

## The Fiendish New Zealand climbing guide, pt 2 of 3:

North Island by Fiend



Fiend enjoying elegant ignimbrite on Sharp Arete 19, Bayleys, Wharepapa, NZ  
© Fiend

### Ngahere Drive:

- **Description:** A small collection of limestone cliffs in a funny suburban setting. Top Rocks are very small but clean, Main Crag larger but a bit dirty. There are some funky flutings around.
- **Guidebook additions:** Grades vary. Totally impossible to get to Main Crag from top carpark - go via Hospital Road instead.
- **Fiend's pick:** Evening at Top Rocks for a bit of a laugh.
- **Ef's pick:** Worth wading through the bushes and cobwebs for Mighty Twenty Footer 15 and Suburban Reptile 17.

### Ti Point:

- **Description:** A nicely isolated, sunny seacliff with interesting flakey and pockety basalt rock. Technical bolted buttresses (18 and above) are seperated by gruesome rounded cracks (17 and below).
- **Guidebook additions:** Grades are fair for the buttresses, hard for the offwidths. Walk in takes longer than expected. There are some new routes near the arch. A bit tidal.
- **Fiend's pick:** Slapping Down 21 is a really fantastic arete. Parallel Cracks 16 just right gives a mighty bridging experience.
- **Ef's Pick:** No.

### Mt Eden Quarry:

- **Description:** The ultimate urban crag, right in the city. Smooth, angular, columnar basalt giving thin and tenacious trad climbing - a fierce and characterful place. Apart from minor routes on the Short Side, you need to be climbing 18+ at least. Gear is generally good.
- **Guidebook additions:** Grades are hard. Not as hot as you think in summer as the sun is too high. If you're parking in the school, it seems best to go in the obvious upper entrance and drive right the way down through the buildings.
- **Fiend's pick:** Just follow the good lines really - Deffust 18 and Bandersnatch 19 being two faves. If you're on the Short Side, try to coincide your visit with a late night game on the nearby astroturf - climb by the spotlights!
- **Ef's pick:** Secret Crack 17

#### Wharepapa area:

- **General:** Bryce's: Every climbing area should have somewhere like Bryce's. Part cafe, part gearshop, part hostel, part campsite, part bouldering cave. All within 5 minutes of the great ignimbrite crags and all presided over by Bryce, an affable if foul-mouthed old gnome and renowned guru of the area. Obviously a great place to stay and hang out. Just remember that while Bryce is bloody experienced, he is thoroughly over-opinionated, so don't be put off trying anything by him.
- **Description:** Pockets pockets pockets. One of NZ's climbing treats - sheer or bulging crags and spires of pale, rough, honeycombed ignimbrite rock. Like climbing a cement sponge - just find the best pockets and pull. After a while it all gets quite similar, then it's time to go to Waipapa and Whanganui.
- **Guidebook additions:** See below. Grades are fair. Check new routes leaflet at Bryce's. Most crags face all directions, are often exposed and dry quickly. On some routes it's important to abseil off instead of lowering, to avoid eye-watering rope drag. Froggatt and Wharepapa South are now owned by Castle Rock, who charge a small fee for access - this is a contentious political issue, be aware of it, but make up your own minds whether to visit.
- **Fiend's pick:** Too much to choose from. The big three of Froggatt, Smiths and Wharepapa South are great, where choosing the most striking lines reaps the best rewards. If it rains, try the fantastic Fiend problems in Bryce's cave, if they're still up.
- **Ef's pick:** Smith Rocks has loads of great routes 14-17, especially Pinnacle Knoll and Swamp Wall. Then walk over to the Back Of Beyond to enjoy the novel vertical tunnel climbing of Itsy Bitsy Spider. Froggatt has some more technical climbs in the same grade range.



Perfect pocket pulling on Turtle Power 19, Froggatt Edge, Wharepapa, NZ  
© Fiend

#### Bayleys:

Sadly all of the truly excellent lines at the New Wall are too overgrown to climb. There are still some good unusual lines on the Roadside crag, though.

#### Bosch:

Beware of old bolts and stiff grades. Some routes overgrown.

#### Froggatt:

Rebolted with shiny ringbolts. Charge to use crag.

#### Secret Valley:

Secretive indeed - nice enough but an absolute pig to find, and consequently underused.

#### Sheridan:

Partly rebolted.

#### Smiths:

Mostly rebolted and increasingly popular. It's well worth exploring right to the very end (Back Of Beyond).

#### Wharepapa South:

Rebolted with shiny ringbolts. Charge to use crag.



### Waipapa:

- **Description:** Ignimbritic slabs, flakes and cracks in a fairly sunny bush setting near a large river. More peaceful, varied, and technically interesting than Wharepapa.
- **Guidebook additions:** Grades are stiff. Most of Cracked Buttress is overgrown except for at the far left.
- **Fiend's pick:** Obviously The Arches 18, easily comparable to the synonymous Northumberland HVS 5b classic. All of the good lines are well worth it.
- **Ef's pick:** Good mid grade stuff - The Arches 18, Millenium Madness 18, Ring Them Bells 17(+).



Pastoral pocket pleasures on De Sade 18, Wharepapa South, Wharepapa, NZ  
© Fiend

### Whanganui Bay:

- **Description:** Awesome. The climbing is great, more varied, technical ignimbrite a la Waipapa, with good lines and trad classics thrown in, but the setting overlooking a broad valley gorge and Lake Taupo, is even better. Generally sunny but with some shade from the buttresses and bush. Well worth the effort.
- **Guidebook additions:** Grades fair. Pay about \$10 each per day to the Maori tribe at the lake. The track from the top carpark will trash your car unless it's a proper 4wd. It's also easy to miss from the road, look for letterbox 5515 and some sheds. Local info suggests only: Whekenui, Plateau, Lobotomy Buttress and bits of Taupiri get climbed, the rest languishes unused.
- **Fiend's pick:** Everything with a star... Whekenui for a variety of classics including the great Bizarete 22, Plateau has several nice mid-grade slabs, Duudoos 21 in one spectacular pitch on Lobo.
- **Ef's pick:** All the 17s at Plateau, also Gunga Din 18 - calf-aching bridging punctuated with a final layback. Sayonara 17 at Whekenui is an impressive line.

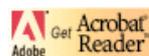
### Kinloch:

- **Description:** <http://www.climb.co.nz/Places/Taupo/Kinloch/kinloch.htm> . Tiny but nice, sunny, crag on the shores of Lake Taupo. Peaceful setting, good solid dimpled rhyolite, and a few good mid-grade climbs.
- **Guidebook additions:** Grades mostly soft. Right-hand side of Bats In The Belfry arete is Kimber 19/20\*, take some cams and follow the pockets....FA Fiend Nov 02 =).
- **Fiend's pick:** Kimber....and the few routes just left.
- **Ef's pick:** Lovely lakeside location for an evening out and a swim.

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