

Castle Rock

by Rachael Mayne

Introduction

- Just off the 309 Road
- Huge potential - world class quality
- Long routes
- Fab views
- All sport climbing
- **Hip and thigh toning approach!!!**

Nice long bolted climbing on beautifully solid rock, but before hurling yourself into this take more care than I would - serious trouble here is easy to come by.

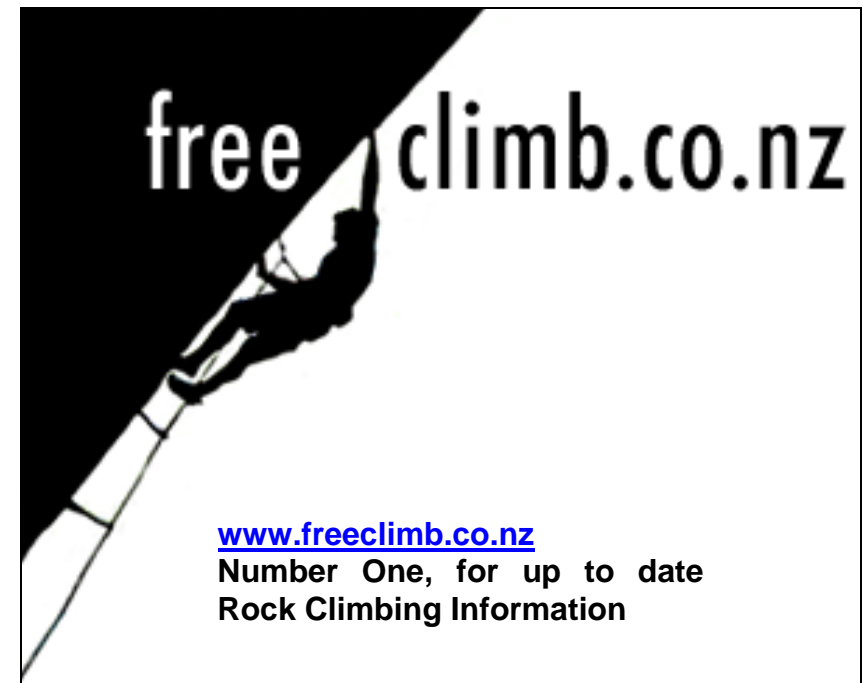
The first time I climbed at Castle Rock my climbing partner and I behaved like complete cowboys, excitedly rapping off any bolts we saw at the tops of the castle rock cliffs. That was one of the many top anchors to non-existent climbs at Castle Rock that we rapped down. We also rapped down a traversing line, the top pitch of an unfinished 5 pitch climb, and couldn't pull the ropes down... oops... blah, blah, blah.... my point being. ... it was fun... just be prepared for something different from anywhere else in the North Island.

A big hug and rainbow colored flowers to all the developers of castle rock - it's a steep walk to take a drill etc - you're awesome!!!

NOTE: New developers please use only stainless steel hardware for new routes. Please try to hide your bolts and consider where your route starts and tops out. Climbers have already added significantly to the erosion at the tops. It's also good practice to keep low profile.

Disclaimer

The author, publisher, and landowners take no responsibility for damages, injury, disability, or death resulting from the use of this guide. This guide does not guarantee any of the fixed gear, including bolts, peg, or belays mentioned in this guide. All fixed gear is to be used at the climbers own risk. Ownership of the guide does not grant you entry onto the property or crag. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of the information in this guide. Climb at your own risk.

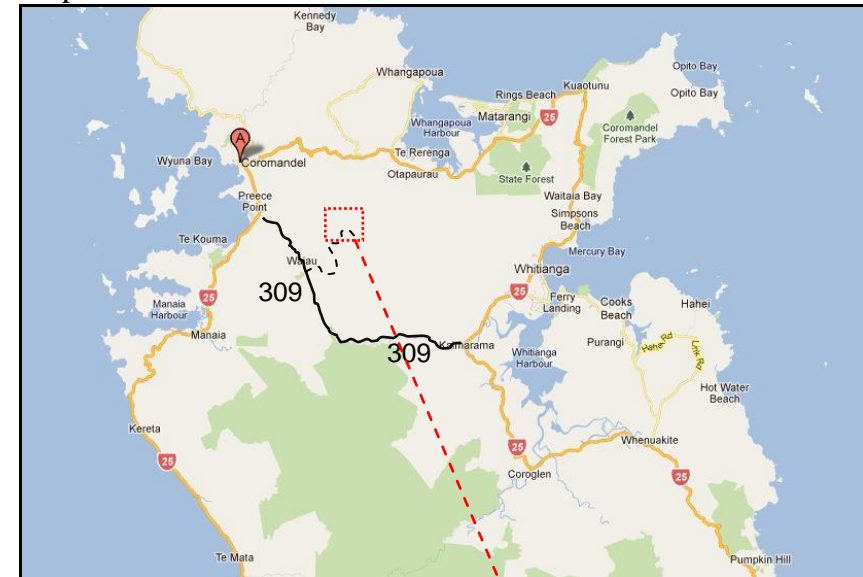


How to get to Castle Rock: From Thames

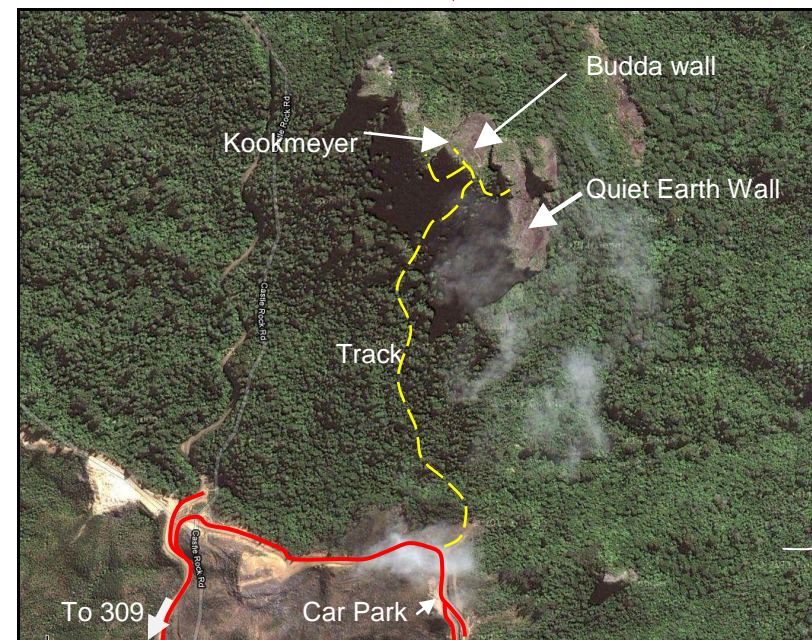
- The "309" road (yes 309 is the name of the road) is about 3km south of Coromandel Township
- Driving North from Thames for about an hour
- Turn right at the 309 road and the sign to the Waiiau Waterworks, (3km before Coromandel)
- When you see the Waiiau Waterworks, take the next left on CASTLE ROCK ROAD
- Drive 3 or so km up the castle rock forestry road to the top.
- Just after the road curls off to the right - you can park on the right side of the road
- You'll be able to see the rock from here
- The walking track is a little overgrown at the start. Go into the bush, at the big corner, and take the little track going straight up to the summit not the long overgrown road curling off to the right
- Go up the walking track in the native bush. The steep walk takes about 25-40 mins up, and 20mins down.

At the top of the saddle there's a fork in the track. Kookmeyer and Budda face is on the left outcrop, the Quiet Earth cliff and the main lookout is to the right. The look out on the right buttress also gives you a great view of the Budda wall.

Map 1 : Coromandel



Map 2: Castle Rock



Kookmeyers & Budda Wall

To get to Kookmeyers take the main track to the summit, at the point the main track meets the saddle between the two rock outcrops. Take the left fork. Follow rough track along ridge, as you approach the summit, the Budda Wall is on your right Kooy Meyer is on the left and the Northern face is out front.

Kookmeyers

Turn left at the fork in the path near the summit. About a meter on the left there's a hidden path (thank you Ken) veering straight down, hard left - almost back the way you just walked up! Slip and stumble down and curl right to end up at the base of a very nice wall of up to 120 metres. The first climb you come to is an open project of unknown grade - this is the very short wall on the right side of the cliff - Perhaps 12 meters. It has 3 bolts and may need another between 1st and 3rd.

NOTES:

- The next climbs are all just under 30 meters, so bring the right rope/s!
- If it has been raining in the last 3 days some climbs on this wall may still be dripping wet
- In Summer this wall is cool till about 12/1pm, Winter it's lovely after midday.
- These climbs can be climbed ground up, unlike many of the other routes at Castle Rock
- Routes Described from right to left as you walk down the hill.

Open Project #5

Short 10M face with 3 bolts, but not lots of holds.

**Nice Touch Wilbur (18) #4

Superb, only it is often dripping many days after rain. Bring 16 draws. Up and right after 4th bolt, extend 4th and 7th quickdraws to avoid drag later on. (27 meters).

Wilbur's Cousin (19) #3

Shares first 4/5 bolts with Wilbur and then veers left. Bring a long draw to extend 3rd - 5th bolts and bolt 10 and 11. A phenomenal route, just a few problems with rope drag if you don't extend draws - the bolts are in the best places for the most solid rock. Bring about 14-16 draws.

** Wind-dancer (21) 60m #2

Pitch 1 30m: A fine line. Go up the left veering ramp and look for the bolts on the left. Don't use a quick-draw on the third bolt as it makes the rope catch on a rock and creates serious drag later on and extending doesn't help. This climb should be called scorpion as it has a sting in the tail.
Pitch 2. 24 30m. **Closed Project** direct up through 2 roofs system.

* Left Foot Dancer (21) 30m

An alternative finish to the 2nd Pitch of "Wind Dancer". Climb the 2nd pitch of Wind Dancer to the 2nd roof. Pull up onto the roof but keep traversing left until you can rock onto the slopping ledge, climb face and groove above to DBC belay. If you are not careful rope drag can be excessive so extend extend extend or break into 2 pitch's (recommended). 8 Bolts of Wind Dancer + 4 on left Foot. 60m Abseil to ground.

Cliff Ellery & Brian Mercer 25/4/12

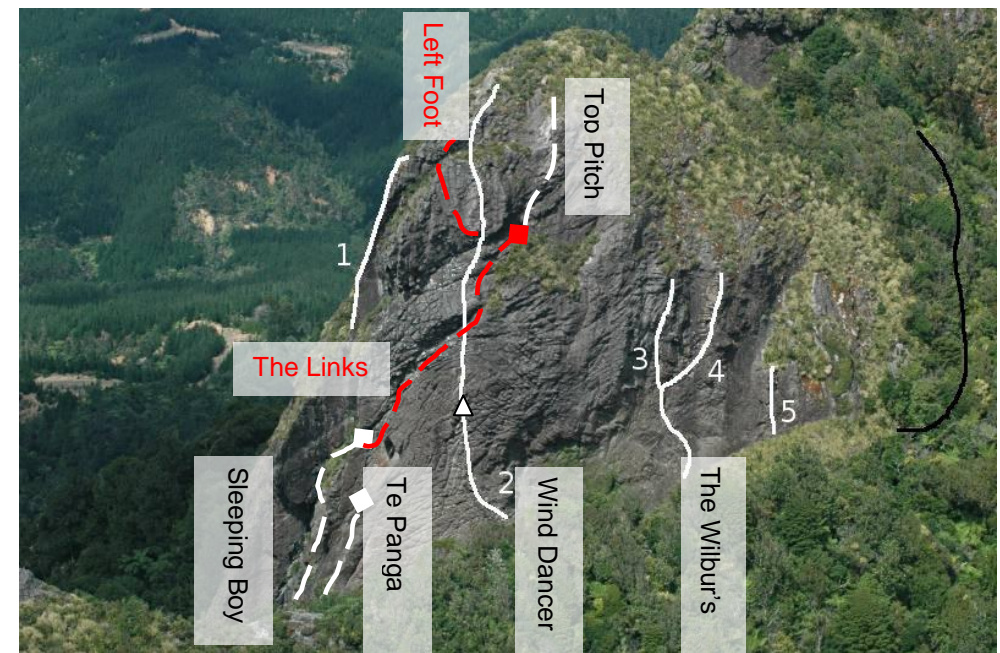


Photo 1: Kookmeyers

Top Pitch (18) 15m #2a

From the ledge climb the face on bulges, harder than it looks (see Links Effect).

**** Te Punga (23) 30m**

My favourite and great on a winter afternoon or summer morning. Just right of the main arete at the bottom of the hill. Fantastic - A hard start followed by a techniques lesson right to the very finish. Very photogenic too. 14 bolts 1 pitch 25 meters. Personally, I cheat clip (aid climb) the second bolt to avoid hitting the rock close by on the ground.

21/Aug/11.

The next climb is around the corner about 10M to the left of Kookmeyers. Getting through the bush to it can be 'interesting'.

***** Sleeping boy catches no fish (18) 50m #8**

Slab climb, fantastic varied climbing. The crux is getting off the ground and a little run out though the ledge system. Bring 14 - 16 draws. Line finishes at rap-station at first clump of bushes.

Nick Monteiths

**** The Links Effect (18) 100 m**

A three pitch link up from top to bottom, a delightful climb that the girls can't keep off. Links up, Sleeping Boys, Te Punga 2nd Pitch, Wind Dancer and Top Pitch.

Pitch 1 (18) 50m. Climb "Sleeping Boy catches no fish"

Pitch 2 (The link) (18) 35m. From the belay of "Sleeping boy" move out right clip 2 bolts then boldly drop over the edge into the over hung corner, follow the ramp up and right past 5 more bolts till you come to the end of the roof (2nd Pitch of Wind dancer) Pull over the lip (crux) then follow the line of bolts right to the belay of "Top Pitch".

Pitch 3. (18) 15m. Climb "Top Pitch"

Kindly bolted by many. First ascent Cliff Ellery & the Girls Rachel Mayne, Jess and Brian Mercer. Feb/2012



Photo 2: Budda Wall, Slab and Kookmeyer

Budda Wall

On the same buttress as kookmeyer but facing north. About 10 meters up on the path at a little rocky step, look right and you'll see a rap station. This is the top of Ganesh. There's an extra bolt on the left bank to help give you strength to get to the rap station if you don't fancy leaning out. It's a 70 odd metre drop if you slip. All climbs have rap stations of 2 or more rings.

*****Ganesh (17) (50m) #6**

A bulgy slab a style quite unique to castle rock., Can be done as one long pitch or broken in the middle by rigging a belay up on two bolts. Abseil into double bolt belay, pull you ropes and enjoy, about 15 bolts (count them on the way down).

Phil Higgans.

On the other side of the cliff, walking more towards the left summit you will find another rap station, quietly hiding on the right. This will connect you to 2 climbs side by side

****Reclining Budda (22, 19, 19) 75m #7**

Abseil 50m to the top of the 1st pitch. Make sure you extend the extend the abseil anchor otherwise your ropes will be difficult to pull. One more rap' will put you at the base of the cliff

Pitch 1 (22) (25m)

Climb up slab to roof then climb through roof and climb head wall to belay.

Pitch 2 (19) (30m)

Tending right climb slab to DBC belay.

Pitch 3 (19) (20m)

Looks can be deceiving, difficult moves off the belay ledge then up through small roof to the DBC belay.

Slinky Malinky(19)

A line of bolts to the right of MH: 2 pitches. 19, 18

Nick Monteiths & Kerry Crawford

McBirney-Gillman Direct (15) 20m #1

Accessible by rappelling in from the summit (30m): 2 ropes needed. Start by rappelling in from the 3 bolts on the far end/middle of the left summit to the top of the climb. You could walk down there - staying right, but tripping up would mean goodbye cruel world. As you look at the ocean, stay on the right side of the arete for the abseil. If you see a hanger and ring far down to the left (as you look at the sea)- don't go there. You'll see the top of the climb 10m down - 2 ring bolts. Change your rope to these top anchors then go about 20 meters to the belay station situated on a small ledge part way up the cliff. You really need to know what you are doing for this one. Don't send beginners down just because they're doing that grade. Tie a knot in the end of the rope please and bring



Rachael Mayne on the First Free Ascent of Te Punga

QUIET EARTH WALL

Access to the Base

The approach right now is "challenging" if you like randomly bashing up through rotting vegetation in hope of bumping into the cliff at the right place. I did and it was worth it. I made a small cairn where to turn left, off the path, but it didn't even help me. I even went with a developer and he couldn't find the way! **How to get to the base of 'Quiet Earth'**. start at the bottom near the carpark just right of the ordinary path, go right on the faint path that starts at the same place. Walk down the hill about 10 minutes, passing a big slip and look for a cairn on the left. Bash up through the rotting vegetation for about 20 plus seemingly fruitless minutes, till you get to the cliff. Bash around until you see some bolts.

Quiet Earth (23) (Closed Project)

5 pitches eventually, but for now it's only 1 pitch of about 25 metres.

This is a fantastic climb, with a lot of variation. I felt it was about grade 23 - 'they' call it 21?!. At the top there's one fixed biner - leave it there and rap off that and the ring beside it. I tried to get to the second pitch traversing on the right, but it was a damn scary, so probably needs another bolt or 3. Never assume anything has been finished either. Anyway the pitch after that hasn't been done.

Access to the "Quiet Earth" wall and ANZAC Parade

Unlike the track to the base access to the top of "Quiet Earth" wall is straight forward, so I would strongly recommend abseiling in. To get to the top follow the public track to the look out. 5m from the top cut right and walk along the ridge. Drop down the first rock ridge/outcrop and climb over the second past an assortment of bolts. Just past this point tucked over the lip (and just out of sight) is the belay of ANZAC Parade. You can rap in from this point, 3 raps to the base or alternatively locate the rap station 5m further along the ridge down a small gully. Extend the rope 5m to the edge then a 60m rap and 30m rap will get you to the base of.

*** ANZAC Parade (20) 100 m

Pitch 1 (17) 30m (8 bolts). From the belay step left onto the main cliff and climb up steep bulgy ground to the small roof. Pull through the roof then continue up steep easy ground tending right to the DBC belay.

Pitch 2 (20) 40m. (10 bolts.) From the belay easy ground leads you to the groove through the roof. Clip the chain extended bolt then get established in the groove above (crux). With your heart in your mouth climb the groove clip the bolt at the top then move right. Another technical move gets you onto the ramp above, Climb the ramp tending right to the big party ledge. DBC Belay.

Pitch 3. (17) 30m(8 bolts). Climb the face to the roof and phallic knob, pull on it and onto the face, out left (A cheap double entre but you will all remember the move). Climb the face to ledge then up step bulgy ground to top. The last move up onto the belay ledge is the crux. Stay left until you can grab the top lip.

Cliff Ellery, Rachel Mayne, Brian Mercer and Richard Knott. Anzac day 2012

The Rock spike by the Carpark

Ken's route up the spike

Near the car-park, you can see it from the car-park, the pillar. It's got an interesting approach I hear. Close, but not so close. I also hear it's about grade 10-14 and a few bolts. Any more information you'll just have to bash off to find the thing.