

TARANAKI

like no other

FORGOTTEN WORLD HIGHWAY

New Zealand's oldest heritage trail
between Taumarunui and Stratford



[taranaki.co.nz/visit](https://www.taranaki.co.nz/visit)

Nau mai, haere mai. Welcome to the **FORGOTTEN WORLD HIGHWAY**

Don't forget ...

Drive on the
LEFT
at all times!



0

petrol stations
– fill up before
you go!



4 public
restrooms



0

(limited)
mobile coverage
– relax & switch off



4 geographic
saddles
to cross



10

km of
unsealed
road



180

m-long
road
tunnel



1

republic



New Zealand's oldest heritage trail is 148 km long. Starting in either Stratford or Taumarunui, it follows ancient Māori trade routes and pioneering farm tracks through ambitious historic settlements, untamed native bush and stunning natural scenery. Along the Forgotten World Highway, you'll encounter a landscape where people and nature have battled for centuries. Whether you approach the Forgotten World Highway as a **three-hour** scenic drive or explore its many stories over several days, you'll be treated to an adventure like no other.

Review this guide's overview of route highlights before you plan your journey. For more details, visit taranaki.co.nz/visit.



The route includes four **saddles** (driving from Stratford to Taumarunui). **Strathmore** offers stunning views of Mt Taranaki and the Central Plateau. **Pohokura**, named after a prominent Māori Chief, provides views into the valley once used as a large railway construction campsite. **Whangamōmōna** offers spectacular surrounding landscape views with a backdrop of beech and podocarp forest. **Tahora** offers remarkable views of ancient Māori pā sites, railway tunnels and the central North Island mountains. It is worth stopping at the top of each saddle to take in the superb views.

The single-lane 180 m-long **Moki Tunnel** was built in 1936 and is known locally as the 'Hobbit's Hole'. Home to fossilised giant crabs, the tunnel's floor was lowered in 1985 to increase the height to 7m, allowing access for triple-decked stock trucks. It has a timber gabled roof and hand-carved walls.

The **Tāngarākau Gorge** is an incredibly scenic passage through a magnificent podocarp forest. This section is unsealed for 10km with plans underway to be sealed over the next couple of years.



The memorial for **Joshua Morgan**, respected early surveyor and trailblazer, who died in 1893, age 35, is a short walkway through native bush. The site also pays respect to the many other pioneers who sought their fortunes in this remote area.



CYCLE

The spectacular, yet challenging, 180km **Taumarunui to New Plymouth Cycle Trail** follows the Forgotten World Highway from Taumarunui to Whangamōmona. It turns off at the top of the Pohokura Saddle, follows Junction Road through Pūrangi and over the Tarata Saddle before joining New Plymouth's famed Coastal Walkway into the city centre. Best done over 2–3 days, the ride includes more than 2,000m of climbing. Note that supplies are limited along the route.

Read NZ Cycle Trail's overview before departing:
nzcycletrail.com/forgotten-world-highway.



EXPLORE



Mt Damper Falls is a 14-km detour off Moki Road, through to Mangapapa Road, then follow the signposts for the 30-min walk. At 74m high, the falls are the North Island's second highest waterfall, making it a must-see, particularly after heavy rain. Note that the track is closed to hunters and dogs from 1 August to 31 October due to lambing season.



Lauren's Lavender Farm and Café, 15km just out of Taumarunui, is a treat for your senses, particularly during the summer months when in full bloom. Hours vary, so check before you go.



Te Wera Arboretum and camp is the base for the 6500-ha forest. The former New Zealand Forest Service campsite is still well used, and several walks lead from here through the arboretum and forest. Te Wera Valley Lodge is a unique base to experience the beauty of the area. Find out more at tewera-lodge.co.nz.



The **Bridge to Somewhere** is a two-hour return journey off the beaten track from Strathmore over mainly unsealed roads. See the map for more information.



Eastern Taranaki Experience

are tour guides and experienced trampers, offering hiking and cycling tours and transportation.



Pūrangi Walks Taranaki provides a safe place for kiwis to thrive. Purangi Walks Taranaki are found 15km along Junction Road from the Pohokura Saddle summit. Two self-guided walks through native bush and forest (30 min and 2.5 hours) are best experienced in summer. Check the track status beforehand. A \$10 donation per person goes towards pest control.



Forgotten World Adventures is a unique experience, with modified golf carts to ‘ride the rails’, and purpose-built rail bikes to zip through a number of tunnels, over viaducts and between landscape inaccessible by road.





WHANGAMŌMONA

Rich in pioneering history, the township of **Whangamōmona** was first settled in 1895 with 300 residents, and provided strong service links, roading and rail construction to the hardy farming community. Despite a great flood in 1924, the population didn't decline to around 20 residents until farm mergers and rationalisation took place in the 1960s. The town has a Heritage New Zealand precinct rating, and centres on the iconic **Whangamōmona Hotel**, which is still open for business.

Rugby fans will find it interesting that Whangamōmona is the only club in New Zealand allowed to wear an all-black strip because they wore it well before New Zealand's All Blacks. The team competes for the Dean Cup – the oldest rugby challenge cup in New Zealand, dating back to 1907. The contest is between three teams in the East Taranaki district – Whangamōmona, Strathmore and Toko.

In 1989, Whangamōmona declared itself a republic. The famous **Republic Day** is held biennially in January and is enjoyed by thousands of visitors. Presidential elections are held on this day – mentionable past presidents being Billy Gumboot the Goat and Tai the Poodle. Find out more about Republic day dates and activities at taranaki.co.nz/visit.

STAY

For accommodation along the route visit taranaki.co.nz/visit or book at your closest i-SITE.

KEY

- State Highway
- State Highways Sealed
- Sealed Local Road
- Walking Trail
- i-SITE Visitor Centre
- Accommodation
- Toilets
- Rest Areas
- Smaller Towns
- Sealed Local Road
- Towns
- Unsealed Road
- Rivers
- Refreshments
- Petrol

DRIVE TIMES

	TIME	DISTANCE
STRATFORD TO:		
Douglas	18 min	18 km
Strathmore Saddle	23 min	23 km
Pohokura Saddle	45 min	45 km
Whangamōmona Saddle	56 min	56 km
Alice King Memorial	1 hr 3 min	65 km
Tahora Saddle	1 hr 15 min	75 km
Moki Rd Tunnel	1 hr 21 min	81 km
Nevin's Lookout	1 hr 50 min	110 km
Taumarunui	2 hr 30 min	150 km
TAHORA/SH43 TO:		
Tāngarākau	6 min, one way	6 km
MOKI RD/SH43 TO:		
Mt Damper Falls	15 min, one way	15.1 km
Moki Forest	8 min, one way	7.9 km

* Approximate distance and drive times

PLEASE NOTE

Ten kilometres of the Forgotten World Highway is unsealed road and there are no petrol stations. When in New Zealand, please drive on the left! The Highway traverses four saddles, where the road passes between two summits. Take care driving these features, as they are steep and windy but offer spectacular views.



FORGOTTEN WORLD HIGHWAY



STRATFORD I-SITE VISITOR CENTRE SITE

Prospero Place and Miranda Street, Stratford

Email: info@stratford.govt.nz

Phone: 06 765 6708

Freephone: 0800 765 6708

Hours: Monday–Friday from 8.30am–5pm,
Saturday 9.00am–1.00pm, closed Sunday and Public Holidays.

TAUMARUNUI i-SITE VISITOR CENTRE SITE

Railway Station, Hakiaha Street, Taumarunui

Email: taumarunui@i-site.org

Phone: 07 895 7494

Summer Hours: Monday–Sunday: 8.30am–5.30pm.
Closed Christmas Day.

Winter Hours: Monday–Sunday: 8.30am–4pm.

taranaki.co.nz/visit and
doc.govt.nz