

Mt Haast, Victoria Conservation Park

WILD FILE

Access A signposted track 1.8km west of Rahu Saddle on SH7

Grade Moderate

Time 3-4hr to summit. Round trip 6-8hr

Distance 2.35km to summit

Total ascent 922m

Map BT22

Description

At 180,000ha, Victoria Conservation Park is New Zealand's largest conservation park. It's reminiscent of Fiordland with reasonably easily traversed tops surrounded by fearsome battlements consisting of forest floor to bush edge bluffs, massive scarps, skinny two-boot-width ridge crests, truncated spurs and alpine cirques.

Mt Haast is modest in altitude, just 1587m, has a track to the bushline and a poled route from there to the top. It's almost 1000m of altitude gain from road to summit, and those metres get steeper as you approach the top.

But first the bush. An easy angled trail begins right beside the highway just west of Rahu Saddle and continues at a pleasant gradient all the way to the bush edge. The forest is mixed and always changing, particularly when heading higher into the subalpine zone. Here, the crunchy fronds of mountain neinei – a flaxy shrub typically found at this level in the west – predominates, creating a carpet of decaying vegetation over the forest floor. The neinei is a harbinger of the bush edge, which you reach soon after.

The ridge crest steepens and narrows as you approach the summit, requiring extra care where over-steepened gullies spiral away beneath the track edge.

Elevation Profile



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Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, Wilderness Magazine does not take responsibility for any errors in the route. Users should use discretion when planning their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing.

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