



# THE LOCAL'S GUIDE TO QUEENSTOWN

*Whether you have a few days to spend in Queenstown before or after your New Zealand Trails adventure or you are spending your free day here on our World Heritage Walking Tour, we want to save you some time and have some suggestions on how you should fill your day(s). We've compiled a guide of all our favourite bars, cafés, trails and things to do in the area. As Queenstown locals, these are the places we can be found indulging, tramping (the Kiwi word for hiking) and sipping on our favourite coffees! With the help of this handy guide, we hope that you will have the most incredible day exploring our home town.*

## Breakfast, Brunch and Lunch



### **Bespoke Kitchen**

9 Isle Street, Queenstown 9300

This trendy café just off Queenstown's main street is a firm favourite of our New Zealand Trails team. Their carefully crafted menu focuses on using the best local and organic produce. Bespoke work hard to adhere to all dietary requirements, and you'll notice immediately the array of vegan friendly dishes on their menu. They place a special emphasis on health and sustainability, but where they really excel is in their presentation - the food looks amazing! If you are here for breakfast/brunch, you can't go wrong with their delicious housemade granola made with oats, stewed apple and blackberry, rose water buckwheat cluster, vanilla yoghurt and seasonal fruit, their creamy vegan mushrooms on sourdough or their rather lavish breakfast board. Delicious! Visit their website [here](#).





### **Yonder**

14 Church Street

They claim to make the best coffee in Queenstown (the most coveted title in Queenstown!) and it's difficult to disagree! What is for certain is that they make their baked goods from scratch and have a great craft beer and cocktails collection. It's a great spot to check out if you are feeling a little parched! Yonder also caters for all dietary requirements without compromising on taste or creativity. They were even voted in the 'top 10 brunch spots in Queenstown' by Culture Trip. One of their specialties is their raspberry and pistachio French toast... yummo! Visit their website [here](#).



### **Vudu Café & Larder**

16 Rees Street

Another frequent haunts of ours is Vudu Café and Larder. Vudu is run by the same group as Bespoke, so expect the same high standards but even more focused on pure indulgence. They are the perfect place to go when the sun is shining. Perch yourself outside and soak up the gorgeous lake views while indulging in one of their many delicious dishes. If you are going there for lunch, we recommend the slow roasted pork belly burger with hand-cut agria fries. If it's busy don't worry, join the line and your waiter will quickly come up and ask you if you are after a table. Dietaries are not a problem here, they have heaps of yummy treats that suit everyone. We also love getting a takeaway coffee, delicious treat and sipping it down by the lake front. Visit their website [here](#).

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## Dinner



### **The Grille by Eichardt's**

9 Marine Parade

One of Queenstown's premier dining destinations, The Grille by Eichardt's sits right on the waterfront. The charming interior may pay homage to New York City bistros, but their menu is all about New Zealand, showcasing the unique tastes of Central Otago and Southland. This authentic dining experience is all about home-grown, free-range, and locally sourced produce. Visit their website [here](#).





### **Botswana Butchery**

17 Marine Parade

If you are a meat and seafood lover, you'll love Botswana Butchery. Curl up by the roaring log fires (inside and out) with a glass of wine from their private 1,800 bottle cellar filled with both Central Otago and international wines. Located in Queenstown's historic Archer's Cottage, we adore this stylish eatery. Visit their website [here](#).



### **Blue Kanu**

16 Church St

For something totally different, there's Blue Kanu, a restaurant that blends two cultures and two styles, Pacifica and Asian to create "Polynasia". This unique dining experience combines fresh and exotic ingredients with ancient spices to create this delicious new cultural soul food. Get ready for a truly authentic dining experience! Visit their website [here](#).



### **Public Kitchen**

Ground Floor Steamer Wharf, Beach Street

For a more relaxed atmosphere, all about bringing people together to feast on wholesome kiwi fare, look no further than Public Kitchen. Another establishment who promotes using local and sustainably sourced produce. Located at the Steamer Wharf on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, Public Kitchen pride themselves on their alternative approach to fine dining and pub fare. Visit their website [here](#).



### **Fergburger**

42 Shotover Street

You can't help but notice the line down the street outside of this famous burger joint. Their burgers are worth the hype! They also do the best fries in town (in our opinion) - but do as us locals do - look up the Fergburger menu online and call 03 441 1232 to place your order. Pick up your order at the little window on the street and you'll have the best burger in town in 15 minutes rather than two hours. Visit their website [here](#).





## Soda

2 Rees Street

Indulge in a sophisticated and relaxed dining experience at Soda. Here you can find a vibrant ambiance and mouth-watering dishes with contemporary versions of Mediterranean-inspired cuisine. Soda's culinary team works with the freshest, locally-sourced ingredients to create innovative dishes. Take in the breathtaking views of the lake while enjoying a delicious meal or sipping on a handcrafted cocktail. Visit their website [here](#).

## Bars



### Smiths Craft Beer House

53 Shotover Street

Your quintessential craft beer house. With a beer menu that fills an entire wall, you won't run out of flavours to sample. Smiths' food menu also does not disappoint, featuring all the favourites like burgers, pizza and fries in big portions! They've perfected the pub classics and executed them with a creative twist. Visit their website [here](#).



### Little Mez

Cow Lane

This cozy cocktail bar is Queenstown's hidden gem. Tucked away on Cow Lane, Little Mez is dedicated to great cocktails and all things Tequila and Mezcal. Little Mez is proudly Queenstown's first and only dedicated Agaveria, offering an impressive collection of more than 120 Agave-based spirits and a delicious range of Mexican-inspired bar snacks to compliment their thoughtfully crafted cocktail list. Visit their website [here](#).





### **Little Blackwood**

88 Beach Street

Another of our team's favourites is Little Blackwood. Sitting in the famous Steamer Wharf Waterfront, this beautiful cocktail bar and eatery has it all. From their roaring open fire, seasonal wine menu, refreshing cocktail list, live music and delectable cheese and meat platters, this place is charming. Visit their website [here](#).

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## Trails



### **Queenstown Hill**

Distance: 4.2km (2.6 miles)

This easily accessible hike from the centre of Queenstown is a firm favourite among locals and tourists alike. Climbing its way for 500 metres up through pine forest to the summit of Te Tapu-nui (mountain of intense sacredness), you will emerge out of the tree line onto the hillside. There, you will take in views of the whole of Queenstown including the Remarkables, Lake Wakatipu and Cecil Peak. Check out the 'Basket of Dreams' sculpture, which asks you to "look inward to reflect to draw inspiration from the mountains, lake and from those who are with you and outward to dream for the future." Then push on a little further to reach the summit. Find out more about the Queenstown Hill track [here](#)



### **Queenstown Gardens Trail**

Distance: 3.1km (1.9 miles)

Stroll through Queenstown's botanical gardens, enjoying flowers, mature trees and a relaxing atmosphere. This tranquil sanctuary is located just a few minutes walk from central Queenstown and a lovely place to stretch your legs. Explore the gardens and then follow the trail along the lake to take in views of Cecil and Walker Peak, and the Kelvin Peninsula. Click [here](#) to find out more about the Queenstown Gardens.





### Sawpit Gully

Distance: 7.3km (4.5 miles) (loop track)

If you want to earn your views, catch a bus or taxi out to Arrowtown for the day and hike Sawpit Gully. You'll experience all the New Zealand native vegetation as beech forest turns to tussock, matagouri, and speargrass. If you're doing this hike in Autumn, enjoy the autumn colours as the exotic larch leaves turn to gold. You'll hike to the saddle between German Hill and craggy Brow Peak. The views out over Lake Hayes on the descent are particularly breath-taking. Read on [here](#) for more information about Sawpit Gully.



### Tiki Trail

Distance: 1.6km (1 mile)

If you don't want to pay for the gondola to get that iconic view of Queenstown, you can walk up the hill! The hour-long walk takes you through Douglas fir and beech forest, emerging out on top to views galore. From there, grab a coffee in the skyline restaurant, go paragliding, lugging, bungee jumping or enjoy the view. Find out more about the Tiki Trail [here](#).



### Ben Lomond

Distance: 14km (8.7 miles) (return trip)

If you are up for a rewarding and challenging full-day hike, Ben Lomond is a local favourite. The trail is accessible from the town centre and has stunning panoramic views. Start from the bottom of the Tiki Trail or take the Skyline Gondola to the top of Bob's Peak to save a bit of time and make your way from there. Whether you choose to turn around at the saddle or push on to reach the summit, the impressive views are the real appeal of this iconic track and will not disappoint. On a clear day, you'll look out over Queenstown, Lake Wakatipu, The Remarkables, and Cecil and Walter Peaks. Find out more information about hiking Ben Lomond [here](#).



## Day Activities



### Wine Tours

If you consider yourself a wine connoisseur, then you will have no doubt heard of Gibbston Valley and its delicious pinot noir. We are lucky enough to live in New Zealand's most scenic wine region and these world-renowned vineyards are located just outside of Queenstown and are well worth a visit. The easiest way to do so is by joining a wine tour. We recommend the Sampler Tour from [Altitude Tours](#) or their Twilight Wine and Craft Beer Tour if you are keen to sample both local wines and brews. Another great option is [Hop On, Hop Off Wine Tours](#). The Hop on, Hop Off tour leaves from central Queenstown and stops at 17 different wineries and breweries. We recommend hopping off to further explore Akarua, Kinross Cellar Door & Bistro and Gibbston Valley Winery.



### Explore Arrowtown

This historic gold mining town is absolutely charming and is well worth a visit. You can get there by taxi or bus (blue #2 route Arthurs Point to Arrowtown). There's something to suit everyone in Arrowtown! You could walk the Arrowtown Trail or Sawpit Gully, explore the old Chinese village or wine and dine to your heart's content. As for food and drinks, we love Provisions, The Dishery, and Slow Cuts for a bite to eat, followed up with a glass of wine or a craft beer in the sun at The Fork & Tap. Find out more about Arrowtown [here](#).



### Kiwi Birdlife Park

If you want to learn more about our native wildlife, then take a trip to the Kiwi Birdlife Park. There, you can explore the 5 acres of native bush and see Kiwi, Kea, Tuatara, and Geckos. The passionate experts working here will regale you with tales and facts about our unique fauna. Check out the [Kiwi Birdlife Park](#) website for more information.



### Historic Cruise on the TSS Earnslaw

Take a cruise on New Zealand's most iconic vessel, the century-old coal fired steamship, TSS Earnslaw, affectionately known as Ernie by locals. You'll get one of the best views of Queenstown on this 90-minute cruise across Lake Wakatipu. Make sure to take a peek into the engine room to see the giant steam engines at work. You can also combine it with a visit to Walter Peak High Country Farm. For more information and bookings, visit the [RealNZ website](#).



### Onsen Hot Pools

Relax in your own private hot pool while taking in breathtaking views of the Shotover River canyon at Onsen Hot Pools. If you feel like you need a bit more pampering, indulge in one of their face or body treatments at their tranquil day spa. Onsen Hot Pools offers a range of options to suit all your relaxation needs. They are located just 10 minutes from Queenstown and offer a complimentary shuttle service from central Queenstown. Learn more about Onsen Hot Pools and make your booking on their website [here](#).



### Skyline Gondola

Enjoy a scenic ride on Queenstown's iconic gondola. Take in the stunning views of Queenstown, Coronet Peak, The Remarkables, and Walter and Cecil Peak as you are carried 450 metres (1,476 ft) above Queenstown to the top of Bob's Peak. Once you arrive at the top, relax and take in the scenery, take a few rides on the Luge, or enjoy a drink or meal at the Stratosfare Restaurant and Bar. If you feeling adventurous, you can even book in to go paragliding, ziplining or bungy jumping. Visit the Skyline Queenstown website [here](#) for more information and bookings.





### **Bike the Local Trails**

Queenstown has a vast network of local biking trails ranging from cruisy lakeside trails to downhill tracks. Queenstown's bike trails offers something for everyone and there is plenty of terrain to explore. Whether you are looking to rent a bike and explore on your own or join a guided cycle tour, Queenstown is the ultimate cycling and mountain biking destination. Learn more about biking in Queenstown [here](#).

If you are interested in biking in Arrowtown, we recommend Arrowtown Bike Hire. They have flexible bike hire options, including e-bikes, and also offer a bike shuttle service. Visit Arrowtown Bike Hire's website [here](#) to learn more and to make a reservation.



### **Lord of the Rings Tours**

Go on an epic journey through Middle Earth and experience the dramatic scenery, towering mountains, and ancient beech forests that have provided inspirational backdrops for the Lord of the Rings films. If you are a Lord of the Rings fan, you'll enjoy a magical, adventure packed day full of breathtaking scenery, whilst discovering LOTR filming locations in the Queenstown area. If you are interested in a Lord of the Rings tour visit the Pure Glenorchy website [here](#) or the Nomad Safari's website [here](#) to learn more and book your Lord of the Rings full or half day tour.



### **Local Art Galleries**

Stroll through the many impressive art galleries that Queenstown and Arrowtown offer and admire the captivating works by local artists. You will find paintings, drawings, contemporary sculpture, watercolours and photography inspired by the local landscapes and culture. You may even have the opportunity to meet some of the local artists during your visit. Learn more about the galleries in Queenstown and Arrowtown [here](#).