

# TONGARIRO ALPINE CROSSING

Tongariro National Park  
CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND



❄️ WINTER | ARE YOU PREPARED?



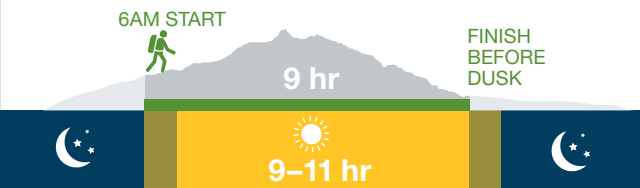
The Tongariro Alpine Crossing is an advanced trip in winter. It requires alpine skills and experience. We recommend you go with a guide or choose another track.

## How to prepare for winter conditions

Winter conditions make the Tongariro Alpine Crossing a very challenging trip. Prepare carefully due to higher risk alpine conditions. Consider nearby alternatives if you aren't experienced or equipped for alpine travel.

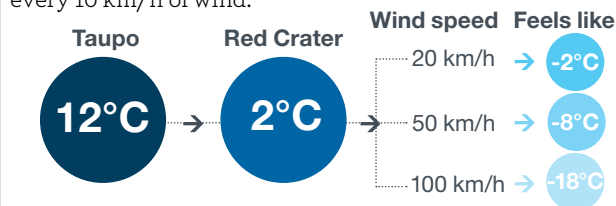
### How much time will I need?

There are between 9 and 11 hours of daylight in winter. Allow 9 hours to complete the walk. **Always take a head torch.**



### How cold will it be?

Red Crater is at least 5°C colder than the start of the track, and 10°C colder than Taupo. Subtract another 2°C for every 10 km/h of wind.



### What's the terrain like?

38% of tramping injuries are from slipping over. You can expect ice on the track between April and October. **Always be prepared to turn back.**



### Other hazards



**Avalanches** – Check the avalanche forecast  
[www.avalanche.net.nz](http://www.avalanche.net.nz)



**Volcanic activity** – Check the latest volcanic activity  
[www.geonet.org.nz/volcano](http://www.geonet.org.nz/volcano)



**Changeable weather** – Check the latest forecast  
[www.metservice.com](http://www.metservice.com)

## Give yourself time and make a plan



Leave early enough to complete the trip within daylight hours. Turn around if conditions no longer allow you to carry on safely.



## Dress for all possible weather conditions



Layer your clothes to trap warm air in and keep cold wind out. Add alpine equipment to your supplies.



## Know your limits and consider a guide

Three approved Tongariro Alpine Crossing guiding companies can help you have a memorable and safe winter-crossing experience:

- **Tongariro Guided Walks**, phone 027 308 9689
- **Adventure Outdoors Tongariro**, phone 0800 386 925
- **Adrift Tongariro Guiding**, phone 0800 462 374

Talk with someone at the Tongariro National Park Visitor Centre who knows the current Tongariro Alpine Crossing conditions; phone 07 892 3729.



**Walking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing in winter requires special skills and preparation.** Additional hazards are present: snow and ice, avalanche risk, and sub-zero temperatures. If you are well prepared and are a competent winter alpine trumper, it can be a fantastic experience.

Parts of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing pass through avalanche terrain – know when it's not safe to continue.

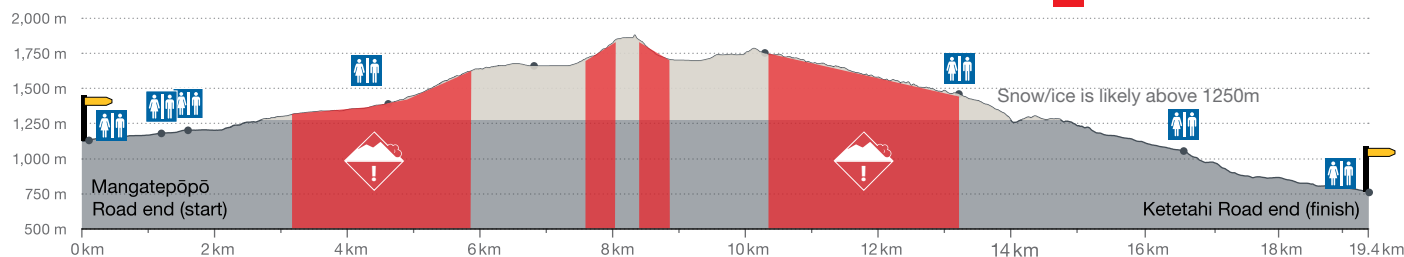
## About this track

This challenging trip begins at 1,120 m, climbs the Mangatepōpō valley to the saddle between Mount Tongariro and Mount Ngauruhoe, through the snow-filled South Crater before again climbing an exposed ridge to Red Crater, the highest point on the crossing at 1,886 m.

You will then descend a steep snow and ice-covered slope to the frozen Emerald Lakes, known as Ngā Rotopounamu (greenstone-hued lakes). After passing the ice-covered Blue Lake, also known as Te Wai Whakaata o Te Rangihiroa (Rangihiroa's mirror), the track sidles around the northern slope of Tongariro, then descends in a zigzag track past Ketetahi Shelter and down to the road end at 760 m.

**Be prepared for a long, cold and challenging day on the mountain.**

## Tongariro Alpine Crossing elevation



## Be prepared – ensure you take:

- plenty of drinking water (water along the track is not suitable for drinking), food and toilet paper
- tramping or mountaineering boots
- waterproof/windproof jacket and pants, hat and gloves, sunscreen, and wear warm, layered clothing
- mobile phone, personal locator beacon (PLB), head torch and spare batteries
- Map, compass and/or GPS
- crampons, ice axe and helmet.



**9 hr, 19.4 km one way**

## High level of fitness required

**Winter track grade:** Route, suitable only for people with high-level backcountry skills and experience, including navigation and survival skills.

## Steep and undulating with snow and ice cover

Track is covered in snow, and very icy in sections. It may be difficult to follow.

## Restrictions

No dogs, bikes or drones

## PHOTOS

COVER:  
Shaun Barnett

INSIDE PAGES (L-R):  
Zhi Yuen Yap  
Stacey Faire  
Zhi Yuen Yap

## History and culture

Ngatoroirangi, the founding ancestor of Ngāti Tūwharetoa, the local iwi (Māori tribe), ascended the great mountains of the volcanic plateau 30 generations ago. It was then that he named Tongariro and the many features of the surrounding landscape, declaring this area as home for his descendants.

The generosity and foresight of Ngāti Tūwharetoa saw the heart of the mountainous area made sacrosanct in 1887, with the intent that the Crown would stand alongside Ngāti Tūwharetoa to ensure the continued protection of Tongariro. This led to the establishment of the Tongariro National Park in 1894, a first for New Zealand, and fourth in the world.

The continued occupation by Ngāti Tūwharetoa in this environment ensures the cultural, spiritual and environmental values are protected and shared with all those who encounter this dynamic landscape.



For more information, visit a Department of Conservation Visitor Centre, your local i-SITE or go to:  
[www.doc.govt.nz/tac-winter-tramping](http://www.doc.govt.nz/tac-winter-tramping)