

Omanawanui Loop, Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, Auckland

Omanawanui Track is part of the Hillary Trail and has a reputation for being spectacular.

Winter weather in the ranges can be hit or miss – and the trails notoriously muddy.

Tackling the track from top to bottom means you'll always have the views in front of you, rather than have your noses into the hill.

The track undulates mostly downhill through mixed forest along an easy ridge before briefly rejoining the road. Re-entering the forest, the track becomes steeper and can be muddy in places. From this point, there are tantalising glimpses of the views across the Manukau Harbour which have inspired Auckland Council to dub the Omanawanui Track one of the 'secret jewels' of this park.

The track rises and falls steeply along the ridge, with one particularly steep rock section to negotiate before the geodetic beacon at Pt241. There is a chain here to offer assistance.

The descent from Pt241 is steep and sometimes slippery with mud, but aided by another chain. Keep an eye out for the remains of the Omanawanui Pa fortifications, which once protected the main kumara storage site for Maori who occupied the valley.

The track diverts north, off the ridge, to the road end at Whatipu Lodge.

From the lodge you could explore Whatipu Caves or head out to the scientific reserve, across the sands to the sea some 1.5km away.

Whatipu Valley has a rich history from its early Maori settlement through to a kauri milling operation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the present day Whatipu Lodge was the former mill manager's homestead which provided accommodation to logging workers and later tourists.

Return along the gravel road to your car, or for a more scenic route, take Kura Track on the northern side of the Whatipu River.

Wild File

Access Whatipu Road end car park or small car park at the upper track end

Grade Easy

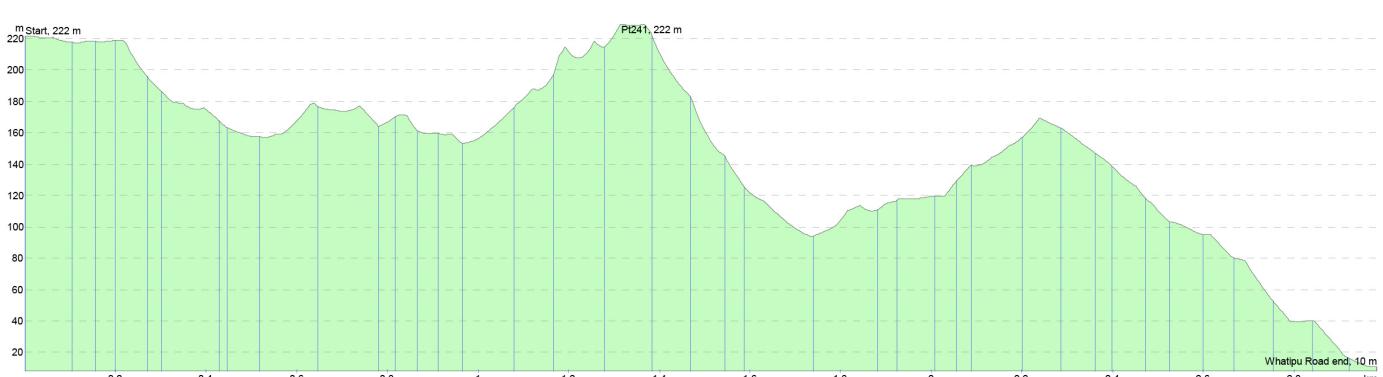
Time 2-2.5hr return

Distance 2.98km to Whatipu Lodge

Total ascent 179m

Map BB31

Elevation Profile



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