

*Plan and prepare*

# ABEL TASMAN COAST TRACK



Duration: 3–5 days  
Distance: 60 km (one way)



Great Walks season:  
All year



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

# ABEL TASMAN COAST TRACK

Blessed with a mild climate, golden beaches and lush, coastal native bush, the Abel Tasman Coast Track has it all.

Located in Abel Tasman National Park on the South Island's northern shores, this family-friendly Great Walk showcases the best that the park has to offer. Marvel at naturally-sculptured granite cliffs and crystal-clear waters.

Plan an adventure that suits your ability and schedule. You can hike the whole track, or take a water taxi between certain locations.

The Abel Tasman Coast Track can be walked in either direction. The track is well marked and signposted, but some sections may be steep and rough and the track could be muddy.

This brochure describes a 5-day hike for independent, non-guided walkers who choose to hike the whole track from Mārahau to Wainui Bay. This track involves one compulsory tidal crossing and several optional crossings. It's important to consult a tide timetable before booking your trip.

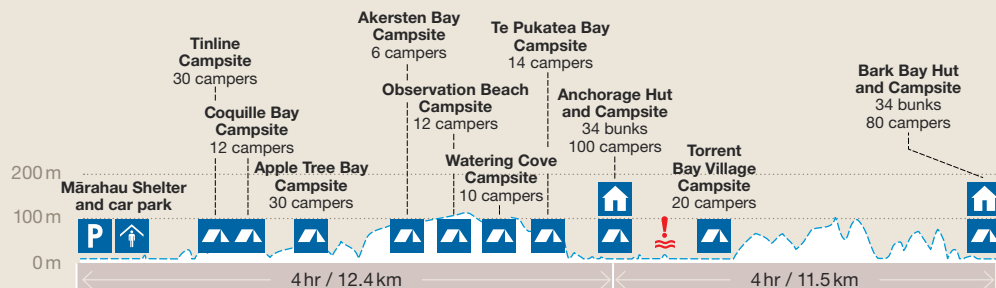


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## Elevation profile & track guide



↗ 4 hours, 12.4 km

You'll begin your journey crossing Mārahau estuary using the causeway. Follow the track through open country, then lush beech forest with large kāmuka trees. The track eventually turns inland, winding in and out of several little gullies before emerging to a view of the beautiful Anchorage Bay. Here you'll descend to Anchorage Hut and Campsite.



↗ High tide track:  
4 hours, 11.5 km  
Low tide crossing:  
3 hours, 8.4 km

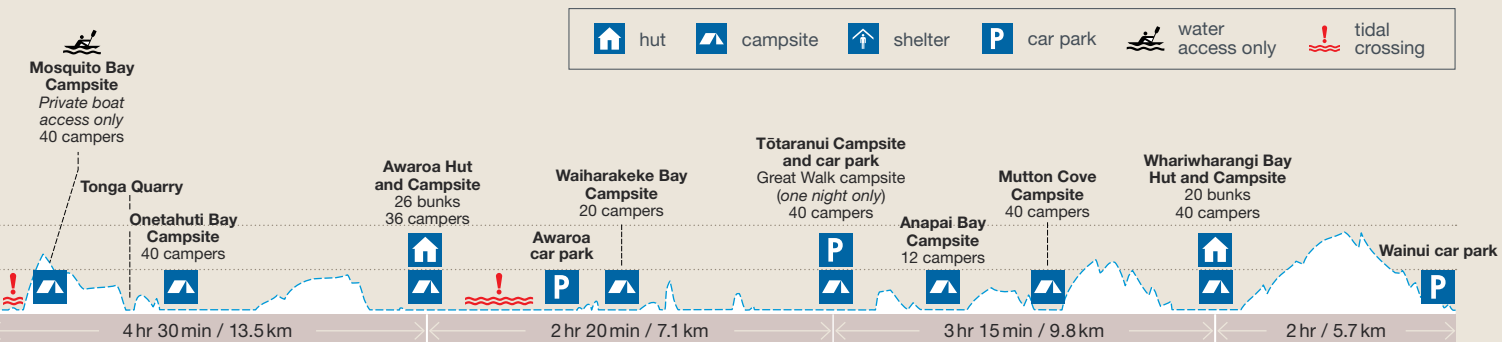
Rākauroa/Torrent Bay estuary can be crossed within 2 hours either side of low tide, or you can take the all-tide track around it. After Rākauroa/Torrent Bay, you'll leave the beach and climb gently into lush coastal forest. An impressive 47-metre long suspension bridge takes you over Falls River. You'll meander through the forest before being led back to the sea and the idyllic golden sands of Bark Bay (Wairima).

COVER: Te Pukatea Bay, *Darryl Wilson*

ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT:  
*Black Pete; Shellie Evans (tikitouringnz.blogspot.co.nz)*  
*DOC/90 Seconds; DOC (photo by Garry Holz); Eduardo Villouta Stengl*

MAIN PHOTO: Tōtaranui, *Daniel Deans*





**Day 3: Bark Bay (Wairima) to Awaroa**



**Day 4: Awaroa to Whariwharangi Bay**



**Day 5: Whariwharangi Bay to Wainui Bay or Tōtaranui**

➤ 4 hours 30 minutes, 13.5 km 🚧

Cross the beautiful Bark Bay estuary 2 hours either side of low tide or follow the all-tide track (10 minutes) around the edge of the estuary. A steep climb takes you through stands of mānuka. Return to the coast at Tonga Quarry and it's a short walk from there to Onetahuti Bay, where one of the longest beaches in the Abel Tasman stretches before you. Here a boardwalk and bridge provide an all-tide crossing. The track then leads over the forested Tonga Saddle. As you start to descend to Awaroa Inlet, you can take a non-DOC track to visit the famous Awaroa Beach, before returning to the main track.

➤ 5 hours 35 minutes (tidal), 16.9 km 🚧

Awaroa Inlet can only be crossed within 1 hour 30 minutes before and 2 hours after low tide under normal conditions. However, this period can be affected by factors such as tide heights, storm surges and heavy rain. It is only safe to cross the inlet in daylight. Allow 25 minutes to cross. There is no alternative track around the inlet, so plan your trip carefully to suit the tide timetable. Once you have crossed the inlet, the scenery alternates between sandy beaches and rocky headlands of regenerating kānuka. Camp or stay just behind the beach in the cosy and historic Whariwharangi Hut (a former homestead built around 1896).

➤ 2 hours, 5.7 km to Wainui Bay  
 3 hours, 9 km to Tōtaranui

Follow a trickling stream and climb above the bay to a saddle overlooking the serene Wainui Inlet. At this point you can either descend to the car park at Wainui or take a left turn onto the Gibbs Hill Track. This will take you to Tōtaranui where you can get a water taxi back to Mārahau.







Air New Zealand partners with the Department of Conservation to help bring native birds back to the beautiful Great Walks.

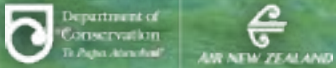


Photo: Rob Suisted (www.naturespic.com)



2

Photo: Nick Thompson



Photo: Karin Noresten

3



4

Photo: Chloe Riddell @awkwardterrain, CC by 2.0

- 1 Explore the crystal-clear waters of **Tonga Island Marine Reserve**. It's a fantastic place to swim, snorkel or kayak.
- 2 An enticing 20-minute side trip on day two takes you through lush trees to the secluded **Cleopatras Pool** – a natural rock pool with a moss-lined waterslide fit for a queen!
- 3 Keep an eye out for **fur seals/kekeno** found along the coast of the park, particularly on the more remote granite headlands and boulder beaches. Seals are confident and agile swimmers but are more wary when out of the water. If you spot one, admire it from a distance – it's a requirement to stay 20 m away.
- 4 Take advantage of the region's sunshine hours and stay next to golden beaches at one of the **18 campsites**.

**Conservation story**

**Project Janszoon** is a privately funded trust that works alongside DOC, iwi, the Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust and DOC's National Partner for Conservation, Air New Zealand, to restore the ecology of the Abel Tasman National Park over a 30-year timeframe. This collaboration enables over 90% of the national park to have sustained pest control, creating a haven for birds. As predators and weeds are reduced, rare native birds and plants are beginning to flourish again. [www.janszoon.org](http://www.janszoon.org).



## Places to stay

DOC operates 4 huts and 18 campsites along the Abel Tasman Coast Track, which **must be booked in advance all year round**. Campers are not permitted to use hut facilities.



Photo: David Buckton

### Great Walks huts

#### New Zealand rate

- \$38 (1 October – 30 April) per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).
- \$32 (1 May – 30 September) per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).

#### International rate

- \$75 (1 October – 30 April) per person per night for all ages (booking required).
- \$32 (1 May – 30 September) per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).

The huts have bunks, mattresses, heating, toilets, cold running water and hand-washing facilities. They may have a lighting source, and a DOC ranger may be present. These huts do not provide cooking facilities, cooking utensils, linen or showers.

### Great Walks campsites

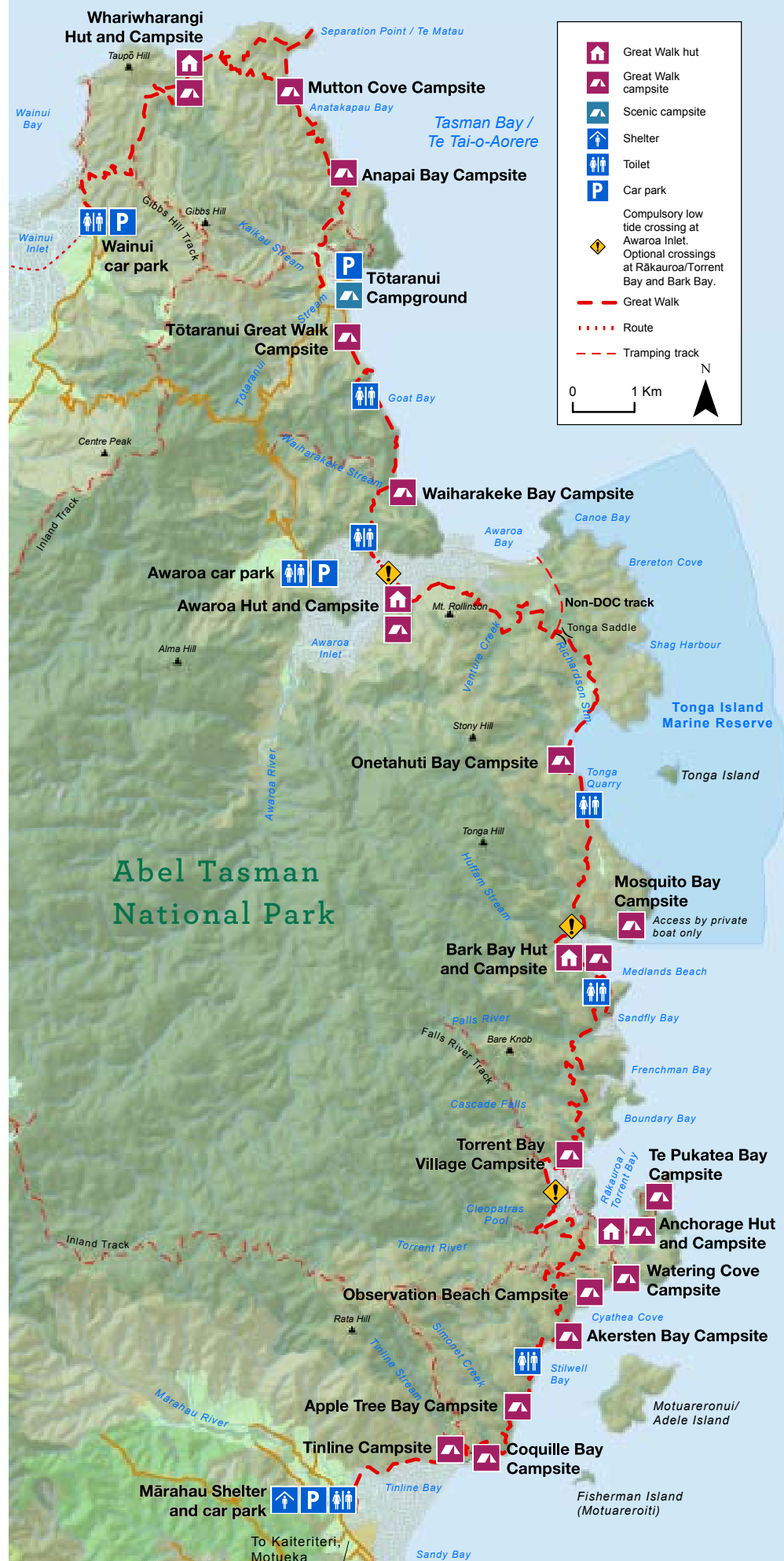
#### New Zealand rate

- \$15 per adult per night; 17 years and under free (booking required).

#### International rate

- \$30 (1 October – 30 April) per person per night for all ages (booking required).
- \$15 (1 May – 30 September) per adult per night, 17 years and under free (booking required).

The campsites offer basic facilities including toilets and a water supply. Some also have a sink, picnic tables and a cooking shelter.



The map in this brochure is a guide only and should not be used for navigational purposes.

## What do I do next?



Start off at **greatwalks.co.nz/abeltasman** for more information.



Consult tide timetables and **book your huts and campsites** online at **bookings.doc.govt.nz**.



**Book your transport** to and from the track.



Buy your food and **pack your bags** – download the Great Walks packing list and make sure you have everything you need for a 5-day independent unguided hike.



Read up on **safety** and make sure you're well prepared for your journey and changeable weather at **greatwalks.co.nz/abeltasman**.



Check the weather, and make sure you've printed your **ticket and official track guide**. You can also find a tide timetable, track guide and the latest weather update online or at the Nelson Visitor Centre. Download the free Abel Tasman National Park app from the App Store or Google Play.



**All set!** Lace up your boots and get hiking. Don't forget to share your experience on **facebook.com/GreatWalks**.

### For in-depth local knowledge, visit:

Nelson Visitor Centre  
Phone: +64 3 546 8210  
Email: [nmbookings@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nmbookings@doc.govt.nz)  
**greatwalks.co.nz**

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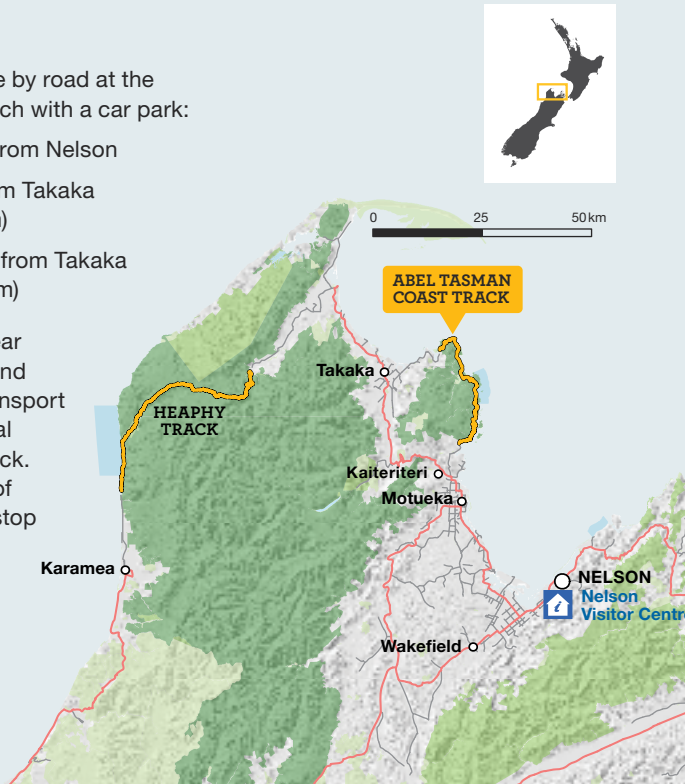
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## Getting there

The track is accessible by road at the following locations, each with a car park:

- **Mārahau**, 67 km from Nelson
- **Wainui**, 21 km from Takaka (unsealed for 2 km)
- **Tōtaranui**, 32 km from Takaka (unsealed for 12 km)

Water taxis operate year round from Mārahau and Kaiteriteri, and can transport you to and from several locations along the track. They do not go north of Tōtaranui and do not stop at Wainui Bay.



### Know before you go

It is **important** to plan your trip thoroughly to ensure you stay safe. Before you go, know the **Outdoor Safety Code** – 5 Simple rules to help you #MakeItHomeNZ.

- 1. Plan your trip.** Choose a trip that fits your abilities. Make sure you have enough time to do your walk, plus extra time. Book accommodation, transport and transfers to the start/end of the track early.
- 2. Tell someone your plans.** Tell someone where you are going and when you'll be back. Ask them to call emergency services if you haven't returned on time. Consider carrying a personal locator beacon, as there is no cellphone reception on most tracks.
- 3. Be aware of the weather.** New Zealand weather is very changeable. Even if it's summer or the forecast is good, you should always carry a rain jacket and warm clothing. Check **metservice.com** for the most up to date forecast.
- 4. Know your limits.** A good level of fitness is needed to walk the track. Read about the track carefully to make sure it suits your abilities. Always follow the track markers and signposted tracks – going off-track can be hazardous, even for experienced walkers. Don't be afraid to turn back.

### 5. Take sufficient supplies.

Take the right gear, including extra food, clothing and equipment in case something goes wrong. You'll have to carry everything you need, as you can't buy food or equipment at Great Walks huts or campsites.

You can find more information on safety at **www.doc.govt.nz/safety** or **www.adventuresmart.nz**.

### Safety on the Abel Tasman Coast Track

- Check a tide timetable when planning your trip as you can only cross Awaroa estuary at low tide. See 'Know before you go' at **greatwalks.co.nz/abeltasman** or contact the DOC Visitor Centre in Nelson.
- While the Abel Tasman coast is generally warm and dry in summer, the weather can change quickly. Be prepared for rain, cold, windy conditions and additional tide crossings when there are coastal changes.
- Go to **greatwalks.co.nz/abeltasman** 'Know before you go' section for detailed safety information, and 'What to take' section for a full gear list.

**Remember – your safety is your responsibility**