

Ruined Castle Walk



5 hrs

Hard track

7.9 km Return

↑ 666m

4

Entering into the Jamison Valley via the popular Golden Staircase, this walk climbs one of the most recognisable landmarks in the Jamison Valley - The Ruined Castle. A beautiful rock formation that offers great views over the valley as far as Wentworth Falls and Katoomba. Explore some of the history of the coal mining in this part of the Jamison Valley.

956m

718m

Blue Mountains National Park

Are you ready to have fun?

Please ensure you and your group are well prepared and equipped for all possible hazards and delays. Check park closures, weather information and Fire Danger Rating before setting out. Optional side trips and alternate routes noted are not included in this walks overall grade, length or time estimate. Please allow extra time for resting and exploring areas of interest. The authors, staff and owners of wildwalks take care in preparing this information but will not accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury you may experience. Please take care, have fun - Happy Walking.

Getting there Traveling by car is the only practical way to get to Golden Stairs Track carpark (gps: -33.7343, 150.2824). Car: There is free parking available.

This is a return, so you will finish back at the start.

Find up to date and more information including; travel directions, weather, park closures and walker feedback at <http://wild.tl/gstrc>

0 | Golden Stairs Track carpark

(210 m 8 mins) From the Golden Stairs car park and information sign on Glenraphael Dr, the walk follows the 'Golden Stairs / To Federal Pass' sign along the narrow track. The track leads gently downhill past the black and yellow 'Warning - Sections of the Golden Stairs are unfenced and can be slippery when wet' sign, with the occasional glimpse out to Malaita Point and towards the Three Sisters. The walk soon heads down a few steep eroded sections of track and passes through a couple of switchbacks. The track then leads to a fenced rock platform signposted as 'Botting's L.O.'.

0.21 | Botting's Lookout

Botting's Lookout offers great views over the Jamison Valley and the cliff line, including the Landslide, Malaita Point and the Golden Stairs. A plaque at the lookout states that the lookout was named after Walter Botting (1887-1985), a pioneer trail-maker of the Katoomba District. [More info.](#)

0.21 | Bottings Lookout

(430 m 19 mins) Turn right: From the lower side of Botting's Lookout, this walk heads downhill along the eroded track. The walk follows the steps through a narrow gully then turns right to flatten out and head under a small overhang between the cliff and fence (passing a 'Caution Rockfall Hazard' sign). After about 100m of fence, the track turns right to cross a wide gully. On the other side of the gully, this walk climbs down a series of metal and stone staircases. The walk flattens again before heading down another series of stairs. Finally, the track winds down the wide spur to meet the signposted T-intersection with 'Federal Pass'.

0.64 | Bottom of Golden Staircase

(2.3 km 51 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Federal Pass - Ruined Castle' sign along the flat wide track, keeping the valley to your left. This track follows the old horse-drawn coal tram route. The track leads through a tall rainforest filled with fern trees and vines, with the occasional lyrebird. After about 1.3km the forest opens up, letting in more light and exposing some distant filtered views. After wandering through the more open forest for about 250m, the track passes a small campsite (on the right). This walk continues for another 700m along the main track through the bracken fern forest to find a larger campsite (just up to the right) with a short stone wall on one side).

2.9 | Miners Campsite

This flat campsite beside the Federal Pass walking track about 2.2km south of the intersection at the bottom of the Golden Stairs. There is short constructed stone wall left over from when there area was habited by miners. The campsite is surrounded by a tall forest, bracken ferns and some nice fern trees. There is no water or facilities.

2.9 | Miners Campsite

(300 m 7 mins) Continue straight: From the miners campsite, this walk follows the clear track south-west, keeping the valley to your left. The mostly flat track narrows a bit as it leads past a large flat area (on your right) after about 140m, then past a smaller campsite a short distance later. The track then winds through the forest for another 100m to come to a clearing and signposted three-way intersection, where there is a 'Federal Pass - Katoomba' sign pointing back along the track. (There is a campsite a few metres further on and to the the left.)

3.2 | Northern Ruined Castle campsite

A short distance south east of the intersection with the Federal Pass and the northern access track to the Ruined Castle, is a fairly large basic campsite. There are two main flat areas for camping, both with fire scares. The area is surround with tall trees and ferns. There is no water nor any other facilities.

3.2 | Northern Ruined Castle campsite

(730 m 20 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Ruined Castle' sign uphill along the eroded track and soon passes the yellow 'Warning - Remote area indistinct route steep terrain - Exposed climbing loose surfaces - No reliable water Carry plenty Sterilise any water found on route' sign. The track winds up the wide valley getting steeper as it goes, climbing up onto the main ridgeline. Here the walk turns left (away from the view of Castle Head) and follows the rocky track more gently uphill for about 220m to pass under the side of a large boulder. The track continues along the narrow ridge for about 280m, with some filtered views past another large boulder to the base of the tall Ruined Castle summit. Here the walk heads

gently down a bit (keeping the rock wall to your left), past a crevice, then follows the main track to the other (southern) side of the summit. The track then heads up again to find a number of rocky pinnacles.

3.93 | Alternate Route Ruined Castle to Northern Ruined C

(1.3 km 35 mins) Continue straight: From near the summit of Ruined Castle, this walk heads south-east along the main ridgeline, initially keeping the rock wall to your left. The track follows the rocky ridgeline gently downhill and after about 70m the track starts to become much steeper. The track winds down, flattening out for a short time before continuing steeply down to a sign posted three-way intersection just beyond the 'Ruined Castle to Mount Solitary' map. There is a 'Ruined Castle' arrow here, pointing back up the hill.

Turn left : From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Katoomba' sign along the mostly flat and clear track, keeping the main valley to your right. The track almost immediately passes a campsite (down a steep track on your right) and continues along the flat through the ferny forest. A little over 200m later, the track passes a large square boulder, then about 100m further, this walk comes to an intersection, where there is a fair amount of coal on the ground, a campsite down to your right and the entrance to an old small coal mine (behind a rock) on your left.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads along the main track initially keeping the campsite down to your right. The clear track is mostly flat and passes through a tall turpentine forest for about 500m before passing another campsite (on your right). Then, just a few metres further on, this walk comes to a signposted three-way intersection where a sign points back along the track to 'Mount Solitary'. Now Turn left to rejoin the main walk .