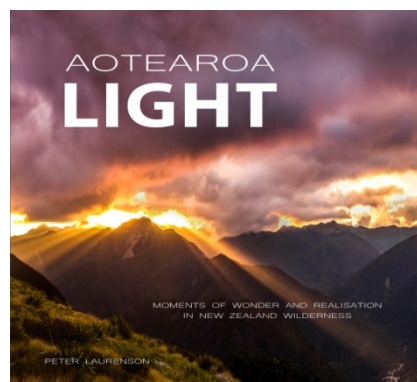


Top of the South Farming
August 2025
Book Review
Tony Orman

***Aotearoa Light – Moments of wonder and
realisation in New Zealand wilderness***
By Peter Laurenson
Bateman Books, \$69.99



This is simply one stunning book with striking photographs of New Zealand's wilderness areas, complemented by nicely written chapters of the author's climbs. "Light" is the underlying theme, and the author isn't reluctant to rise from his sleeping bag before dawn to capture the key lighting moment of sunrise or to wait for the "golden hour" towards twilight.

The author's stated aim is to provoke an appreciation of the country's natural beauty – and a will to recognise and deal with any environmental threats. Peter Laurenson isn't afraid to briefly snipe into politics and point a finger at short sighted government policies narrowly focused on GDP while ignoring environmental values.

I am constantly bemused by a trend in publishers, in using "Aotearoa". Or should it be "New Zealand"? The photographs admirably capture wilderness beauty enhanced by light patterns often of dawn and dusk. Be assured, Marlborough, North West Nelson and Westland feature.

It is a superb coffee table book and more, i.e. as a volume to delve into after an initial read and savour again and again. Beautifully designed and excellently presented by the publisher, it is highly recommended.