

MOUNT TONGARIRO via HARDMAN'S RIDGE

Topo50 Map: BH35 Turangi & BH34 Raurimu

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START: Exit Taupo on SH1 down the lake for 47km in 45 minutes to Turangi then:

- Follow the Desert Highway (**SH1**), turn off right to SH46 for Rangipo
- Continue on **SH46** to the T-junction with **SH47** and turn left
- At 90km (1:15 min) turn left on to gravel road for Mangatepopo & Tongariro Alpine Crossing – speed limit 40kph
- Park at car park with toilets at 96km and about 1 hour 30 minutes driving from Taupo.

Rough Description: A fairly strenuous walk of 6-7 hours covering about 16km, with another 3-4km added for altitude gain and loss, in some of the wildest terrain in the Tongariro National Park. Starts on the tourist track from Mangatepopo car park towards the Tongariro Alpine Crossing and branches off left (N) over the Mangatepopo Stream after about 40 minutes to gain Hardman's Ridge. Three hours uphill grunt gets to the top of Mount Tongariro whilst offering splendid views of Tongariro and the New Alpine Crossing track. South Crater is then circled clockwise to meet the "crossing" track just below Red Crater from where it is 2:30 minutes back to Mangatepopo car park.

Detail: From the car park (**WP01**^{1090masl}) follow the Alpine Crossing track past the Mangatepopo Hut. At about 40 minutes to just when the rough rocky outcrops start to occur on the right hand side (S) and the valley on the left is quite narrow, look for a small unmarked track on the left. This is also just before the outcrops of rock on the slope to the north (on the left) occur. This track (**WP03**^{1212masl}) slips off into the valley, parallels the "Crossing" track for a few metres then crosses the stream and heads due north steeply uphill. It is a bit of a grunt upslope on the old, much degraded track to gain the crest (**WP04**^{1333masl}) of the ridge just below some rock outcrops. Head up the ridge (ENE) where there are some natural mini-terraces (a Himalayan Bhutanese farmer would have these cultivated) and over a flattish crest (**WP5**^{1399masl}), down through a dip which offers a good spot for "smoko". From here there are superb views of the flows and fans coming off Tongariro and a first glimpse of the new "Alpine Crossing" track.

Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu from Hardman's Ridge



Distances and times are taken from the Police Station in Taupo and the route can be followed above 1. Yellow marks tramp



Another 30 minutes steady ascent on the ridge gains a rocky top (**WP6**^{1516masl}) from where superb views of the new crossing path are seen as well as the very clear channels of the flows on Ngauruhoe. The track now being followed is clearer and there are a few cairns to be found. Soon after this the serious work of the day commences as the slopes of Tongariro are hit with a hefty grunt occurring in-line with a small bluff (**WP7**^{1606masl}). There is a slight respite at about 2:15 minutes when a small shelf (**WP08**^{1669masl}) is gained before passing through a slight dip and then it is up gain on loose scoria gravel and a small scoria wall has to be surmounted. Twenty minutes later the scoria track gets steeper then it eases to cross (**WP09**^{1770masl}) to the N bank of the gullied stream line being paralleled. This next section is very steep, very loose scoria and a bit dangerous and advice is to cross back to the other (S) side of the gully and go up the rocks there at the S (**WP10**^{1932masl}) end of the ridge. From here it is almost a pleasant scramble up the rocks to the summit (**WP11**^{1967masl}) of Tongariro where the remnants of the old trig points can be seen.

New Alpine crossing track



After lunch on the crest follow the poled route to the NE which circles round "South Crater" giving new views of the Alpine Crossing, Ngauruhoe plus the Blue and Emerald Lakes (**WP12** ^{1889masl}). This track is a bit rough and there are patches of unstable, loose scoria but nothing too technical or difficult and within about an hour joins the Tongariro Alpine Crossing track just below Red Crater (**WP13** ^{1855masl}).

Lunch on crest Tongariro



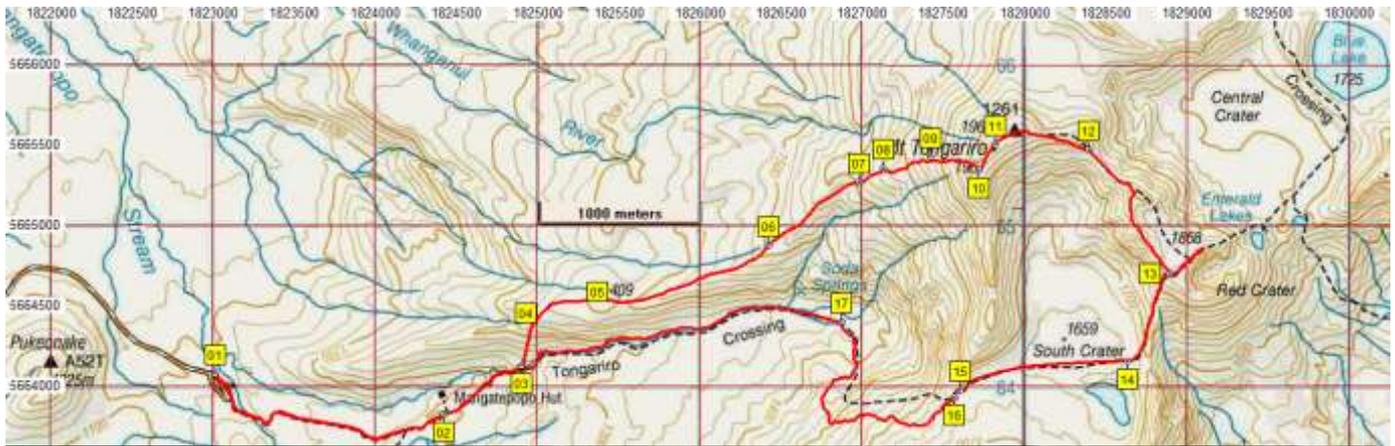
Splendid views all round



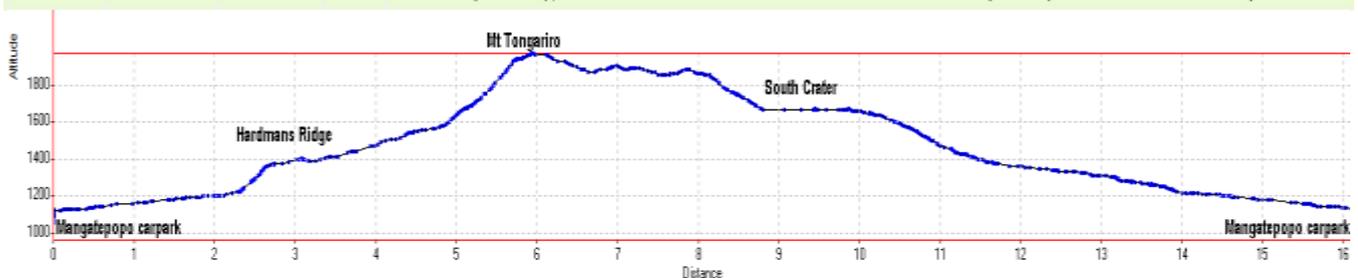
It is then a bit of a scrambling, slippery descent down past the remnants of the rock-wall to get into the flat bed of South Crater (**WP14** ^{1672masl}) from where it takes 20 minutes to cross to the west side of the crater and the T-junction for the route up Ngauruhoe (**WP15** ^{1671masl}). The return is then on the new "Crossing" track (**WP16** ^{1663masl}) which takes about 25 minutes to get down through some amazing scoria terrain to the DOC toilet (**WP17** ^{1379masl}). The new section of track completely cuts out the badly eroded, steep, rocky, infamous "ladder" which can now hardly even be seen. From the DOC toilet it is 1:15 minutes from the starting car park at Mangatepopo.

Newish track





Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1823015	5664074	1090	Mangatepopo car park
02	1824426	5663826	1168	25min (1.7km); Mangatepopo Hut junction
03	1824905	5664128	1212	38min (2.29km); off left into narrow valley, upstream then cross stream line and steeply uphill
04	1824929	5664451	1333	50min (2.73km); on ridge just below rocky tops after fair grunt using degraded path
05	1825370	5664582	1399	1:10min (3.05km) ; crest after ascent of ridge with "terraces" then into dip with Ngauruhoe views
06	1826425	5664874	1516	1:45min (4.19km); rocky top then cairns on the improving track. Good view of "Crossing" track.
07	1826982	5665271	1606	1:55min (4.88km); into serious grunt up slopes of Tongariro and in-line with small bluff
08	1827132	5665359	1669	2:15min (5.08km); small shelf with easing of slope, a dip then on to loose scoria + scoria wall
09	1827421	5665426	1770	2:35min (5.41km); steep track through scoria then cross stream line to go up N bank of gully
10	1827719	5665347	1932	2:55min (5.73km); crest at south end of Mount Tongariro Ridge
11	1827820	5665503	1967	3:05min (5.95km); crest for lunch then down left (NE) on poled track to circle round South Crater
12	1828394	5665469	1889	3:50min (6.57km); just before saddle below Mnt Tongariro with good views of Blue and Emerald Lakes
13	1828898	5664701	1855	4:15min (7.58km); meet Tongariro Alpine Crossing track just below Red Crater, go left SSE
14	1828636	5664157	1672	4:45min (8.81km); at east end of South Crater after steep descent on loose gravelly track
15	1827609	5663974	1671	5:05min (9.83km); T-junction with track off left (S) for Ngauruhoe ascent
16	1827571	5663934	1663	5:06min (9.96km); top of track /steps through scoria and replacing the "Staircase"
17	1826874	5664398	1379	5:30min (11.7km); bottom of descent at DOC toilet with 1:15 min (4.5km) walk to return to carpark



Notes:

- **GPS** = Garmin GPSmap 60CSx
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level

Total Moving Time: 6 hours
Total Outing Time: 6 hours 48 minutes
 Total walk length: 15.9 + altitude
Overall altitude gain: 930metres

Time taken : 6:48:36
 Total Distance : 15.909 Km

Minimum Speed : 0.000 KPH
 Maximum Speed : KPH
 Average Speed : 2.336 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 1037 Meters
 Maximum Altitude : 1977 Meters