

Places to Go: Te Anau Airport at Manapouri

Contributed by Ruth Presland

HAVE YOU EVER thought about visiting Te Anau Airport at Manapouri? Here is some information to help plan a trip to one of the most spectacular regions in the south west of the South Island.

Firstly, pick your weather. You will find the best conditions will be when a large anticyclone is over southern New Zealand. At Manapouri the prevailing winds are from the west and north west, which can be fairly smooth flying. On good flying days, from about 4 pm, a southerly/sea breeze kicks in within the valley.

Getting there

As with any new destination, it pays to check your map in advance to help plan a smooth arrival. Have a close look for the aircraft reporting points. Familiarising yourself with these at your kitchen table will ensure an enjoyable and relaxed arrival to any airspace that you are not familiar with.

Shallow Bay is used by east bound traffic coming down Lake Manapouri. Balloon Loop is a prominent loop in the river 2NM east of Shallow Bay on your right, as you turn on to finals on 14. Kepler swamp is a large swamp situated off the threshold of 08 extending north to Te Anau. Hidden lakes refer to the small lakes 3 NM northwest of the township at the entrance to the first arm.

Traffic in and around Te Anau can be frequent and varied. Wings and Water operate a Cessna 206 float plane which is based at the Te Anau township water front. Helicopters also fly from there so keep a good look out and listen out on your radio. At the airport itself, traffic includes helicopter training, scenic flight operations and parachute jumping. With this in mind please keep to the circuit - the jumpers land on the lake side of the terminal. The parachute jump plane sometimes does tight low level turns onto 34 (on the lake side) so again keep a vigilant look out and make your intentions clear on the radio. Be careful not to let the awe inspiring scenery distract you from making your position reports in a timely and accurate fashion.

Also be aware there are other private strips in the vicinity, one of which can be busy with microlight training. This airstrip is 3.5 miles south of runway 14.



Clockwise from top: The award winning terminal building; Possibly the most scenic fuel installation in NZ; Hidden Lakes viewed from the local float plane.

to hotel style. Te Anau is 20 km from the airport and Manapouri Township is 4 km from the airport. At Manapouri, for camping or cabins try Lakeview Motor camp. They have a range of accommodation for budget conscious flyers. Lake View Hotel has rooms or try the local B&B called Connemara which is owned by a pilot. They have cottages and a car available for visiting the surrounding area. Call Murray Hagen on (03) 249 9399 or (021) 220 7889.

Things to do

The places to visit are vast and varied for all interests. Try out the Milford Sound Glow worm caves, Manapouri or Doubtful Sound day trips, overnight trips, or Manapouri power station (which is highly recommended). If you have always wanted to fly in a float plane, Alan will cheerfully take you out. This is a real blast and you may well entice a few pilot yarns from him as well - Wings and Water, ph (03) 249 7405.

Before you leave take your

own scenic flight over Lake Manapouri. Look for the monument on an island, south on the lake 4NM from the township.

You could also fly over the Fiords, though some mountain flying training is then advisable. If you would like a local pilot to act as your guide, Ruth (me) or Wayne from www.mountainflyingnewzealand.com are only too happy to help out. Just let us know prior to your arrival.

For local advice, always ask. We'd much rather spend 10 minutes on the phone, than days looking for you! For local Te Anau - Manapouri advice call Russell Baker on 0274 343 008.

Have a great trip while you discover what this fantastic region has on offer. You will meet some wonderful locals, enjoy a warm welcome and experience what is the South Island's best kept secret: Te Anau Airport, Manapouri.

Useful contacts

Airport Manager email: qaosh@ihug.co.nz
 Airport Secretary: Lee (03) 249 6720,
 email: admin@airfiordland.com
 Aero Club President: Murray 021 220 7889

A warm welcome awaits

There is a brand new aero club building currently being constructed and well on its way to being finished which will ensure a warm welcome to visiting pilots. A landing charge of \$15 is payable (and monitored by cameras) so please visit the award winning terminal and make your payment to save in administration fees.

You will find fuel at Te Anau Airport, Manapouri in the form of Avgas and Jet A1, which requires a Kaurilands card. BP avgas is also available at old Te Anau strip by arrangement, if you happen to get caught out. Don't forget to check the expiry date on your fuel card before you leave to save stress on your flying holiday! Also, pack your strong and sensible tie downs as permanent pickets are limited and the ground is hard and stoney.

Transport can be arranged by the airport staff at Manapouri, phone (03) 249 6720.

Places to stay

So you have made it - why not stay a day or three. Accommodation is available at both Manapouri and Te Anau townships and varies from holiday parks and motels