University of Canterbury, New Zealand

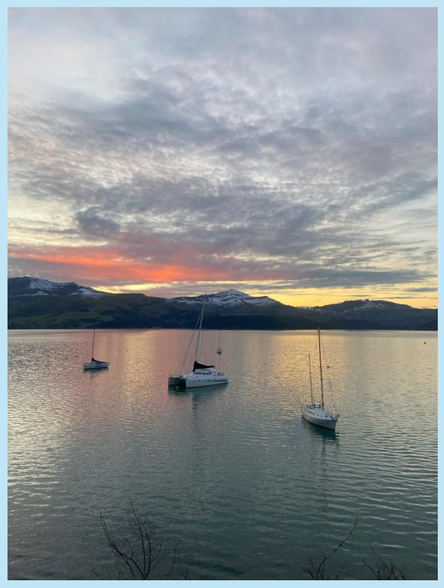
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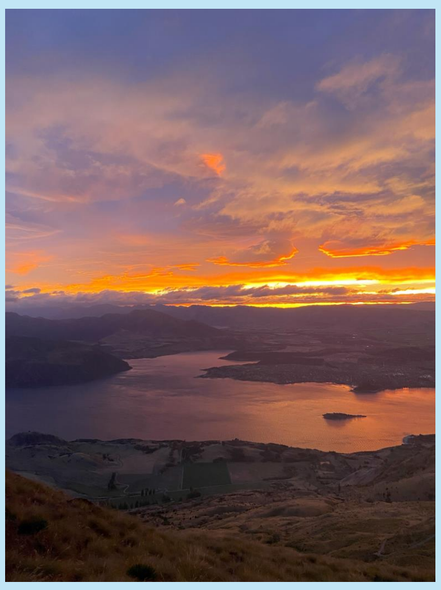
General information

- University of Canterbury is a campus university located in Christchurch on the South Island of New Zealand
- The New Zealand academic year is from February to November so study year abroad students join at the start of the second semester and then stay for the first semester of the next academic year
    - Worth noting many of the international students (from countries other than the UK) only do one semester abroad
- Some very unique modules to choose from, popular choices included:
    - Māori and Indigenous Studies
    - Land Journeys and Ethics (involves a weekend backpacking trip!)
- Lots of brilliant societies – I joined the running and tramping (hiking) clubs











Accommodation

- Most international students stay in Sonoda accommodation
    - Great way to make friends as soon as you arrive
    - Some local students choose to stay here too but it is only available to students in second year and above
- Ilam is another option available to international students
    - This is a much larger accommodation block
    - Mixture of local and international students
    - Available to all years meaning most local students are freshers

Christchurch

- Biggest city on the South Island with a population of 380,000
- Local markets on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays
- University is a 30 minute drive to the beach
    - I learnt to surf while I was there
- The campus is only a 10 minute drive to Christchurch airport (or 25 minutes by public transport)
- Frequent flights from Christchurch airport to the North Island
    - 55 minute flight to Wellington
    - 1 hour 25 minute flight to Auckland
- Christchurch is a 4 hour drive to Picton where you can catch the ferry to Wellington (North Island)
    - This ferry takes 3 hours 30 minutes
- I absolutely loved living in Christchurch, it still felt quite small but had everything I needed

South Island highlights

- Mount Cook
    - New Zealand's highest peak
    - Mount Cook National Park is a brilliant place to hike – I did the Hooker Valley Track and the Sealy Tarns hike which were both fantastic
- Queenstown
    - Known as the adventure capital of the world and for good reason!
    - This is where I did my first (and definitely last!) bungy jump
    - Many other adventure sports available to try
- Wanaka
    - Beautiful town between Christchurch and Queenstown
    - Roy's Peak hike at sunrise is a must-do
- Abel Tasman
    - Abel Tasman track is a multi-day hike in the north of the South Island
    - It is one of the ten Great Walks of New Zealand and a highlight of my trip

Transportation

- You can get almost everywhere in Christchurch and the surrounding suburbs by public bus
    - Very affordable – bus journeys only cost $1 (approx. 50p) with a student metro card
- However, if you want to travel outside of Christchurch, New Zealand unfortunately doesn't have a lot of accessible public transport
- If you are keen to see the island, and especially if you are keen to hike, you will have to hire your own vehicle
- I hired campervans with friends to travel around each island – this worked out as an affordable but fun way to see the country

Travel

- Due to the semester dates in New Zealand, there is a three month Christmas holiday over the summer
- Most international students took this opportunity to travel outside of New Zealand
    - Australia and Fiji were popular destinations
- You also get mid semester breaks during both semesters so there is plenty of time to explore New Zealand as well as another nearby countries if you are keen to do so





