



## HIGH PEAK

A Hunting Destination for the Discerning Few.

### The Top 10 things to consider when Hunting in New Zealand

If you've heard about hunting in New Zealand and like the sound of it, then there are a few things to keep in mind before you get started. In our 28 years hosting hunters, we've learned a thing or two from our clients' [experiences](#). Here are the top ten points to consider.

#### 1. Hunting Season.

It may seem obvious to some, but we should say it out nonetheless; New Zealand seasons are opposite to those in the Northern Hemisphere! While you can hunt all our big game species at any time of year without restriction, our hunting season usually starts in early March when stags' antlers have stripped and they're ready for the roar.

Broadly speaking, April is peak season for deer species and May is peak season for tahr and chamois with June still a great time to hunt. Once July comes around things can get pretty chilly and at High Peak we like to let the animals winter in peace.

#### 2. Wishlist.

Being a small island in a big ocean means most hunters visiting New Zealand will be travelling a fair distance to get here (at considerable time and cost) so you'll probably want to make it count.

This could mean getting the biggest trophy buck you can find, or perhaps hunting good examples of each of our top five big game species. By defining your wishlist and your budget, you can then use them as a means to determine your hunt duration, hunt type and the outfitter that will make it happen.

#### 3. Trip Duration.

So now that you've created your wishlist, it makes sense to give yourself enough time to achieve it. Make the flight over, recover a little from any effects of jet lag, go hunting and get your animals. We strongly recommend exploring this beautiful country post-hunt – allowing enough time for adverse weather!

For example, for a single species [Red Stag hunt](#), you should plan to spend seven days *minimum* in New Zealand; a day for arrival, three days hunting, two spare days for weather or sightseeing and a departure day. There is no point in rushing something like this, especially if it's a once-in-a-lifetime trip, so give yourself ample time to enjoy it properly.





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### 4. The Hunt.

Now that you have worked out when you want to visit, what you want to hunt and the length of your hunting trip, you need to work out the type of hunter you are and the experience you're looking for.

*A hunt is a hunt, right?* No way! Like many game destinations, New Zealand offers a full range of hunting experiences for a vast range of trophy species. If you're a free-range type hunter, who isn't concerned about trophy size, then you'll be looking for a different experience to the hunter after the biggest record-book score he or she can afford. This should be a major factor in outfitter selection.

### 5. The Outfitter.

Which brings us to outfitter selection. This is one of the single biggest decisions you'll make upon deciding to hunt NZ. Some operations cater to those after record-book scores where the actual hunting experience is a secondary priority. Others are all about the hunt with the trophy *size* being less important.

Some cater to both by offering a select few fair-chase hunts on large estates for a full range of trophy sizes but these won't be cheap.

When looking for the right outfitter, think *Good, Cheap, Big* – and you can pick any two.

### 6. Fitness.

You've decided where, when and what you're hunting. You also know how you want to do it. If you're an experience-oriented hunter who wants to get out there and really enjoy a physical hunt, it's a good idea to get in shape first. The earlier you start working on your fitness, the better prepared you'll be both physically and mentally when the first hill presents itself.

### 7. Hunting Firearms.

You want to make sure you're appropriately armed for the task. Ask your outfitter the appropriate calibre for the animals on your wishlist. Most outfitters should provide top quality firearms for the animals they offer.

Alternatively, if you already have the right tool for the job, importation of firearms into NZ is a straightforward process requiring a \$25 [temporary permit](#) issued by the NZ Police upon arrival. If in doubt, ask your outfitter for advice.





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### 8. Your Trophy.

Or maybe *Trophies*. What do you plan to do to your trophy once you have harvested the animal? Prior to the hunt, you should give some thought as to what you'd like to do with [your trophy](#). Full body, shoulder or European mount?

You have two options with mounting. Either mount the trophy here in NZ with your outfitter-recommended taxidermist or expedite for mounting by your taxidermist back home. Your outfitter should arrange field preparation and delivery to their recommended taxidermist as part of the guide fee, after which it's up to you. But having an idea of what you want to bring home before you depart will help you focus on achieving exactly that.

### 9. Your Companion.

Some prefer to hunt alone with a guide as their only company but for us, hunting is an experience to be shared. Whether it's your wife, father, son, best friend or hunting buddies, New Zealand should be considered as a destination that is well set up for sharing your hunt with the people who matter most. The right outfitter should be able to provide a great range of alternative experiences for those who don't wish to hunt, while those who *do* should be welcome to join in on the thrill of a good hunt.

### 10. The Story.

This takes us right back to the start – the very reason you're considering New Zealand in the first place. Forget the trophy, the lodge, the score. Why do you really want to come all the way out here? For many, it's about the story of the experience and being able to recount it to people for years to come. But most of all, it's about your memory of a valuable experience to be treasured like gold. It's a good thing to keep in mind when considering any hunting adventure, whether it be in New Zealand or anywhere else.

*We want to know what you think – please get in touch by email [simon@highpeak.co.nz](mailto:simon@highpeak.co.nz) or visit [www.huntingredstag.com/](http://www.huntingredstag.com/)*

