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# 4 Great Days with Mountain Flying New Zealand

RUTH Presland is a familiar face around New Zealand airfields, providing a South Island contact for Tecnam NZ, writing the Places to Go pages for KiwiFlyer, and being one half of the team behind U-Fly Wanaka and Mountain Flying New Zealand, based at Wanaka Airfield.

Mountain Flying New Zealand offer tailor made mountain flying training for pilots at all levels of capability. Courses are usually run over 4 days and include around 12 to 16 hours flying in total, although Ruth says that less or more can easily be arranged depending on budget and time. They offer a comfortable and well equipped training environment for all pilots, whether mature, or new and just starting out. Courses develop understanding as well as the learning of standard procedures for various mountain flying requirements such as ridge crossing, etc.

A course in mountain flying increases pilot skills generally and builds a safety foundation on which long term repeat lessons in the mountains become very valuable. Ruth says that weather in Wanaka is good most times of the year but particularly so in August – so plan your trip soon. She says that half day and full day packages are available which offer great value at \$985 and \$1685 respectively (current at June 2011). Enquiries for tailor made programmes to suit your individual requirements are welcome at any time.

### A Customer Testimonial

A good number of Mountain Flying New Zealand's customers come from overseas, choosing to combine a scenic aviation holiday with an advancement in their flying skills while also enjoying some great southern hospitality. Two such recent visitors were John and Paul Clifford from the United Kingdom who wrote of their experience, providing a glowing testimonial. We'll leave it to John to explain what four days with Mountain Flying New Zealand was like. John writes:

"In February along with my younger brother Paul I ventured to the other side of the world to see what mountain flying in the Southern Alps was all about.

Our instructors were Ruth Presland and Wayne Allanson, a young couple who own and run Mountain Flying New Zealand, a flight training business at Wanaka Airfield. We were to fly in two seaters, a Tecnam P92 and a Tecnam Super Echo high wing (both

of which we had previous experience in). Although still quite young, both Ruth and Wayne have a great deal of mountain flying experience and are expanding this side of their business. They also run tourist flights from a second company, U-Fly Wanaka.

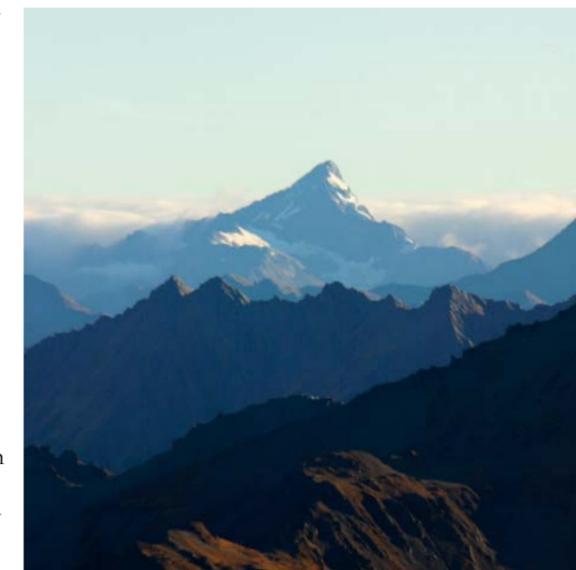
Following our arrival at Wanaka airstrip on a beautiful sunny Monday morning in early February, Ruth and Wayne explained that they had arranged a four day itinerary for us but it could be modified if we

end - although not until we had eaten a fantastic steak at the Lake Hawea Hotel in the evening.

Day three was the most daunting and emotional day of all with a flight up to Mount Cook via Fox Glacier which was our stop for lunch. On landing on the tarmac runway at Mount Cook we were met by Richard Royds, one of the joint owners of Mount Cook Ski-planes who had waited to meet the 'two aviators from England' and

we could not have asked for better hospitality. The night was spent at the splendid Hermitage Hotel where there are lots of reminders of Sir Edmund Hilary's pioneering climbs before his famous ascent of Everest in 1955. The following morning was an exciting surprise to find that we had been booked on a trip on one of the ski-planes which landed us on the Glacier and to our astonishment the next ski-plane to arrive brought a wedding party. The happy couple were married on the glacier!

Our last day took us southwards again with a touchdown at the gliding capital of Omarama where we had a 'tea' stop and pleasant conversations with members of the gliding fraternity - a surprising number who turned out to be English! Our final leg was back to



Learn how to fly here safely with Mountain Flying New Zealand.

Wanaka flying over the Dingle saddle and Lakes Hawea and Wanaka. Apart from being excellent instructors Ruth and Wayne were wonderful travelling companions providing us with many laughs along the way. We feel indebted to them for organising such an amazing experience. We both learnt a lot about the intricacies of mountain flying with an emphasis not only on how to fly a plane but to be aware about the vagaries of the weather and wind, how to cross geographical features such as saddles, and to realise the navigational difficulties of flying in the mountains, including good traffic awareness.

For anyone wishing to undertake a mountain flying course this would be hard to better, simply because New Zealand has the most beautiful mountain scenery in the world and Mountain Flying New Zealand is simply the best." John Clifford, UK.

After a night on the island in an apartment at "Loosie's" we flew back to the mainland and over Fiordland - full of picturesque mountains and valleys, finally landing in the hot sunshine for lunch on a grass airfield near Te Anau. In the afternoon it was onwards up the west coast to spectacular Milford Sound. Maintaining the correct altitude here proved somewhat difficult because of updraughts but this was what mountain flying was all about. Another landing for tea on the grass airstrip at Glenorchy at the northern end of Lake Wakatipu and then we headed back to Wanaka, bringing our second day to an

Wanaka flying over the Dingle saddle and Lakes Hawea and Wanaka.

For more information Contact Ruth or Wayne at Mountain Flying New Zealand on 03 443 4005, email: [info@u-flywanaka.co.nz](mailto:info@u-flywanaka.co.nz) or visit [www.mountainflyingnewzealand.com](http://www.mountainflyingnewzealand.com)

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