



PRESS RELEASE



DISCOVER NEW ZEALAND'S LANDSCAPES SHOWCASED IN THE HOBBIT TRILOGY

Experience the real Middle-earth as the final film, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*, premieres in London on 1st December

The final film of Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit* Trilogy, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*, premieres in London on 1st December 2014. The film, a production of New Line Cinema and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures (MGM), will be released in the UK on 12th December, from Warner Bros. Pictures. New Zealand was the sole filming location for *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* Trilogies, with over 150 locations used across the country and numerous ways for visitors to experience them, including newly launched experiences at Weta Workshop and new evening tours of Hobbiton.

The final film will also feature more epic New Zealand landscapes, including the beautiful backdrops of Lake Pukaki in the heart of the South Island.

Last year, 13 per cent of international visitors took part in a Hobbit experience - from scenic flights over Lake Pukaki in the South Island to hiking and cycling tours through Mount Ruapehu in the North Island. Tourism New Zealand now reveals the top ways to experience the Trilogy locations, whether you're a hardcore Hobbit fan or not.



Head to the Skies over 'Lake-town' - Lake Pukaki, Mt Cook, South Island - experience one of the film locations used in *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*

Lake Pukaki is a shimmering blue jewel set into the South Island's grand alpine playground - an iconic New Zealand landscape of high mountain peaks, glacier fed alpine lakes and golden tussocks stretched beneath an endless sky. Peter Jackson used a set replica of Lake Pukaki as the setting for

For further information and images please contact Paul Charles / Louise Ferrall / Ollie Druttman / Sarah Rigler at Perowne Charles Communications

+44 (0) 20 7792 8884
newzealand@verypcc.com

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'Lake-town' in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*, but used the actual location for the final film, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*.

Experience the reality: One of the best ways to experience the majestic landscape is on scenic flights that offer an unending panorama of mountains, lakes, glaciers and the Tasman Sea on the rugged West Coast and the Canterbury Plains fringed by the surging Pacific Ocean. There are also options for landings on glaciers and snow, or cross country tours by 4WD and Argo, and glacier exploring by boat. The iconic Alps to Ocean cycle trail starts in Aoraki and travels 300km to the coastal town of Oamaru. Along with shorter walks, the southern edge of Lake Pukaki forms one section of Te Araroa - The Long Pathway, a walking trail that travels the length of New Zealand. Other outdoor activities include kayaking, mountain biking, skiing, horse trekking and hiking. Local waterways are popular for salmon and trout fishing.

Activity Idea: Take a scenic heli flight over the region for the ultimate aerial views. Departing Twizel, the Alpine Express 25 minute heli flight will land you amongst the jewels of the Southern Alps with spectacular views over Lake Pukaki and the Mackenzie Basin. A 25 minute flight costs from NZ\$265 per person with The Helicopter Line. www.helicopter.co.nz

Useful Websites: www.mtcooknz.com
www.christchurch.org.nz

Hobbiton - New Evening Dinner Tours now launched

The Hobbiton Movie Set in the North Island's Matamata has grown to become one of New Zealand's number one tourist attraction. Hobbiton Movie Set tours are now taking the experience to a new level as they bring Hobbiton 'to life' after dark with new evening dinner tours. Hobbit holes and key landmarks throughout The Shire, including the Party Tree and Green Dragon Inn, are now wired with power and a mesmerising lightshow can also be viewed from some iconic locations.

Activity idea: Enjoy a Hobbiton Evening Dinner Tour at dusk with a guided tour of The Shire recounting details of how the movie set was created. The tour concludes at The Green Dragon Inn where guests can enjoy a beverage from the Hobbit Southfarthing range before being treated to a banquet feast fit for a Hobbit. After dinner, guests will re-join their guide for a walk along the illuminated trails with authentic Hobbit lanterns. The Evening Dinner Tour starts from NZ\$175 per adult and NZ\$100 per child. For more information visit www.hobbitontours.com

New experiences at Wellington's Weta Workshop - from

chainmaille to blood making...

Weta Workshop is a multiple Academy Award-winning conceptual design and manufacturing facility in Wellington, best known for the company's design and effects work on *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* Trilogies. Weta Workshop has launched a selection of tours giving visitors a unique, behind-the-scenes glimpse at Peter Jackson's work.

Activity ideas: The **Learn the Trade package** offers Tolkien fans the chance to learn how to make Chainmaille, lightweight chains and jewellery that were designed for the cast of *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* Trilogies, with a souvenir to take home at the end. Learn the Trade (approx 45 minutes) costs from NZ\$34 per person. For true fans of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* films, Weta Workshop has launched a **Luxury Private Experience**, giving groups of two to 12 guests a personal tour by a senior Workshop artist. Starting with a buffet of locally sourced cuisine, guests will then be given a private one-hour tour with exclusive insight into the workshop and a chance to look at the day-to-day workings. Guests will then have the choice to join three workshops such as **Model Making, Sculpting, Blood Making and Chainmaille** or three presentations including **Design Demonstration, Weapons Presentation, Movement Coaching or a Make-up and Prosthetics Demonstration**. A Luxury Private Experience (approx 4.5 hours) costs from NZ\$10,000 per group, up to 12 guests. For more information visit www.wetaworkshop.com

Ski hike and bike through 'Hidden Bay' - Turoa, Ohakune, North Island

Turoa – a popular ski area high on the flanks of the active volcano Mount Ruapehu is embedded in a Dual World Heritage Site in the North Island's great Central Plateau. A place of raw beauty and mystery, steeped in ancient legends, Māori lore and geological wonders, Peter Jackson chose this rugged terrain to depict Hidden Bay – the entrance to The Lonely Mountain in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*, and the watchful eyes of the giant craggy bust of Thrór. Jackson also chose the ski resort town of Ohakune to feature in *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* as the outskirts of Hobbiton.

Experience the Reality: The North Island's main driving route passes directly through this region and Tongariro National Park is a year-round tourist destination – attracting skiers and snowboarders in the winter season to the Mt Ruapehu ski areas of Turoa and Whakapapa, and walkers and hikers, mountain climbers and mountain bikers who roam the many well-formed trails in the warmer months.

Activity idea: The Mountain Bike Station is one of Ruapehu's premium activity providers with a reputation for providing high adrenaline tours. Try the Mountain to Sea Cycleway Tour, a five-

day mountain bike trip taking bikers from high on the slopes of Mount Ruapehu to the beach at North Mole in Castlecliff, Whanganui, experiencing the best trails of New Zealand. Tours range from NZ\$25 – NZ\$2,000.

www.mountainbikestation.co.nz

Useful Websites:

www.tongarirocrossing.org.nz / www.nzcycletrail.com

www.newzealand.com/travel/media/features/maori-culture/maori-culture_new-zealands-sacred-mountains_feature.cfm

Make like Dwarves in Barrels - Pelorus River, Marlborough, South Island

Pelorus River, half way between Blenheim and Nelson in the north of the South Island, is the setting for the barrel escape scene in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*. Peter Jackson chose the setting for its solid rock shoreline surrounded by forest with a sandy beach for the barrels to come ashore.

Experience the Reality? Visitors can swap barrels for kayaks on a guided kayak tour down the river, which includes stops at waterfalls, streams and the filming location itself, with the opportunity to camp overnight in the lush native forest just 100 metres from where the filming took place.

Activity Idea: Pelorus Eco Adventures offers river canoe trips through the filming locations in inflatable tandem canoes. From \$85 per person for a 3 ½ hour journey.

www.kayak-newzealand.com

Useful Website:

www.newzealand.com/travel/media/topic-index/nz-regions/marlborough.cfm

Get adventurous - Paradise, Queenstown, South Island

The epic landscapes of New Zealand's vast Southern Lakes region are a cinematographer's dream. Arcadia Station – a working high country farm in Paradise Valley near Queenstown – was chosen as the setting for Beorn's House in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*. The region can also be credited with providing the most film locations for *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* Trilogies, with scenes including Bilbo and The Company's quest after departing Rivendell in *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*.

Experience the reality: Glenorchy's proximity to the adventure capital of New Zealand Queenstown means there is a wealth of activities on offer. Next to Arcadia Station, popular Dart Stables runs horse treks through locations including where Boromir met his doom at Amon Hen in *The Lord of the Rings*

Trilogy.

Activity idea: Dart Stables offers The Ride of The Rings tour, a 1 and ½ hour horse ride taking visitors to actual filming locations from *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* in Paradise, 22 km north of Glenorchy. The Ride of The Rings package starts from NZ \$175 per person with return transport from Queenstown. www.dartstables.com

Useful Websites: www.glenorchy.net.nz
www.queenstownnz.co.nz

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ABOUT THE HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES

From Academy Award-winning filmmaker Peter Jackson comes *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*, from a screenplay by Fran Walsh & Philippa Boyens & Peter Jackson & Guillermo del Toro, based on the novel by J.R.R. Tolkien. Jackson also produced the film, together with Carolynne Cunningham, Zane Weiner and Fran Walsh. The executive producers are Alan Horn, Toby Emmerich, Ken Kamins and Carolyn Blackwood, with Philippa Boyens and Eileen Moran serving as co-producers.

New Line Cinema and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Present a Wingnut Films Production, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*. As with the first two films in the Trilogy, *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* and *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug*, the final film is a production of New Line Cinema and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures (MGM), with New Line managing production. Warner Bros. Pictures is handling worldwide theatrical distribution, with select international territories as well as all international television distribution being handled by MGM. www.thehobbit.net