

Tutoko Valley Track, Fiordland National Park

WILD FILE

Access Three kilometres from Milford Sound, near the Historic Suspension Bridge

Grade Moderate

Time Three hours to the end of the track, countless opportunities for off-track exploration beyond

Distance 4.69km to camping location

Accommodation Camping

Map CB08

Description

This is one of the best 'underrated' trips in the area. The Tutoko Valley trail winds through virgin beech forest for several hours, not following the river but not straying far from it either. While the gradient isn't steep, the going certainly isn't easy and you may find yourself frequently knee-deep in mud, leaping from one tree root to another to avoid the deepest puddles. There are logs to scramble over, streams to ford and bramble to push through. Finally emerging into a grassy alpine valley, continue on the trail, for a further two kilometres. Eventually, the trail peters out on a gravel bar by the clear, rushing water of the Tutoko River – a good spot to set up your tent, surrounded by jagged peaks and waterfalls.

Leaving your tent by the river, head upstream, occasionally boulder-hopping along the river, sometimes veering off into the forest when it becomes too steep.

Further upstream the landscape changes and becomes more rugged. Scars from a recent avalanche are evident, giant beech trees ripped from the ground and strewn across the riverbed; piles of rocks and rubble left atop boulders as though placed there by a mischievous giant.

The Tutoko Valley is a remote, spectacular place. Don't do this as a day hike – give yourself at least one or two nights to explore the valley. It's unbeatable.

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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