

# RUAPEHU

Tongariro National Park  
& the Whanganui River



# Welcome to Ruapehu

*Tākiri kau ana ngā hīhi o te rā i te Kāhui Maunga,  
i te Awa Tupua, i Te Nehenehenui me te whakatau  
atu i ngā manuhiri o te ao. Nau mai, haere mai.*

As daylight illuminates the majestic mountains, the Whanganui River and our beautiful forests, the tribes of these sacred places welcome you from around the world to our special place.

***Situated in the heart of the North Island and home to both Tongariro and Whanganui National Parks, the Ruapehu region is one of New Zealand's most dramatic and rewarding places to visit.***

Discover Ruapehu's striking natural beauty on one of many unforgettable outdoor experiences such as the world-famous Tongariro Alpine Crossing and Whanganui Journey, or choose from three ski areas, countless cycle trails and a wealth of other leisure activities. Add in captivating history and fantastic visitor services, and you've got a holiday destination with something for everyone, all year round.

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Discover more at  
**[visitruapehu.com](https://visitruapehu.com)**

Visitruapehu.com has everything you need to know about our region – from what to see & do, accommodation and transport, to shopping, dining and much more.

You can also call our i-SITES on 0800-647-483.

# Must Do's

*Whatever your age or interests, you'll find something memorable to do in Ruapehu.*



## Explore a volcanic wonderland

The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is just one way to get up close to the otherworldly spectacles of Tongariro National Park.



## Hit the slopes of Mount Ruapehu

Heaps of snow and World Heritage landscapes combine for a skiing, snowboarding and snow play holiday you'll never forget.



## Journey down a mystical river

Canoe or jet boat along the remote Whanganui River, or try stand-up paddleboarding or rafting on alpine lakes and rivers.



## Enjoy short walks with amazing scenery

This region is a walker's paradise, with options ranging from short nature trails to all-day epics.



## Cycle through ever-changing landscapes

From easy cruising to challenging backcountry mountain biking, Ruapehu has trails for riders of all ages and abilities.



## Delve into Ruapehu's rich history

Hear stories of dramatic natural events, Māori settlement, military history, and pioneering farm, railway and timber industries.



## Eat, drink, shop, relax & enjoy

Ruapehu offers a warm welcome, great hospitality, satisfying shopping and plenty of good times.





# Our Towns

*Set in stunning surrounds and each with their own special character, Ruapehu's towns offer everything you need to explore and enjoy the region.*

## **Taumarunui, Ohura & Ongarue**

Ruapehu's largest town, Taumarunui, lies on the bush-lined Whanganui and Ongarue Rivers. Rich in Māori and European heritage, it is the starting point for the Whanganui Journey, and Forgotten World Highway with its fascinating pioneer history & rail carts. To the north is the Timber Trail, a walking/cycling track through spectacular Pureora Forest, ending in the settlement of Ongarue.

## **Owhango, Raurimu & Whakahoro**

The tiny town of Owhango lies at the end of the 42 Traverse MTB trail and has many other adventures within easy reach. Raurimu boasts life size driftwood sculptures, 4WD tours and the 'Spiral' – a railway engineering marvel – while Whakahoro is a backcountry conservation settlement offering outstanding walking, horse riding, cycling and river trips.

## **National Park Village, Whakapapa Village & Horopito**

Located between Tongariro and Whanganui National Parks with panoramic views of the volcanoes, National Park Village is a lively ski town in winter. It's also a popular base for hikes such as the Tongariro Alpine Crossing and many others in the area. Other activities within easy reach include mountain biking, minigolf, rafting, scenic flights, and stand-up paddleboarding.

The peaceful alpine village of Whakapapa nestles into Mount Ruapehu's lower slopes. The gateway to Whakapapa ski area and another handy base for hiking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, it also accesses many memorable short walks and summer chairlift rides to New Zealand's highest cafe and the mountain's six hour Crater Lake hike. South on State Highway 4 is Horopito, home to Smash Palace, the car salvage yard made famous by several New Zealand movies.

## **Ohakune & Waiouru**

At the base of Mount Ruapehu, on the edge of Tongariro National Park, Ohakune is a vibrant town offering all-seasons activities as well as a range of eateries and accommodation. The gateway to Tūroa ski area and a 45-minute drive to Whakapapa, it's also a popular base for the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, Whanganui River and family activities including walking and biking. Waiouru, situated on a naturally dramatic stretch of State Highway 1, is a helpful service town and home to the New Zealand National Army Museum.

## **Raetihi, Ruatiti & Pipiriki**

These charming towns have many fascinating stories to tell and are popular access points for the Mountains to Sea cycle trail, Whanganui Journey, Bridge to Nowhere and the scenic Whanganui River Road.

## **Day Trips**

A short drive from Ruapehu is beautiful Lake Taupō. The trout-fishing hub of Turangi lies on its southern edge, while lively Taupō town with its wealth of experiences can be reached via a spectacular drive around to the northern shore. To Ruapehu's west is Whanganui, a vibrant region centered on a mighty river and rich in art and culture.



# Getting Here

*Situated in the heart of the North Island at the southern end of Lake Taupō, Ruapehu is easily accessible by road, rail or air.*

## Air

Approximately 70 minutes' drive from Taupō airport and between 90 minutes to two hours from Whanganui and Palmerston North brings you to the mid point of the Ruapehu region.

## Road/self-drive

Scenic driving routes between other parts of New Zealand include the Forgotten World Highway leading to Taranaki and the Whanganui River Road linking Whanganui, both of which connect with the Volcanic Loop that circuits the remarkable mountains of Tongariro National Park; and the Adventure Highway taking in sights in western Ruapehu.

## Bus

Major bus networks including InterCity run scheduled bus services to Ruapehu towns such as National Park Village, Ohakune and Taumarunui.

## Train

KiwiRail's Scenic Northern Explorer is a stunning train journey between Auckland and Wellington that stops at both National Park Village and Ohakune.

## Shuttle

Once here, local shuttle bus companies run scheduled or on-demand services throughout the region. Rental cars can be hired from neighbouring airports.

Approximate driving time/distance	Auckland	Hamilton	Rotorua	Taupō	Wellington
National Park Village Whakapapa Village	4–4¼ hrs 325–340km	2½–2¾ hrs 205–220km	2¼ hrs 180km	1¼ hrs 100km	4–4¼ hrs 320–335km
Taumarunui	3½ hrs 280km	2 hrs 160km	2 hrs 165km	1½ hrs 125km	4½ hrs 360km
Ohakune	4½ hrs 360km	3 hrs 240km	2½ hrs 215km	1¾ hrs 135km	3½ hrs 280km



Discover more at  
[visitruapehu.com/transport](https://visitruapehu.com/transport)

# Tongariro National Park



***UNESCO-listed for both its natural and cultural heritage, Tongariro National Park is an otherworldly landscape of golden tussock and towering volcanoes made famous by The Lord of The Rings and the incomparable Tongariro Alpine Crossing.***

New Zealand's first national park, Tongariro was established in 1887 and now covers 79,000 hectares. At its heart are three mighty volcanoes – Tongariro, Ngauruhoe, and Ruapehu – the country's largest active volcano and the North Island's highest peak (2797m/9176ft).

The national park is home to the North Island's only glaciers, as well as three ski areas, offering a chance to explore a unique alpine wonderland. Strange volcanic phenomena including steaming vents and colourful lakes can be seen on hikes such as the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, and Ruapehu's six hour Crater Lake hike.

As rugged and adventurous as it seems, the park has plenty of easygoing adventures too, with much of its grandeur able to be enjoyed on short walks and driving routes around the mountains.



# Whanganui National Park



Forgotten World Jet

***Discover rich human history, an array of natural wonders, and your own sense of adventure in the remote wilderness within Whanganui National Park.***

Steeped in both Māori and European history, Whanganui National Park is centred upon New Zealand's longest navigable river, which winds 290 kilometres from its birth as an alpine stream high on Mount Tongariro, down to meet the Tasman Sea at Whanganui.

The ultimate way to immerse yourself in this remote and magical place is on the Whanganui Journey, a canoe trip through deep gorges lined with majestic forest, cascading waterfalls and historic sites.

There are many other ways of discovering the magic of Whanganui National Park, with highly scenic jet boat tours revealing many of the river's secrets including the Bridge to Nowhere. Other special experiences are overnight stays in peaceful riverside lodges, bush hikes, and mountain biking on the Mountains to Sea cycle trail.

# Skiing & Snowboarding



mt.ruapehu.com

***High annual snowfall, incredible views, unique volcanic terrain and plenty of accommodation close by make Mount Ruapehu one of the world's premier skiing and snowboarding playgrounds.***

Whakapapa and Tūroa together offer 1000 ha of skiable terrain, each with 700m of vertical descent through natural half pipes, chutes and sweeping glaciers, accessed via state-of-the-art lift facilities. Learners are well catered for at New Zealand's best beginner area, Happy Valley Snow Park, open early June.

Those drawn to the wild side can ski the smaller Tukino club field on the eastern slopes of the mountain. Easy to get to, Mount Ruapehu is 4½ hours' drive from Auckland or Wellington. Shuttles and gear hire are easy to arrange, while cafes and family-friendly facilities keep everyone in great spirits.

National Park Village, Whakapapa Village and Ohakune provide a range of accommodation, services and merry après-ski scenes, while nearby activities such as cycling, walking, rail carts, museums and more offer a break from the slopes.



# Tongariro Alpine Crossing



***One of the world's finest day hikes, this unforgettable journey takes in the remarkable volcanic landscape and epic mountaintop views of dual World Heritage area, Tongariro National Park.***

Taking walkers past two active volcanoes, fumaroles, giant lava fields, a bright red crater and emerald-green lakes, the Tongariro Alpine Crossing is like a crazy geology field trip complete with invigorating exercise and photo opportunities that will knock your socks off.

A major pay-off is mind-blowing views over Lake Taupō and the volcanic plateau, while a side-trip up the steep scree slopes of the near-perfect cone of Mount Ngauruhoe – Mount Doom in *The Lord of The Rings* – is a memorable add-on for fit, sure-footed walkers.

The Tongariro Alpine Crossing starts at Mangatepopo car park, 20 minutes' drive from Whakapapa and National Park Villages, or 40 minutes from Ohakune or Turangi. Around 20km long, it's a challenging walk for fit, well-equipped hikers. Guided hikes are popular, especially in winter when there are fewer crowds and dramatic snow cover.

Adrift Outdoors

# Walking & Hiking



***The Tongariro Alpine Crossing may be world famous, but countless other trails threaded through Ruapehu's national parks and reserves make the region a walker's paradise.***

With so many diverse landscapes – from rock-strewn craters and alpine gardens, to ancient forest and picturesque countryside – Ruapehu's walking trails offer visitors new scenery every day. Nature trails, easy hikes and more challenging ones mean there's an experience to suit every interest and ability.

Memorable Tongariro National Park trails usher walkers to Taranaki Falls, Waitonga Falls, the striking Silica Rapids, and Lake Surprise – a genuine hidden gem. Multi-day walks include the Northern Circuit Great Walk and the Round the Mountain Track. Mount Ruapehu's amazing six hour Crater Lake hike is mainly accessed via a spectacular chairlift ride.

Whanganui National Park's walks feature the Bridge to Nowhere and Mangapurua Tracks, often combined with jet boating or canoeing. Other rewarding trips include the Timber Trail through Pureora Forest, as well as Ohakune's Old Coach Road, Mangawhero River and Forest walks.



# Cycling & Mountain Biking



Epic Cycle Adventures

***An enviable network of cross-country trails – complete with awesome scenery and varied terrain – have cemented Ruapehu as one of New Zealand's best mountain biking destinations.***

The region boasts two of New Zealand's 22 'Great Ride' cycle trails. One is the Mountains to Sea – a 217km, 3–5 day epic taking in views of the region's volcanoes and remote parts of the Whanganui National Park as the river winds from Mount Ruapehu to the Tasman Sea. It can easily be broken into short rides, including the relatively leisurely Ohakune Old Coach Road.

The other Great Ride is the Timber Trail, just north of Taumarunui. An intermediate, 1–2 day, 85km ride, it leads riders deep into Pureora Forest with its ancient forest, native birdlife, graceful suspension bridges and rusty timber-milling relics.

Ruapehu is also home to the 42 Traverse and Fishers Track – two classic MTB rides that have attracted off-road riders for many years. An increasing number of around-town and other leisurely rides keep the wheels spinning, as do convenient bike hire and shuttle transport in towns and villages, all within easy reach of the trails.



# Water Activities



***Whether you go in, on, or just around them, you'll feel energised and refreshed by Ruapehu's dazzling array of wild rivers, waterfalls, streams, wetlands and lakes.***

From the alpine tarns, rocky mountain streams and tumbling waterfalls of Tongariro National Park, to the forest-lined gorges of New Zealand's longest navigable river, Whanganui, this region offers all sorts of ways to dip a toe in the water, make a splash, try your hand at paddling, or just reflect on nature's sparkling beauty. All this lies within an easy drive of New Zealand's largest lake – Lake Taupō – offering even more aquatic adventure.

The most popular water-based trip is the Whanganui Journey, the Great Walk that is actually a kayak or canoe trip through a remote part of the national park. Jet boat trips are also a great way to see the Whanganui River, while the region's other rivers and lakes offer many more kayaking and rafting opportunities to suit all abilities, ranging from easy grade 1 floats up to grade 3.

Less energetic options include fly fishing in world-renowned trout rivers, and stand-up paddleboarding on serene Lake Otamangakau. Countless walks take in pretty stream, river and lakeland scenes, featuring cascading waterfalls and unique waterside flora and fauna.

# Family Fun



***With a variety of gentle outdoor adventures and family friendly attractions, Ruapehu is a memorable holiday destination for all ages, all year round.***

You can expect warm welcomes and a wealth of family friendly facilities when you visit the heart of the North Island. And with so many places to explore, each day offers new experiences that both adults and children will enjoy.

The must-visit for curious types is Whakapapa Visitor Centre, where displays explain how Tongariro National Park's eerie landscapes were formed. The park's nature trails and short walks offer chances to see, smell and touch all sorts of freaky stuff in strange places.

Other activities include skiing and snow play, chairlift rides in summer, rafting, rail cart trips, horse treks, minigolf, and indoor rock climbing. Older children will enjoy walking or biking Ohakune's Old Coach Road, while nearby Te Pepe Pump Track offers BMX fun. The National Army Museum's KidzHQ has plenty to entertain the young ones, too.



# Eat, Drink, Shop & Relax



***A warm welcome and good times await in Ruapehu, a region sprinkled with friendly towns offering excellent visitor facilities and genuine Kiwi hospitality.***

Ruapehu's towns, villages and out-of-the-way places provide all you need for a satisfying holiday, including great food and drink, shopping, and more.

You won't go hungry here, with a diverse range of dining options serving everything from fish and chips, wood-fired hamburgers and pizza, to contemporary

cuisine showcasing local ingredients and matched with fine wines. Essential experiences include high tea in one of the country's grandest dining rooms at the Chateau Tongariro Hotel, and the chairlift ride to Knoll Ridge Café, high on the slopes of Mount Ruapehu.

As well as all the essential services you'd expect such as supermarkets and petrol stations, there's plenty of good browsing to be found in boutique shops, with New Zealand-made outdoor clothing, art, and craft available to take home as a special souvenir.



# Where to Stay



***Whatever your needs, taste or budget, Ruapehu has accommodation to suit, spread among its towns and villages and sprinkled throughout the beautiful countryside surrounding them.***

Ranging from budget to plush, hotels and motels can be found in larger towns such as Ohakune, National Park Village, Whakapapa Village and Taumarunui.

Self-contained apartments and holiday homes are ideal for travellers looking for family or group accommodation

or just a homely atmosphere, while bed & breakfast lodges and homestays enjoy a fine reputation for high-quality accommodation with friendly hosts.

Backpackers are well catered for, with hostels and budget lodges offering dormitories and private rooms with communal facilities.

Campers and motorhome travellers can stay in nearly a dozen holiday parks and back-to-nature campgrounds. Wake up to the sound of birdsong surrounded by the beauty of our national parks.

# WHAKAPAPA

· U N L I M I T E D ·

SCENIC CHAIRLIFT RIDES    GUIDED CRATER LAKE HIKOS

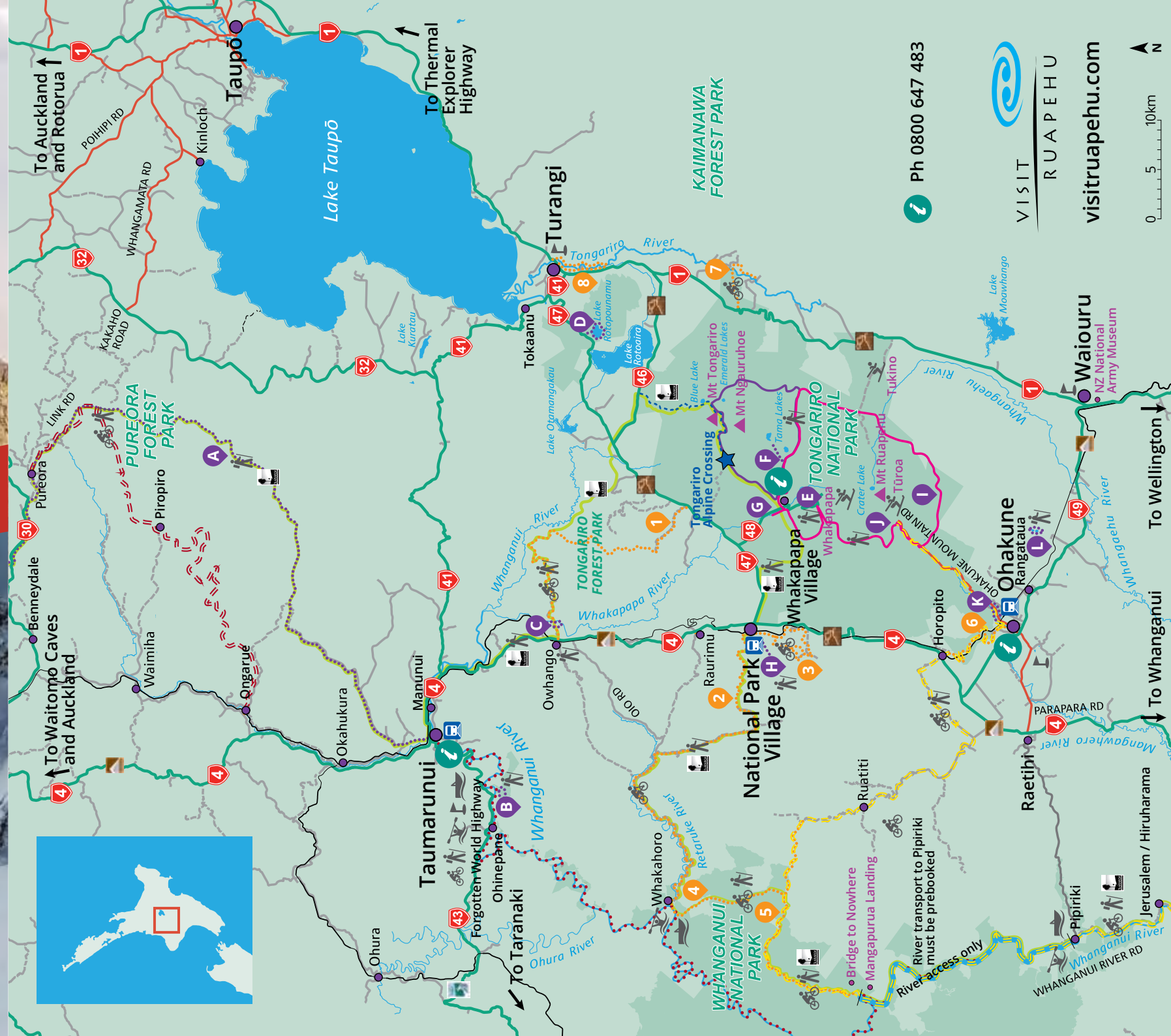


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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>State Highway</li><li>Arterial Route</li><li>Minor Road</li><li>Railway Station</li><li>Mountain Bike Trail</li><li>Walking Trail</li><li>The Timber Trail</li><li>Mountains to Sea Cycle Trail</li><li>Whanganui Journey</li><li>Tongariro Alpine Crossing</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Jet Boat Tours</li><li>Golf Course</li><li>Walking / Hiking Trail</li><li>River Access, Canoeing</li><li>Ski Area</li><li>Volcanic Loop Highway</li><li>Adventure Highway</li><li>Te Araroa Trail</li><li>Tongariro Northern Circuit</li><li>Round the Mountain Track</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Hauhungaroa Track</li><li>Te Maire Track</li><li>Ohinetonga Reserve</li><li>Lake Rotopounamu</li><li>Crater Lake Hike &amp; Volcanic Summer Walks</li><li>Taranaki Falls</li><li>Tawai Falls</li><li>Tupapakurua Falls Track</li><li>Waitonga Falls / Old Blyth Track</li><li>Lake Surprise</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mangwhero Forest Walk</li><li>Lake Rotokura</li><li>42 Traverse</li><li>Fishers Track (alternate M2C start)</li><li>Marton Sash &amp; Door Trail</li><li>Kaiwhakauka Trail</li><li>Mangapurua Trail</li><li>Ohakune Old Coach Road</li><li>Tree Trunk Gorge</li><li>Tongariro River Trail</li></ul> |
|---|---|---|---|
- Not all roads, waterways, hazards, tracks or attractions are marked. Please use this map as a guide only.



# Essential Information

## WHEN TO VISIT

Ruapehu has something for everyone, all year round. Summer is particularly popular for hiking, mountain biking and water-based activities such as the Whanganui Journey, while in winter the region is transformed into a beautiful white wonderland with awesome skiing and other snowy activities. Spring and Autumn serve up some spectacular weather with fewer crowds and top conditions for enjoying the many all-season activities.

## SAFETY IN THE OUTDOORS

[mountainsafety.org.nz](http://mountainsafety.org.nz)

- **Plan your trip** Seek local knowledge, plan the route you will take and the amount of time you can reasonably expect it to take.
- **Tell someone** your plans and leave a date for when to raise the alarm if you haven't returned.
- **Be aware of the weather** Check the forecast and expect weather changes.
- **Know your limits** Challenge yourself within your physical limits and experience.
- **Take sufficient supplies** Make sure you have enough food, equipment and emergency rations for the worst-case scenario. Take an appropriate means of communication.

The Department of Conservation ([doc.govt.nz](http://doc.govt.nz)) manages the volcanic areas and early warning detection systems within Tongariro National Park. For your safety, please adhere to all signage and stay on formed tracks. Any notable volcanic activity alert will be advised by officials or your local hosts.

## EMERGENCIES

### Fire, Police, Ambulance

Dial 111

### Taumarunui Hospital

Tel (07) 896-0020

### Health Centre/Doctor

Taumarunui, tel (07) 895-3333

Raetihi, tel (06) 385-4211

Enjoy the sacred places of other tribes as you leave our special place.

*Haere ora atu me te aroha nui.*

## > VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES

For comprehensive, impartial information and booking services for accommodation, activities, attractions and travel within Ruapehu and New Zealand-wide, contact a Ruapehu i-SITE on 0800-647-483 or visit us in Ohakune, Taumarunui or Whakapapa Village.



**SITE**



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