

## MOUNT TIHIA

**260 Series Map:** Tongariro, T19

**Topo50 Map:** BH35Turangi

### How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo down the lake on **SH1** to Turangi
- Turn right off **SH1** on to **SH41** towards Tokaanu
- Turn left off **SH41** to **SH47** for Whakapapa – set your trip meter
- Small car park (**Wp1**) on **RHS** of road at 4.5km from the Junction
- There is space for about 3 cars here so park in tidy manner

**Rough description:** A moderate walk through very thick bush in parts and with somewhat of a steep start from a car park at the side of SH47 only a few kilometres out of Turangi. The lower part is a bit steep, through thick broadleaf forest with very active birdlife – including Tui. Further up one crosses the line of the Tokaanu Tunnel then emerges from forest into rather high bush – which is a struggle for the vertically challenged. From the summit head SSW aiming between Lakes Rotopounamu and Rotoaira. Eventually pick-up a small gully / track back down to the Tokaanu Tunnel track, going left to exit at entry point.

**Detail:** Drive out of Turangi on the Tokaanu Road (SH41) then turn off left on to the road for Whakapapa (SH47) and continue up SH47 for 4.5km where there is a small car parking area on the right hand side. Park here (**WP1642masl**), but well off the road.

Buried in the trees on the edge of this car park is a small footpath leaving the road at right angles and heading off uphill into the forest. There is a bit of a brutal start to this walk heading off up quite a steep slope without any warm-up wander along a level path. There are also some quite large step-ups for the short-legged Hobbit trumper.

After 20 minutes of steep uphill cross (**WP2772masl**) a level, over-grown, obviously man-cleared area which follows the contour round the hill – this is the line of the road that paralleled the tunnel feeding Tokaanu power station.

After this the slope eases a bit but there are a few wind-fall trees which are slightly awkward to get over then the slope gets steeper again after about 40 minutes. Then in 1 hour there is a change from NW to W (**WP3995masl**) and the slope eases again but there is high, scratchy bush to struggle through. Minutes later there is a small clearing (**WP41036masl**) perfect for morning tea. Within 1:15min, after following ribbons in the tunnels through the dense bush, suddenly there are the first views (**WP51055masl**) of the day when Lake Taupo, Mt Pihanga and the “smoking” Te Mari Crater on Tongariro are all clearly visible. There is then a lot more “nasty” unfriendly bush to struggle through but the recent addition of coloured ribbons do assist in staying on course as often the ribbons can be seen whilst the track below the feet cannot. Within 2 hours the crest can be reached offering all round views including Lakes Rotoonamu, Rotoaira and Otomangakau as well as Mount Taranaki.

From the summit there is no obvious track so aim SSE looking at the bush between Lakes Rotopounamu and Rotoaira passing over the odd bare, rocky area and soon a small gully, incipient track will be encountered (**WP81100masl**). This descent is a bit hard work with several tricky bits involving almost swinging on the bushes whilst trying to get the feet to hold on the slippery or gravelly ground. After twenty minutes or so there are a few bits of orange ribbon to advise someone has been here before (**WP9976masl**) and the slope eases dramatically. The walking is now very pleasant and easy with the track quite visible underfoot.

The gentle slope area continues for the best part of 2km till the mapped track which parallels the Tokaanu Tunnel is reached (**WP10841masl**) after a total outing time of 3:15minutes. There is a choice here: by going right the track emerges on to SH47 which means a 3 -4 km walk back along the road or by turning left one stays in the forest.

The walk in the forest is not quite a walk in the park as there are many windfalls which cause some pretty big work-arounds at times but anything is better than walking on a road dodging the traffic. The track followed used to be the road in fact and this will be believed when the steep bank on the left (NW side) is studied – there has been some major earthworks and cutting back in places, but mother nature really has taken this lot back and the forest is now covering everything that was man-made. It takes about 1:45 minutes to get back to the orange ribbons of the track used for access at the start of the day then another 15 to 20 minutes to get back out to the car park after a total time of 5 hours plus having only walked 7km, ascended 643 and descended 618 meters.

**NZ Grid GPS:** Geodetic Datum 1949

**NZTM GPS:** NZTM on WGS84

### Access



Steam plumes from Te Mari Crater



Lake Rotoaira and Ruapehu / Tongariro



This was a road in the past

### GPS data

From : 31-Oct-12 08:28:31  
To : 31-Oct-12 13:46:45

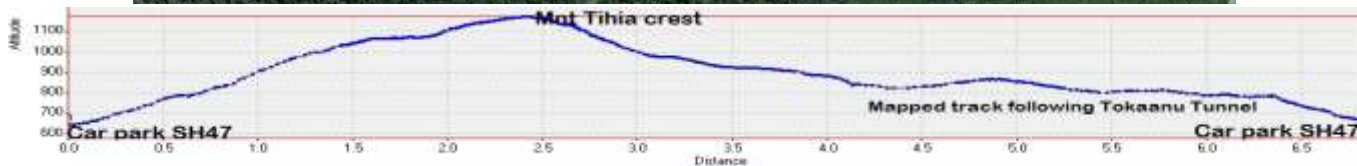
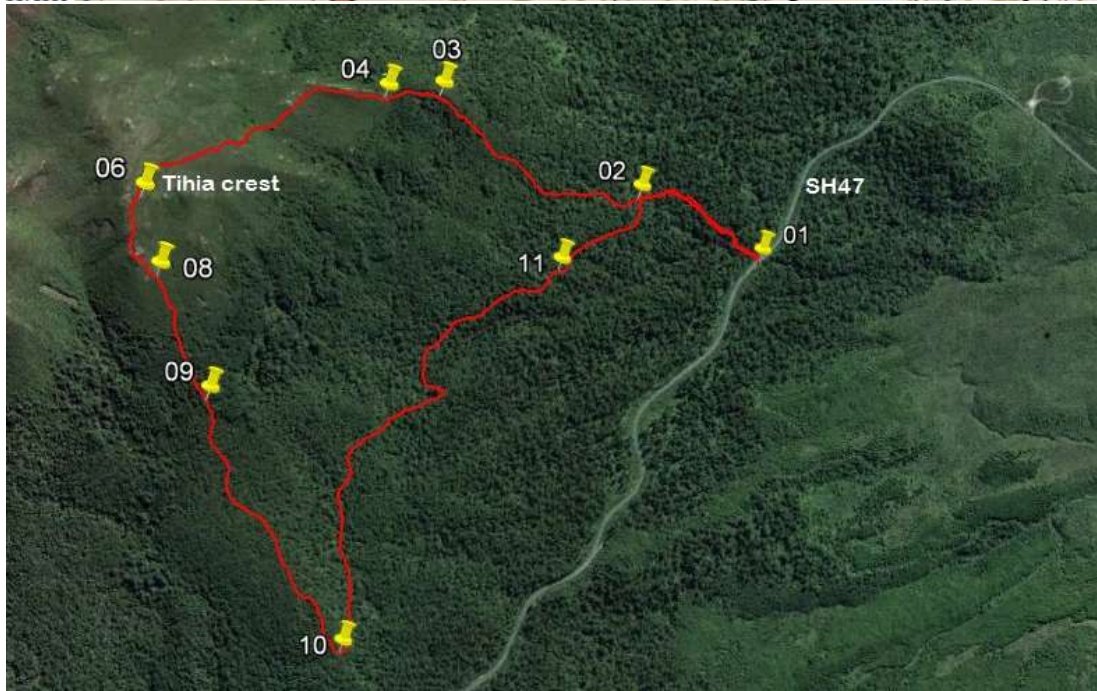
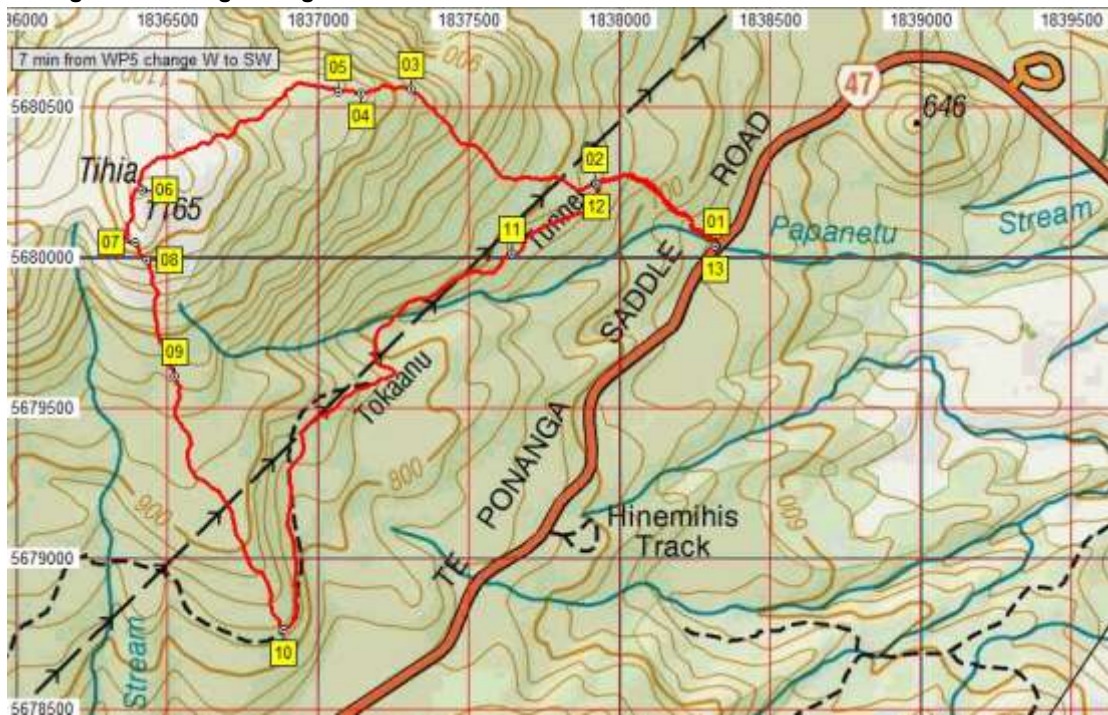
Time taken : 5:18:14  
Total Distance : 6.889 Km

Minimum Speed : 0.004 KPH  
Maximum Speed : 4.782 KPH  
Average Speed : 1.299 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 641 Meters  
Maximum Altitude : 1175 Meters



Map with NZTM grid and Google Image with NZTM GPS data



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1838320	5680038	642	Car park at edge of SH47
02	1837921	5680246	772	20min (0.5km); steeply uphill to meet contour track - headrace tunnel
03	1837311	5680558	995	1hour (1.27km); direction change NW to W and slope eases
04	1837145	5680543	1036	1:08min (1.46km); small clearing, heavy dense scrubby bush, many ribbons
05	1837066	5680550	1055	1:25min (1.55km); virtually tunnel walking in scratchy bush to good views
06	1836417	5680224	1175	2hours (2.42km); Tihia crest with good views all round
07	1836394	5680048	1134	2:13min (2.64km); more or less due S. Rough, no track aiming at Rotoponamu
08	1836433	5679989	1100	2:20min (2.72km); following a small gully, stream line type basic track. Rough and steep
09	1836527	5679604	976	2:43min (3.11km); basic track, odd orange ribbons and slope eases dramatically
10	1836888	5678762	841	3:30min (4.14km); off basic track to turn left on Tokaanu Tunnel track
11	1837645	5680010	796	4:50min (5.95km); small open area on otherwise very overgrown track with many windfalls
12	1837925	5680244	784	5hours (6.35km); meet track from SH47 as used for access in morning
13	1838318	5680037	660	5:18min (6.89km); return to car park on edge of SH47

- Notes:**
- GPS Garmin GPS60csX & GPSMap62sc
  - WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
  - masl = metres above sea level