

General Information

Located on the north east shores of the largest lake of New Zealand (Lake Taupo), Taupo is a relaxed resort town famous for the giant trout that may be caught in the lake. It is also a popular place to set a base camp for variety of adventures offered in the Lake Taupo region. Tongariro National Park is accessed from the southern shore of Lake Taupo, and the Thermal Explorer Highway leading north from Taupo to Rotorua is full of geothermal activities. Formed by the Waikato River, Huka Falls is also a popular tourist spot.

The name Taupo comes from Maori Taupo-nui-a-Tia. When translated (literally), it means "The great cloak of Tia," referring to the discoverer of the lake. The town of Taupo has a population of 22,300 (based on 2006 census).

Since Taupo is a popular tourist activity center, it is always busy. Nevertheless, relatively quiet roads for cycling can still be found in the surrounding areas.

Total # of Rides Listed: 3

Family Rides: 0

Road Rides: 3

MTB Trails: 0

Bike Path Rides: 0

 Loop Rides: 2

 Out & Back Rides: 1



When to Visit

The best time to visit Taupo is during the summer months and early autumn (southern hemisphere) when the maritime weather is calmer and at its warmest. If you are planning to visit during December and January or on major holiday weekends such as the Easter Holiday, it is advisable that you make reservations for lodging ahead of time.

Climate and Weather

Lake Taupo has relatively warm winters and cool summers with light winds and a fairly even distribution of rainfall throughout the year. The average summer temperature is 74°F (23 °C) and the winter average is 54°F (12 °C). This is ideal weather for summer outdoor activities and perfect for cycling.

How to Get There

Taupo is serviced by Air New Zealand with regular regional flights from Auckland and Wellington.

Several bus services (InterCity and others) serve Taupo from many regions of the North Island. If you are planning on taking a bus to Taupo, check the internet for bus companies and their schedules and policies for bicycles.

If you are traveling by car, the primary road access to the Taupo is via State Highway 1 (SH1) from either south or north.

From the north take State Highway 1 south from Auckland to Tirau, and then turn off on State Highway 5 to Rotorua. Follow the signs along State Highway 5 to Taupo. You can also take State Highway 1 from Auckland to Hamilton and Tokoroa, and then straight to Taupo. Taupo is about a 4-hour drive south from Auckland (280km).

From Wellington, take State Highway 1 north direct to Taupo, passing through Levin, Taihape and Turangi. Taupo is approximately a 4-5 hour drive north (380 km) from Wellington.

Accommodations

There are plenty of accommodations in Taupo, but reservations are recommended during the high season from December to the end of January and on major public holidays such as Easter, etc.

The Roads

The roads around Lake Taupo are mostly of paved, sealed chip surface and can be narrow in places. However, some of the main roads do have a nice shoulder to ride on.

What You Need To Know

The Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge is an annual event hosted by Taupo each November. Hosted by Taupo annually since 1977, the Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge is New Zealand's largest mass participation cycling event with over 11,000 riders participating each year. The ride starts and finishes in Taupo with one lap around the lake, approximately 100 miles/160 km in length.

Taupo is also the host to New Zealand Ironman every February; and the A1 GP Car Racing is another Taupo annual event.

Tongariro National Park is the oldest national park in New Zealand and the fourth national park in the world to be established.

Road Rides (1-3 of 3)

Road Rides

[Taupo to Turangi](#)

30.8 mi/49.3 km (*Out & Back* Total: 61.6 mi/98.6 km)

[Aratiatia Rapids](#)

37.2 mi/59.5 km (*Loop*)

[Around Lake Taupo](#)

95.4 mi/152.6 km (*Loop*)

