

## Into the wild with.... ROB SUISTED

Rob Suisted is professional nature and outdoor photographer with a 50,000 image library – several of which have graced the cover of this magazine. He's published seven books – his most recent, *Majestic New Zealand*, was released in November last year.

**What's your favourite piece of outdoor kit?** After a considerable amount of camera equipment that follows me quite closely, I'd have to say that the new generation of sumptuous sleeping mats are gold. I'm using an Exped downmat 7.

**What's your most expensive piece of kit?** Excluding camera gear it's probably a Macpac Olympus tent. Not fully taken with the latest model, having used three now – not as much room for a tall boy like me.

**What do you pack for a typical trip?** I don't have typical trips – a lot of it I just throw everything I might need into the Jeep and head for the South Island. The rifle often comes along to collect wild organic venison.

**Where's your favourite place to escape into the outdoors?** It's hard to beat the tussock tops in the Glaisnock Wilderness Area (Fiordland) – stunning scenery, challenging route finding, the likelihood of going where no human has grovelled before.

**Is it the destination or the getting there that counts?** It's the journey for me, absolutely. Just aiming for a destination tends to take us away from the present and our enjoyment lessens as a result.

**Best food for keeping your energy up?** I've just got into making my own organic venison jerky; it's making my saliva run just thinking about it.

**Where would you most like to be right now?** On top of Mt Durward in the Smyth Range in Westland. The place names – Scamper Torrent, Amethyst Ravine, Whirling Water, Glamour Glen, Moonbeam Torrent – named by a poet.

**Who would you most like to go for a tramp with?** Someone with shared love, enjoyment, and respect of the mountains, with a good sense of humour and who is an expert pancake chef and barista in small tents on pit days.

**What's one outdoor adventure you'd like to put on your bucket list?** Bouvet Island (Antarctica) would be a cracker.

**What are you most proud of?** *Majestic New Zealand*. I feel like my photography has got to a level of maturity that makes a book like this finally possible.

**What does the outdoors mean to you?** A place that I can be present. Worries of the world drop away and it's a rare time of clarity where you can watch your own mind at work. Simplicity and happiness comes from that. That sounds pretty zen; it's also the physical challenge that I love.

**What's your top outdoor tip?** Use your eyes and senses. Immerse yourself in the landscape and environment and always be inquisitive – don't just move through it.

**Where's the best place to get away from it all?** I love taking the Jeep around the south coast of Wellington. Whether it's sitting watching seals at Tongue Point, going for a dive, or climbing to the old WWII observation station on the hills above, it's a great tonic from the office.



**What's the worst thing about getting into the hills?** Packing and unpacking, and organising food.

**Do you prefer to stay below the bushline or get above it?** Above – you get stuck in the tent much more, but when the weather clears it's great for the soul.

**Are you a GPS or a map and compass person?** Both. I've always been strong at navigation with compass and map, and really enjoy the challenge. I sometimes carry a Spot satellite tracking beacon with the tracks live on my blog site ([blog.naturespic.com](http://blog.naturespic.com)) for people to follow.

**What have you got going on at the moment?** I have some technically challenging assignments pending, and I'm hoping to get over to Easter Island in a few months.



Special offer! Rob is offering Wilderness readers signed/dedicated copies of *Majestic New Zealand* on his website. Head to <http://bit.ly/MajesticWilderness> to make an order.