Milford Track, Fiordland National Park

South Island, New Zealand

This past March I took a trip to New Zealand to visit my sister. As part of the trip, my mom and I took an awesome backpacking trip through Fiordland National Park. It’s on the west coast of the south island. The trip was on a pretty famous trail called the Milford Track. It starts at one of New Zealand’s largest lakes (Lake Te Anau) and goes for 33 miles through a BEAUTIFUL glacial valley, up and over a pass and ends up at the Milford Sound. Here are some of the highlights of the trip...

The trail map...
The trip took 4 days total. The first was mostly bus, and boat and a short hike. The other three were lots and lots of hiking and frolicking. This is my mom and I at the trail head:

The first half of the trip is through the Clinton Valley. It is one of many, many, many glacial valleys in Fijorland NP. We were lucky to have had a lot of rain the first day because it meant waterfalls. Hundreds of waterfalls!
Backpacking is pretty cushy in this park. The trails are very well maintained and there is no technical climbing. They only allow a certain number of people to start the track each day, there are awesome huts with cook stoves, bunk beds and fireplaces for lodging...

The water is so fresh, clean and uncontaminated; there is no need to carry lots of water because you can drink it right from the falls and the creeks...
Another example of some of the beautiful waterfalls...

There are hundreds of cool factoids about NZ’s unique ecology, and here is one-
The south island of NZ has over 30 species of ferns. One of my favorites, the tree fern can get up to 10+ feet tall:
The valley from one of the upper ridges...
From the same ridge, looking the other direction...
If you ever want someone to talk you into a trip to New Zealand, please speak to me (or Dorothy, we are both in love with this country). My sister married a Kiwi (the affectionate term from someone from NZ) and has lived there almost 20 years. This was my 5th time there. The people are friendly and love to show off their country. It’s a very easy county to travel, and you can get a bit of everything there!

For more info on this and other backpacking trips, see the NZ website: