

OKATAINA WALKWAY EAST

Topo50 Map: BE37 Rotorua & BE38 Lake Rotoma

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START: Exit Taupo on SH 1 North

- At Wairakei follow SH 5 to Rotorua
- Enter Rotorua and at roundabout follow SH30 to Whakatane
- At traffic lights go right on SH30 to Whakatane
- Next roundabout go straight on
- Traffic lights go straight on SH 30
- Over mini-roundabout, pass Rotorua Airport
- At Te Ngae go right on SH 30 to Whakatane
- Pass "Hell's Gate" thermal area
- Hapaurau Bay then pass Western Walkway
- At Ruato turn right into Okataina Road (7km)
- Park in car park (01) on left at extreme end of the road; there are toilets.

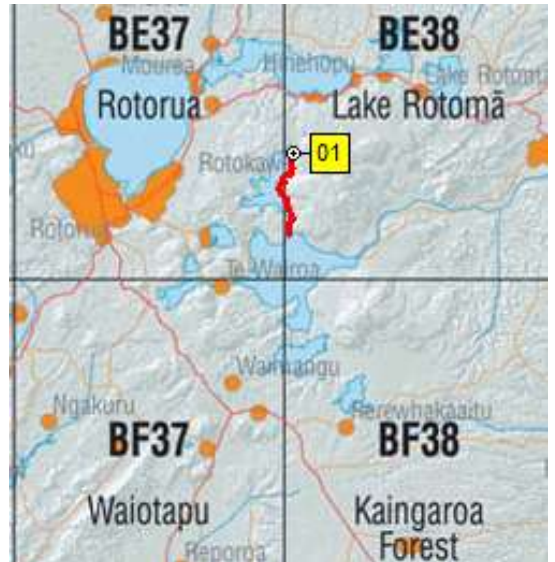
Rough description: Total driving time is 1:30min to reach the start. Depending on what you do this can be a long walk as it can take 3 hours to 3:30 minutes one way down Lake Okataina to the top of Lake Tarawera, hence you could be looking at 6 - 7 hours if you do full length in and out. If this is the plan leave Taupo by 7:30am. Though fairly long the walk is NOT too strenuous as there are no real slopes and the footpath is good and well-marked. The forest is basically re-growth so not too many large trees but there are many ferns of various types.

The walk is in forest all the way so not too many views but those that are offered of the lake are picturesque on a good clear day.

Detail: As in the directions above leave Taupo heading north on SH 1 then go to Rotorua where, soon after entering the city limits, a right turn is made at a round-about for Whakatane on to SH 30. Pass the airport, Hell's Gate then on the edge of the lake at Ruato follow the road off right to Okataina Lake. On reaching the end of this road (7km) enter the car park (01) on the left overlooking the lake where toilets and the start of the Eastern Walkway path will be found along with many informative notices.

TTC devouring the notices

Historical facts



The route followed is shown in the map where the yellow boxes are waypoints taken by GPS at features that could be noted and the actual GPS trace (GPS recorded track) is shown in red. It must be noted that the route followed is not exactly as marked on the topographic map indicating that the track has been shifted to that originally mapped - the accuracy of the GPS points can be guaranteed as this track was taken by a high sensitivity device.

A T-junction (02 329masl) to Te Koutu Pa is arrived at in approximately 15 minutes walking from the car park, going right arrives on the shoreline in a matter of minutes whilst the route to be followed is left / straight on. Immediately after this there is a very gloomy section of forest to pass through with low light conditions; this is due to being below quite high bluffs. The path is good and undulating to rolling in nature.

Good views over Lake Okataina can be had from Kaiwaka Bay (03 322masl) which is reached in less than one hour from the car park. South of Kaiwaka Bay the path followed diverges from the mapped path and it has to be assumed there has been path realignment. The path firstly follows the shoreline then works round a stream line and more or less approaches the mapped path before crossing a headland and returning close to the lake.

From : 04-Jul-07 09:04:34

To : 04-Jul-07 12:11:09

Time taken : 3:06:35

Total Distance : 10.297 Km

Minimum Speed : -0.083 KPH

Maximum Speed : 9.904 KPH

Average Speed : 3.311 KPH

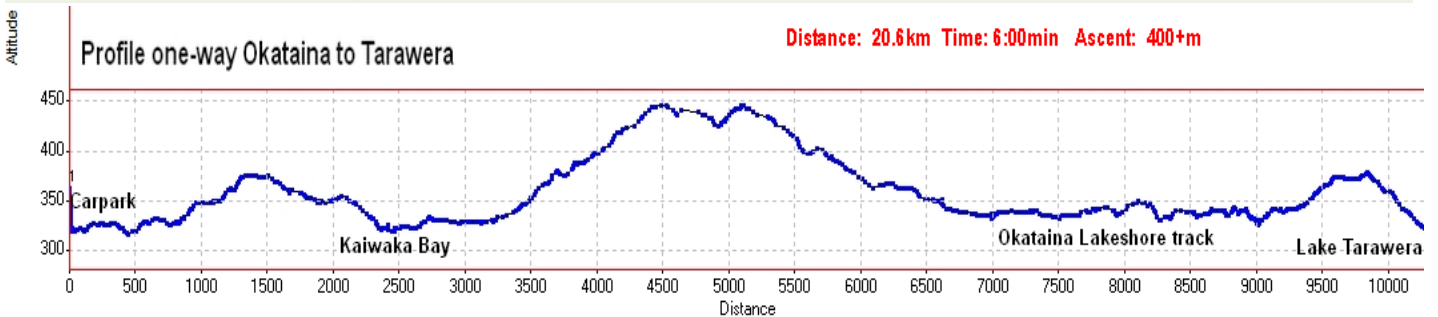
Minimum Altitude : 317 Meters

Maximum Altitude : 462 Meters

NB One way data



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1900846	5777435	322	Car Park at N end of Lake Okataina
02	1900748	5776780	329	800m (15min); right at T-junction for lakeshore, straight on for Tarawera
03	1900620	5775551	322	2.46km (45min); lakeshore at Kaiwaka Bay
04	1900062	5774811	389	3.95km (1:30min); bend in track near top of long uphill grunt, red marks show route for Rata walk
05	1900279	5772976	348	6.78km (2:20); vague junction, go right down-slope
06	1900393	5772678	335	7.1km (2:30min); marker post just before lakeshore
07	1900555	5771247	329	9km (2:45min); T-junction with right to lake and notice for Lake Tarawera 20 min
08	1900538	5771218	334	9.1km (2:46min); still on lakeshore, 1 min from notice to pass 9km marker on upslope heading S
09	1900459	5770157	320	10.5km (3:05min); edge of Lake Tarawera



One of the “grunts” of the day occurs on the above described section as there is a long slope to ascend but it is not too steep and you should be up it in about 1 hour 25 minutes (**04** 389masl). A further deviation from the mapped path then takes you slightly further away from the lake over another raised area then, by going right at a small T-junction (**05** 348masl), drops back down to the lake edge at Oruaroa Point (**06** 335masl)).

This is a lovely spot for lunch with good views and black swans pottering in and out of the reeds on the lake edge. It takes another 30 odd minutes to reach the end of Lake (**07** 334masl) Okataina from this point and there is a notice board here showing it is another 20 minutes to reach Lake Tarawera. The last section to Lake Tarawera is up and over a hilly section but it is not too steep and really does only take 20 minutes each way. There are good spots to be found overlooking the lake for a late lunch or refreshment break (**09** 320masl).

Kaiwaka Bay



Millpond smooth lake reflections



Notes:

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