



**HILLARY**  
**OUTDOORS**

**PROGRAMME**  
**ACTIVITY OPTIONS**  
TONGARIRO



# Activity Options

Tongariro



## LOW ROPES

### WHAT IS IT?

A variety of problem solving activities, mainly based in the vicinity of the Centre, that are designed to encourage communication, creative thinking, trust, and team cohesion.

### WHY DO IT?

These activities are often done near the start of a programme to set the scene and give participants an insight into how they can begin to operate as a successful team. By doing a series of these kind of challenges, with guided reflection between, groups can make quick progress in how they are functioning and can also learn how to review their own performance. Often instructors may get their group to revisit certain problems during the week; maybe to show how far the team has developed or to work on a particular area of development within the group.



## HIGH ROPES

### WHAT IS IT?

Hillary Outdoors Tongariro has a purpose built high ropes course which is made up of a large variety of individual elements from balance beams, wire ropes, and a big swing, to team challenges such as the Giant's ladder. Participants are safeguarded by ropes managed by their peers under the careful supervision of a Hillary Outdoors' instructor.

### WHY DO IT?

The high ropes course is a great place for participants to push themselves outside their comfort zone and overcome their fears. As students are safeguarding each other it is a fantastic environment to develop trust and learn how to both give, and receive support. The high ropes course also lends itself to team challenges, where groups can build on what they have learnt in the low ropes or other team building activities and put the theory into action while they are also dealing with the pressure of working in a more challenging environment.



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## MOUNTAIN DAY

### WHAT IS IT?

Hillary Outdoors sits adjacent to the Tongariro National Park and we are fortunate to have a concession that allows us to visit 'out of the way' areas in the Park that the general public rarely access. This means that we can avoid the crowds and enjoy the beauty and tranquillity that the mountains have to offer and take our clients to areas they may not otherwise get to visit.

An appreciation for the unique beauty of this volcanic environment and a respect for the cultural history of the area is part of the teaching in every mountain day, whether the focus is getting up to the higher mountain environment or journeying through the sub alpine areas. Tramping, navigation, weather, and mountain safety may all be aspects that the students learn, depending on the focus of the day.

### WHY DO IT?

At Hillary Outdoors we believe that participants need to learn to love and appreciate the outdoor environment in order to want to conserve and look after it and spending a day in the mountains is a fantastic way to connect with nature. A mountain day also provides opportunities for personal challenge as well as the need to function as a team member, and understand and appreciate the physical and emotional challenges that other group members may be facing. Participants will need to be willing to both offer and receive support.

Mountain days can often be described as 'Type 2' fun. While many students, given the choice, would choose activities with immediate reward for their efforts, after a big day out in the mountains there is excellent learning that sometimes hard work over a period of time is needed to get the reward.



## CAVING

### WHAT IS IT?

Hidden in the Tongariro Forest Park are the Okupata and Pukehinau cave systems. These limestone caves provide an intriguing underground experience where students travel through the cave system under the supervision of their instructor. Challenge by choice is the order of the day; there are options of taking a challenging squeeze or choosing an easier route so that all the students complete the same journey but at a level that is comfortable for them.

For those groups who want a further challenge, the Pukehinau cave offers a great second challenge and is not for the faint hearted!

Many people have never had the opportunity to go underground, so caving is a really popular choice with many of our groups.

### WHY DO IT?

The underground environment is the perfect place to teach and give opportunities to put into practise all the things that Hillary Outdoors is about. For many participants there is a level of anxiety about caving and so it lends itself perfectly for opportunities to push outside comfort zones and realise that you can overcome your fears. Students often think that they won't like or be able to do things that they have never tried before; caving teaches them that if you give things a go often those preconceived ideas do not ring true.

The underground environment is also the perfect place to develop communication, trust, group management, and leadership skills; as well as providing an opportunity to put these skills into practise in a real environment.



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## SIT ON TOP KAYAK

### WHAT IS IT?

Participants learn basic kayaking skills on our stable one or two person sit on top kayaks either on the local lake or sometimes a little further afield on Lake Taupo. These skills are then put to use to go on a journey and/or participate in a series of fun games and team challenges with opportunities to develop further skills along the way. Some students may venture up to the weir, where they can learn some basic white water skills in a safe and controlled environment.

### WHY DO IT?

Flat water kayak sessions provide the foundation skills before possibly heading on a journey or going on a river trip later in the course. Participants also learn about water safety and have opportunities to experience the local hydroelectricity scheme which is an integral part of our environment and this opens up great opportunities to discuss sustainability and link this to their responsibilities both during their stay and in their everyday lives. Journeying in the kayaks gives ample opportunities for working on a variety of skills including leadership opportunities and communication skills.



## CANADIAN CANOEING

### WHAT IS IT?

Canadian canoes are the perfect vehicle for journeying, even in the heart of winter as generally you can wrap up warm and stay dry and carry plenty of food and equipment with you. Students either travel in pairs in individual canoes or we make a raft out of two boats which is a little more stable and easier to manage. Canoe journeys often form part of our overnight expeditions and are an ideal way to travel through and appreciate the local environment. Canoes are also an excellent way of introducing non swimmers and those with a fear of water into boating activities.

### WHY DO IT?

Getting a Canadian canoe to go where you want it to can be a challenge, hence they are fondly called “divorce boats” as it is easy to blame your paddling partner for lack of control! Hence this activity is fantastic for developing communication skills and showing empathy and patience. As with most of our journeying activities it also provides opportunities to develop leadership and team skills, as well as options to work on navigation skills or develop paddling skills to a higher level.

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## SEA KAYAKING

### WHAT IS IT?

Our double sea kayaks offer another opportunity to get out onto the water and explore either the local lake or Lake Taupo and tend to be used more with our older students or adults. Once basic skills and capsize drill have been taught, participants will go on a journey which could be just for the day or could be an overnight trip.

### WHY DO IT?

Sea kayaking offers all the learning opportunities that our other journeying activities offer as well as a chance to visit some of the areas on Lake Taupo only accessible by boat. Just like a mountain day, often students real appreciation of what they have achieved is retrospective, as travelling in a sea kayak does require some effort and determination.



## INFLATABLE MAVERICK KAYAKS

### WHAT IS IT?

Mavericks are two-person inflatable river kayaks that are perfect vessels for an introduction to white water kayaking. Students are taught some skills, rescue techniques and river safety in the morning before embarking on a journey down the Grade 2 section of the Tongariro River. Spills and thrills are all part of this adventure, which is reserved for our older and more confident students and only during the warmer months of the year.

### WHY DO IT?

Because it is really good fun and will be something to remember for a long time! It also provides opportunities to push participants out of their comfort zones and learn plenty about risk management and leadership skills as well as developing their communication skills so that they can work effectively with their partner and as part of the group as a whole.



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## BRIDGE JUMP

### WHAT IS IT?

Exactly what the name suggests – an exciting jump off the canal bridge into the deep, cold water below and a great finish to a day on the lake.

### WHY DO IT?

Personal challenge. While some participants are used to this kind of activity, many participants are apprehensive of doing the jump, but get immense satisfaction once they have made the commitment and often come back for a second go.



## BUSH ACTIVITIES

### WHAT IS IT?

Tongariro Centre has some beautiful native bush on the doorstep and our staff are passionate about sharing it with their students. A day in the bush can involve a whole variety of things, including navigation skills, bush travel, river travel, river crossings, shelter building and survival skills, and learning about the local flora and fauna, and how to look after them. Students may also get the opportunity to assist with emptying and setting traps on the Hillary Outdoors’ trap lines which are an important part of protecting the rare Whio (blue ducks) that are present in the area.

### WHY DO IT?

The bush environment defines the New Zealand outdoors and there are so many hidden gems in there if you know where to look. Our staff will help participants appreciate the bush environment by sharing their knowledge and taking the students to some interesting, out of the way places and students will learn the “Leave No Trace” Principles, and increase their environmental awareness. There are plenty of leadership opportunities and groups will need to function as an effective team in order to successfully complete their missions in the bush.



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## FLYING FOX

### WHAT IS IT?

An impressive zip line high above the Mangatepopo River.

### WHY DO IT?

Personal challenge and also an element of teamwork as participants will need to pull each other back across the river. This is often a favourite with groups as it provides a personal challenge to overcome fears, but is more accessible to students who may struggle with the physical component in the high ropes.



## ALPINE

### WHAT IS IT?

A seasonal and weather dependent activity where participants get to experience the stunning winter wonderland of the National Park. We will teach students some basic alpine skills such as walking on snow and using an ice axe before embarking on a journey through the winter terrain. Winter alpine walking can be hard work and the environment harsh, but this is rewarded with amazing views and a huge sense of achievement and is often the highlight of a student's visit to Tongariro.

### WHY DO IT?

Many students haven't experienced the snow, or if they have, they haven't had the opportunity to travel away from the ski field to the quieter areas further afield. It is also a perfect environment for pushing personal boundaries, having leadership opportunities, and looking at self-management and risk management in a real environment.



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## ABSEILING

### WHAT IS IT?

Abseiling is a way of descending a rock face on a rope, often used by rock climbers to access a climbing area or to return to the ground once they have completed their climb. At Tongariro, like many Outdoor Centres, we use it as an activity in its own right, with plenty of exciting venues to pick from, both in the bush and in the mountain environment, and even adjacent to huge waterfalls.

Participants use a friction device to control their speed, but are always protected by a safety rope which is controlled by their instructor.

### WHY DO IT?

A perfect opportunity to push personal comfort zones and also offer support to other people.



## ROCK CLIMBING

### WHAT IS IT?

Many participants will have climbed at an indoor rock gym but climbing outdoors in the mountain environment on real rock is a whole different experience. Soak up the mountain environment at one of our many rock climbing venues while testing yourself at a variety of rock climbs depending on your skills and level of challenge. You will be safeguarded by a rope which will be managed by your peers under the careful guidance of one of our instructors, before being lowered back down to the ground.

### WHY DO IT?

Personal challenge, pushing your comfort zone – rock climbing is the perfect activity. Clear communication and developing trust within peer groups is also key to success in this activity as they will be belaying you as you climb and descend.



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## SKIING

### WHAT IS IT?

Skiing is a seasonal activity for which there is an extra cost as the equipment, venue, and lessons are provided by Ruapehu alpine lifts. Students have a two hour ski lesson, regardless of any previous experience, in which they are divided up with other participants of similar ability. The afternoon is then spent putting what they have learnt into practice during free skiing time, although Hillary Outdoors staff will be out on the slopes too should they need any assistance or advice.

### WHY DO IT?

Ruapehu is the biggest ski area in New Zealand and offers fantastic facilities for all skiers from beginners through to experts, so including it in your week can be a great way of giving students this opportunity that they may never get again.



## OVERNIGHT EXPEDITION

### WHAT IS IT?

The overnight expedition can take place in the bush, on the mountain or on the water. Students usually sleep either under fly sheets or in tents, but on occasions may build shelters in the bush or even dig a snow cave to sleep in. On some occasions we may make use of the local DOC huts, especially in bad weather. The expedition could be a long physically demanding journey, but equally could be an opportunity to travel to some different activities or spend time in the bush or on the mountain building shelters and enjoying spending a prolonged period of time appreciating nature in the company of their peers.

### WHY DO IT?

The overnight expedition is a fantastic finale to the week, giving students the opportunity to utilise both the hard and soft skills they have learnt throughout the week. Instructors give the students as much independence as possible to plan, organise, and execute their trip so that the students have a sense of ownership and the associated sense of achievement when they accomplish their goals. The overnight expedition also gives the groups time to reflect on their learning and is very often the most memorable aspect of their time at Hillary Outdoors. The above is just a list of the main activities we can do at Hillary Outdoors. Due to our amazing location and the expertise of our staff we have almost unlimited options of places to explore and things to do with our clients and no two weeks are the same.



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