[High/Low]

Christchurch

Tidily manicured gardens, Gothic Revival buildings, and the winding River Avon once had many calling Christchurch, New Zealand, "more English than England." Earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 destroyed some of that veneer, but the devastation offered an opportunity for creative reinvention with pop-up shops and übercool architecture. Visit in summer (mid-December to mid-March), when Christchurch buzzes with cultural events. *christchurchnz.com.* —*Amy S. Eckert*

GO

Worth It: The British-style double-decker bus tours of **Discover Christchurch** offer a fun intro to the city, from the 150-year-old Botanic Gardens to pop-up interactive public art. $25. *011-64-3-385-5775; hasslefreetours.co.nz.* Learn about Christchurch's earthquakes at the multisensory **Quake City** museum. $15.73. *011-64-3-365-8375; quakecity.co.nz.*

On the Cheap: A visit to Christchurch's most famous postquake innovation, the **Cardboard Cathedral,** near Cathedral Square, is free (donations are appreciated). Constructed of pressed cardboard tubes, steel, and glass, this Anglican church is as beautiful as it is innovative. *011-64-3-366-0046; cardboardcathedral.org.nz.*

EAT

Indulge: Award-winning **Pescatore** serves up artfully arranged dishes of local lamb, salmon, and oysters in a space overlooking picturesque Hagley Park. A full meal with appetizer and dessert costs $90; a nine-course tasting menu is $102 ($164 if paired with wines). Dinner only, Tuesday–Saturday. *011-64-3-371-0257; thegeorge.com/restaurant-dining/pescatore.*

Budget Bites: The coffee is good at **C1 Espresso,** but the sliders are out of this world. For $16, you get a combo of three, from black bean with lotus root to spicy lamb meatball, delivered to your table via pneumatic tube, Jetsons-style. *c1espresso.co.nz.* Grab inexpensive sandwiches and pizza at food stalls in the **Re:Start Container Mall,** a shopping district constructed of repurposed shipping containers. *restart.org.nz.*

Currency exchange at press time:
$1 USD = $1.27 NZD

STAY

Big Spender: Sleek lines and polished wood form the decor of the 53-room **George,** which overlooks the River Avon and is a pleasant walk from Christchurch's cultural center. Rates start at $238. *011-64-3-379-4560; thegeorge.com.*

Smart Saver: The 34-room **Towers on the Park** offers moderately priced lodging on leafy Hagley Park. Choose from a variety of room types: standard, family units, and executive and spa suites. Rates from $114. *011-64-3-348-0613; towersonthepark.co.nz.*

JO CHAMBERS/ALAMY

CATHEDRAL SQUARE

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