



# MARGRET BURN

canyon v6a6VI ★★☆☆

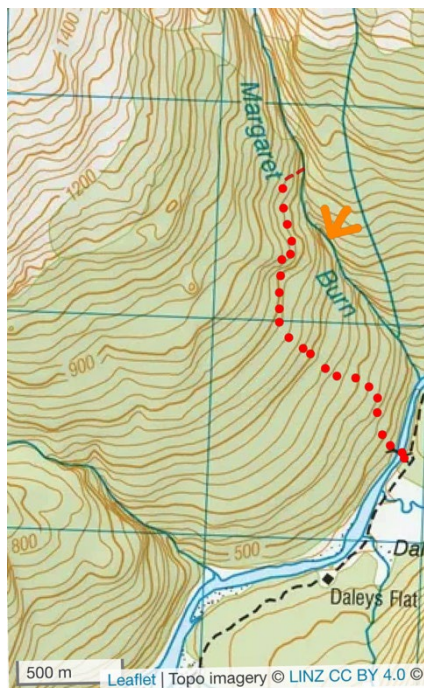
## Location

Dart Valley near Daleys Flat hut

## Character

Starts with a constricted slot that funnels into a long cave tunnel system, which then flows into many siphons in between rocks and then reappears just before an impressive 100m tall, 5 m wide canyon tunnel section.

The approach after crossing the dart cable bridge is off track, and the canyon should be scouted prior to descending to ensure the middle cave tunnel is not blocked.



## Map

Otago region, Orange arrow is where a small cave can be found so you can abseil in (brings bolts and up to 200m of rope to leave fixed) to the middle cave to check if the cave is passable. Red route is to enter top of canyon via a gully walking in.

## Approach by Car

Drive to

[https://maps.app.goo.gl/wRbjf3BDY8U68vP47?g\\_st=ic](https://maps.app.goo.gl/wRbjf3BDY8U68vP47?g_st=ic)

Chinamans Bluff Carpark, at the end of Glenorchy-Paradise road.

## Approach on Foot

Tramp 4-6 hours to Daley Flat hut, where you can set up base camp. The Dart track in 2026 had a significant landslide which is very hard and dangerous to get around, alternatively you can get a helicopter to the hut, or walk many days via the Rees valley.

## Rock

Schist and streaks of Quartz, with moderate firmness, Petzl Pulse bolts have pulled out of the rock several times, expansions did not have a problem.

## Water

The water is ice cold due to the glacier fed canyon, dry suits are advisable, the water level increases significantly in the afternoon on warm days, we recommend starting before first light from the hut and avoiding spending too much time there in the afternoon. March - April is the best season for lowest water.

## Catchment

10.8 km<sup>2</sup> and around 3.5km<sup>2</sup> of glacier in that catchment.

## Anchors

Bolted single to double 8mm expansions. Bring a drill and 30 anchors in case of anchors being destroyed via flood.

## Gear

You will need at least 200m of rope to scout and rig the cave section, but the longest drop is 35 m, therefore 2 x 40 would be adequate as longest ropes but many more fixed lines may be required for scouting. Ascending gear, drill, 30 bolts.

## Route Description

At approximately 690m elevation, there is a landslide/small tributary which can be used to enter the canyon, to avoid rappelling in at the end of the tributary there is a tree covered slope you can scramble down RR of the tributary just before you enter the main stream.

To scout the canyon, the upper section can be investigated from a tree covered platform in the centre of the gorge. The middle cave section can be scouted from the entrance to the cave at approximately 59GKL 91426 65441, and through a hole approximately 100m downstream on RL next to a mossy fallen log which requires scrambling through hole right and then left around a corner and over large boulder to find large double abseil (15m and 40m) as seen in the following 3 pictures.



The lower section of the middle cave can be scouted from the opening at approximately 59GKL 91483 65282 as seen below.



The lower section can be scouted by reversing the canyon from the bottom all the way to the 30 m abseil.

Following are a list of abseils with approximate lengths and their locations which are subject to change depending on canyon state.

1. 10m abseil RR tree
2. 15m abseil RR Bolt above large flake

3. Access bolt RL 5m out then 10m aid climb to ledge on RR, traverse on ledge 10 m on RR
4. 15m abseil RR on to ledge above water on RR
5. 10m abseil on RR and stem out 5m to next anchor on RR
6. 7m abseil RR down to water, swim across pool to ledge on RR
7. Abseil 5 m RR above a pool with hydraulic and siphon afterwards and aid climb up wall 4 m on RR to a large sandy ledge next to a large chockstone above a siphon, then again aid up to ledge on RR 3 m up to bolt on RR
8. Abseil 20 m down back into canyon after siphon into pool with hydraulic, can avoid on ledge on RR then the canyon opens up to mark the start of the middle cave section at 690m elevation.
9. Enter the cave section with bolts overhanging a dark hole on abseil 20m bolts R centre.
10. Abseil 20m down RL and swing over siphon on to ledge RL (alternatively can swing into alcove on RR and split abseil into 2 parts)
11. Abseil 10m RL on bolt hidden on wall RL around corner, swing onto RR across waterfall.
12. Abseil through short squeezey hole on RR down 5 m then swing into ledge on RR and abseil horizontally on ledge for 10m.
13. Abseil 15m through another squeeze hole at start, then swing to RR to ramp. And traverse 10m on ledge to cross over canyon on RL.
14. Follow creek down stream on RL and down a ramp into the water, then through many stemming positions and climbing for 100m and 3 open chambers then traverse on RR to channel that drops down 5 m where we traverse above the water with a 3 bolt traverse line in roof of cave for 10m.
15. Abseil 6m on RR to ramp ledge then followed through difficult route to find passage climbing, stemming through boulders in roof of cave, until you are met with a section with triple siphons which are impassible by humans, exit to daylight on RL.
16. Walk over boulders in creek for 100m, rap off tree in centre, 35m
17. 20m abseil off tree RL

## MARGRET BURN

Canyon v6a6VI ★★★★★

*Topo by Madie Garnache*  
[www.kiwicanyons.org](http://www.kiwicanyons.org)

18. 15m abseil off tree RL just before lower canyon section
19. **'Start of Lower section'** 30m rap off bolt RR into lower section of canyon, guided rappel helpful in most flow levels, used water/floating anchor to set up.
20. Walk through breathtaking lower canyon with some pushy flow in deeper sections for 300 m until tunnel opens up
21. Follow burn downstream until you reach the dart, follow dart downstream to cable bridge and back to Daleys Flat Hut.



### Time

Daleys flat hut to start of canyon	2-3 hours
Descent	4-6 hours
Return to Daleys flat hut	0.5-1 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>6-10 hours</b>

### Flash Flood Danger

Severe flash flood risk, ensure you have constant daily weather updates via inreach or similar to keep up to date, avoid in stormy weather.

### Escapes

There are escapes after the middle cave section, but none after, fixed lines can be left if concerned.

### Notes

#### First descent:

Integral March 2026 (upper, middle and lower): Leo Garnache, Madie Garnache, Jason Brand.

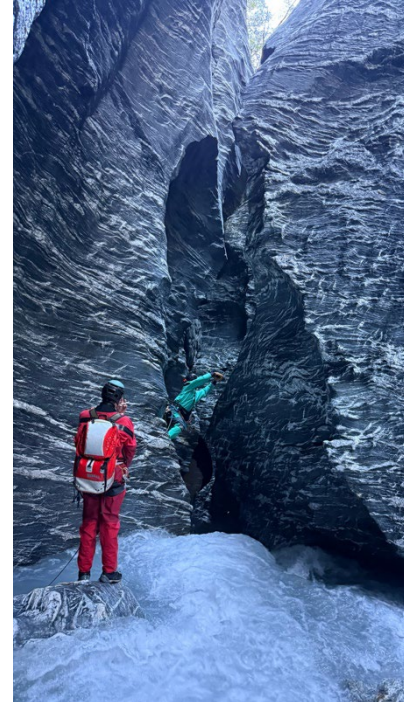
Lower section only: March 2024 Léo Garnache, Madie Garnache, Leo Tregret, Reto Bubendorf

**Fun to effort ratio:** one of the most beautiful canyons we have seen, high effort but worth it.

**Access issues.** Landslide on Dart Valley Track, see details above or on DOC website.

**Commercial Canyon?** No

**Remarks** The cave nature of the canyon means PLBs and inreaches will not work as well, please make sure you have adequate safety plans and self rescue skills.



# MARGRET BURN

Canyon v6a6VI ★★★★★

Topo by Madie Garnache  
www.kiwicanyons.org

# MARGRET BURN

Canyon v6a6VI ★★★★★

*Topo by Madie Garnache*  
[www.kiwicanyons.org](http://www.kiwicanyons.org)