

Queenstown Fun Facts

- Queenstown was originally named the 'Camp' by William Rees. The name Queenstown has two theories, the most common being that it was gold prospectors, captivated by the beauty of the surrounding mountains and rivers, who hit upon its name when they pronounced it a "town fit for a Queen". The other is that it was named Queenstown after Queenstown in Ireland (now called Cobh).
- Queenstown is at a latitude of 45 degrees south. Only two other countries in the world, Chile and Argentina, are at the same latitude.
- Queenstown has a resident population of about 28,000 and welcomes more than 100 times that number (3.3 million) visitors per year.
- The Remarkables mountain range was so named in 1857 by a surveyor Alexander Garvie who called it that after seeing the dramatic razorback mountain range in all its glory at sunset. The view across the lake to The Remarkables has now become one of the most photographed in the Southern Lakes region.
- The Remarkables mountain range is one of only two mountain ranges in the world to run directly north to south (the other is the Rockies).
- Renowned as Queenstown's 'Lady of the Lake', the TSS Earnslaw steamship was first launched in 1912 – the same year as the Titanic. It was built by J.McGregor and Co in Dunedin, cost £20,850 to complete and was named after the highest peak in the region, Mt Earnslaw, which stands at 2,819m (9,248ft).
- The TSS Earnslaw was a working ship for many years transporting sheep, cargo and passengers to surrounding high country stations. In 1969 she was retired and purchased by Fiordland Travel (now Real Journeys). She is now one of the oldest tourist attractions in Central Otago and the only remaining passenger-carrying coal-fired steamship in the Southern Hemisphere.
- Despite being over 100 years old, the TSS Earnslaw still works 14 hour days in the summer months and cruises for 11 months of the year. She even made a brief cameo appearance as an Amazon River boat in the 2008 movie Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.
- Queenstown's founder William Rees first arrived on the shore of Lake Wakatipu in February 1860. Some of his descendants still live here!
- In 1885 all Queenstown hotels were run by women who all happened to be widows.
- The Shotover River is known to be the richest gold bearing river of its size in the world.
- Sir Henry Wigley founded commercial skiing in Queenstown in 1947.
- Set up in 1958, Queenstown's Kawarau Jet was the world's first commercial jet boat business.
- Bungy New Zealand's Kawarau Bridge bungy site (established 1988) was the first commercial bungy operation in the world.
- The highest bungy jump in Australasia is Queenstown's Nevis Highwire at 134 metres or 44 stories high.
- People over 75 years old can bungy jump for free in Queenstown (the oldest person to bungy jump is a 94 year old man from Southland, New Zealand).
- The most people who have bungy jumped together in New Zealand is 8. The record was set in 1999 at the Kawarau Bungy Bridge.

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- Queenstown's longest snowfall was in July 1995 when snow fell for 11 consecutive days and lay on the ground for 14 days.
- In September 1999, President Clinton was the first US president ever to visit Queenstown.
- The Frisbee Golf course in the Queenstown Gardens was the first of its kind established in New Zealand and continues to be a popular activity for visitors and locals.
- Queenstown's Skyline Gondola moves 35 cabins up and down Bob's Peak 365 days a year and at its fastest rate it can move 1,100 people per hour. When passengers arrive at the top of the gondola they are at 790 metres above sea level.
- Queenstown's stunning scenery and world-class expertise makes it an ideal destination for shooting feature films, commercials and promotional videos. Queenstown and the Southern Lakes region have featured in movies like The Hobbit trilogy, The Lord of the Rings trilogy, The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, Vertical Limit, Prince Caspian and the Bollywood superhit I Hate Luv Storys.
- Central Otago is New Zealand's highest and the world's most southerly wine region. It is New Zealand's seventh largest wine region.
- There are just under 200 vineyards in the Central Otago region within a 1½ hour drive of Queenstown. Of these, 80 have cellar doors for tasting and purchasing wine and around 30 are wineries with wine-making facilities (12 of these also have winery restaurants). 80% of the grapes produced are Pinot Noir, the wine for which the region is world-renowned.
- In April 2014 The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, William and Kate, visited Queenstown. They tasted wine at Amisfield Winery and Bistro and took a spin on the Shotover Jet.
- The remake of Pete's Dragon, the beloved 1977 movie about an orphaned boy and his magical best friend, was filmed in locations around Queenstown in 2016.
- At the start of 2017, Disney's *A Wrinkle in Time* production brought stars such as Oprah Winfrey and Reese Witherspoon to our shores.
- In June 2017, stars including Tom Cruise and Henry Cavill arrived in Queenstown for a month-long stay filming scenes *Mission: Impossible – Fallout*, the sixth movie in the *Mission Impossible* franchise.
- In January 2020, stars including Benedict Cumberbatch and Kirsten Dunst visited Queenstown to film Jane Campion's next feature film *The Power of the Dog*.

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