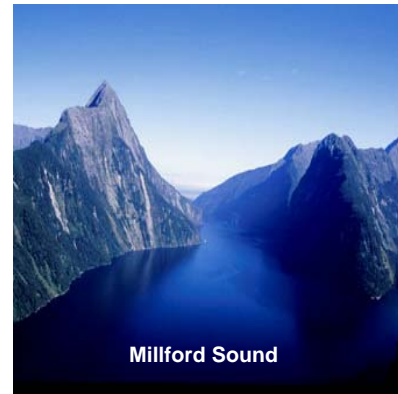


A CONSIDERATION FOR LONG RANGE NEW ZEALAND PLANNING



Generally, when clients plan a second or third New Zealand visit, the approach is to repeat the experiences they enjoyed the most from their previous trip(s) and add a few new stops. That is the same approach that Marte and I take each year with our New Zealand adventure – we repeat some of our favorite stops and try to uncover a few new nuggets to add to our itinerary.

During our 2007 trip, we spent time in Fiordland and the areas south of Queenstown.....and we did discover some new nuggets. One of those nuggets turned out to provide what may have been the most spectacular day we've enjoyed in all of our New Zealand experiences. That day is detailed in this report.

We wanted to see Millford Sound, but were not interested in taking a full day to do it. We had reserved one of Fiordland's outstanding guides and given him these instructions: "during our time with you, we want to do a 5 to 10 minute helicopter tour of Millford Sound and then have the copter drop us at some spectacular stream in the area for a day of fishing with you." The guide assured me he had just the ticket to satisfy our request, but he mentioned that the weather was unpredictable, more so in this area than much of NZ. As we had three days of fishing scheduled with this guide, he told us that most likely we would have at least one of those three days that would allow for the Millford - Fiordland "combo trip" we were requesting.



We did have such a time. The winds were calm and the skies bright blue. These conditions stayed with us the entire day – one of those very special NZ days. We did our 10 minute copter tour of Millford Sound and captured it with the camera – truly spectacular scenery.

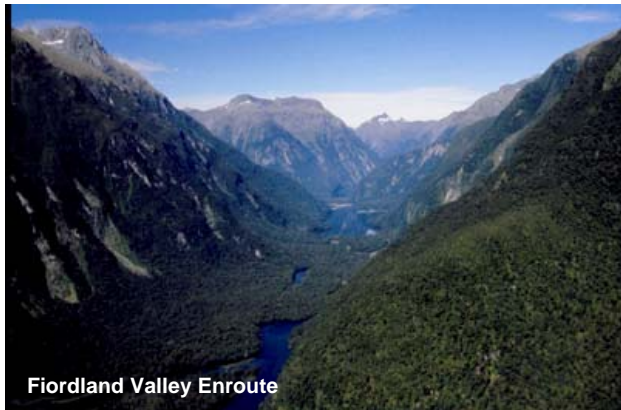
Next, the copter whisked us through some stunning, rocky-ridge rimmed valleys, the sort of stuff that gives Fiordland

its reputation. We were dropped on a small stream (unnamed of course) amidst rocky crags towering above us.

We could have walked this stream in its pristine environment *without* a rod in hand and it would have been a wonderful day.....however, we had the added bonus of having one of my best NZ fishing days ever. We released 10 fish, all on dry flies, between 4 and 7 pounds. The copter picked us up, dropped us at the Millford heliport, and we made our way back to our lodge for a delightful dinner and relaxing evening.



We also found a super stay near Te Anau which we used for our base of operations.....Fiordland Lodge. Wonderful ambiance, service, and cuisine. It would rival many of the top stays in NZ such as Blanket Bay or Grasmere, but it was priced well below those. It could be termed a “value, high end stay,” words that don’t often go together.



Fiordland Valley Enroute



The Unnamed River Valley

A Catch: the river we fished needs 7 to 10 days rest between fishing days. What that means is that this particular Millford-Fiordland combo day can only happen 3 or 4 times a month. Early planning is needed to have this as part of your NZ itinerary – think 2009. There are many other terrific waters in this area so the Fiordland stream referenced is just part of three or four good days of fishing here. Also, for the more rugged adventurer, the guy we fished with also guides two or three night campouts in Fiordland – lots of great options in the wonders of Fiordland, New Zealand.



Fiordland Lodge

Don Muelrath
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