

Te Araroa Trail – Northbound Guide

Tasman– Marlborough

Boyle to St Arnaud: 110 km, 5 days

3D view north-west: Boyle to St Arnaud

43. Boyle to Anne Hut (20 bunks): 9 hrs 45, 28.5 km (maps 104, 103)

Note: If you are using the TA pdf maps you will need to continue with the ones for Canterbury up to Carolyn Bivvy before switching to Tasman. I prefer to break my notes at logical section beginning/end points rather than the strictly correct regional boundaries that may be in the middle of wilderness.

This is an easy, though long, walk along the St James Walkway. The only slog is up to Anne Saddle (1136m), about an hour north of Rokeby Hut. There is no efficient way of breaking this day into two, unless you camp, or possibly stay at the basic Rokeby Hut (3 canvas bunks). Boyle to Boyle Flat Hut (14 bunks), 4 hrs. Boyle Flat Hut to Rokeby Hut, 1 hr. Rokeby to Anne Hut, 4 hr 45. There is the side track to the small modern Magdalen Hut (5 bunks) before you get to Boyle Flat too. Anne Hut is a modern, spacious hut with a short-wave radio. This is useful for checking the weather before you head over the Waiau Pass in two days time, as that is not a good place to be in bad weather. You could get a weather report from the office at Boyle as well, and use their phone to call the DoC visitor centre in St Arnaud (03 521 1806) to ask if the pass is snow free.

44. Anne Hut to Waiau Hut (6 bunks): 7.5 hrs, 22 km (maps 102, 101)

The route continues on the wide open grass and tussock land that surrounds Anne Hut for another long day. At the Ada River the St James Walkway goes off to the left and you continue on to the Waiau Pass Track, giving the privately owned homestead a wide berth on your left. Waiau hut, three kilometres north, has now replaced the decrepit Caroline Creek Bivvy. The site of the former bivvy is a nice spot for camping, under the shelter of trees and with a camp fireplace of rocks.

45. Waiau Hut to Blue Lake Hut (16 bunks): 8 hrs, 15 km (maps 101, 100)

There is further potential for camping on the way up to the Upper Waiau Forks, at a camping spot just before the forks in particular. Then it is a steep climb to Waiau Pass (1870m). This is one of the most difficult sections of the TA and one that shouldn't be attempted in poor weather. At certain

points you are climbing or scrambling up steeply sloping sections of rock. A reasonable head for heights is required. The descent on the other side is quite different and is mostly down steep scree slopes. The track skirts round the left of Lake Constance and then goes up steeply to the left part-way around to avoid rocky bluffs that go right to the water. Avoiding this track, by going around the bluffs at lake level, is almost certainly impossible. After crossing the rocky boulder moraine dam of Lake Constance the stunning Rotomairewhenua / Blue Lake and its nearby hut come into view. The lake is said to have the clearest fresh water in the world. This is because it is fed by water from Lake Constance that has been filtered through the moraine. The waters are considered by Māori to be tapu (sacred). Respect the lake and this cultural belief by not bathing, washing your clothes, or cleaning your dishes in it. There is a plan to install a warden at the hut to help curb this sort of insensitive behaviour.

Blue Lake Hut, West Sabine Hut, Upper Travers Hut, John Tait Hut and others on the Travers-Sabine circuit are no longer covered by the Backcountry Hut Pass 😞 Hut tickets are needed (one blue for the serviced hut rate and one green standard ticket), or \$20 cash, from 1 Oct to 30 April. The hut pass will cover you if you just camp at the huts though.

46. Blue Lake Hut to Upper Travers Hut (24 bunks): 7 hrs, 15 km (maps 100, 99)

You are now in the Nelson Lakes National Park. This is a popular tramping destination, so expect to see plenty of others on the trail and in the large modern huts. Its popularity is deserved, and TA hikers often rate this section of the trail as one of the South Island highlights.

The way down to West Sabine Hut (34 bunks), 3 hrs, is rocky and slow but well marked. After facing a tough ascent the previous day you then have another – up to the Travers Saddle (1787m, 3 hrs). There is an amazing deep chasm crossed by a bridge about 2.5 km from the West Sabine Hut before the steep climb to the saddle. There is a bit just near the saddle where the trail diverges slightly from the route on the NZ Topo Map as at Oct 2022 (but correct on the TA pdf map and I think on the TA App) and you leave the steep valley where the track is damaged to follow a poled route on its right side.

The downhill descent on the other side is easier, taking you to Upper Travers Hut in 1 hr. (The time from Upper Travers to West Sabine in the TA trail notes of 6 to 8 hours (and DoC of 6 to 9) seems grossly overestimated and there is no reason to think it would be slower going south to north – quite the opposite in fact). Upper Travers Hut is an excellent place to stay, as it has a view right over the valley below.

47. Upper Travers Hut to St Arnaud: 8 hrs 45, 29.5 km (maps 99, 98)

It is easy, downhill walking to Lake Rotoiti and then along a wide flat track around the lake to St Arnaud. The small detour to Travers Falls about 9 km down from Upper Travers Hut is well worth a stop. It is clearly marked. There are plenty of nice camping spots from John Tait Hut to Lakehead, though the national park is well known for sandflies.

If you feel like another steep climb you could take an alternative route to St Arnaud and go up to Lake Angelus and then down the very exposed Robert Ridge. The hut needs to be pre-booked, though there is camping by the hut.

Upper Travers Hut to John Tait Hut, 2 hrs 15; Tait to Lakehead Hut, 4 hrs; Lakehead to St Arnaud, 2.5 hrs.

The track ends at the Kerr Bay Campground, St Arnaud. St Arnaud is a small tourist town, with a limited range of supplies. The DoC visitor centre (open 8am to 4.30 in summer) sells camping gas and dehydrated meals and may accept food parcels but you should check this. The general store has an associated café with fantastic meat pies and, at peak times, fish and chips. There is a more upmarket café at the Alpine Lodge. The 24 hr [NPD St Arnaud Alpine Store](#) (scroll down for store) sells methylated spirits and screw-on gas cannisters, but if you are relying on either it would be best to phone ahead to make sure (03 521-1854).

- [Kerr Bay Campsite](#) – DoC operated. Cooking facilities, toilets and showers (not running in winter). Bookings at the DoC Rotoiti / Nelson Lakes Visitor Centre, 03 521 1806, View Rd. Here is the full [low-down on the campground](#) from Jon Moake (same link as for store, above).
- [Alpine Lodge St. Arnaud](#) – 75 Main Rd, St Arnaud, 03 521 1869, info@alpinelodge.co.nz. Dorm and private rooms. Food parcels can be stored for \$15 (address 75 Main Rd, St Arnaud, RD2, Nelson 7072. Mark with your name and 'Te Araroa Walker').
- [Nelson Lakes Motels and Travers-Sabine Lodge](#) – SH63, St Arnaud, 03 521 1887, info@nelsonlakes.co.nz. Dorm rooms in the lodge. The entire lodge can be booked out to groups. Food parcels are no longer accepted.
- [Tophouse Historic Inn and Mountain View Cottages](#) – 68 Tophouse Rd, about 2.5km off trail about 4.5km north of St Arnaud (i.e. 7km from St Arnaud total). Cheapest \$145 for couple, \$110 for single. 03 521 1269, 021 0712 363.
- [Nelson Lakes Shuttles](#), who usually run scheduled services in summer, are not operating these at present, but they will do chartered ones and you may be able to piggy back on one of these. 03 540 2042 or 027 222 1872 (for urgent matters).
- [Intercity Coachlines](#) run between Westport and Nelson and stop for booked passengers at Kawatiri, the junction of SH63 from St Arnaud and SH6 between Nelson and Westport. This is 25 km to the west of St Arnaud. However, this service does not seem to be running as of October 2022. ph 03 365 1113.
- [Heaphy Bus Company](#) go to Nelson and Westport on Sundays in the summer months, but again you would have to arrange to be picked up at Kawatiri.
- [Trips and Transfers Nelson Lakes and Beyond](#) is a charter transport shuttle in St Arnaud. Jennifer, 03 539 4896; 022 615 4915. As with Nelson Lakes Shuttles you may find that a trip is already going the day that suits you.
- See listing for [Private Driver Hire](#) under Pelorus Bridge to Queen Charlotte too.

Richmond Alpine Track & Pelorus River: 130 km, 7–8 days

This section on the [Richmond Alpine Track](#) over the Richmond range and then along the Pelorus River is a further highlight for many on the TA South Island trail. It is the toughest part, and also the longest without a place for resupply, so packs will be heavy to start – that's eight nights of food if you do it as set out here and walk through to Havelock. The huts are mostly small, as few people travel over the tracks and the only people you see will probably be other TA walkers and hunters (many of the huts were built as deer culler huts, hence their age and basic nature). You will not want to be on the higher, exposed parts in bad weather, so check the forecast before your leave St Arnaud. If you

do want to exit the trail at some point then Hackets Hut is the usual place out that is closest to civilisation, but it would be more effort than it is worth if you just need to get more food. Nice places to stay for their locations are Red Hills, Hunters, Tarn, and Mt Rintoul huts, amongst others.

3D view north-west: St Arnaud to Pelorus Bridge

48. St Arnaud to Porters Creek Hut (6 bunks): 9 hrs, 28.5 km (maps 98, 97, 96)

The first part of the route, from St Arnaud to Red Hills Hut, has been changed in 2017. The following is the old route and the time and km above are for that (9hrs, 28.5km): The first section is road walking for 2 hrs. The track turn-off is at the end of the 5 Mile Scenic Reserve at the bottom of the hill before a one-way bridge. It is then 1 hr 50 up a long steady incline on a 4WD track to Red Hills Hut (6 bunks), a pleasant modern hut with a nice outlook that catches the afternoon sun.

However, you may wish to do the new route, as per the map, which involves turning off left on Tophouse Rd and taking the track off its right after about 700m. This is about 1 km less road walking than the 5 Mile Scenic Reserve option above, but involves a steep climb to peaks at 1,100 and 1,200 m (with great views) up a mountain bike track, and is 3 km longer, so it would probably extend the St Arnaud to Porters Creek Hut time to 10.5 hrs. You might choose to go only as far as the Red Hills Hut on the first day. Then go to Hunters Hut (8.5 hrs) the next, and to Top Wairoa Hut (9 hrs) after that, or just to Mid Wairoa Hut (5 hrs) after Hunters.

The track from Red Hills Hut downhill is very difficult going, beginning as boggy and then becoming very rocky, with a good deal of up and down. The sign at Red Hills Hut says 4 hrs to Porters Creek but this is an underestimate and is more like 5 hrs 15. A tricky way-finding bit is the last section up Lowther Creek after its confluence with Porters Creek, as the TA map is not sufficiently detailed here. There are no poles at first, but as you go up the wide, rocky Lowther Creek bed a poled route up the steep side to the left will become evident. The hut is well up on a boggy plateau.

49. Porters Creek Hut to Top Wairoa Hut (6 bunks): 8 hrs 45, 17km (map 96)

It is more up-and-down travel over a boulder strewn track to Hunters Hut (8 bunks), 3 hrs 15, 7 km. About 20 minutes before the hut you will see black boulders on the trail. Pick a smaller one up and you will find it remarkably heavy. This is magnetite, an iron ore. Hunters Hut replaces an earlier one in the area that was swept away in a flash flood, killing two DoC workers inside. The hut is better sited now, so no need to worry about this happening again. From Hunters Hut it is a descent down to the river and an easy crossing without getting wet feet. Then it's a long grind up onto open tops where you get a panoramic view of Tasman Bay. There is no water source from the river crossing to Top (aka Upper) Wairoa Hut. After weaving around the ridge lines the descent to the orange-painted hut is slow and very difficult through tussock and fields of jagged boulders.

50. Top Wairoa Hut to Tarn Hut (5 bunks): 8.5 hrs, 13.5 km (map 97)

It is relatively slow going down the valley to Mid Wairoa Hut (6 bunks), 4 hrs, on a narrow track with many tree roots and rocks and about eight river crossings (which may be difficult after rain). The hut is on a grassy flat and is a good lunch stop. (If the weather is not looking good for heading up to Mt Rintoul you could always go downstream here and cut across to Starveall Hut, though the latter is still fairly high up.) After crossing a swing bridge it is a steep climb up through forest for about an hour, along ridges and then another less steep climb. Finally there is a downhill detour to Tarn Hut,

set at the forest edge of a clearing that is also suitable for camping. The tarn is very picturesque and it is worth a detour even if you are not stopping here.

51. Tarn Hut to Old Man Hut (5 bunks): 7 hrs 45, 14 km (map 94)

Once back up to the ridge, the track wends its way along through bush, with a climb up to Purple Top and then more ridge walking through bush to Mt Rintoul Hut (6 bunks), 3 hrs 45. There is cellphone coverage from Purple Top onwards. The hut is positioned with a great outlook and big windows. It would be a good place to stay and watch a sunset. If you are pressing on, top up with water as there is none along the ridges. This is the most difficult section of the Richmond Alpine Track. First is the steep climb up to Mt Rintoul (1731m, the highest point on the track). Near the top it looks like you descend very steeply but it is just a short diversion to get you round the next peak before Mt Rintoul. From Mt Rintoul you can see the hard part ahead, as the track descends steeply off to the right and then comes back up equally steeply to the top of Little Rintoul. This is not a section for the faint hearted, nor in poor weather. A short way along from Little Rintoul is the diversion to the right to Old Man Hut. It is quite a long way down to the flat clearing and the hut. And of course, you have to make the haul back up the next day to the ridge track, though by a different, somewhat shorter track.

52. Old Man Hut to Starveall Hut (6 bunks): 6 hrs, 14 km (maps 94, 93)

It is a half hour climb to regain the ridge. The walk along it amongst stunted beech and open tops to Slaty Hut (6 bunks) takes 4 hrs. And from there it is 2 hrs to Starveall Hut, which is nicely positioned for the afternoon sun.

53. Starveall Hut to Rocks Hut (16 bunks): 8 hrs, 19.5 km (map 93)

It is down through the forest all the way to Hackett Hut (6 bunks), 2.5 hrs. There are about seven stream crossings but with boulder hopping in low flows you can avoid wet feet. If you need to exit the trail for resupply, this is the place to do it. The Hackett Track takes you down the Hackett River to the car park on Aniseed Valley Road (approx 1.5 hrs) and from there it is 10 km to Hope, behind Richmond, a major satellite settlement of Nelson city. There is a large supermarket in Richmond or you could continue on to Nelson (29 km), which has outdoor stores, supermarkets and many backpacker accommodation options. You could arrange transport with Paul (see Private Driver Hire further below) to be picked up from the Hackett car park by phoning from a high point on the Richmond Range – there is no reception at the car park itself.

- [The Pear Orchard](#) – 569 Hill Street South, Hope, 03 544 5361, 021 0224 6501. Rooms range from dorm to private rooms with ensuite. 3km or so from Hope School. Pickups from the Hackett picnic area can be arranged.

Browning Hut to Rocks Hut: 4.5 hrs.

To continue on the TA, you now begin on the Pelorus River Track. It is a short distance from Hackett to Browning Hut (8 bunks), 1 hr. About 20 minutes along there is a sign to the high river track to avoid a stream crossing. This involves a steep climb up, and the stream crossing duly averted is minor in normal flows (but there is another crossing after the detour finishes anyway), so there is probably no need to take the high track. It is then a stiff climb from Totorā Saddle up through forest followed by a long, gently rising ridge, with some sidling here and there throwing in undulating sections. The track is a little rough, with many tree roots. The hut is modern and spacious and has a

flushing toilet. There is no cellphone reception here but you can go further up to a lookout spot where there is patchy reception and a view. Take care to note your route, as it is difficult to find the track again for the way down to the hut.

Note that at Totara Saddle, where the track splits to go up to Rocks Hut at left, the Pelorus Track goes to the right to sidle above Roebuck Creek to Roebuck Hut. It then sidles above Pelorus River to eventually join up with the track down from Rocks Hut and on to Middy Hut. If you zoom out on a NZ Topo map this is marked as the TA route, but this is incorrect. When you zoom in, the route up to Rocks shows as the TA route. The Pelorus Track may save you some climbing, but it is along some steep slopes and I don't know if it is any easier or shorter.

54. Rocks Hut to Captains Creek Hut (6 bunks): 3.5 hrs, 9.5 km (map 92)

From Rocks it is easy walking 1.5 hrs downhill through bush to Middy Hut (6 bunks). Then easy, flat bush walking to Captains Creek, 2 hrs.

55. Captains Creek Hut to Pelorus Bridge camp ground: 6 hrs 45, 22.5 km (maps 92, 91)

The trail begins as a narrow track winding around hillsides for the first 2 hours. Then as it comes back down to the river it widens and becomes a flat easy walk to the road end. An hour or so before the road is the pleasant Emerald Pools picnicking area where you could perhaps camp. Once the track ends it is road walking (no water sources) along the mostly gravel Maungatapu Rd that is flanked by increasingly well-manicured lifestyle blocks. There is little traffic. The Pelorus Bridge DoC camp ground, found by turning right and crossing the bridge at the end of the road where it meets the main highway, has a nice café for tourists but no groceries for sale. You pay for camping in the café (well, I did, but the rules may have changed – see below). The camp ground is a pleasant spot overlooking the river. It is mainly frequented by campervans, and has toilets, showers and a cooking building (but no cabins).

- [DOC Pelorus Bridge Campground](#) – Bounce boxes are held for \$10. Send to: <Your name>, Te Araroa walker <due date>, DOC Pelorus Bridge campground, 5949 State Highway 6, Main Rd, RD2, Rai Valley. 03 571 6019. Note that bookings by phone or in person(!?) attract a \$10 charge. DoC wants you to book via their website. And that there is a minimum 3 night stay 27 Dec to 4 Jan (surely this doesn't apply to a single person's tent?).

Pelorus Bridge to Queen Charlotte Track (Anakiwa): 37 km, 1–2 days

56. Pelorus Bridge to Havelock: 4 hrs 45, 20.5 km (maps 90, 89)

After leaving the camp ground head back over the Pelorus Bridge and take the Circle Track directly opposite Maungatapu Rd. It is indeed a circle and it doesn't matter which way you go, for Dalton's Bridge track still leads off it about half way round. This track goes across farmland until Dalton's Bridge. You are expected to follow the marked route along the fence line and strictly not take the farm road. Then you continue in the same direction on Kaiuma Bay Rd. It is road walking on a mostly gravel road with very little traffic. Take Te Hoiere Rd at right over the bridge, and then, after the road becomes Boulton's Rd, another bridge to bring you to the main road, SH6. Then 2.5 km of unpleasant walking beside a very busy stretch of road brings you to Havelock, a village based on mussel farming and tourism. A number of restaurants and cafés line the streets (some closed

Mondays). Anyway, there is a post office (in the pharmacy), an information office, a petrol station, a bus stop marked on the road surface for Intercity buses travelling between Nelson and Picton, a small Four Square supermarket, and various places to stay. The motor camp is right in town, down Inglis St. Consider buying your pass for the Queen Charlotte track at the i-Site and booking a water taxi from Ship Cove (see later) while in Havelock as your options may narrow later.

- [Blue Moon Lodge \(BBH\)](#) – 48 Main Rd, 0800 252 663; 021 133 3705.
- [Rutherford Backpackers](#) – 46 Main Rd, 03 574 2104.
- [Havelock Garden Motel](#) – 71 Main Rd, Havelock, 03 574 2387.
- [Havelock Holiday Park](#) – 24 Inglis St, Havelock, 03 574 2339.
- [Bow to Stern store](#) – 75 Main Rd. 8am–5pm weekdays, 9am–4pm Sat, closed Sun. Have gas canisters and some camping equipment, 03 574 2941, ask@bowtostern.co.nz
- [Intercity Coachlines](#) – Busses pass stop at Havelock on the route from Picton to Nelson, 03 365 1113
- [Private Driver Hire](#) – can transport to/from all locations Picton-Anakiwa-Pelorus Bridge-Nelson-St Arnaud, including from Hacket carpark, 03 391 0500, 0272 565 643 (Paul).
- [The Link Bus](#) – Transport between Pelorus Bridge at request, Havelock, Picton, Anakiwa. Flag downs and bookings welcome. Phone/text Helen, 027 314 8569.

3D view north-west: Havelock to Ship Cove

57. Havelock to Mistletoe Bay: 8 hrs 15, 28.5 km (maps 89, 88, 87)

Havelock to Anakiwa: 4 hrs 45, 16.5 km

Continue on SH6 out of Havelock, then turn left into Mahakipawa Rd, which changes into Queen Charlotte Drive within a few hundred metres. When you have crossed the Kaituna River there is a sign at the base of a hill to a refuse station at right. Opposite is another to the Link Pathway / Te Ara Tuhono that goes around the peninsula before rejoining the Queen Charlotte Drive. Walk along the side of the road here for about 1km before a bush track at left offers respite for another km. Then it is more road walking up to, and along, the Linkwater Straight (still Queen Charlotte Drive). A quarter of the way across the Straight there is a petrol station and a café opposite, and 2 km later a school (with accessible toilets and water). The Smiths Farm Holiday Park is 500m past the school. From the school a footpath takes you along the left hand side of the road to the Anakiwa Rd turn off at left. Take the gravel path on the right hand side of Anakiwa Rd. After 1 km this becomes a bush track that brings you into Thompson Bay. YHA Anakiwa and Anakiwa 401 (at the far end of the bay opposite the second wharf) are here.

- [Smiths Farm Holiday Park](#) – 1419 Queen Charlotte Drive, Linkwater, 03 574 2806, 0800 727 578. Camping sites and cabins (cheapest \$60 for one or two people).
- [Anakiwa Lodge](#) – 9 Lady Cobham Grove, Anakiwa, 03 574 2115; 0274 296 022 text. Only one dorm of 4 beds at \$35 each, rest are double, twin and family rooms, with cheapest \$90 double, \$100 twin.
- [Anakiwa 401](#) BBH – 401 Anakiwa Rd, Marlborough Sounds, 03 574 1388, 027 574 1000. Self-catering kitchen. Has a two bedroom wing sleeping four (\$295) and a one bedroom apartment sleeping two (at \$150).
- The Green Caravan Café is run by Anakiwa 401 and offers tea, coffee, ice creams, sweets, snacks and somewhat pricey ready-to-heat meals. Open 1.30 to 4pm Nov to end of May.

- [The Queen Charlotte Tavern](#) – 1162 Queen Charlotte Drive, just before the petrol station on the other side of the road at Linkwater. Offers food and accommodation. 03 375 2507.

Queen Charlotte Track: 67 km, 3–4 days

The rest of the South Island trail is on the Queen Charlotte Track, a very popular and easy trail that takes you to Ship Cove, the place that Captain James Cook, the first European to set foot on New Zealand soil, used on separate voyages in 1770, 1773 and 1777 as a [place to re-provision](#) and repair his ships.

The track is a nice, relaxing contrast to the arduousness of the Richmond Range and an easy end to the South Island TA trail. It is mostly a wide track, broad enough for DoC workers to ride quad bikes and other small vehicles on. It does involve some long climbs, but these are mostly gradual. Travel is through a mixture of native bush, scrub, and some open land, and varies from ridgeline to coastal travel. There are many places to stay along the way, too many to list all here. Most are up-market, though some are more backpacker oriented, and there are seven campsites. Bring cash for the honesty boxes at campsites. In 2020 the fee was either \$6 or \$8 per person. Beware of weka stealing your stuff at campsites.

The usual direction of travel on the track is north to south, as water taxi companies will transport packs (for a fee) from accommodation to accommodation going south, enabling you to walk unencumbered. So nearly everyone you will see on the track will be carrying a day pack. You could consider reversing your direction on the TA at this point. Besides being relieved of your pack, going with the flow also means you avoid this steady stream of people, some of them very well-heeled on cruise and walk packages, coming your way. (There will also be occasional mountain bikers going either direction from March to November.)

Whether you begin or end at Ship Cove, you will need to take a water taxi to or from this point. Cougar Line is the main one. Their boats leave Picton for Ship Cove at 8am, 10am, 1.30am and 6pm (the last from mid-Dec to Easter only) and take about 1.5 hrs. The boats go directly north and then wend their way back down to Picton, stopping at various pickup/drop off points. There is no exact schedule for stop off/arrival at locations along the way, as these are very much according to demand, which affects travelling time. The all-important last time in the day for pick up from Ship Cove is 2.45pm during the summer schedule (1 Oct to 30 Apr) and 2.30 in winter. The fare to Picton is \$75, plus \$10 if you left your pack at a spot earlier in your walk and want it picked up (it has to be ready on the wharf for collection, something accommodation providers can do). You will definitely have to book for your own pick up from Ship Cove, since if there is nobody booked for a pick up or drop off at a location, the boat doesn't call in. Note that the booking site doesn't allow for bookings from Ship Cove, so you will have to phone. And cellphone coverage on the Queen Charlotte track is very limited, so best to sort this out at Havelock, or at an accommodation on the track with a phone you can use.

- [Cougar Line Water Taxis](#) – Picton Town Wharf, 03 573 7925, 0800 504 090. Office open 7 days, 7am to 7pm Sept to Feb; 8am to 4.30pm March to October. Ship Cove to Picton summer time table, dept 9am, 11am, 2.30pm

- [Beachcomber Cruises](#) – Waterfront, corner of London Quay and Wellington St, Picton, 03 573 6175, 0800 624 526. Picton to Ship Cove dept summer 8am, 9am, 1.30 pm (arr 4pm as this one is not a direct sailing), \$76 one way from Ship Cove, incl one pack drop-off. TA walker discounts available.
- [Arrow Water Taxis](#) – 03 573 8229. Seem to be mainly an on-demand service for groups, but you may be able to get a ride on a boat going your direction.

There is an \$25 fee payable to the Queen Charlotte Track Land Cooperative to use track sections that cross private land. You can buy this at the the Havelock i-Site, Linkwater petrol station (1173 Queen Charlotte Drive), Picton i-site, The Green Caravan in Anakiwa, a machine at the Anakiwa car park, at certain lodges along the way, and [online](#) (where it comes with a 10% discount voucher on the Interislander ferry).

The [DoC brochure on the track](#) is very useful as it lists many of the accommodation options, has historical background, flora and fauna, a good map and shows the altitude profile of the track. The walking times are fairly generous. As the brochure states, they “lean more towards a person with a slow walking speed”.

Anakiwa to Davies Bay Campsite: 40 mins, 2.5 km

This is along the coast through mature forest. Then it is up around hillsides to the ridge above Mistletoe Bay and 15 minutes or so down to the water.

Davies Bay to Mistletoe Bay Campsite: 2 hrs 45, 9.5 km

- [The Mistletoe Bay Eco Village](#) – 03 573 4048, 021 131 8283. The Village includes the campsite (42 sites, kitchen, showers, laundry), ensuite cabins with shared kitchen, and a cottage with bathroom and kitchen that effectively offers dorm bed accommodation (\$40 single, \$80 double in separate room, or \$160 for the whole cottage).

58. Mistletoe Bay Campsite to Bay of Many Coves Campsite: 7 hrs 40, 22.5 km (maps 87, 86)

This is along ridge lines all the way, passing a road turn-off at Torea Saddle to Portage Bay, location of the upmarket Portage Hotel (with café, bar and restaurant), but also the Debretts and Treetops backpackers and a campsite in the adjacent Cowshed Bay. Black Rock Campsite is further along the ridge, with a shelter (including rainwater tanks), toilets and a very limited number of tent sites (officially 4). Bay of Many Coves Campsite, also on the ridge (and not, despite the name, down in the bay), has the same facilities but more options for camping in amongst the trees behind the shelter.

Mistletoe Bay ridge to Torea Saddle: 2 hrs 45

Torea Saddle to Black Rock Campsite: 1 hr 40

Black Rock Campsite to Bay of Many Coves Campsite: 3hrs

- [Treetops Backpackers](#) – 03 573 4404, staytreetops@xtra.co.nz. Located above Portage Hotel. Separate twin and double bedrooms, shared bathrooms, fully equipped kitchen. (Confirmed correct Oct 2022)

59. Bay of Many Coves Campsite to Furneaux Lodge, Endeavour Inlet: 6 hrs, 19.5 km (map 85)

Bay of Many Coves Campsite to Camp Bay: 2 hrs 45

There is a waterfront campsite at Camp Bay, and around at Punga Cove Resort to the east is a nicely located café on the jetty. You have a choice of descending down into the bay (as per the current TA map) or staying on the road and then taking the first track off at right (which is the shorter option and the previous TA route).

- [Punga Cove Resort](#) – 03 579 8561. This place is moderately upmarket but has a ‘Basecamp’ unit with 7 rooms with shared kitchen and bathroom for \$95 single, or double or twin for \$160. Prices go up late Dec to mid Jan.

Camp Bay to Furneaux Lodge, Endeavour Inlet: 3 hr 15

If you have descended to Camp Bay you can continue on along the foreshore to meet up with the main track as it comes down to the water. The track remains mostly low down into Endeavour Inlet. Before you get to the head of the Inlet there is the privately run camp ground Madsens Camp, and then at the head, another, Miner’s Camp, to the left of the track. Further round, Endeavour Resort and Fishing Lodge (misplaced on Google Maps) offer backpacker accommodation with a kitchen. This is followed by the extensive Furneaux Lodge complex.

- [Madsens Camp](#) – Ownership changed in late 2021 but a website is up and running now. \$15 to camp. The former owners didn’t have eftpos so it might be prudent to carry the cash.
- [Miner’s Camp](#) – 03 579 8186. Includes 4-bed bunkroom and one double room. This is listed as ‘temporarily closed’ on Google at Sept 2022 and the website is not functioning.
- [Furneaux Lodge](#) – Endeavour Inlet, 03 579 8259. This historic lodge has upmarket accommodation as well as small 4-bed bunk rooms charged at a relatively high \$58 per person (costs are high I guess, as everything to run the place needs to come in by sea). There are shared showers and toilets but no kitchen. There is a restaurant, café/bar, and a water taxi booking office. The Howden Room restaurant is expensive, but good quality. Cheaper evening meals are available at the bar, “a venue for quality casual dining and socialising in a premium yet egalitarian environment”, as the website carefully puts it.

60. Furneaux Lodge to Meretoto / Ship Cove: 4 hrs, 13 km (map)

You can leave your pack at Furneaux Lodge for picking up later, so you can walk around the last section without its weight. You will have to pre-arrange this, as the water taxi will only pull into the jetty if there are people or goods to pick up or drop off. And it costs \$20. The section round to Meretoto Ship Cove ascends gently before dropping down to Resolution Bay. Here there is the Resolution Bay Cabins accommodation and further along, the DoC Schoolhouse Bay Campsite. It is a final push up to a 240m saddle then a steep descent into Ship Cove, where there is a memorial to Cook’s visits and toilets.

- [Resolution Bay Cabins](#) – 03 579 9411. No mains electricity or eftpos/credit card facilities. Cheapest option in tramping huts is \$70 per person in summer. A cabin works out to be more expensive per person for two people.

Congratulations, you’ve made it! Take a selfie.

Picton and Getting to Wellington

- [The Villa YHA](#) – 34 Auckland St, 03 573 6598.
- [Atlantis Backpackers](#) – 2 London St, opposite the waterfront (with a park intervening), 0800 423 676, 03 773 7390. ‘Honours hostel member cards’.
- Backpackers further from the waterfront are [Tombstone Backpackers](#), [Sequoia Lodge](#) and the [Jugglers Rest](#) (all BBH). [Tasman Holiday Park Picton](#) is 1 km from the waterfront at 78 Waikawa Rd (0800 277 444; 03-573 7212) and has cabins and camping; and Alexanders Holiday Camp is 1.3 km away, at 2 Canterbury St, close to the Jugglers Rest, at the back of town.
- There is a Four Square at 49 High St, and a large, well supplied Fresh Choice 200m further away from the waterfront at 102 High St.
- [The Interislander ferry](#) – 0800 802 802. Several sailings a day to Wellington, fares \$60 to \$76 depending on flexibility. The trip on the Interislander or Bluebridge takes about 3 hrs 15 mins. Note that the terminal in Wellington is 30 mins or so walk from town. There is a free shuttle bus from 8am to 7pm.
- [Bluebridge ferry](#) – 04 471 6188, 0800 844 844. Several sailings a day to Wellington, fares similar to Interislander. Cabins are available for an extra \$30 to \$40, but these work best for the night sailing from Wellington. The terminal in Picton is about 1 km from town but a free shuttle bus leaves near the iSite and a couple of other locations one hour before each sailing. The Wellington terminal is well sited, opposite the railway station.
- [Pelorus Air](#) – 027 757 7247. This may be more of academic interest, but this company will fly from Port Gore to Wellington. With 3 people the cost is \$202 per person (compared to, say, \$150 water taxi to Picton and ferry to Wellington, plus cost of junk food you will probably eat in Picton or on the ferry). Port Gore is over the hill from your end point, Ship Cove. But the NZ Topo Map does not show a track between the two locations.

Always check the Trail Status pages of the official Te Araroa website for recent changes or alerts on the trail.

Last updated 8 October 2022

Header photo: Camp Bay, Queen Charlotte Sounds