



Photographic locations worth sweating for

Rangiwahia Hut, Ruahine Ranges

Peter Laurenson takes us on a visual adventure to one of New Zealand's hidden gems, showcasing a stunning option for those pondering an overnight trek into the heart of the country's majestic landscapes. Explore the captivating photographs on the following pages, which promise to ignite your wanderlust and inspire you to add this spot to your must-visit list.

WORDS AND IMAGES
PETER LAURENSEN

occasionalclimber.co.nz

Perched at 1,327 metres on a broad spur extending 3 km west off the main Ruahine Range is Rangiwahia Hut. Sitting above the bush line, it offers unimpeded views from south to north, taking in Mounts Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe to the northwest, which light up beautifully at sunrise. The hut itself makes a lovely foreground subject at sunset.

To reach Rangiwahia Hut, head east from SH1 at Mangaweka along Ruahine Road, turn left into Te Para Para Road, and follow it until it becomes Renfrew Road, which ends at 920 metres at the trailhead car park. That only leaves a relatively small 500-metre climb up a well-formed track to reach the hut, taking an hour or two. En route, the trail crosses a spectacular and photogenic arched bridge at about 1,000 metres.

Rangiwahia is a serviced (water, cooking facilities, mattresses) DOC Hut with 13 bunks. Due to its easy access and great viewpoint, it's popular on weekends and holidays, so booking is required to stay there.

Another attraction when visiting Rangiwahia Hut is that you can easily take a circuit trail rather than simply retracing your steps out. The spur that the hut sits on leads quite gradually up to Mangahuia at 1,583 metres, where even greater views can be enjoyed if weather permits. The trail beyond Mangahuia then leads about 5 km back down another spur to the car park. Definitely an overnight journey worth sweating for.



THE ARCHED BRIDGE BELOW RANGIWAHIA HUT
STITCH OF 3 PORTRAIT IMAGES, F8, 1/40 SEC, ISO 125, 24MM



SUNRISE VIEW OF RANGIWAHIA HUT
F8, 1/25 SEC, ISO 125, 78MM



A VIEW NORTHWEST, ON THE DESCENT FROM RANGIWAHIA HUT
STITCH OF 3 PORTRAIT IMAGES, F8, 1/320 SEC, ISO 125, 24MM



RIDGES ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF POINT 1,635M, FROM THE TRAIL ABOVE RANGIWAHIA HUT
F8, 1/125 SEC, ISO 125, 93MM



A VIEW NORTH AT SUNSET OF RANGIWAHIA HUT
STITCH OF 2 LANDSCAPE IMAGES, F5.6, 1/40 SEC, ISO 125, 44MM



VIEW NORTHEAST FROM MANGAHUIA
STITCH OF 3 LANDSCAPE IMAGES, F8, 1/320 SEC, ISO 125, 24MM