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INNOVATION & DESIGN

64 Adventure's Leading Edge

Consider this your guide to a changing world. To celebrate the best of what's next, we brought together the brightest new ideas, revolutionary thinkers, and groundbreaking gadgets that will change the way you play. BY GREG MELVILLE

PLUS: PAUL KVINTA talks with explorer David de Rothschild about his proposed 7,500-mile trans-Pacific journey aboard the *Plastiki*—a raft made of plastic bottles. Has the young Brit gone off the deep end?

78 The Strange Legend of the Four Corners Fugitives

It began with a violent murder in a small frontier town and ended nearly a decade later with a body in the desert. DAVID ROBERTS ventures into canyon country to explore the final mysteries of a modern American Western.

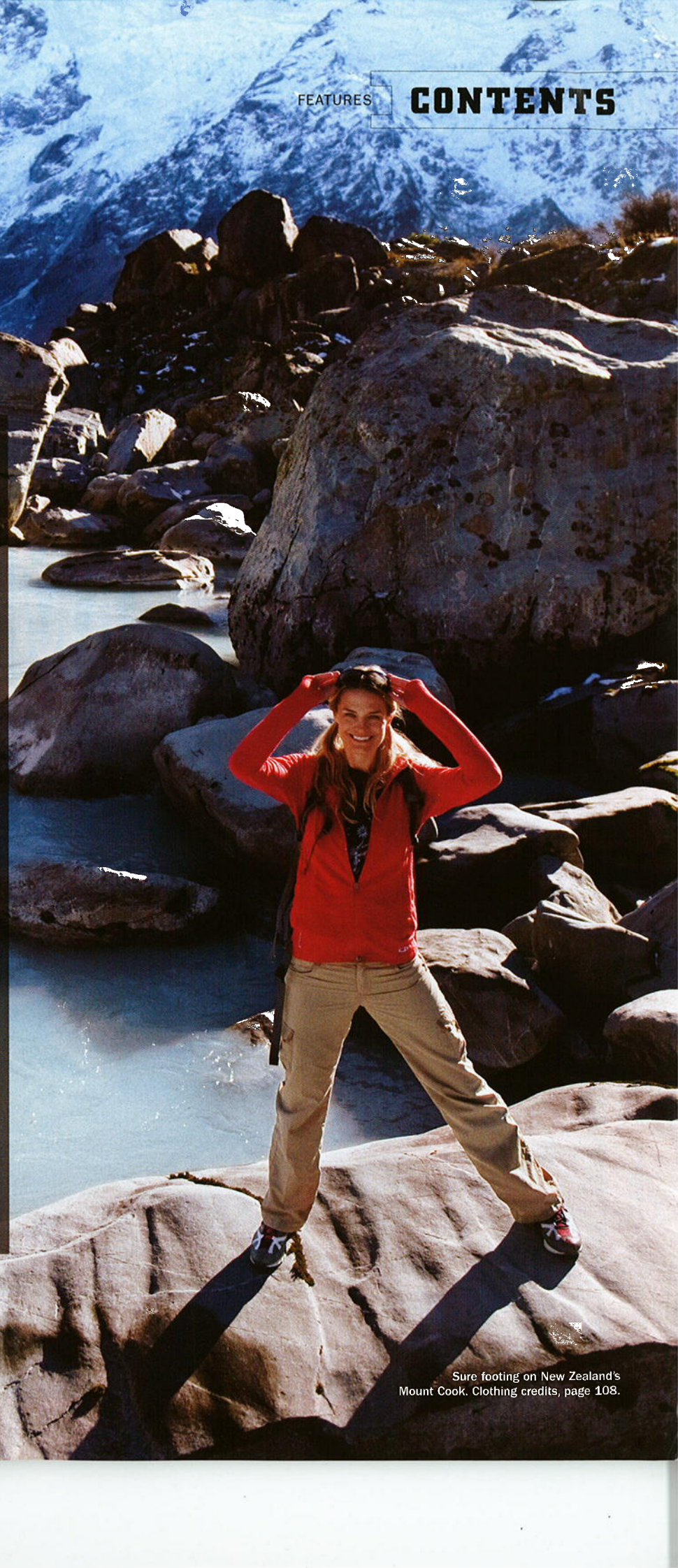
84 Kiwi Horizons

Adventure is a way of life in New Zealand. From the volcanoes of the North Island to the beaches, glaciers, mountains, and fjords of the South, we spent 11 days testing fall's best apparel—and charting the ultimate trip through Middle Earth. BY STEVE CASIMIRO

94 Colorado's Next Great Ride

The idea is simple: Combine the best qualities of long-distance riding (scenery, remoteness) and singletrack cruising (going really, really fast). JIM GORMAN maps the best way to ride mountain biking's mecca.

ON THE COVER: Hapuku Lodge, Kaikoura, New Zealand, by Steve Casimiro. Inset: Brammo Eertia motorcycle, courtesy of Maddox Visual



Sure footing on New Zealand's Mount Cook. Clothing credits, page 108.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE CASIMIRO

Kiwi

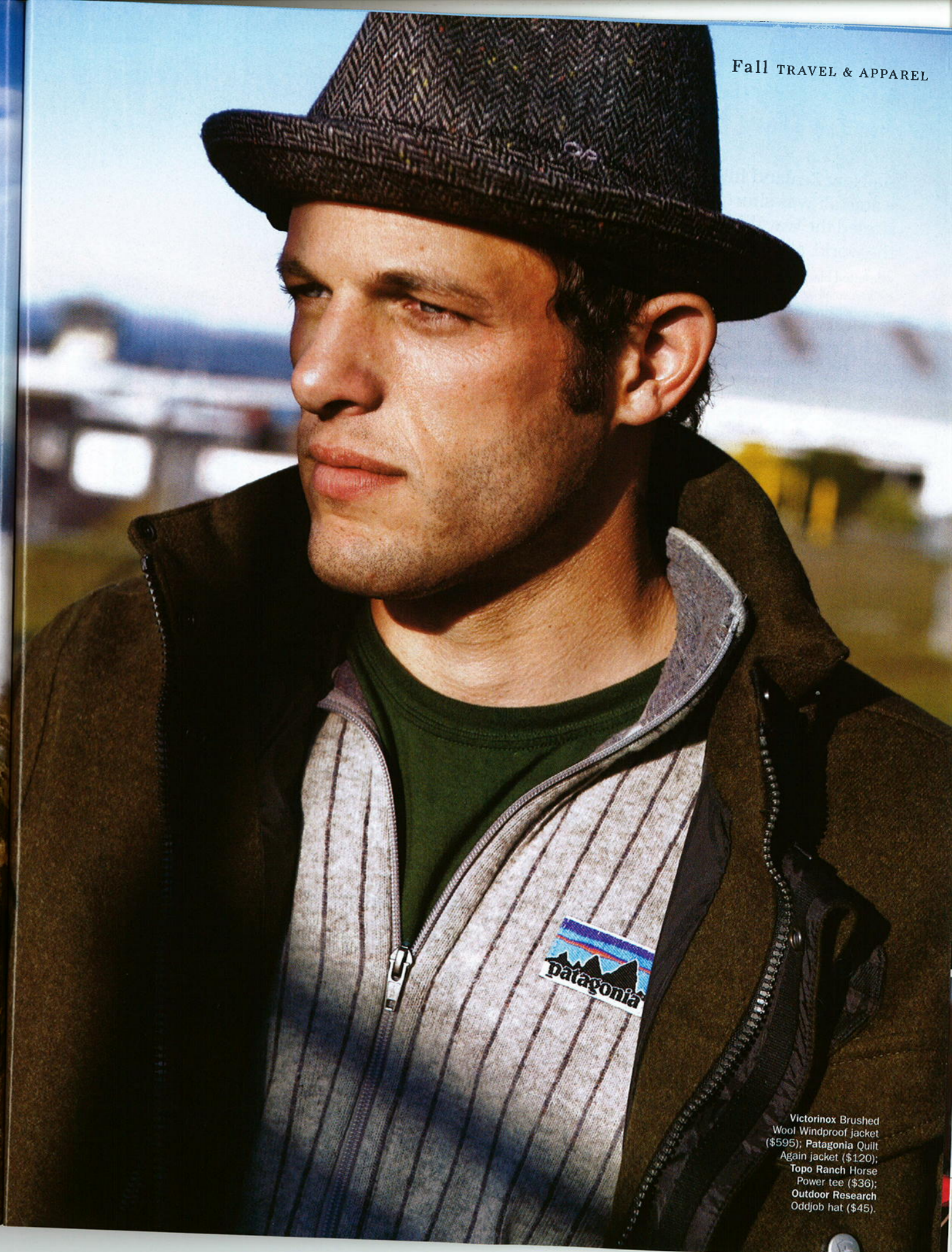
HORIZONS

Consider this: You are 13 hours away from the glaciers, fjords, beaches, and mountains of **NEW ZEALAND**. That's it—a long day at work. Plan right, pack right, and get on then.

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE CASIMIRO

NORTH ISLAND

Often overshadowed by its sister to the south, New Zealand's North Island deserves more than a glance. The high point? Tongariro National Park, the nation's first, which is home to the active Ruapehu volcano (or Mount Doom in *Lord of the Rings* speak) and a handful of the country's best trails. Also, don't miss the coast (pictured). The ridgeline hikes rival anything in Hawaii.



Victorinox Brushed Wool Windproof jacket (\$595); Patagonia Quilt Again jacket (\$120); Topo Ranch Horse Power tee (\$36); Outdoor Research Oddjob hat (\$45).

As New Zealand hikes go, the trail to Ohau waterfall was short, less than half a mile. It started the way things often do in that part of the world, at a deserted gravel pullout next to

a deserted black-cobble beach. A microscopic trail sign pointed up a hill. A small dark path, a mix of packed earth and rock, ran next to a boulder-strewn stream. We began to walk.

The going was flat enough, but within a hundred yards the trail ducked into the thorny and dyspeptic jungle that Kiwis call "the bush." The sun vanished, leaving the world mossy, ferny, Jurassic.

I was still getting my bearings. Three days earlier, my group of five had arrived for an 11-day photo shoot that would take us from Auckland to Te Anau, covering as much of New Zealand as possible. We had just bunked in a luxury tree house at the Hapuku Lodge in Kaikoura, a corner of the South Island seldom visited even by locals. That morning one of the staffers, an enthusiastic American transplant named Mark, ran us through the area's attractions. Whale-watching, helicopter trips, hut-to-hut treks—he had leads on every imaginable adventure. But first he offered a cryptic smile and suggested we hike a certain little trail.

Before I could even work up a sweat, the path petered out in a grove of trees, then ended at the base of a large waterfall, where a chill mist clung to the air. Thirty feet of crashing water: no Niagara, but impressive enough. Then I looked down. In the pool below, an army of slick black heads bobbed in the foam. Fur seal pups.

Dozens of them. They roiled the water, squirting between boulders, leaping like dolphins, chewing on each other's tails.

I stared down at the clear-water pool. It was too small to hold enough fish to draw fur seals up from the beach. Instead, these animals had clambered half a mile, flipper over flipper, to reach the waterfall—seemingly for the pure, raw fun of it.

With none of the brashness of Australia or the exoticism of South Africa, New Zealand can appear rather staid compared to its

former colonial companions. That's plain wrong. This is the country whose most famous and revered citizen, Sir Edmund Hillary, was a mountaineer, where they invented jet boats, commercialized bungee jumping, and turned helicopters into backcountry taxis. A South Canterbury farmer, rumor has it, flew a homemade airplane before the Wright brothers flew theirs. And do you know what Hillary drove 1,200 miles across Antarctica to the South Pole after he summited Everest? A South Island farm tractor. Random facts, perhaps, but they reflect the distinctly Kiwi spirit: clear-headed determination, ingenuity born of extraordinary isolation, and an unbridled and creative approach to adventure. »

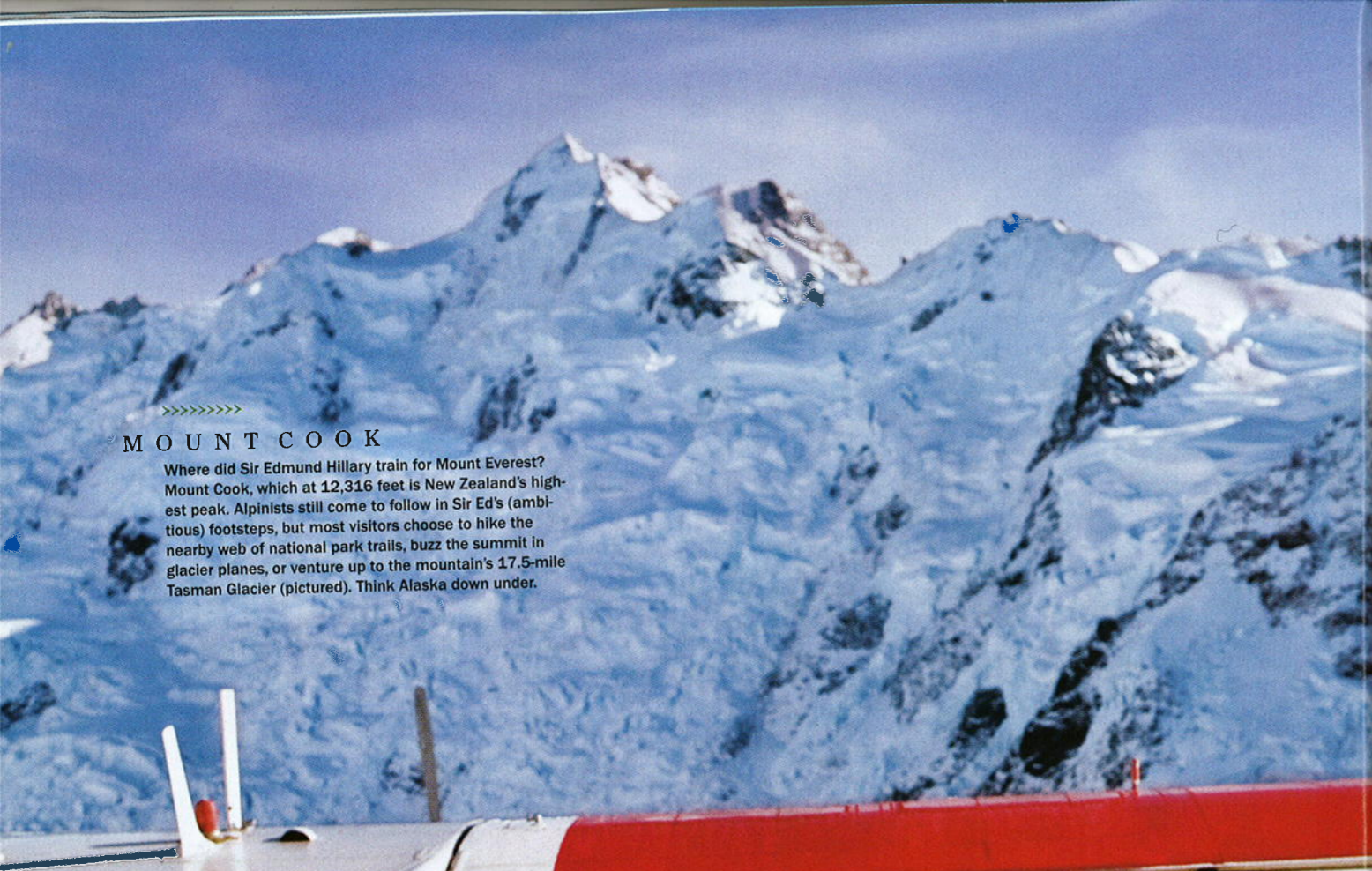


KAIKOURA

Black-rock beaches, desolate headlands, and a jumble of lime green foothills—Kaikoura is the South Island's forgotten corner and a haven for wildlife travelers (sperm whales, orcas, dolphins, seals, and penguins are often seen offshore). It's also catching on with the hipster set. Case in point: the luxury tree houses of the new Hapuku Lodge (pictured), one of the most distinctive hotels in the country.

BELOW, FROM LEFT:
 Arc'teryx Epsilon AR jacket (\$199); Helly Hansen SLX long-sleeve top (\$65); Smith Optics Amelia sunglasses (\$119); GoLite Ion backpack (\$50).
 Left: Rogan Ivanhow sweater (\$240); Oakley Automated Denim pants (\$55); J Shoes Beacon boots (\$230). Right: Powderhorn Buckle Bunny zip neck (\$89); Prana A-line skirt (\$65); Mission Playground Magma tights (\$65); Kaenon Leila sunglasses (\$239).
 Napapijri Hector sweater (\$548).





▶▶▶▶▶
MOUNT COOK

Where did Sir Edmund Hillary train for Mount Everest? Mount Cook, which at 12,316 feet is New Zealand's highest peak. Alpinists still come to follow in Sir Ed's (ambitious) footsteps, but most visitors choose to hike the nearby web of national park trails, buzz the summit in glacier planes, or venture up to the mountain's 17.5-mile Tasman Glacier (pictured). Think Alaska down under.



Left: Helly Hansen Norse Down Bomber jacket (\$250); Holden Raven Belted pants (\$350); Mountain Hardwear Aludra beanie (\$30); Smith Optics Amelia sunglasses (\$119); Dakine Mission backpack (\$60). Center: Kjus CIO down jacket (\$449); Ibex Milo pants (\$220); Serengeti large aviator sunglasses (\$160). Right: 66°North Blafell jacket (\$420); SmartWool Hahn's Peak half-zip top (\$100); Spy Optic Decker sunglasses (\$150); Level Tempest Windstopper gloves (\$55); Kelly Redtail backpack (\$70).



And, of course, there's the land. Whether it's the Maori earth-spirit influence or the simple fact that the country is home to the full gamut of *Lord of the Rings* landscapes, geography is a fixation that trumps even religion. Discontent over the piety of the national anthem, "God Defend New Zealand," inspired a movement for a new state song, "My Own Land." It didn't work—it's tough to change anthems, after all—but it was a powerful reminder that what Kiwis value most is right under their feet.

As you drive across the country, you see that nearly every patch of farmland is manicured, orderly, and thick with sheep. Yet the wild places—the mountains, deserts, and fjords—have been purposely kept that way. It's true that New Zealand trailed the U.S. in conservation, but not by much: Its first national park, Tongariro, was created just 15 years after Yellowstone. And some of its routes for hut-to-hut trekking (called tramping) are routinely praised as the world's best. Kiwis take great pride in the irascibility of the bush and the fact that Hillary trained for Everest on Mount Cook, a glacier-clad peak that despite its fickle weather still attracts visitors to climb, hike, or bomb around in bush planes. They even express glee that one of the most visited sights in the country, the renowned Mil-

ford Sound, doubles as one of the wettest places on Earth. One suspects that the worse the conditions, the happier the New Zealander.

When we first met kayaking guide Rosco Gaudin, it was at the edge of Milford Sound and he was covered in biting sand flies. All of us were, but while we swatted and cursed, Rosco went on prepping the kayaks. As we headed onto the water and neared a massive, 450-foot waterfall, he warned a first-time kayaker in our group, Linus, not to get too close. Later, though, when Linus proved to be a quick learner, Rosco couldn't help but urge him closer, shouting into the rushing spray. Our rookie paddler headed straight for the tumbling pillar of water, and Rosco turned to me. "Aw, I wouldn't mind it if he tipped and went in . . . have himself a bit of fun," he said.

A lot has changed in New Zealand since the isolation of earlier days. It used to be that you couldn't find a decent cup of coffee on either island; today you can't pass a village without an espresso stand. Kiwis used to head out on walkabout and see the world. They still do, but now they actually come home. On one list of the world's most livable cities, New Zealand has two in the top 15: Auckland and Wellington. (The U.S. has none in the top 25.) The draw is so great that some towns are plagued with housing shortages, and prices have increased 83 percent in the past seven years.

How all this will affect the Kiwi character, one can only guess. Personally, I doubt much. Heading back to the car after the waterfall and the fur seals, we reached a small wooden bridge. From its edge I could see down to the beach. Coming up the creek all alone was perhaps the littlest pup of all. Whether a runt or a particularly young one, who knows, but it gamely made its way up the streambed, cresting rocks, sometimes toppling, sometimes slipping backward, but always determined. I can't be certain, but it sure seemed like he was having himself a bit of fun.

FROM TOP: Holden Hartman jacket (\$260); SmartWool Hahn's Peak half-zip top (\$100); Timberland System 2-Layer insulated pants (\$120); Ecco Xpedition Sayan Mid boots (\$220); Spy Optic Decker sunglasses (\$150); Level Tempest Windstopper gloves (\$55).

Left: Patagonia Nunuq down jacket (\$350); Helly Hansen Juell Knit cardigan (\$100); Napapijri Starnberg pants (\$175); Kelly Redtail backpack (\$70). Right: Scapegoat Coaster jacket (\$295); Napapijri Kincaid pants (\$175).

Left: Outdoor Research Transcendent vest (\$120); Mountain Hardwear Lightweight Power Stretch zip tee (\$70); Helly Hansen Duro Trek pants (\$90); Serengeti large aviator sunglasses (\$160). Center: Cloudveil Run Don't Walk hoodie (\$155). Right: The North Face Mammatus jacket (\$499).



W A N A K A

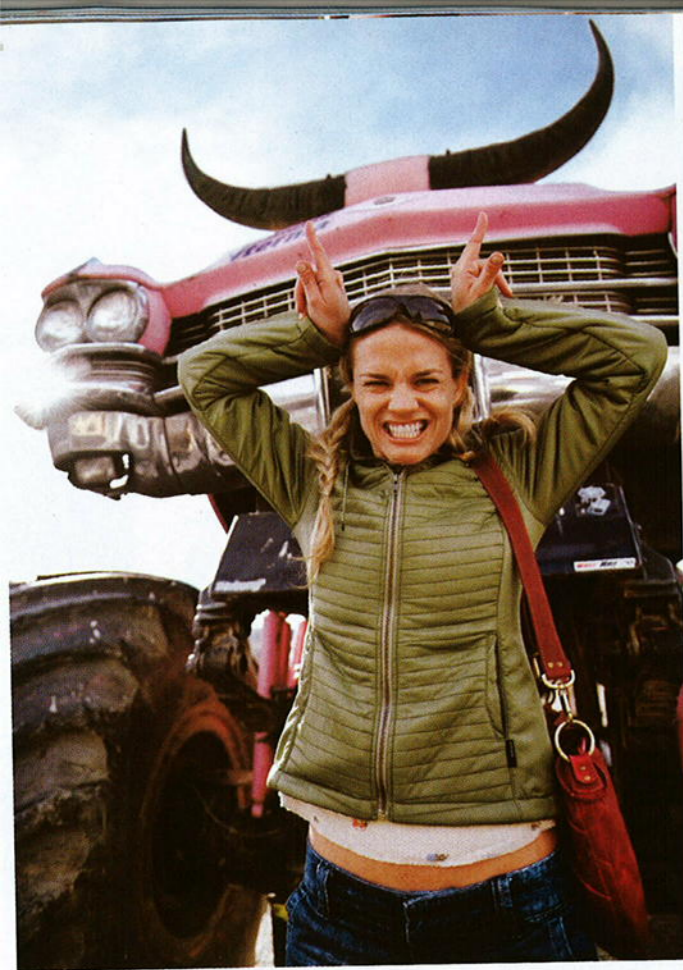
Rock climb, jet boat, bike, riverboard, ski, tramp, or sledge (rip through whitewater face-first on a plastic sled)—the range of adventures in Wanaka, outside Mount Aspiring National Park, is nearly limitless. And yet all activities are tempered by a dose of civility, like a backcountry hut accessible only by helicopter (right), or the town's oversize selection of tasteful restaurants. Hint: Don't leave the good clothes behind.

Oakley Alpine Sherpa coat (\$165); Quiksilver Tyla Vintage jeans (\$88); Aigle Bergen boots (\$199); Spy Optic Dirty Mo sunglasses (\$110).



Fall TRAVEL & APPAREL

Prana Damascus shirt (\$58); Dakine Mid-Weight Ghost rider long-sleeve crew (\$40); Helly Hansen Juell pants (\$80); Serengeti large aviator sunglasses (\$160); MountainSmith Spot backpack (\$60).



MILFORD SOUND & MOERAKI

It should be a felony to skip the South Island's southernmost reaches. To the west is Fiordland National Park, home to the paddlers' paradise of Milford Sound (pictured) and some of the country's best tramping. To the east, Moeraki's spherical boulders (opposite) speckle one of the planet's most unusual coasts.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Arc'teryx Nomad hoodie (\$250); Helly Hansen Duro Trek pants (\$90); The North Face Elevation Pom Pom beanie (\$35); SealLine Baja 5, 10, and 20 dry bags (\$14-\$20). Mountain Hardware Lightweight Power Stretch zip tee (\$70); Few New Zealand Guy Few tee (\$20). REI Sub Kilo sleeping bag (\$239); Columbia Packus Ridge Omni-Tech boots (\$90); Mountain Hardware Helion 2 tent (\$395).

New Zealand ADVENTURE GUIDE

GETTING THERE: Air New Zealand runs 13-hour direct overnight flights from L.A. to Auckland (\$1,600 round-trip; airnewzealand.com). All seasons are great, but austral fall avoids summer crowds and winter's big storms.

NORTH ISLAND: Get straight to the volcanoes of Tongariro National Park. Day hikers should consider an epic called the Tonga Alpine Crossing, while trampers should hit the three-day Tongariro Northern Circuit, one of the country's nine hut-to-hut "Great Walks." NZ's Department of Conservation operates the backcountry huts (\$19; doc.govt.nz), while stately Bayview Chateau Tongariro is a good frontcountry option (\$140; chateau.co.nz).



KAIKOURA: If you make it to this corner of the South Island, consider bunking up at Hapuku Lodge, a warren of luxury tree houses that alone are worth the trip (\$475; hapukulodge.com). Whale Watch Kaikoura runs wildlife-viewing trips (\$100; whalewatch.co.nz). To reach Ohau waterfall and its fun-loving fur seals, head north of Hapuku about six miles on State Highway 1.

MOUNT COOK: Most visitors to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park base themselves at the 124-year-old Hermitage Hotel, which offers comfort at the edge of the wilderness (\$100; hermitage.co.nz). On-site outfitter Alpine Guides provides hiking info and leads trips up Mount Cook (alpineguides.co.nz). For bush flights, drop in to Mt. Cook Ski Planes and ask for the Grand Circle, which, weather permitting, lands on the Tasman Glacier (\$330; mtcookskiplanes.com).

WANAKA: You'll have no trouble drumming up adventure in this town near Mount Aspiring National Park. For climbing guides, contact Adventure Consultants, run by Everest icon Guy Cotter (adventure.co.nz). Mountain bikers should consult Freeride NZ (freeridenz.com), while hikers should tackle the three-day Routeburn Track through Mount Aspiring. Wanaka has tons of accommodations, but the most striking is Whare Kea Lodge, a luxury outpost on Lake Wanaka (\$730; wharekealodge.com). Plan a night in its hell-accessed Whare Kea Chalet.

MILFORD SOUND & MOERAKI: Paddlers ready to explore one of the world's top sea kayaking spots should contact Rosco Gaudin's Milford Sound Sea Kayaks (day trips from \$110; kayakmilford.co.nz). The four-day, hut-to-hut Milford Track is the greatest hike in all of New Zealand. 'Nuff said. Contact the Department of Conservation for reservations (\$215; doc.govt.nz). To visit the otherworldly boulders of Moeraki, cross the South Island and jog 37 miles north of Dunedin. Way worth it. ▲

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF THE BRANDS FEATURED IN THIS STORY, SEE PAGE 108.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Scapegoat Flux jacket (\$275); Quiksilver Leigh top (\$64); Rip Curl Manhattan Trousers jeans (\$52); Smith Optics Prize sunglasses (\$119); El Naturalista Handbag NAO20 (\$350). Quiksilver Lita leather jacket (\$500); Victorinox Pleated Shoulder long-sleeve shirt (\$155); Quiksilver Lindsey wide-leg trouser (\$98); Dansko Nevada Pull-Up boots (\$225). Left: Rab Microlite vest (\$125); SmartWool Micro-weight crew (\$60); Burton Conner Cord pants (\$60). Center: Topo Ranch Duster (\$172); Quiksilver Lindsey wide-leg trouser (\$98). Right: Patagonia Buckshot Flannel shirt (\$75); Dakine Mid-Weight Ghost rider long-sleeve crew (\$40); Lucky Brand Vintage Straight Corduroy pants (\$88).

