

# Itinerary for The Catlins, Southland

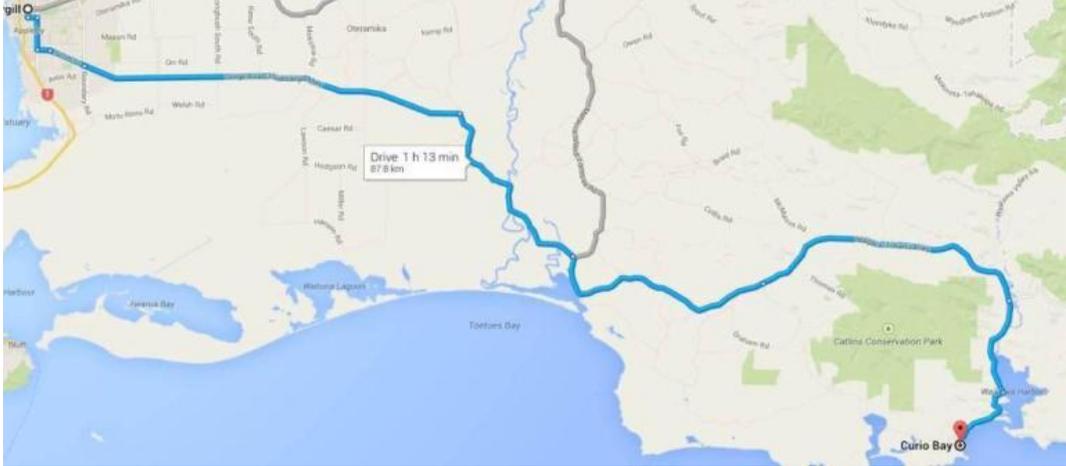
[www.southlandnz.com](http://www.southlandnz.com)  
[www.catlins.org.nz](http://www.catlins.org.nz)  
[www.southernscenicroute.co.nz](http://www.southernscenicroute.co.nz)



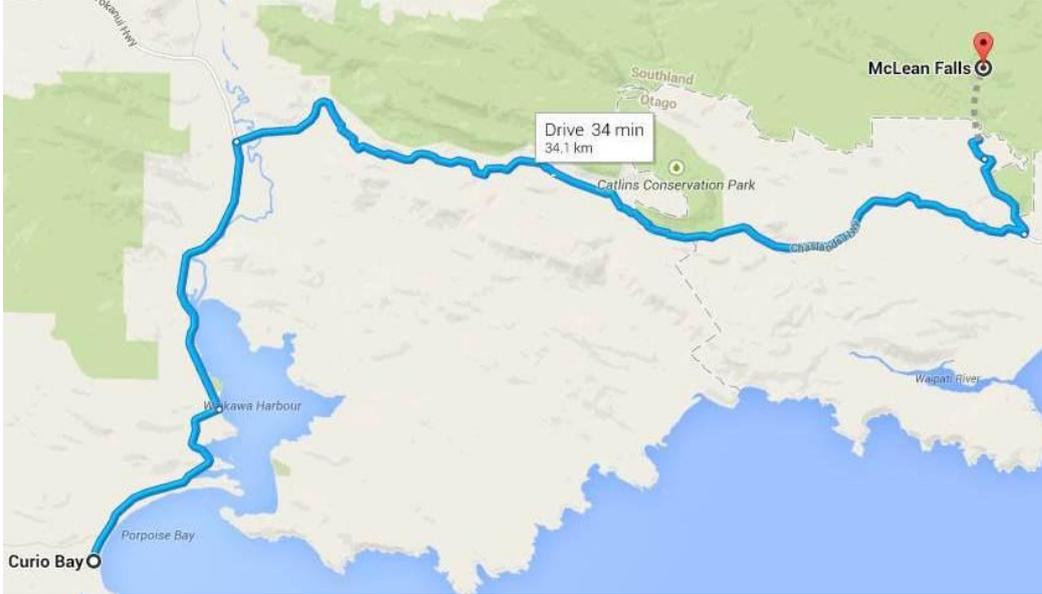
**Southland**   
New Zealand

**Venture Southland**  
Enterprise, Tourism & Community Development

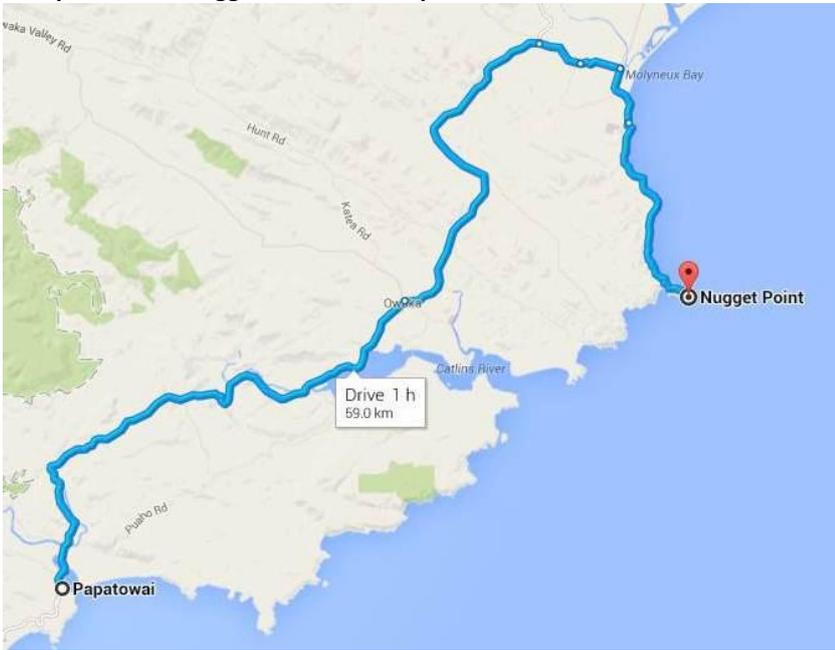
**Please note: This itinerary starts in Invercargill. If you are travelling from Dunedin, please complete these activities in reverse.**

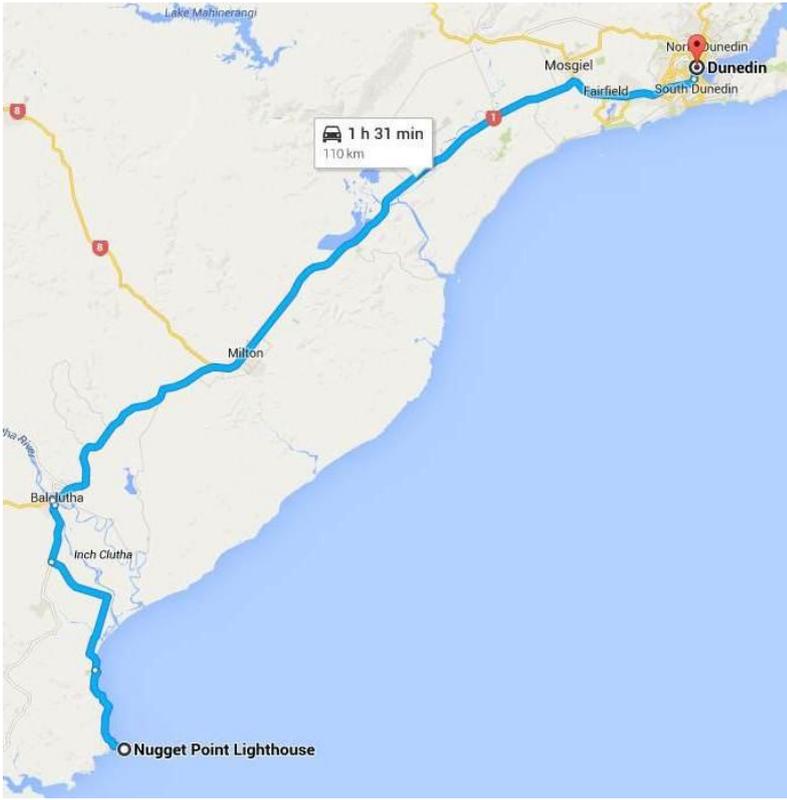
	<p>We recommend you take your time to explore The Catlins region. If you are looking for accommodation suggestions please visit <a href="http://www.southlandnz.com">www.southlandnz.com</a> or our <a href="#">Southland Trade Manual</a></p>
	<p><b>Drive from Invercargill to Waikawa and Curio Bay.</b>  <b>The trip should take about 1 hour, 15 minutes.</b></p> 
<p><b>Visit</b></p>	<p><b>Curio Bay Fossilised Forest</b></p> <p>The fossilised remains of an ancient forest is exposed at Curio Bay during low tide. This is one of the most extensive and least disturbed examples of a Jurassic fossil forest in the world and stretches about 20 kms from Curio Bay south west to Slope Point.</p> <p>180 million years ago the Curio Bay area was a broad forested coastal floodplain. During this time, the middle Jurassic period, New Zealand was part of the ancient super-continent known as Gondwana. The forest predominantly consisted of trees forming a low canopy and undergrowth dominated by ferns.</p> <p>Over time, massive sheet floods of volcanic debris are believed to have destroyed the forest. In the millions of years since, the sediments were buried deeply and eventually turned the wood to rock. In some places fern fronds and leaves have been preserved as fossils within the mudstone rocks.</p> <p>Curio Bay is great for viewing yellow eyed penguins, which can be spotted from a safe distance at dusk and dawn.</p>



<p><b>Suggested lunch/dinner spot</b></p>	<p><b>Niagara Falls Café</b>  An oasis in The Catlins. Set in a historic Niagara school house, enjoy delicious New Zealand cuisine and wine. During summer the café is open for breakfast, lunch and extensive a' la carte evening dining. Specials include whitebait, Bluff oysters, green lipped mussels, salmon, venison and a dessert board to die for! The Gallery has locally produced arts and crafts. Families, groups and functions welcome.</p> <p>Contact: Laura and Sue Thompson  256 Niagara Waikawa Road  Niagara  Tel: +64 3 246 8577  Email: <a href="mailto:niagarafallscafe@xtra.co.nz">niagarafallscafe@xtra.co.nz</a></p>
	<p><b>Drive from Curio Bay to McLean Falls. The trip should take about 35 minutes.</b></p> 
	<p><b>Depart along the Southern Scenic Route. Key stops include:</b></p>
	<p><b>McLean Falls</b>  Take the turn off at Rewcastle Road and travel 3km to the car park where this 40 minute return walk begins. This is a forest walk to what some say is the most striking of The Catlins' waterfalls.</p> <p>Easy Walking - 40 minutes return</p>
	<p><b>Cathedral Caves</b>  The walk passes through the podocarp and kamahi forest of the Waipati Beach Scenic Reserve. After reaching the beach it's another 10 minutes to the caves. When the tide's right you can walk from one cave to another, though you should be prepared for wet feet!</p> <p>Access to the caves is limited at times due to tide levels, please visit the website below for more information <a href="http://www.cathedralcaves.co.nz">www.cathedralcaves.co.nz</a></p>

	<p><b>Lake Wilkie</b></p> <p>Take a short walk through tranquil podocarp forest and you will reach a peaceful lookout and boardwalk over Lake Wilkie. The lake was formed as a result of the last ice age. When the rata is in flower you will be treated to a feast of colour and birdsong as the native tui and bellbird enjoy the nectar.</p>
	<p><b>The Lost Gypsy Caravan, Papatowai</b></p> <p>Deep in the heart of The Catlins, in a tiny hamlet called Papatowai. The intriguing figure of a man stands at the side of the road. His arms stretched high above his head; he holds a sign that points to a highly decorated and mysterious house-bus labelled The Lost Gypsy. Crunch up the path and, close to the entrance, there is a sign on a post and underneath a button reads: "There are many temptations in life and this is one of them". Who could resist? Press the button and a jet of water shoots from the mouth of a china mask of Maggie Thatcher and straight at your ear!</p> <p>This is the first surprise in this caravan of surprises where Blair Somerville, an escapee from Auckland, has honed the skills he learnt as an engineer to make ingeniously mobile what-nots that he calls 'rustic automata'. He fashions these gizmos from old tins, bits of wire, shells and wood that he finds nearby and powers them by tiny solar panels or clever dynamics.</p>
	<p><b>Purakaunui Falls</b></p> <p>A 10 minute walk on an excellent track brings you to the best known of The Catlins' forest waterfalls, located in a small reserve of mixed podocarp and beech forest.</p>
	<p><b>Purakaunui Bay</b></p> <p>A side trip to Purakaunui Bay is well worth while, whether to see the highest cliffs in The Catlins, to explore the sheltered beach and rocky shore or to camp.</p>
	<p><b>The Catlins Lake</b></p> <p>At low tide, many migratory and resident wading birds can be seen in this large tidal lake. There are pleasant picnic areas on both sides of the lake and fishing is possible.</p>
	<p><b>Owaka – is a key stop within The Catlins region. It has a number of good country cafes, accommodation and attractions.</b></p>
	<p><b>Owaka Museum</b></p> <p>Take yourself to the Owaka Museum on your journey to the south-east edge of Aotearoa / New Zealand. Discover Owaka's new architectural feature, the Owaka Museum: Wahi Kahuika the Meeting Place - a rest on your journey. Experience a visual, story-filled journey and discover what made The Catlins how it is today. This includes exhibitions, mini-movies, and shipwreck &amp; settler stories.</p> <p>Contact: Kaaren Mitcalfe  10 Campbell Street  Owaka  Tel: +64 3 415 8371  Email: <a href="mailto:kaaren@in2net.co.nz">kaaren@in2net.co.nz</a></p>

<p><b>Cafe suggestions</b></p>	<p><b>Catlins Cafe</b></p> <p>Catlins Café offers fantastic espresso coffee using world class Allpress Coffee. Their menu boasts homemade cafe style food, traditional fish and chip takeaways and all the tasty NZ treats like Tip Top rolled ice creams and milkshakes.</p> <p>Contact: Aileen and Steve  3 Main Road  Owaka 9535  Tel: +64 3 415 8040  Email: <a href="mailto:catlinscafe.co.nz">catlinscafe.co.nz</a>  <a href="http://www.catlinscafe.co.nz">www.catlinscafe.co.nz</a></p> <p>Winter hours:  Sunday – Wednesday 9.00am – 7.00pm  Thursday – Saturday 9.00am – 8.30pm</p> <p>Summer hours:  Monday – Sunday 7.30am – 8.30pm</p>								
<p><b>Cafe suggestions</b></p>	<p><b>Lumberjack Café</b></p> <p>The Lumberjack Café &amp; Bar is well known throughout the south for its good food and great atmosphere. Situated in Owaka, it is within walking distance of all local accommodation, and in easy reach of all the activities the area has to offer.</p> <p>3 Saunders St  Owaka  Tel: +64 3 415 8747  Email: <a href="mailto:lumberjack_owaka@hotmail.com">lumberjack_owaka@hotmail.com</a></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>Summer Hours</u></td> <td><u>Winter Hours</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tuesday – Sunday</td> <td>Wednesday – Sunday</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lunch 12 – 2.30 pm</td> <td>Lunch 12 – 2.30 pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dinner 6pm – 8pm</td> <td>Dinner 6pm – 8pm</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Summer Hours</u>	<u>Winter Hours</u>	Tuesday – Sunday	Wednesday – Sunday	Lunch 12 – 2.30 pm	Lunch 12 – 2.30 pm	Dinner 6pm – 8pm	Dinner 6pm – 8pm
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	<p><b>Drive from Papatowai to Nugget Point. The trip should take about 1 hour.</b></p> 								

	<p><b>Nugget Point</b></p> <p>The Department of Conservation Wildlife Reserve at Nugget Point has dramatic views of “The Nuggets.” These wave-eroded rocks, which are likened to the shape of gold nuggets, can be seen from the viewing platform at the Nugget Point Lighthouse.</p> <p>Along the way to the lighthouse you may see the fur seal colony on the rocks at sea level to the left of the track and also below the lighthouse, or the many seabirds that make The Nuggets their home. During the months of December – February elephant seals also make The Nuggets their stopover point.</p> <p>Roaring Bay, which is on the road to Nugget Point, is only a short walk from the car park to a bird-viewing hide. Yellow eyed penguins can be seen here as they move from the sea to their nesting places in coastal vegetation.</p>
	<p><b>Cannibal Bay</b></p> <p>In this small sheltered bay and beach, which was the site of early Maori encampments, New Zealand sea lions can often be seen. The sedimentary rock formations are spectacular.</p>
	<p><b>Drive from Nugget Point to Dunedin. The trip should take about 1 hour 30 minutes.</b></p>  <p>The map displays a route starting at Nugget Point Lighthouse on the southern coast of New Zealand. It travels north through Milton, Mosgiel, and Fairfield, eventually reaching Dunedin. A callout box on the map specifies a travel time of 1 hour 31 minutes and a distance of 110 kilometers. Other geographical features like Lake Mahinerangi and the Via River are also labeled.</p>