

309 Rd to Te Rerenga and Kuaotuna via Castle Rock

Riders on this trail will need to do some planning so that when you get to either Te Rerenga or Whangapoua you have a car waiting for you unless you want to ride back to the start.

After leaving Whitianga in the direction of Tairua, 309 Rd is on the right hand side. It crosses the Coromandel Range and towards to western seaboard some 8 km from the Coromandel end, you pass Waiiau Waterworks fun place on the right hand side. Near here on the right hand side is the entry to a public easement called the Castle Rock Rd. This is a forestry road. There is an unofficial local race track at this junction on 309, that provides plenty of space for drop offs and parking.

Ride along this road, watching out for logging trucks and trailers, and about 2km after the ford up a gentle climb is the start of the Castle Rock Walk up to the Castle Rock. If you want to walk up, this is where you start.

Otherwise following Castle Rock Road you will sidle along this “road” under impressive sleeping giant native trees. The trail continues along the ridge, following a logging road route and then a 4 WD route. At some places it is overgrown so take care. From the ridge you can see on a clear day Firth of Thames, Great Mercury Island, Cuvier Island and Great Barrier Island. Soon you start heading down into the Whangapoua catchment. You descend through recently cutover pine forest. The trail can be a bit rough.

The last part of the ride is reasonably flat and reaches the eastern side of SH 25 about 500 m east of Whangapoua Beach Road. Some sections of the ride have quite large grade of metal, as it is a forestry truck route, but it is well worth the ride. The overall distance is about 12 km so allow 1 1/2 hours from the car park to Whangapoua. Carry water, spare tube and tools and warm spare clothing/parka as it can be cold in the bush.

A suggestion for this ride is for a family to be entertained at Waiiau Waterworks whilst you ride and for them to then travel to Whangapoua Beach Road via Coromandel Town. At Whangapoua there is a wonderful sandy beach and small store. If there is no vehicle to meet you, then retrace your ride back to the race track car park. Leaving here a detour to the café at the Waterworks will be a great finish to the ride. You may also enjoy the fun as you have a cool down.