



WEST COAST TREETOP WALK AND TOWER ZIPLINE

INTRODUCTION

- Treetop Walk, Café and Retail since December 2012
- Tower Zipline since December 2022



LOCATION

15 MINUTES SOUTH OF HOKITIKA

45 MINUTES SOUTH OF GREYMOUTH
TRAIN STATION

90 MINUTES NORTH OF FRANZ JOSEF

200 MINUTES EAST OF
CHRISTCHURCH AIRPORT

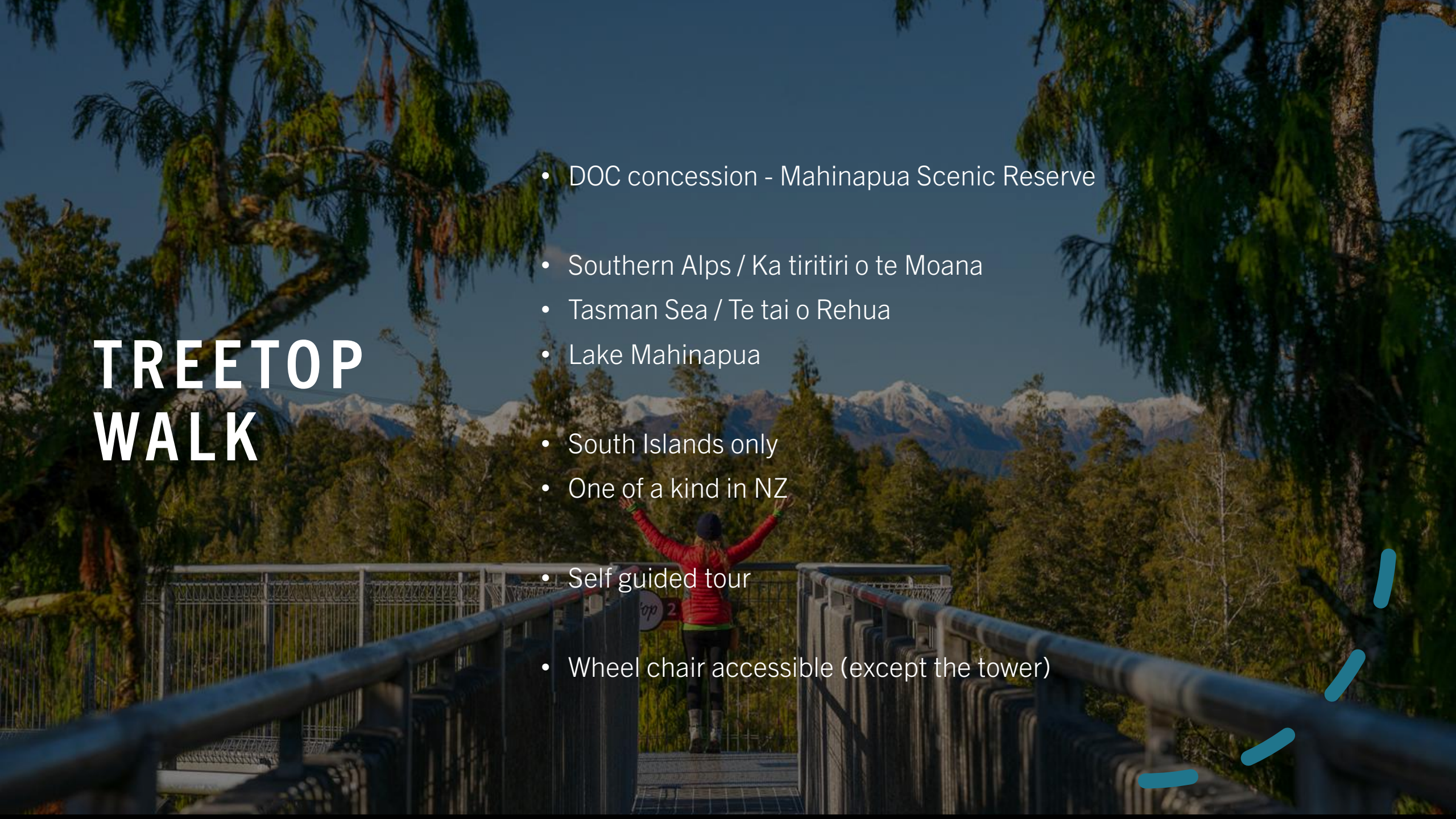


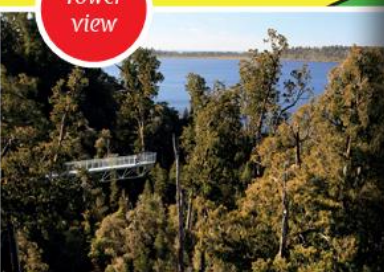
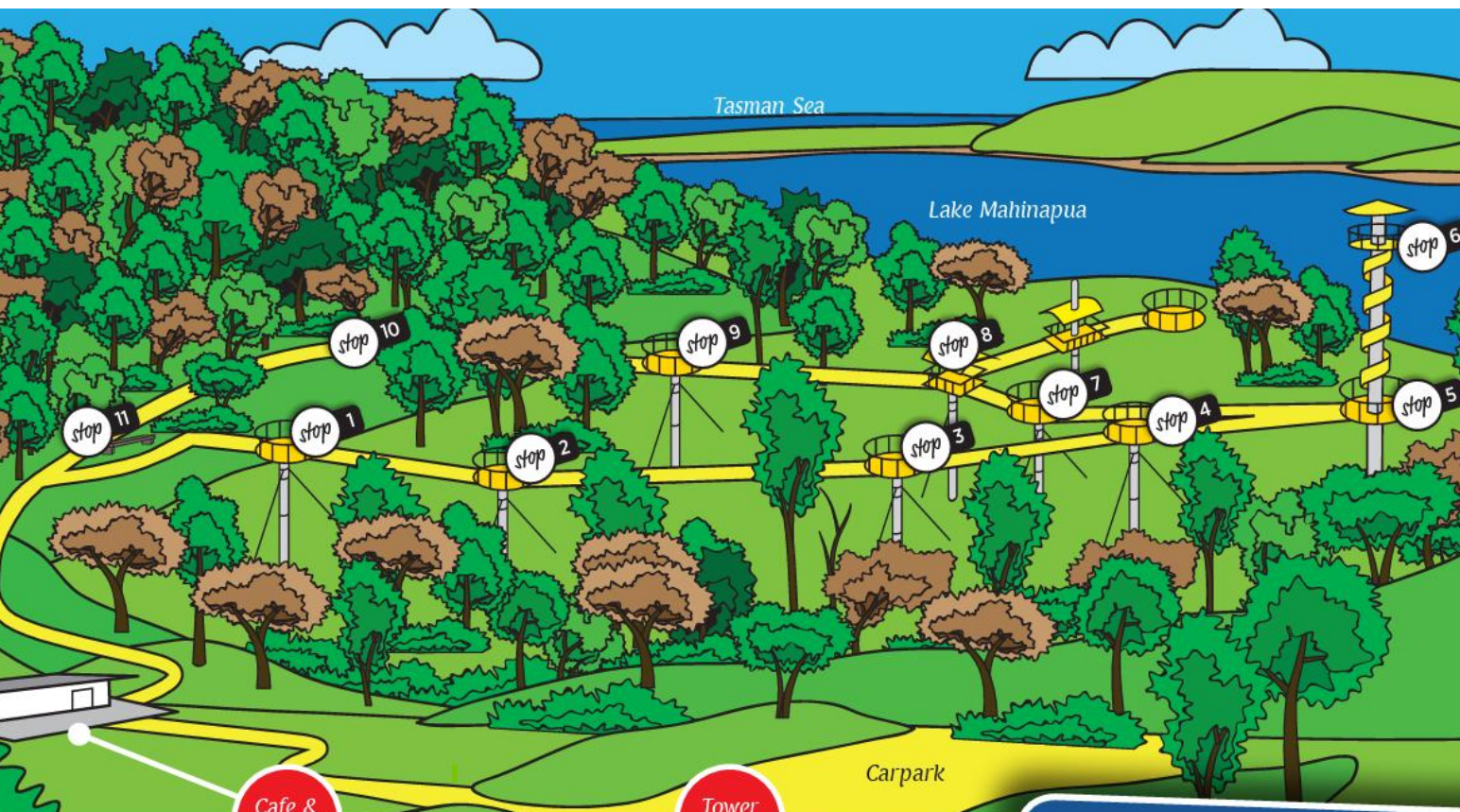
WEST NEW ZEALAND
COAST
UNTAMED NATURAL WILDERNESS



TREETOP WALK

- DOC concession - Mahinapua Scenic Reserve
- Southern Alps / Ka tiritiri o te Moana
- Tasman Sea / Te tai o Rehua
- Lake Mahinapua
- South Islands only
- One of a kind in NZ
- Self guided tour
- Wheel chair accessible (except the tower)





West Coast
treetop walk & café
HOKITIKA - NEW ZEALAND

Ancient forests in a New Land

The forests you see before you contain plants related to some of the earliest species to colonise the Earth. These temperate broadleaf forests are dominated by the giant Podocarp trees that surround you. Under the forest canopy native ferns, mosses, bromeliads and bryophytes, all of which are very ancient in origin. New Zealand/Aotearoa has been isolated in the Pacific Ocean ever since this land broke away from the supercontinent Gondwana about 85 million years ago. The primitive species about have been evolving in isolation over time. Author and biologist Jared Diamond refers to New Zealand as 'the nearest approach to life on another planet'. More modern flowering plant species have made their way to these isolated islands mainly on the wind blowing across from the giant landmass of Australia.

Regeneration of forest

Looking to your right (towards the mountains) there are a lot of smaller trees which are the young versions of the larger Podocarp trees you see around you. They start with a conical shape, very much like a traditional Christmas tree. As they get older, they will shed the lower branches and have long straight trunks with a crown of greenery forming the top of the canopy of the forest. These forest giants were a treasure for loggers as they had long lengths of timber with no lower branches, which were great to mill and sell. The wood is also of excellent quality, particularly the Rimu (*Dicranium cupressinum*) which makes up many of the wooden buildings in New Zealand built before the 1920's. Logging of these trees has all but ceased and they are now seen as a taonga (treasure) and are protected.

Miro and Kereru

Many trees rely on the birds to help them spread around the forest. The Miro tree (*Phorastylis leucocarpa*) in front of you here has very large crimson fruit in autumn and relies on the wood pigeon or kereru (*Henicopus leucogaster*) to eat them and then distribute the seeds throughout the forest. The kereru, notable for its noisy wing-beat and striking plumage is the only New Zealand bird that can eat a large fruit like this and also pass it through their digestive system, so the seed tree and the kereru mutually benefit each other. Forests all over the world are full of relationships like these, without one the other will struggle to survive.

Orchids in the treetops

New Zealand/Aotearoa has many orchids but most people have never seen one (or not aware of it if they have). They are usually small plants with little flowers and are often growing in the tops of the trees and rocky outcrops. This treetop walkway offers a unique opportunity to see these special little orchids. The Easter orchid (*Isotria medeoloides*) flowers in autumn and has a rich perfume that fills the air around. A close relative of the Easter orchid is the hawkei or hanging line orchid (*Isotria medeoloides*) which has cream to yellow flowers. There are also Spotted orchids or Pukapuka (*Winkia caribbeana*) in these treetops, which flower in summer to early autumn.

Lichens, mosses and ferns

The mosses and ferns you can see in the treetops and the forest floor in this area are very prevalent throughout New Zealand/Aotearoa forests. They are primitive and have very ancient breeding systems with no seeds but spore instead. Most mosses thrive in a moist environment without too much drying sunlight, which means they prefer the forest floor. The Lichens (even as a whitish green plant-like mass growing on rocks, up trees or on the ground) are an interesting group of species. They are a mix of fungi, algae and sometimes cyanobacteria, all working together to make a kind of hybrid that lives in very harsh places few others will grow in.

Mountains to the sea

From the top of the Hokitika Tower you can see both the mountains to the sea. The mountains to the east are the Southern Alps, formed from the collision of the Pacific Plate to the east and the Indo-Australian Plate to the west. These plates collide in the South Island creating these stunning mountains. In the last 100,000 years, there have been a number of glaciations, which have helped shape this landscape. Looking north from Hokitika is a basin, undoubtedly a deposit left by a retreating glacier called a lateral moraine. This landscape is filled with evidence of a large glaciation, which formed lakes, valleys and hills as these glaciers flowed like rivers of ice, carving the landscape as they went. The Tasman Sea is a wide and windy place with large waves pounding northwards at its shore. As the sediments are washed down the rivers, they are then channelled and tumbled again until they are sand which gets washed northwards up the coast to be deposited on Farewell Spit at the northwest tip of the South Island.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a word you may often hear but its importance is paramount in a forest such as this. The old rotting trees in this area offer food sources for insects, birds and even bacteria in the ever-changing process of life and death. The forest floor has as much diversity (perhaps more) than the canopy above. The insects that live in the forest floor provide food for many birds including the kiwi (*Apteryx*) which probes the ground for worms and other insects with its long beak. New Zealand/Aotearoa has many species like weka, robins and tui that live on the forest floor's insects.

The Treetop Walkway Structure

Work began on the Treetop Walkway structure in July 2012 and doors opened in December of that year. The steel structure was prefabricated in Australia in two months and brought to Hokitika in steel parts where it was re-assembled. Amazingly in only six weeks, 400m² of concrete was used in the construction so the structure can withstand the wildest weather the West Coast can throw at it. With over 15,000 bolts used to put the structure together, this engineering masterpiece was designed to move with the wind and be as solid as a rock. The Hokitika Tower has 107 steps to reach an impressive 47 metres, which provides a spectacular view of nature's forest, mountains, lakes and forest.

The Evergreen Canopy Rainforest

This temperate broadleaf rainforest has three main tiers or levels. The evergreen canopy that is around 20-30 metres high consists mainly of the tall Podocarp trees you see around you. Below this is a sub-canopy at around 10-15 metres with many smaller forest species such as Kauri (*Agathis robusta*), Broadleaf (*Libocedrus*), and Westland *Giant* (*Quintinia*) dominating the level with tree ferns (from the *Dicksonia* and *Cyathea* genus) often sitting just below this level. Mosses and ground ferns dominate the forest floor although there are a number of other plants that thrive in this low light environment as well as young Podocarp trees, which benefit when protected from the direct sunlight.

The West Coast Rainforest

This area is known for its high rainfall and allows the temperate broadleaf rainforest to thrive as an ecosystem. The wettest rain gauge in New Zealand sits around 30km inland from here in the Corry River Valley where in 1997 they recorded 12.4 metres of rain over a 12 month period. As air blows across the Tasman Sea on the westerly winds, it picks up liquid through evaporation off the ocean surface. When the moisture laden air reaches the western slopes of the Southern Alps, the air is forced upwards and it cools which causes it to release its moisture as rain.

Epiphytes

Epiphytes are trendy hangers on, using the larger trees as a ladder to the sunlight in the canopy. There are many varieties of this phenomenon such as *Asplenium* (*Asplenium*), and *Kiwifruit* (*Phorastylis leucocarpa*). Right through the treetops you can see germinating ideas (*Clusia*), mosses, orchids and many others. Botanists studying epiphytes in the South Island have identified an incredible diversity of these parking plants. Epiphytes are different from parasites which tap in to the nutrients of their host and can potentially kill them over a period of time.

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ZIPLINE

By The Numbers



425m Length:

Experience the thrill of New Zealand's only dual zipline.



60+ km/hr Speed:

Feel the wind as you fly through the air.



47m High:

Launch from a breathtaking 15 storeys above the ground.



45 Second Ride:

Expect pure exhilaration from start to finish.



Dual Zipline:

Share the excitement side-by-side with a friend.





RETAIL PRICE STRUCTURE (TO 31/03/26)



Customer Type	Treetop Walk	Tower Zipline (Includes Treetop Walk)
Adult	\$39	\$120
Child (5-18)	\$21	\$95
Senior (60+)	\$35	\$110
Student	\$35	\$110
Family/Group	\$105 (2 Adults and 2 Children)	\$395 (Any 4 people)
Under 5	Free	Childrens price (Must be 30kg)



CONTACT US



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Website

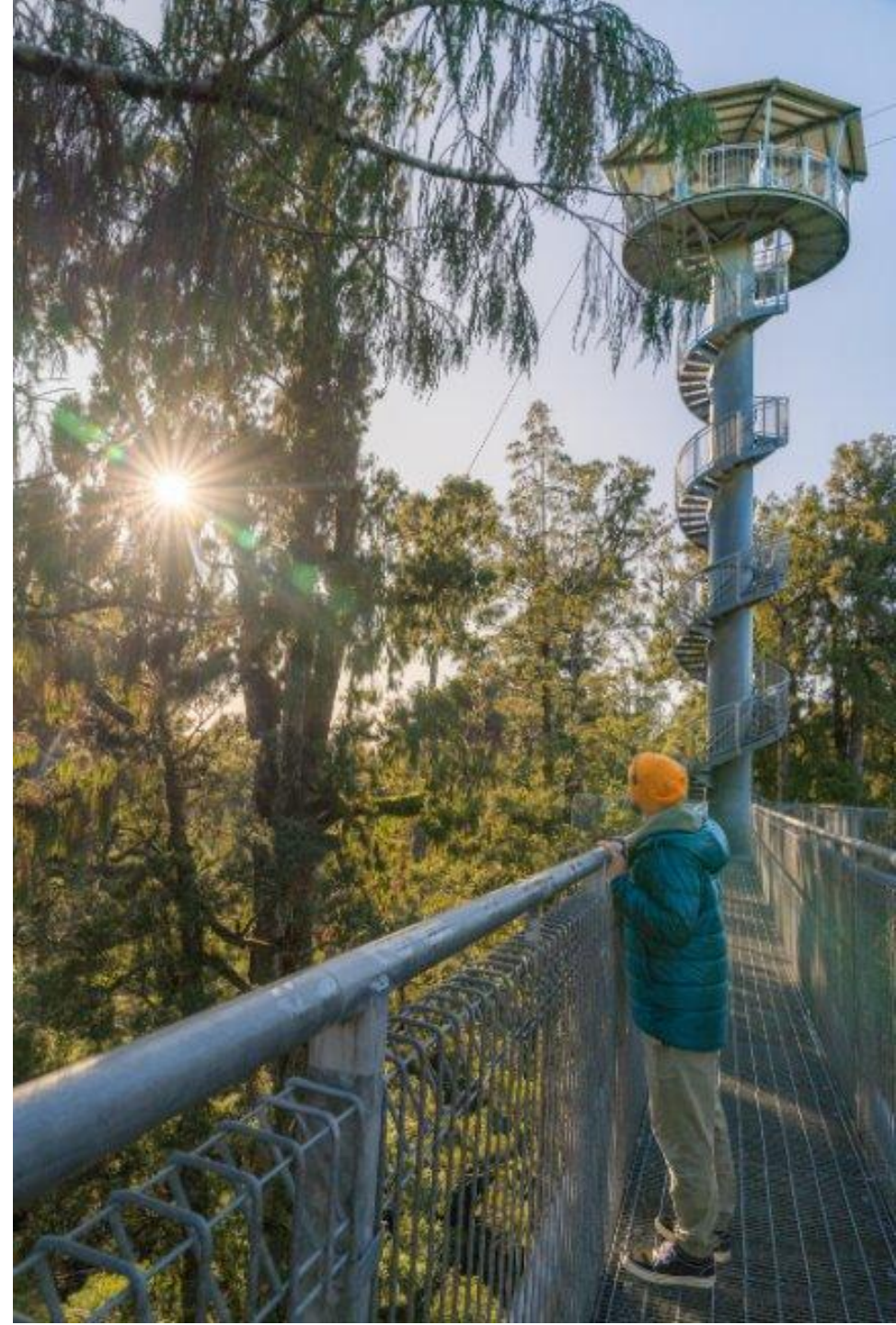
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Q & A

