

Arapuni Suspension Bridge, Waikato

WILD FILE

Access The walkway and bridge are accessed on the south side of Arapuni on the Arapuni Road

Grade Easy

Time 30min

Map BE35

Description

Deep in the heart of the Waikato, hidden from the highway by the slot gorge through which the Waikato River flows is a remarkable series of hydroelectric dams. One of the most spectacular is the Arapuni and its adjacent suspension bridge, which spans the gorge and provides an eagle's-eye-view of the dam, river, and magnificent forest.

There is no difficulty in reaching the bridge, just a short hike through a park and down a steep flight of steps to the cliff face where the spectacle awaits.

At first it's hard to take in all the features of the gorge and power station, as they are so far below your line of sight, but that bridge captures all attention anyway and just begs to be crossed. At 152m long and 54m above the river, and with a relatively steep gradient – the east end is 8m higher than the west side – it's visually stunning. If gaping from the bridge is not enough, there is the possibility to extend your time in the gorge environs by taking to a section of the nearby Waikato River Trail and Cycleway which passes alongside the gorge, with plenty of opportunity to explore further afield.

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