

## Te Paki Coastal Track, Cape Reinga

The track begins on a broad sweep of Spirits Bay, almost 10km long, and traverses across the base of dunes. At the beach's western end, the track crosses the Waitahora Lagoon on a long boardwalk, before sidling across a forested ridge and then descending to Whangakea Beach. The Pandora Campsite lies slightly inland. From the campsite, the track climbs out of the Whangakea Valley, until gaining a ridge some distance from the shoreline. This is one of the bigger climbs of the tramp, which otherwise has little climbing.

For the next couple of hours, the track stays on the spine of the ridge, before reaching the old pa site at Tirikawa. Here, the route descends to the coast to reach Tapotupotu Bay and the campsite. This campsite, lying just east of Cape Reinga, is also accessible by road, so offers another possible starting point for those with less time.

To avoid impassable cliffs, the track sidles high, climbing almost 200m before descending again to Sandy Bay, crossing a small stream and resuming a climb to Cape Reinga, where the Pacific Ocean and Tasman Sea meet in a clashing of currents and swells.

The track then swings south-westward, towards Te Werahi Beach – a wide sweep of sand and dunes that separates Cape Reinga from Cape Maria van Diemen. Following the shoreline, the route reaches Te Werahi Stream, which can be difficult to cross in flood, but normally presents nothing more than wet feet.

The track climbs to Herangi Hill, which can be hard work in the loose sand, and fine views over Cape Maria van Diemen. The cape can be reached on a sidetrack which leads to an attractive rocky shore, with the Motuopao Island and its derelict lighthouse lying just offshore.

The Te Paki track bends south, following a high terrace overlooking the bluffs of Maungatiketike Point and then descends to Twilight Beach. The campsite lies at the far end of the beach.

For those with limited time or needing an escape route, the Twilight/Te Werahi Loop Track leads back to SH1. From Twilight Beach campsite, the track climbs over Tiriparepa or Scott Point. It separates Twilight Beach from its more famous and vastly longer Ninety Mile Beach.

It's best to walk this section of the trail at low tide, when you can pick the firmest sand. The endless pounding on the unchanging sandy surface can cause blisters, bruised feet, or both – so be prepared.

The Te Paki track turns inland after 5km or so, where Te Paki Stream disgorges onto the shore. The route heads inland, following the stream, into extensive dunes. It's well worth allowing enough time to wander in this landscape of sand mountains. The track ends on the edge of the dunes, at Te Paki Stream Road car park.

### Wild file

**Access** From Spirits Bay Road end, 1hr 45min drive from Kaitaia. A car shuttle is required or local operators can arrange pick-up/drop-off

**Grade** Easy

**Time** 2-3 days. Tapotupotu Bay campsite to Cape Reinga, 2-2.5hr; To Herangi Hill 2hr; To Cape Maria van Diemen 90min return; To Twilight Beach campsite 1.5hr; To Te Paki Stream Road, 4-5hr

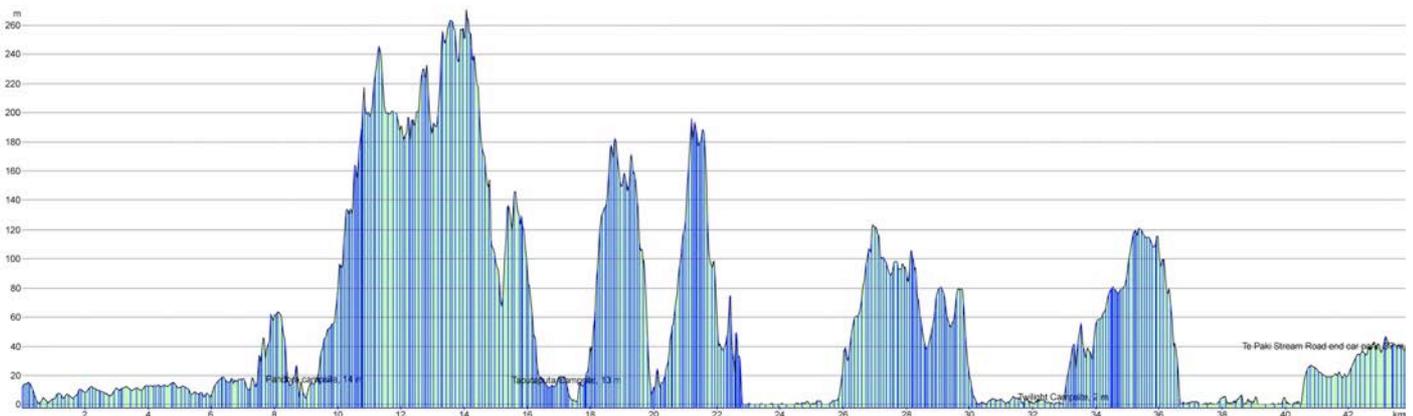
**Distance** 43.8km

**Total ascent** 1787m

**Accommodation** Campsites at Pandora, Tapotupotu Bay and Twilight Beach

**Map** AT24

### Elevation Profile



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**Disclaimer:** While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, Wilderness does not accept responsibility for any errors. Users should plan their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing. The GPX file associated with this route has been drawn using Memory-Map software, version 6. Use discretion when following the route, especially when no track is marked on the map. **The GPX file in these cases are a "best guess" of the route only. Users should use a combination of GPS, visual observations, maps and compass to find the best possible route.** Memory Map shows purple tracks and hut icons as verified routes and huts. Red or blue routes are those drawn by Wilderness.





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Te Paki Coastal Track, Cape Reinga. Map 3

