

Your adventure starts here.



HELICOPTERS NELSON
NEW ZEALAND
TOP OF THE SOUTH

About Us

Helicopters Nelson is the Top of the South Island’s largest privately owned helicopter company

Helicopters Nelson is owned and operated by a large and very passionate aviation family, the Darling family. Helicopters Nelson has evolved into one of New Zealand’s most well-known and respected aviation companies.

Our CEO and Flight Training Manager is Pete Darling, a pilot with over 30 years experience, including 14 years working for two major international operators as multi-engine check and training captain.

Alongside our tourism operations, we also operate commercial helicopter services, fire and emergency services and flight training.

We specialise in creating luxury, tailored and unique helicopter tours in and around the “Top of the South.”

We offer helicopter charter services and customised tours to some of the country’s most stunning remote locations – there is no better view of New Zealand than from the skies.

Whether you’re looking for a corporate event, an active adventure or a romantic escape – anything is possible with Helicopters Nelson.

Your comfort and safety are paramount to us. Our professional pilots have a wealth of experience and local knowledge.

We primarily fly from our base at Nelson Airport but often fly in and out of lodges, venues or private properties nation wide.

Our Safety Record



Helicopters Nelson has a 100% safety record.



Helicopters Nelson pilots are highly experienced flying in mountain and coastal terrain.



Our fleet of aircraft are maintained to the highest standard.



Helicopters Nelson’s owners have over 30 years aviation experience.



Helicopters Nelson complies with all Civil Aviation requirements.



Helicopters Nelson has been awarded Qualmark gold.

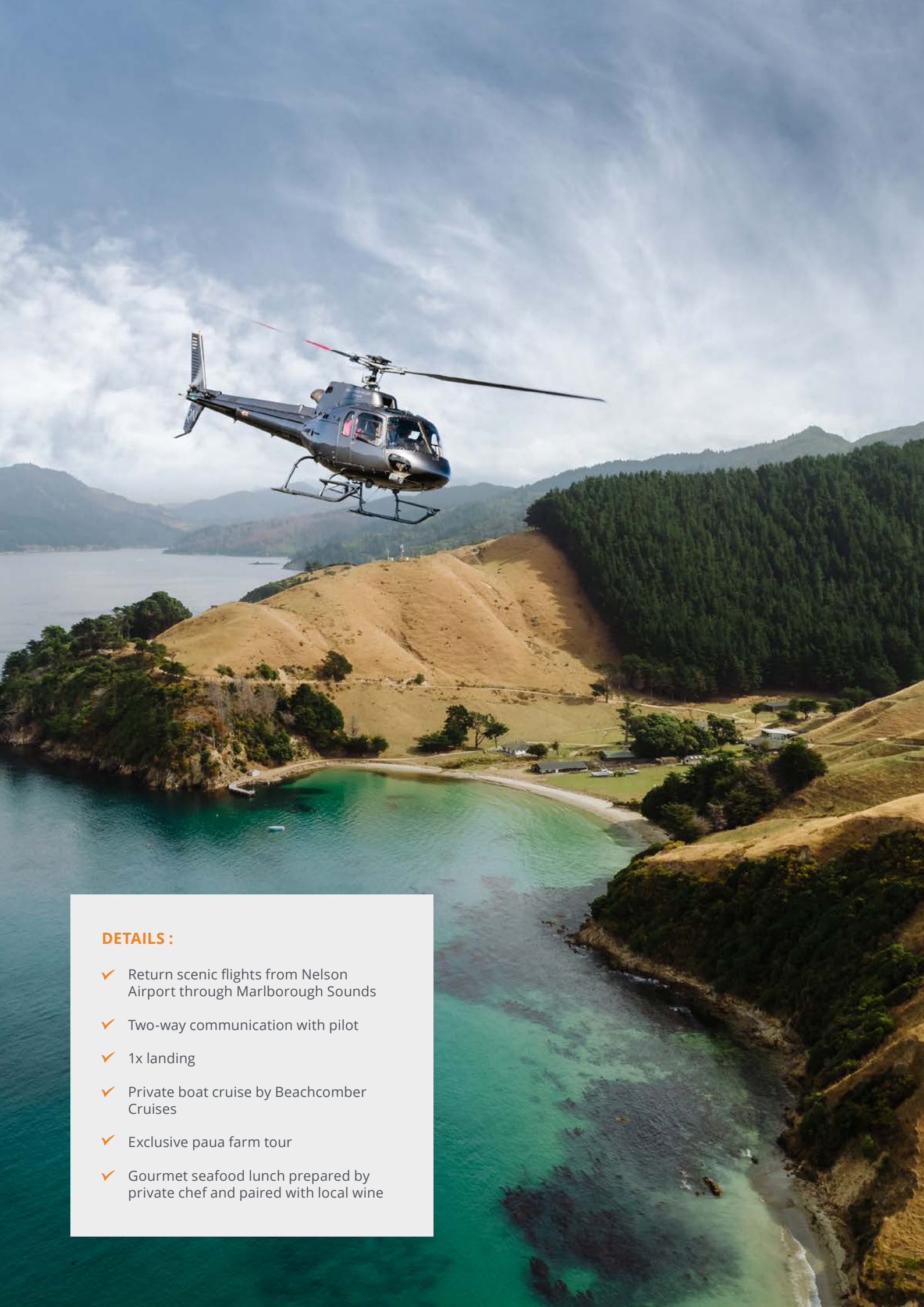
Our Fleet

Helicopters Nelson operate a versatile fleet of modern helicopters.

We primarily use Airbus helicopters for our Tourism sector; they are lined with state of the art leather interior and soft carpet, along with a compact cabin to allow every passenger the opportunity to enjoy the views through the large windows.

Cargo pods are available when transporting luggage.





Majestic Marlborough Sounds by Air & Sea

Flight time: 80 minutes
Tour duration: 5+ hours

Your unforgettable journey begins with a breathtaking helicopter flight from Nelson Airport, soaring over the stunning coastline and emerald waters of the Marlborough Sounds.

You'll touch down in the heart of this natural paradise, Arapawa Island — home to one of New Zealand's finest pearl farms.

Here, you'll enjoy an exclusive guided tour, learning about the intricate process of cultivating the rare and exquisite blue pearls unique to this region. See expert pearl farmers in action and admire the shimmering treasures harvested from the deep.

On completion of your pearl farm tour, you'll board a premium vessel operated by Beachcomber Cruises, ready to set sail on an afternoon of indulgence.

Your experience reaches new heights with a gourmet seafood lunch crafted by a private chef, showcasing the freshest local delicacies. Savour fresh seasonal seafood, perfectly paired with world-class Marlborough sauvignon blanc. As you dine, take in the breathtaking views of secluded bays and tranquil waters, enjoying the ultimate fusion of flavor and scenery.

After an afternoon of pure indulgence, your adventure concludes with a scenic helicopter flight back to Nelson, offering a final panoramic view of the sounds as you reflect on a day of unparalleled luxury.

This is more than a tour—it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience for discerning travelers who seek the finest seafood, scenery, and service.

DETAILS:

- ✓ Return scenic flights from Nelson Airport through Marlborough Sounds
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Private boat cruise by Beachcomber Cruises
- ✓ Exclusive paua farm tour
- ✓ Gourmet seafood lunch prepared by private chef and paired with local wine





Abel Tasman Heli-Hike

Flight time: 50 minutes

Tour duration: 3.5 hours

Helicopters Nelson is proud to partner with Wine, Art & Wilderness to bring you this half-day tour designed to capture the best parts of the Abel Tasman National Park — from the air and the ground.

Step aboard your private helicopter with a knowledgeable guide from Wine, Art & Wilderness. Watch the landscape transform from cityscapes to golden coastlines and lush bush. The helicopter provides unparalleled views and manoeuvrability, revealing hidden gems and scenic wonders inaccessible from the ground alone.

After a thrilling 25-minute flight, touch down for immediate immersion into the park's natural wonders. Take a moment to absorb the beauty and tranquillity before setting off on foot with your guide. Enjoy insightful commentary, personalised attention, and ample opportunities to pause and admire the surroundings.

For those seeking extra adventure, opt to kayak back along azure waters while savouring coastal vistas.

Capture unforgettable moments of Abel Tasman's landscapes during your return flight, completing a day filled with exploration, education, and appreciation for this pristine national park.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport
- ✓ Return road transfers from accommodation
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Guided hiking tour of the Abel Tasman
- ✓ Lunch, refreshments, and beverages





Te Araroa Heli-Hike

Flight time: 30 minutes
Tour duration: 3 hours

The Te Araroa Trail is a 3,000km trail running the length of New Zealand. The Richmond Ranges in the top of the South Island are well regarded for providing the best views on the Te Araroa – as well as the most remote and difficult terrain. Enter the helicopter!

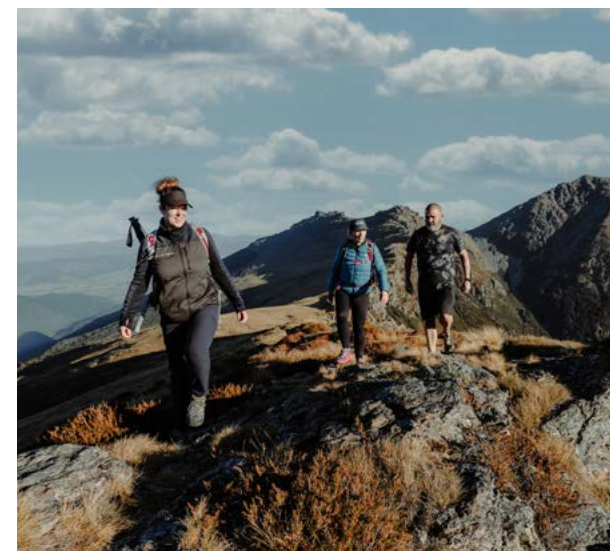
Skip the days of hiking and grueling climbing — with a spectacular helicopter flight, you'll land in the perfect spot amongst the tussocks, well above the tree line, to begin your adventure.

Leave the navigating to your experienced guide and focus on the unobstructed views of the 3 national parks which surround us, the curve of Tasman Bay and Nelson far below.

In just two and a half hours, you can experience the best parts of Te Araroa, something that would usually take an experienced hiker many days of walking and climbing to get to. All in the good hands of an experienced and knowledgeable pilot and guide.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return helicopter flights
- ✓ Return road transfers from accommodation
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Experienced private guide from Wine, Art & Wilderness
- ✓ Refreshments & beverages





D’Urville Indulgence Marlborough Sounds

Flight time: 90 minutes
Tour duration: Full Day (9am-4pm)

Combine a scenic flight with a spot of helicopter reef fishing — and eat the catch!

Follow the eastern coastline to land on D’Urville Island. D’Urville Island is truly one of New Zealand’s best kept secrets. Discovered by French explorer Jules Dumont D’Urville, the island is located off the northern coast of the South Island with an area of approximately 150 square km, making it the eighth-largest island of New Zealand.

Your fishing guide will provide all equipment and assistance as required. Once we have a decent catch, we hop across to a sheltered bay where your freshly caught fish will be prepared to your liking alongside fresh local produce. Enjoy your catch, with a glass of fine local wine or a cold craft beer in hand. Relax and enjoy the pristine beaches and native bush, you can even take a swim!

Our flight home tracks via the Mt Richmond Forest Park.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge to D’Urville Island
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Private guided reef fishing
- ✓ All equipment and bait
- ✓ Preparing and cooking of the catch
- ✓ Picnic lunch including local wine and beverages of choice





Abel Tasman: Best of Both Worlds

Flight time: 45 minutes

Tour duration: Full day (9am-4pm)

Discover the best of two National Parks in one day!

From your local lodge or Nelson Airport, your private shuttle will connect you with Abel Tasman Charters at Stephens Bay near Kaiteriteri for a private cruise into the Abel Tasman National Park to discover lush bush, golden sand, and heavenly blue waters.

Lunch onboard

Relax onboard with a fresh platter-style lunch, showcasing local artisan food, before meeting your private helicopter at Awaroa Bay.

Private Helicopter Flight

From Awaroa, take flight into the rugged Kahurangi National Park for a landing high in the mountains, where you can explore unique rock formations and alpine lakes.

Enjoy truly spectacular views of Tasman Bay on your return flight to your lodge or Nelson Airport.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Vehicle transfer to Stephens Bay near Kaiteriteri
- ✓ Private boat charter to Awaroa
- ✓ Onboard lunch and beverages
- ✓ Helicopter scenic flight from Awaroa
- ✓ Mountain landing in the Kahurangi National Park
- ✓ Helicopter drop off at local lodge or Nelson Airport





Heaphy Heli-Hike - NZ Top 10 Great Walk

Flight time: 100 minutes
Tour duration: Full day (9am-4pm)

This trip combines fantastic aerial views and frequent opportunities to land and enjoy the wilderness surrounds.

Depart Nelson in your private helicopter flying west into the Kahurangi National Park for a mountain landing. Here your experienced guide will point out geological features of the area.

Our next stop lands at a point along the world famous Heaphy Track where you will have the option of walking 1-4 hours towards the coast before enjoying a picnic on the beach.

After lunch, we fly the rugged North West coastline viewing seal colonies and eroded rock formations before landing at the archways of Wharariki Beach. Enjoy stunning aerial views of Farewell Spit and Golden Bay on your return journey.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Private guided “hike” of the best parts of the Heaphy Track
- ✓ Picnic lunch including beverages of choice





Te Tau Ihu West Coast Wilderness

Flight time: 100 minutes
Tour duration: 5 hours

Immerse yourself in the amazing West Coast wilderness of Te Tau Ihu – Top of the South Island

Kahurangi National Park

From Nelson Airport or your local lodge, lift off and track deep into the Kahurangi National Park wilderness.

Landing at a remote alpine lake, enjoy a short walk to a waterfall before re-boarding your helicopter for the second leg of your journey.

Beach Landing

Tracking further west to Westhaven Inlet, following the remotely beautiful wild North West coastline for your second landing on a beach. Explore sand dunes and eroded rock formations.

Picnic Lunch

Sit back, relax and enjoy a gourmet picnic lunch and glass of local wine.

After lunch we lift off to explore Farewell Spit and Golden Bay before your return flight.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Picnic lunch including local wine and beverages of choice





Golden Bay Scenic with Horse Trek

Flight time: 80 minutes

Tour duration: 5 hours

A great opportunity to explore one of our most beautiful coastal landscapes on horseback

Tracking west into the Kahurangi mountains, enjoy a scenic flight over unspoilt country before your pilot lands at a remote alpine location, where you can enjoy the overwhelming surrounds of New Zealand's second largest National Park.

Following your mountain landing, we re-board the helicopter and descend further north west, tracking through the beautiful mountains to land in Golden Bay for a spectacular horse trek experience.

Riders of all experience levels are given opportunities to learn more about the foundations of good horsemanship whilst experiencing stunning coastal scenery of Golden Bay on horseback. With a focus on teaching light and balanced riding, guided holistic horse riding experiences are so much more than just a trail ride.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge to Golden Bay
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Private guided horse trek
- ✓ Picnic lunch including beverages of choice





Kārearea Falcon Experience

Flight time: 60 minutes

Tour duration: varies

Combine birds' eye views of the Nelson-Marlborough Region with an up-close-and-personal experience with one of New Zealand's rarest native birds.

Lifting off from Nelson Airport, we head East over the Richmond Ranges to NZ's largest wine region before landing at the Marlborough Falcon Trust, to be greeted by their ambassador for a private tour of their facilities.

Capable of flying at speeds up to 200 km/h and catching prey larger than itself, the New Zealand falcon is one of our most spectacular birds, assisting wine-makers in the region by scaring off grape-gobbling pests! Today only 5,000–8,000 kārearea remain.

Guests are welcomed two at a time into an aviary. Each person will take turns wearing a falconry glove and call a trained advocacy kārearea to fly over and land on their hand. Kārearea encounters are always subject to the willingness of the advocacy kārearea to ensure we uphold and champion positive animal welfare standards.

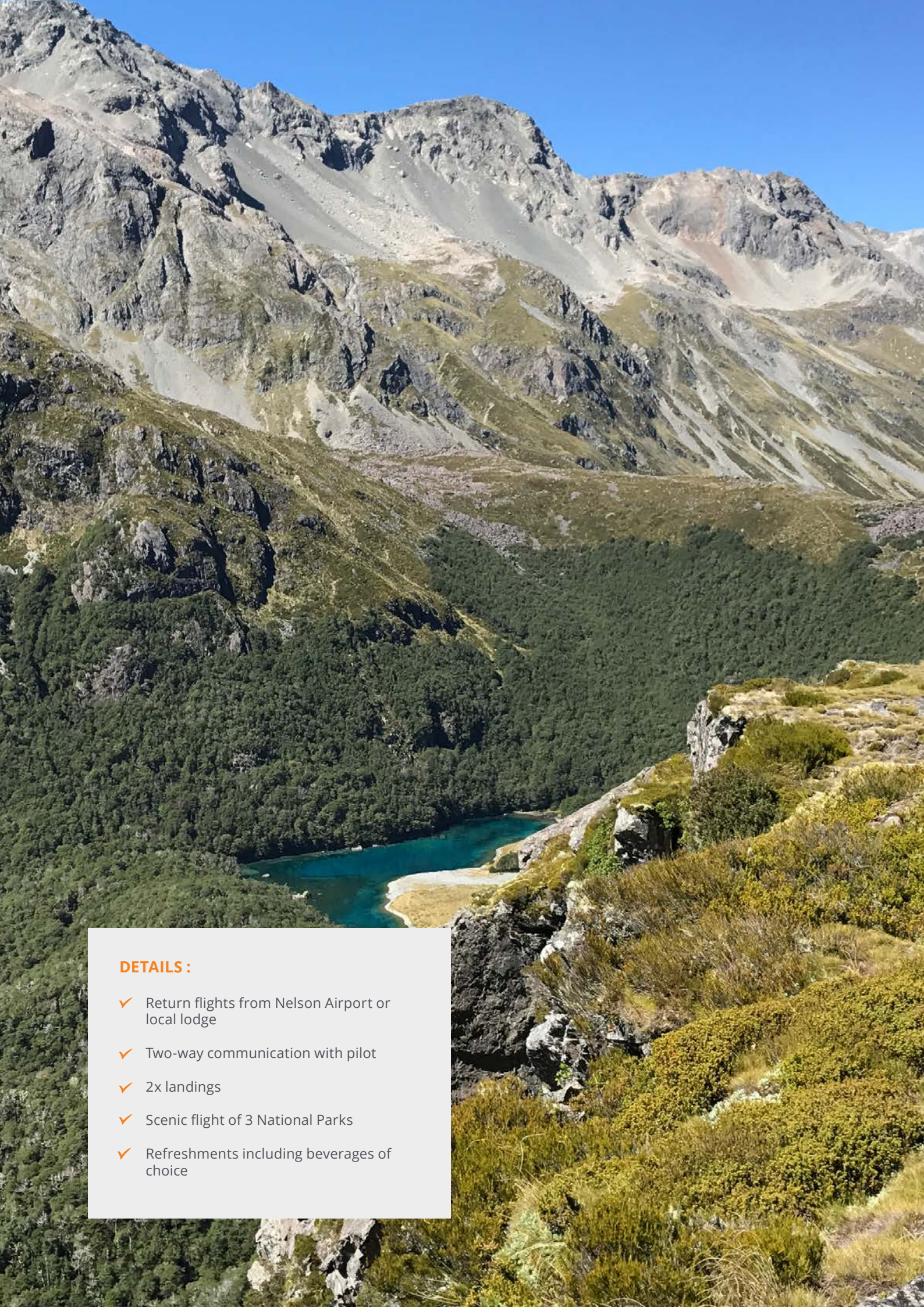
Optional Vineyard Visit

From the Falcon Experience, you have the option of visiting a nearby vineyard for wine tasting and dining.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport to Marlborough Falcon Trust
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Private guided Falcon Experience
- ✓ Optional vineyard visit with wine tasting and dining options - extra cost





Top of the South - 3 National Parks

Flight time: 100 minutes
Tour duration: 4 hours

Lifting off, your flight begins by tracking south, ascending towards New Zealand's fifth largest National Park.

Nelson Lakes National Park: The Nelson Lakes National Park is home to craggy mountain ranges, crystal clear blue lakes and tranquil beech forests. At 7000ft you will take in the grandeur of 102,000 hectares at the northernmost tip of New Zealand's Southern Alps.

Clearest Water in the World: View some of the clearest natural water in the world from the air, deep glacial carved valleys and experience the untouched beauty the Nelson Lakes is known for.

Kahurangi National Park: From the Nelson Lakes, your helicopter will next track for the Kahurangi National Park. Our flight path offers an unrivalled perspective, exploring the famous Lord of the Rings film locations at Mt Owen and Mt Olympus from the air along with mineral belts and some of New Zealand's oldest rock formations that have created a diverse environment best enjoyed from the air.

Choose your landing! Your Kahurangi landing could be one of the following:

Lord of the Rings Film Location
Alpine Lake with waterfall walk
Mountain Peak

Abel Tasman National Park: Abel Tasman is the smallest of New Zealand's National Parks, however arguably the most beautiful.

Awaroa Beach Landing: Surrounded by dense green native bush and turquoise waters, this stretch of golden sand is so exquisite that a group of New Zealanders banded together to buy it for the country. You'll have time for a walk, a swim, or lunch at the lodge.

Return via the stunning Tasman Bay coastline.



DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Scenic flight of 3 National Parks
- ✓ Refreshments including beverages of choice



Heli-Kayak Abel Tasman

Flight time: 50 minutes
Tour duration: 3.5 hours

From our base at Nelson Airport, fly up the coastline, taking in the stunning views of the Abel Tasman National Park.

Landing at the remote Awaroa Bay, you will be escorted through the short bush track and met by Awaroa Sea Kayaks.

A sea kayak tour will be designed specific to your group with a choice of duration according to your fitness level and skill. Awaroa is regarded by many local guides as the best place to sea kayak in the Abel Tasman National Park. Spectacular granite sea cliffs, golden sand beaches, crystal clear water and the majestic Awaroa Lagoon make for an unforgettable sea kayaking experience.

Light refreshments included, finished with a return helicopter flight back to Nelson Airport.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Private guided sea kayak tour of Abel Tasman with Awaroa Sea Kayaks. Kayak hire included.
- ✓ Refreshments included





High Country Merino Farm Tour

Flight time: 50 minutes

Tour duration: 3-4 hours

Nestled in the Awatere Valley lies a place unlike any other. Middlehurst Station is one of New Zealand's original high country runs. It covers 16,550 hectares in the Upper Awatere Valley, Marlborough at the top of the South Island.

Middlehurst extends right to the top of the rugged Inland Kaikourā Range. It's classic high country, ranging in altitude from 550 meters to 2,500 meters. The homestead is at 800 meters. The station's other boundaries are the Awatere, Tone and Winterton Rivers.

It is the ideal country to raise merino sheep – whose fleece is used to create soft, luxurious, warm and durable fabrics used in international brands like Icebreaker.

They also have their own meat brand – Middlehurst delivered. This concept was born out of a desire to bring 100% Merino Lamb direct to consumers.

Middlehurst's aim is to establish a sustainable, productive family farming business. They want to make sure high country traditions are maintained and passed on – and to have fun while doing it.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport to Middlehurst High Country Sheep Station in Awatere Valley
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Private guided farm tour
- ✓ Gourmet lunch prepared by Middlehurst's chef





Arapawa Pearl Farm Marlborough Sounds

Flight time: 60 minutes

Tour duration: 3-4 hours

Follow the coastline to the Marlborough Sounds, landing on the shores of Arapawa Island.

Arapawa Island Blue Pearl Tours will teach you the secrets behind the exotic and unique blue pearls you find in their exquisite jewelry.

There is nowhere else in the world you can experience this. Learn how to grow and harvest the paua and blue pearls. Sample the delicacy that is New Zealand abalone, cooked to your preference as either a whole steak or cut into slices and cooked in butter (grass-fed of course!) with garlic.

Home baking with tea and coffee completes your visit to Arapawa, and you will have the option to purchase the exquisite jewelry, designed and made by a local jeweler.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge to Arapawa Island, Marlborough Sounds
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Private guided pearl farm tour
- ✓ Sampling of cooked paua
- ✓ Refreshments of home baking and tea/ coffee
- ✓ Opportunity to purchase the exquisite jewelry, designed and made by a local jeweler





Kiwi Spirit Distillery & MacMillan Art Studio Tour

Flight time: 60 minutes
Tour duration: 3-4 hours

From Nelson Airport or local lodge, board your private helicopter for a scenic flight into the Upper Moutere to Michael MacMillan's Studio.

Michael MacMillan is an artist and sculptor working from his studio on Neudorf Road in Upper Moutere. He is well known for his large outdoor sculptures and limited edition bronzes. Michael's work is bold, reflective, textured, carved and kinetic. While polished aggregate is the medium that Michael is best known for, his works also include classical and contemporary bronzes and innovative creations using French Oak. His art studio is an artwork in itself, blending traditional materials and traditional craftsmanship, and is worth a visit on its own.

Land at New Zealand's only tequila farm Kiwi Spirit Distillery in Golden Bay. Kiwi Spirit Distillery specialises in unique spirits handcrafted from the purest homegrown ingredients including the only 100% Blue Agave Tequilana spirit made in New Zealand. Enjoy a tour of the distillery and tastings before re-boarding your helicopter for the return flight along the Tasman bay coastline.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Private tour of MacMillan Art Studio in Upper Moutere
- ✓ Private tour and tastings at Kiwi Spirit Distillery in Golden Bay
- ✓ Opportunity to purchase direct





Kahurangi Alpine Lake Picnic

Flight time: 60 minutes
Tour duration: 3 hours

Lift off from Nelson Airport or local lodge to journey deep into the Kahurangi National Park wilderness, where the roads can't take you.

Discover a hidden alpine lake that will take your breath away by its beauty as you descend for a landing.

Landing Lakeside

Your helicopter will shut down, allowing you to enjoy the ultimate sensory experience in nature.

Waterfall

Your pilot will lead you to the nearby waterfall and back to the lake for your picnic.

Picnic by the Lake

Relax by the lake for a picnic with beverages of your choice. Swim in the lake optional. Re-board your helicopter for the return flight.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Picnic lunch including local wine





Abel Tasman Experience

Flight time: 50 minutes

Tour duration: 2.5 hours

Experience this slice of Abel Tasman paradise!

Take a flight over the golden-sand beaches and pristine waters of the Abel Tasman National Park, New Zealand's smallest National Park.

Touching down in Awaroa, you can take a stroll down the beach or swim in the clear waters of Awaroa Bay, before returning to our Nelson Airport Base via the Tasman Bay coastline.

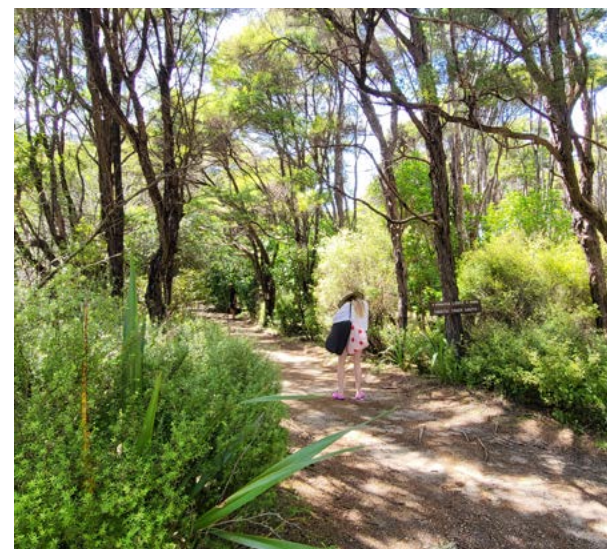
Lunch at the Awaroa Lodge or pre-book a picnic platter-style lunch.

Optional add-on:

Mountain landing to capture photos at high altitude with stunning scenery.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport to Awaroa
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing
- ✓ Lunch at Awaroa Lodge or picnic graze box available with prior booking at the guests' cost





Middle Earth Heli-Tour

Flight time: 80 minutes
Tour duration: 2.5 hours

Discover why Peter Jackson chose these locations for the Lord of the Rings Films!

Immerse yourself in the magical scenery brought to life by Peter Jackson in Lord of The Rings.

From Nelson Airport, your private helicopter will track northwest into Golden Bay for a landing on Mt Olympus to explore the site of "South of Rivendell."

The second leg of the flight is to Mt Owen, above the vast and untouched terrain that is the very heart of the Kahurangi National Park.

Land once more to view the rocky landscape that became the "Exit from the Mines of Moria."

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 2x landings
- ✓ Private guided tour of official Lord of the Rings Film locations





Marlborough Vineyard Heli-Tour

Flight time: 60 minutes
Tour duration: 3 hours

Visit New Zealand's largest wine region - by helicopter!

Enjoy a scenic flight over the Mt Richmond Forest Park before descending into Marlborough's Wairau Valley

Iconic Marlborough Vineyard

Land at an iconic Marlborough vineyard. Popular choices include Cloudy Bay, Wither Hills and Hans Herzog.

A lunch booking and tastings can be arranged at your cost. We are happy to advise.

Your flight home will offer fantastic views of Tasman Bay and beyond.

Should you wish to include a scenic flight over the Marlborough Sounds prior to or after your winery experience, we can arrange this at an additional cost.

DETAILS :

- ✓ Return flights from Nelson Airport or local lodge to Marlborough Wine Region
- ✓ Two-way communication with pilot
- ✓ 1x landing (can be increased if more than 1 vineyard is requested)
- ✓ Private wine tastings and dining can be arranged prior and at an extra cost.
- ✓ We are happy to advise on vineyard options.





Top of the South Back Country Fly Fishing

Flight time: customised

Tour duration: customised

Customized back-country trout fishing.

The Nelson Marlborough region offers some of the best brown trout fishing in the world.

Our vast experience and knowledge is invaluable when it comes to helicopter drop offs and pick ups for back-country trout fishing.

Guides are available for day trips and multi-day overnight hut stays.

Please enquire for options and pricing.





Top of the South Heli-Cycling & Heli-Biking

Flight time: customised

Tour duration: customised

Nelson has quickly become one of New Zealand's top mountain biking destinations with tracks that cater for all skill levels.

If you are up for an adventure and have some biking experience, let us take you heli-biking.

Access stunning scenery and explore the back-countryside while ticking off a Nelson must-do activity.

If mountain biking isn't your thing, take a more gentle approach with a cycling heli-tour. E-bikes are also available.

Please enquire for more detailed information and itineraries.





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NEW ZEALAND

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