Lake Gault. Early morning is best for the reflected views.



Gillespies Beach Walks (Fox Glacier)
Various: 500m to 6.8km, 5mins to 3h 30min

A visit to Gillespies Beach offers a scenic drive, lovely views of the Southern Alps, historic mining remnants and coastal walks. The Galway Beach Tramping Track (6.8km return) follows the Miners Tunnel Track through the forest and leads to a remote beach. In winter, there is a seal colony at Galway Beach.

FULL DAY HIKES ↓

These hikes are for experienced and well-equipped trampers only. Good fitness is required and the tracks can be on steep and challenging terrain.



Roberts Point (Franz Josef)
11km or 12.3km, 5h - 5h 30min, return via same track

This is one of the region's best day walks with spectacular views of Franz Josef Glacier surrounded by sheer rock walls, waterfalls and mountain peaks. The track also includes a series of impressive swing bridges and an exciting cantilevered walkway around a cliff face. The track is well marked and maintained but is steep in places and very slippery when wet.



Alex Knob (Franz Josef)
17.2km, 8hours return via the same track

The track to Alex Knob climbs steadily from lowland forest through sub-alpine scrub to alpine meadows and herb fields, providing superb views of glaciers, mountains and coastal landscapes at various viewpoints along the way. It is recommended for experienced trampers only.



Copland Track to Welcome Flat (Fox Glacier)
18km, 7hours one way (overnight tramp) Return via the same track.

The hike along the Copland valley to Welcome Flat Hut is a popular overnight return trip for visitors to Glacier Country. The track lets you experience Westland Tai Poutini National Park's spectacular forest, river and mountain scenery. The natural hot pools at Welcome Flat are an added attraction for weary trampers. Bookings are required for Welcome Flat Hut.

