



ST RONAN'S WELL

canyon v2a3III ★

Location

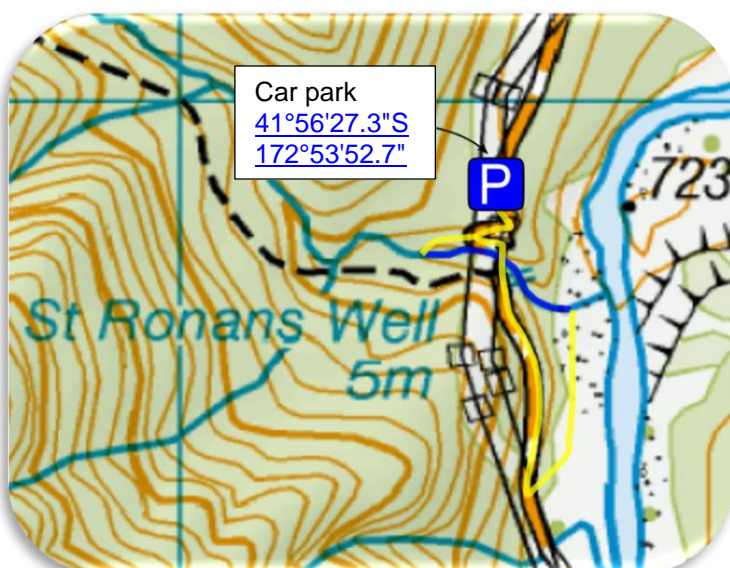
St Arnaud Range, Marlborough.

Character

A short canyoning trip in a very enclosed and scenic canyon. Do not be deceived by the lack of features, it is still a worthwhile trip. A great repeatable training canyon.

Map

BS25 Severn.



Approach by Car

From St Arnaud head towards Blenheim on SH63. After ~10 km, turn right into Rainbow Road. Drive 20 km up the Wairau Valley (do not take the right turn to the ski field) and park at the top of a distinctive switchback just before St Ronan's Stream. A 4WD may be necessary to cross the fords on the Rainbow Road, but a 2WD should comfortably get you to the ski field turn-off at Six Mile Creek (3.5 km / 45 mins walk from the canyon).

The land along Rainbow Road is lease hold and requires permission to access. There is a locked gate shortly after the ski field turn-off. It is normally open during the summer, but you need to still call ahead, drop off a waiver form at the homestead (take the first left along Rainbow Rd, the homestead is 1km down the gravel road), and pay a fee per vehicle (usually \$10 per vehicle if only going to the canyon).

More details here: rainbowstation.co.nz/rainbow-access

Approach on Foot

From the car park, walk down to the bridge and abseil into the canyon (not strictly necessary, but it makes the trip more interesting).

Alternatively, from the car park follow the 4WD track heading upstream on the TL of the stream. Enter the stream as soon as convenient.

Once out of the canyon, head upriver/south along the river flats for a few hundred metres until the road is visible and you can easily climb up to it.

Rock

Hard greywacke.

Water

Medium flows in normal conditions.

Catchment

7.6 km²

Anchors

Double bolt anchors. The canyon is bolted for training, often with anchors on both sides of waterfalls, anchors for safety lines that may not be strictly necessary, and anchors for guided rappels that are not necessary in normal flows.

Gear

Minimum 1x 30m rope.

Route Description

Rappel off the bridge (R1) into the deep slot, which is inescapable until just near the end. R2 and R3, in a narrow s-bend, are the crux of the canyon. There is an optional jump from a ledge to the left of the R3 anchors (check the pool, it is not very deep). There are anchors for optional guided rappels at the bottom of R3 and R4, if you want the practice. You get a nice view of the Wairau river valley from the last rappel (R6). The canyon would get challenging in higher flows.

Time

Vehicle park to start of canyon	5m
Canyon descent	1h30,
Return to Vehicle	15m
Total	2h

Flash Flood Danger

Moderate to high (narrow canyon, sizeable catchment)

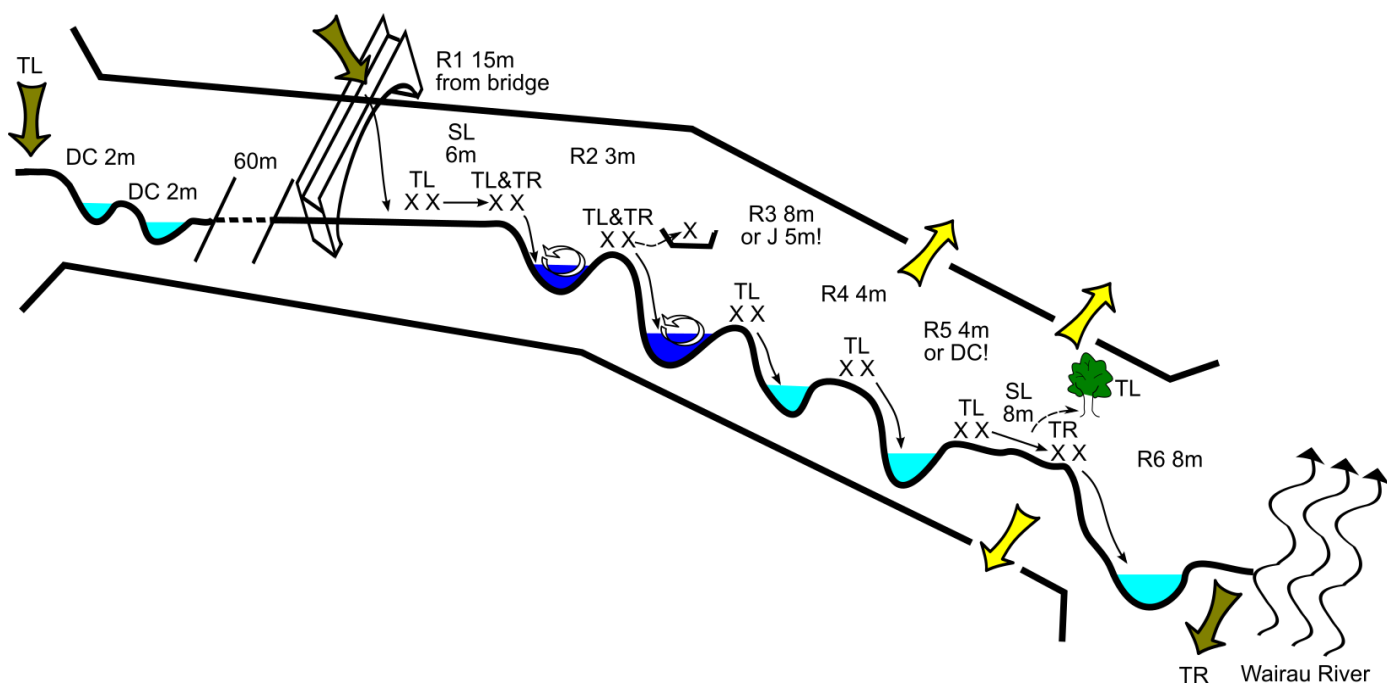
Escapes

None between R2 and the top of R5.

Notes

First descent: Unknown. First documented descent: Fergus Bramley, Benoit Gourgues, 7/1/2017

Fun to effort ratio: (1.5+1)/0.5=5



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Topo by Fergus Bramley and
Richard Bramley

www.kiwicanyons.org



Photo: Adrian Paris



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