

## Oturere Hut via Mt Tongariro, Tongariro National Park

Follow the well-beaten track from Mangatepopo car park to just past Mangatepopo Hut, then cross Mangatepopo Stream and scramble through hardy tussock to Hardmans Ridge. The tussock soon gives way to scoria, rocky outcrops, wildflowers, and patches of snow in winter.

The north-facing summit of Tongariro will be snow-covered in winter, but may be soft enough to climb without crampons – you must carry these just in case. From the summit, the mountain showcases a vast scene: South Crater, Mt Ngauruhoe, Mt Ruapehu beyond, and the distant snow-capped Ruahine Range on the horizon.

Continue along the Mt Tongariro Summit Route – depending on the time of day, it may be prudent to camp here. It's at least four more hours to Oturere Hut – to rejoin the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. If camping, you will have time to check out Blue Lake the following morning (as shown on the map).

At the Emerald Lakes, pick up the Tongariro Northern Circuit Track to Oturere Hut. Snow will slowly give way to the barren landscape of volcanic pumice, scoria, sand and ash.

Oturere Hut is on a flat spot surrounded by tussock and overlooking the Kaimanawa Range.

To complete the loop, head south-west on the well-graded track to Waihohonu Hut, before deviating due-west off-track down into a wide alluvial valley system between Pt1409 and Pt1212.

An alluring 'X' on the map marks where Waihohonu Stream originates from the ground, but the coordinates are actually incorrect – head 700m further up the valley between Tama peak and Ngauruhoe in search of the source (coordinates: BH35 2967 5944). Like an oasis in the desert, at the foot of a large lava flow and surrounded by lush vegetation, sparkling clear water bubbles up in a large pool.

After 2km of easy walking over soft volcanic soil, a prominent side-valley overlooking the Tama lakes is reached. Ascend to the saddle between Mt Ngauruhoe and Pukekaikio, which is thought to be one of the older vents of the Tongariro complex.

From the saddle, drop down into the Mangatepopo Valley and the TAC Track which leads back to the car park.

### Wild File

**Access** From Mangatepopo car park during off-peak season. Parking time limits apply at the car park

**Grade** moderate

**Time** Car park to Mt Tongariro, 3-4hr; To Oturere Hut, 3-4hr; To car park via Pukekaikio, 6-7hr

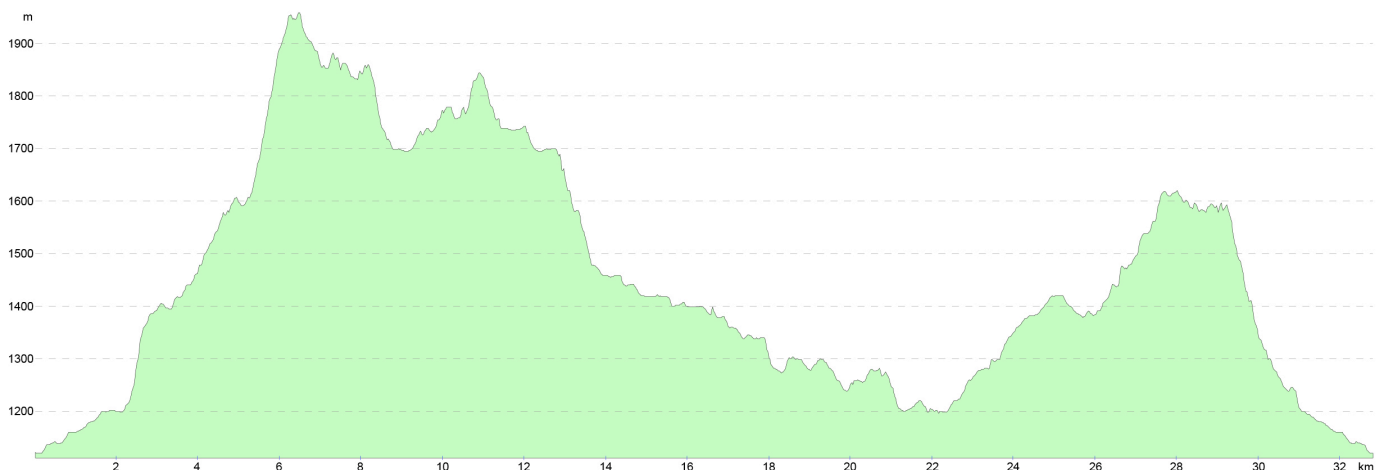
**Distance** 32.8km

**Total ascent** 1748m

**Accommodation** Oturere Hut (\$15 (off season) /\$36 (in season), 26 bunks

**Topo50 map** BH35

### Elevation Profile





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