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# Welcome to Tasmania

**T**HERE OUGHT TO BE signs up at every Tasmanian airport and interstate ferry wharf: “Renew hope all ye who enter.” Australia’s southernmost State invigorates, refreshes and ultimately leaves visitors ready to face their everyday lives with a new sense of purpose.

Here are mountains that can look as snow-cloaked and craggy as New Zealand’s, cultivated fields that seem as green as any in Europe and hedge-rows that prompt visions of England. But Tasmania is so much more than



a copy of somewhere else. Here we have some of the world's cleanest air. Here are vibrant, compact cities – with small-town friendliness but metropolitan culture – breathtaking natural scenery and beautifully preserved remnants of human history. Here are people united by their desire to dwell amid such artless grandeur and poignant memories.

For visitors attracted to the outdoors, especially bushwalkers, Tasmania is without peer. Despite its compact size (roughly 300 km north–south and east–west) it has more than 2000 km of major walking tracks, many of them multi-day walks that traverse sections of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (WHA). The WHA covers 13,838 sq. km – about one-fifth of the State – and is one of only three remaining temperate wilderness areas in the Southern Hemisphere. It protects lonely coastlines, tracts of rainforest barely penetrable by humans, raging rivers such as the Franklin and spectacular peaks such as Cradle Mountain and Frenchmans Cap.

The sum of these parts is an island of wild beauty that lingers forever in memory. Fill your rucksack and join adventurous spirits from around the world in Tasmania for your own unforgettable natural experience.



## TRAVELLING TO TASSIE

**IT'S FAST AND EASY** to get to Tasmania from mainland Australia. Several domestic air carriers offer flights and seamless connections from international flights, and ships provide links to Melbourne and Sydney.

The main air carriers with daily services to Hobart and Launceston from Melbourne and Sydney are Qantas (phone **131 313**, [www.qantas.com.au](http://www.qantas.com.au)), Jetstar (**131 538**, [www.jetstar.com.au](http://www.jetstar.com.au)) and Virgin Blue (**136 789**, [www.virginblue.com.au](http://www.virginblue.com.au)).

Smaller carriers such as Regional Express (**131 713**, [www.regionalexpress.com.au](http://www.regionalexpress.com.au)) Airlines of Tasmania (**1800 144 460**, [www.air-tasmania.com.au](http://www.air-tasmania.com.au)), TasAir (**03 6427 9777**, [www.tasair.com.au](http://www.tasair.com.au)) and King Island Airlines (**03 9580 3777**) fly to smaller Tasmanian centres (mostly from Melbourne) and the Bass Strait islands.

Three large, fast, interstate ships, *Spirit of Tasmania I*, *II* and *III* (**1800 634 906**, [www.spiritoftasmania.com.au](http://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au)), ply the Bass Strait route. *Spirits I* and *II* cover the Melbourne–Devonport route seven nights a week, year-round, with day-time sailing at peak times. *Spirit III* goes overnight between Sydney and Devonport up to three times a week. The ships are ideal for mainland visitors wishing to take their own cars to Tasmania.

**Walkers revel** in the beauty and solitude at Wineglass Bay, Freycinet National Park.

# The best of Tasmania

**T**ASMANIA may be Australia's foremost bushwalking destination, but there's so much more for visitors to see and do. There's a range of outdoor adventures to try in stunningly beautiful locations; peaceful pursuits such as fishing and golf; and some of Australia's finest wines and freshest food to savour. Come for a long walk, but sample some of Tasmania's other treats while you're here.

## ■ FOR ADVENTUROUS SPIRITS

River rafting, sea kayaking, rock-climbing: Tasmania has it all. Which one to choose? Rock-climbing is very popular as Tasmania's beautiful dolerite and granite formations offer a feast of climbing at all levels. Popular, accessible climbing sites include the Organ Pipes at Mt Wellington, near Hobart, Cataract Gorge in Launceston and Whitewater Wall and The Hazards at Freycinet National Park.

You'll find contact details for commercial guides offering rock-climbing and many other adventures at [www.discovertasmania.com.au](http://www.discovertasmania.com.au) > things to do and see > outdoor adventure and at [www.tasadventures.com](http://www.tasadventures.com).

## OUTDOOR GUIDES

**A**S WELL AS GUIDES for specific walks or activities, Tasmania offers professional guides who can lead you on a multi-day potpourri of activities, including rafting, climbing, kayaking and walking. One of the longest-running organisations is the Launceston-based Tasmanian Expeditions. Its flagship trips are Franklin River rafting journeys, but the company also offers several walking trips (including all the classic tracks), cycle tours on quiet back roads, sea kayaking in pristine Bathurst Harbour and Port Davey, and half- and full-day rock-climbing. For more information phone **1300 666 856** or **03 6339 3999** or go to [www.tas-ex.com](http://www.tas-ex.com).

**Guide** Ben Christie-Johnston at Osmiridium Beach, South Coast Track.





**Rock history.** *Spectacular relics such as these Permian-era marine creatures at Maria Island's Fossil Cliffs are a common sight on Tasmanian bushwalks.*

## ■ HISTORY AND HERITAGE

No other Australian State has history as tangible as Tasmania's.

The island's thousands of years of Aboriginal occupation are marked by countless middens, hut depressions, rock shelters, caves, petroglyphs (carvings) and other sites. Many are accessible only on foot, affording walkers opportunities to see Aboriginal artefacts and relics at their best – in their original setting and context. Some Tasmanian walks – notably the South Coast Track – follow ancient Aboriginal trading routes. ►





Convict days are best remembered at Port Arthur ([www.portarthur.org.au](http://www.portarthur.org.au)), just a skip from the Tasman Coastal Trail (see map page 30). Other significant convict-era ruins are found on the east coast at Maria Island (page 12), in the west at Sarah Island, and at Ross and Richmond.

In Hobart, Launceston and dozens of smaller centres you'll find buildings and streetscapes that survive from the earliest years of Van Diemen's Land – sights that are mostly removed from landscape and memory on mainland Australia.

For more information about historical places to visit go to [www.discovertasmania.com.au](http://www.discovertasmania.com.au) > things to do and see > history and heritage. For in-depth background try [www.tas.gov.au/tasmaniaonline](http://www.tas.gov.au/tasmaniaonline) > history and genealogy.

## ■ FISHING

Although Tasmania has great sea fishing, its abundant inland lakes, streams and waterways put the island State well ahead of the school as a trout-fishing destination. Excellent trout waters are found throughout national parks and the World Heritage Area, so walkers keen on fishing can combine their passions on a single trip.

The angling main season runs August–May (best fishing October–April), and a few lakes are open year-round. Throughout the season, shifts in weather, water levels and trout behaviour provide opportunities to try different techniques. If you're a novice, an experienced guide will be of great benefit.



**Craypots piled and ready,** fishing vessels moor at Triabunna between voyages. Tasmania offers superb seafood and fishing opportunities.

Licences are required to fish all inland waters (except private fisheries). A one-day licence is less than \$20 and it's only \$50–60 for the full season. Licences are available from more than 120 agents around the State, including most tackle shops. Tackle shop assistants will also advise about inland fishing regulations (such as minimum legal sizes, bag limits and closed seasons on certain species and waters), where to fish and what gear to use.

The Fish Online site ([www.fishonline.tas.gov.au](http://www.fishonline.tas.gov.au)) is the best starting point for information about angling in Tasmania. For additional information about fishing and contacts for accommodation and professional guides go to [www.troutguidestasmania.com.au](http://www.troutguidestasmania.com.au).

## ■ FOOD AND WINE

Once known mainly for its apples, Tasmania has been transformed in recent years into a gourmet's Treasure Island. A clean environment and favourable climate are mainstays of superb local produce – the freshest fruit and vegetables, peerless cheeses, tender meats and superb seafood. Look for Tasmanian specialties such as crayfish, scallops and abalone. Try leatherwood honey on your morning toast.

In season, travel the Huon and Tamar valleys and select delectably fresh fruit and berries from roadside stalls. Or visit Hobart's Salamanca Market – open every Saturday – for fresh vegies.

Locally made pinot noirs and rieslings are rated among Australia's best and the vineyards that produce them are a pleasure to visit. The Tamar Valley wine country is fast becoming one of Tasmania's leading visitor attractions.

The annual Taste of Tasmania Festival is held just after Christmas each year on Hobart's waterfront.

Go to [www.discovertasmania.com.au](http://www.discovertasmania.com.au) > things to do and see > wine and food to download cellar-door guides to Tasmania's wine and food regions. For more information about the Tamar Valley go to [www.valleyofthesenses.info](http://www.valleyofthesenses.info).

## TASMANIA'S GREATEST HITS

**I N AND NEAR HOBART**, the weekly Salamanca Market, Cadbury Chocolate Factory, Cascade Brewery, River Derwent cruises and Mt Wellington are top of the pops. Cataract Gorge pulls in Launceston guests, and the city is gateway to the Tamar Valley wine route. Port Arthur Historic Site, on the Tasman Peninsula, is the runaway leader among built-heritage sites. Visitors interested in natural attractions make tracks mostly to Cradle Mountain, the Freycinet Peninsula, Lake St Clair and Russell Falls at Mt Field National Park. The most popular outdoor experiences include the Tahune AirWalk, cruises on the Gordon River (from Strahan) and the West Coast Wilderness Railway, between Queenstown and Strahan.

## ■ MORE INFORMATION

The official Tourism Tasmania website ([www.discovertasmania.com.au](http://www.discovertasmania.com.au)) is a great starting place for information about everything there is to see and do in Tasmania. You can phone **1800 806 846** (free call from anywhere in Australia) to request information. See page 64 for more Tasmanian travel contacts.

# Bushwalking preparation

**P**LANNING AND PREPARATION for any extended bushwalk should begin many months ahead of departure date. The walks described in this guidebook are arduous undertakings in regions subject to changeable – and sometimes dangerous – weather conditions, and relatively isolated from emergency services. The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service's *Essential Bushwalking Guide & Trip Planner* is an excellent starting point when planning a walk; it's available at PWS offices or online at [www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/mib.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/mib.html).

## ■ GET INTO SHAPE

If it's your first experience of multi-day walking, you'll need to train. Start with short day-walks with a light daypack and build up to at least one fully laden overnight walk. A decent amount of training should reduce the risk of knee and ankle injuries and will speed your 'settling-in' period once you're on the track.

## ■ WHAT TO EXPECT

Although they may be arduous, the walks in this booklet aren't extreme. All follow established tracks, many of which have had extensive improvements over the years.

The great unknown is the Tasmanian weather, which can change an easy walk into an extremely tiring one. You must be prepared for all types of weather conditions and – especially on the Overland and South Coast tracks – ensure everything is waterproof.

## ■ TRACK NOTES, MAPS AND GUIDES

This guidebook is an introduction to overnight walks in Tasmania and isn't intended for use as your only track notes or walking maps. Australian Geographic strongly recommends walkers obtain the TASMAT sheet maps with track notes that cover each of the walks (these maps generally cover the national park in which the walk is found). Each sheet sells for \$9–10. The maps are widely available at map suppliers and outdoor shops, or you can order direct from TASMAT (phone **03 6233 7741**, email [tasmatsales@dpiwe.tas.gov.au](mailto:tasmatsales@dpiwe.tas.gov.au)). For information online go to [www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au) > Property, Titles and Maps > TASMAT.

There are several published guides with extensive track notes covering Tasmanian walks. Among the best known are: *Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair* by John Chapman and John Siseman, *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman, and *100 Walks in Tasmania* by Tyrone Thomas. John and Monica Chapman's *Bushwalking in Australia* and Lonely Planet's *Walking in Australia* both contain Tasmanian walks.





**Treading the boards.** Walkers bound for the ferry wharf at Narcissus Bay, on Lake St Clair, stride out their final flat kilometres on the Overland Track.

## ■ NATIONAL PARKS FEES AND PASSES

You must have a current Tasmanian National Parks pass to walk in a national park. Day passes are \$10, but the PWS recommends the two-month Holiday Pass (\$30) for visiting walkers. Holiday passes are available at national parks and at Tasmanian travel centres, visitor centres and PWS Tasmania (see page 64 for contact details). An online order form is available at [www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/current\\_fees.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/current_fees.html).

## ■ MINIMUM IMPACT BUSHWALKING

It's one thing for you to survive in the wilderness – you also need to ensure that the wilderness survives you. Following is a very brief summary of minimum impact bushwalking (MIB) techniques; for more details see the *Essential Bushwalking Guide & Trip Planner* or the web pages of bushwalking clubs.

### FUEL-STOVE-ONLY AREAS

Throughout the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (and some other parts of the State) campfires are not permitted and walkers must carry fuel stoves for cooking.

### CARRY OUT ALL RUBBISH

Try to cut down the amount of packaging you carry – there'll be less to carry out. Rubbish includes food scraps, sanitary pads, tampons and condoms.

### STAY ON THE TRACK

Stick to formed tracks and stay in the middle of the track, even if it's muddy. If you're walking in a trackless area, fan out – don't follow in each other's footsteps.

### CAMPSITE ETIQUETTE

Use established sites; don't make new ones. Where there are built tent platforms or huts, use them. Camp 30 m away from watercourses and tracks. Don't damage vegetation and don't dig drainage ditches around tents. Use hot water and sand or a scourer for washing up – not detergent.

### TOILETS AND HYGIENE

If there's a toilet, use it. If there's no toilet you should walk at least 100 m away from the track, campsite or any watercourse, dig a hole at least 15 cm deep, and bury faeces and toilet paper.

## ■ THE WATERPROOFING CHALLENGE

To pack your rucksack for Tasmanian conditions you'll need a pack liner (a plastic garbage bag will suffice, although most outdoor suppliers sell heavy-duty, longer-lasting bags), a good supply of plastic garbage bags and zip-lock bags and/or waterproof stuff sacks. Pack everything that needs to stay dry inside a zip-lock or garbage bag before stowing it inside the pack liner. Take particular care with your dry clothes, sleeping-bag, inner and sleeping mat. Roll your tent and fly inside a garbage bag. Consider double zip-locking anything – such as snacks, camera and first-aid kit – that you carry in accessible pockets outside the pack liner. A growing number of walkers are using removable pack covers for extra protection.

## ■ FIRST-AID KITS

The perfect first-aid kit doesn't exist, so try creating your own. At the end of each trip, list the things you wish you had and the things of which you wished you had more. Also appreciate the value of commercial first-aid kits. Manufacturers think of things you'll probably forget. See [www.equip.com.au](http://www.equip.com.au) or [www.firstaid.com.au](http://www.firstaid.com.au) for examples.

Re pack your kit each trip. Review the expiry dates on medications and check for sterile items that are open or damaged. Consider any special needs for your route. Don't pack anything that you don't know how to use.

Ultimately, life and limb are saved by knowledge and skill. The Wilderness Medicine Institute runs remote-area first-aid courses (**1800 137 847** or **08 9331 6066** or [www.wmi.net.au](http://www.wmi.net.au)). Several reputable bodies including the Red Cross ([www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au)) and St John Ambulance Australia ([www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au)) offer general first-aid training.

## ■ STOP THE ROT

The root-rot fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi* kills many plants in Tasmania. This microscopic pathogen, carried in mud and soil, leaves plants unable to absorb enough water from the soil. Ensure that you start your walk with clean gear – especially boots, tent pegs, gaiters and tent – and use wash-down stations when they are provided.



**Boot-wash-down stations** play an important role in limiting the spread of the plant-killing root-rot fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

# Packing checklist

**W**HATEVER TIME OF YEAR you walk you must be prepared for all conditions. But take care not to overload. Most walkers are comfortable with a pack that weighs between one-fifth and one-third of their body weight, depending on their level of fitness.

## ESSENTIAL

- Rucksack
- Pack liner
- Tent (built-in floor essential), poles and pegs
- Sleeping mat
- Sleeping-bag
- Inner sheet (silk inners are light and compact)
- Map
- Compass
- Boots
- Gaiters
- Socks (2 pr minimum)
- Rain jacket
- Waterproof overpants
- Walking clothes (including thermal layers)
- Dry set of clothes
- Fleece or down jacket
- Camp shoes (sandals)
- Sunhat
- Beanie
- Gloves
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

- Toothbrush and paste (and any other personal toiletries you can't live without)
- Torch and batteries
- Toilet paper and lightweight trowel
- First-aid kit
- Whistle
- Water container
- Meals and snacks
- Fuel stove and fuel
- Pots, plates/bowls and cutlery
- Waterproof matches and butane lighter
- Zip-top plastic bags
- Length of light cord or rope

## OPTIONAL

- Camera, spare film/memory cards and batteries
- Notebook and pencil
- Books/field guides
- Playing cards (or other lightweight entertainment)
- EPIRB
- GPS
- Satellite phone

### ■ THE WALKERS' ONE-STOP SHOP

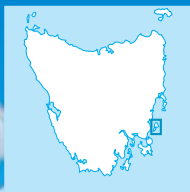
One of Tasmania's newest guiding outfits, Tasmanian Wilderness Experiences (TWE), offers an all-in-one service. They'll collect you from the airport (or anywhere else) and take you back to their bush-haven accommodation (Base Camp Tasmania) at Glenfern near Hobart. During an overnight stay you'll be fed and set up to walk with almost everything except a pair of boots. They'll transport you to your walk, provide guides if you wish, and return you to Base Camp for another night to shower, return gear and have another tasty meal. To top it off, TWE offers 16 guided walks of three to nine days' duration. Call **03 6261 4971, 1300 882 293** or see **[www.bctas.com.au](http://www.bctas.com.au)** for more information.



**Cool at the top.**  
*Guide Hanny Allston  
gazes over Great  
Oyster Bay from  
Bishop and Clerk's  
599 m summit, the  
dolerite spires that  
crown Maria Island's  
north-eastern flank.*

# Maria Island

ISLAND OF HISTORY



**M**ARIA ISLAND looms off Tasmania's east coast like a craggy shadow, distant and mysterious. The steep mountains that dominate its more visible, larger, northern part – their peaks often shrouded in cloud – appear to rise almost straight out of Mercury Passage. The northern part of Maria is about 10–15 km offshore, sufficiently distant for first views to tantalise and entice.

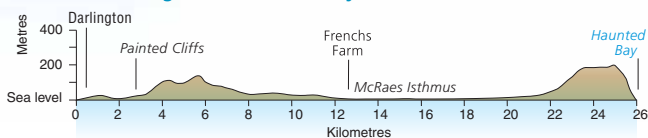
Once you find out a little more about the island, a trip to the East Coast to catch the ferry will be irresistible. There are Maria's remarkable fossil beds, the breathtaking views from its soaring peaks, its quiet forests and the historical buildings around Darlington settlement. Enticing extras are the abundant native animals – Maria has been a national park since 1972 – and solitude. ►



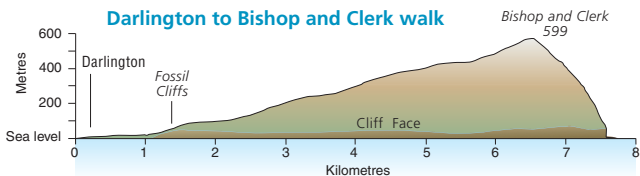
## ■ Maria Island – the facts



### Darlington to Haunted Bay walk (inland route)



### Darlington to Bishop and Clerk walk







### ■ BEST TIME TO WALK

December–April is the warmest period with longest daylight hours. Mild winter temperatures are favourable for walking, but check ferry departure times when planning.

### ■ TRACKS & DIFFICULTIES

The island's longer walking routes are flat or undulating and easy, and follow tracks also used by PWS vehicles and mountain bikes. The tracks up Bishop and Clerk (599 m) and Mt Maria (711 m) have steep sections and require some scrambling.

### ■ ACCESS & INFORMATION

Tassielink buses **(03 6271 7320, 1300 300 520)** run regularly between Hobart and Triabunna. Call the Triabunna Visitors Centre **(03 6257 4090)** or the Maria Island ferry operators for information about timetables and fares for departures from Louisville **(03 6257 1589)** and Triabunna **(0427 100 104)**. The PWS information centre is in the Commissariat Store, near the Darlington jetty. Maria Island PWS phone is: **03 62571420**; or web: **www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/maria**

### ■ FACILITIES & WATER

There are no shops on Maria Island so bring all supplies with you. There is basic bunkhouse accommodation (no electricity) at the penitentiary in

**Mainland bound,** *walkers load rucksacks aboard one of the two Maria Island ferries that ply the usually calm Mercury Passage throughout the year.*

Darlington and camping grounds at Darlington, Frenchs Farm and Encampment Cove. Fuel stoves are recommended. Fireplaces and some firewood are provided at Darlington camping ground. PWS requests that people take all their rubbish off the island when leaving. Tank and reservoir water is available in Darlington and there's limited tank water at Frenchs Farm and Encampment Cove. There are gas hot showers (gold coin donation) near Darlington BBQ area. Limit showers to three minutes. All inquiries to Maria Island PWS office.

### ■ MAPS

Maria Island NP Map and Notes (1:50,000). Also, see page 63 for where to buy maps and track notes.

### ■ FEES

Walkers need a Tasmanian National Parks pass (contact PWS, see page 64). It's \$22/night for up to six people at Darlington penitentiary units, and \$4.40/night at Darlington camping ground; Frenchs Farm and Encampment Cove are free.

**Forester, or eastern  
grey kangaroos** (below)

*are one of several species  
introduced to the island  
during the 1960s, when  
Maria became a reserve for  
endangered wildlife. Today,  
marsupials and birds wander  
freely around the historic*

**Darlington settlement**  
(bottom).



**KING DIEGO OF DARLINGTON**

**I**N 1884 THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT leased Maria Island to entrepreneur Diego Bernacchi. Attracted by the mild climate and good soils, Bernacchi planted grape vines and mulberry trees and began planning other industries. In 1888 he renamed Darlington “San Diego” and launched Maria tourism with the opening of the Grand Hotel. Darlington – San Diego – thrived for a time, its population attracting a State school (now the national park office), general store, butcher and baker to the island. Unfortunately, the 1890s Depression scuttled Bernacchi’s plans, and he left the island after his assets were seized in 1896. He returned in 1920 to create a cement industry. The venture never thrived. Bernacchi died in 1925, before the cement works failed in 1930.



**M**ARIA ISLAND'S WALKS range from mere strolls near Darlington settlement, through longer but undemanding walks to more distant campgrounds, to fairly testing day walks up the mountains. Although there isn't a long-established multi-day track here, if walkers move between the island's three camping grounds and add several day walks, it's possible to create a walking program of many days and more than 60 km. The Maria Island Walk's four-day guided walk (see next page) covers 33–40 km.

Spend a night or two at Darlington camping ground to allow time for visits to historic buildings and to complete the Fossil Cliffs and Bishop and Clerk walks. The Bishop and Clerk track – one of the more demanding on the island – includes steep sections over scree and some scrambling near the 599 m summit, from where there are breathtaking views north to Tasmania's east coast and Freycinet Peninsula.

Plan at least a three-day walk from Darlington. On day one take the undulating coast track south past the Painted Cliffs and set up camp at either Frenchs Farm or Encampment Cove. On day two, take an out-and-back day walk along McRaes Isthmus and on to Haunted Bay. The track rises on quiet south Maria and leads to sweeping views of the Tasman Sea and Forestier and Tasman peninsulas. Few people venture down to this part of Maria, and there's a palpable feeling of isolation.

**Ile du Nord** (above) was the site of a whaling station in the early 1800s. Since 1991, its surrounding waters have been protected in the park's marine section. It's now a popular spot for snorkelling and diving.



**Brilliant red in rain,** the gum-top stringybark (above) is one of Maria's nine eucalypt species. Although much altered by human activity, the island contains some pristine woodlands.

On day three, walk the inland route home from Frenchs Farm or Encampment Cove and take a strenuous side-trip to Mt Maria's 711 m summit and its spectacular lookout. The upper reaches of the track are rocky and challenging and a fitting climax to a day that includes little flat terrain. As a walking destination, Maria lacks the reputation of some of the better-known Tasmanian tracks. That lack of recognition is a Maria walker's ticket to solitude. People looking for a comfortable introduction to multi-day bushwalking ought to have Maria at the top of their list. □

**White sands fronting Riedle Bay (below),** on the eastern side of McRaes Isthmus, see few human footprints. Groups led by the commercial operation *The Maria Island Walk* are some of the few human visitors here.

#### GUIDED OPTIONS

##### ■ THE MARIA ISLAND WALK:

4-day walk staying at fixed camps and historic house in Darlington.

**03 6227 8800,**

**[www.mariaislandwalk.com.au](http://www.mariaislandwalk.com.au)**

##### ■ TIGER TRAILS:

4-day Maria Island Dreaming walking/camping trips. **03 6234**

**3931 or 0427 397 815,**

**[www.tasmanianwalks.com](http://www.tasmanianwalks.com)**



**M**ARIA ISLAND HOSTS one of Tasmania's newest, most diverse and historically absorbing guided walks. The four-day Maria Island Walk includes a route via beaches and through peaceful forests, accommodation in comfortable standing camps and a historic house, ample time to explore intriguing Darlington and – this could be the clincher for you – fine food and wine. Optional side-trips to Mt Maria or Bishop and Clerk aside, the walking is blissfully undemanding. Guests need only carry personal gear, an inner sheet (sleeping-bags are provided) and lunch, so pack weights are low. The walk offers several attractions unavailable to independent walkers, including the boat passage to McRaes Isthmus, the standing camps' positions (one on south Maria and one near Four Mile Beach) and the chance to stay in Diego Bernacchi's old house in Darlington. For more information phone **03 6227 8800** or go to **[www.mariaislandwalk.com.au](http://www.mariaislandwalk.com.au)**.



**Crumbling dolerite,** a remnant of Jurassic-era molten-rock intrusions, forms a scree slope below Bishop and Clerk's summit. Such obstacles emphasise Maria Island's diverse terrain.





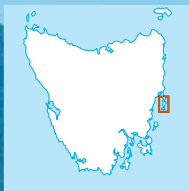


**Vintage view.**  
*Wineglass Bay dazzles  
beneath Mt Amos.  
Circuit walkers cross  
Mt Freycinet and  
Mt Graham, middle  
distance, before  
traversing Wineglass  
on their return to  
Coles Bay.*



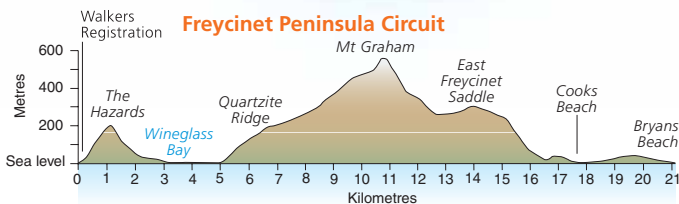
# Freycinet Peninsula Circuit

BEAUTIFUL BEACHES  
& GRANITE PEAKS



**A**S YOU DRIVE from Hobart to Freycinet Peninsula on a clear day, the peninsula's rearing peaks first appear across the wide expanse of Great Oyster Bay. Further on, The Hazards – implacable granite lumps that are Freycinet's front gate – dominate views. From quiet Coles Bay, it's just a few kilometres, past Richardsons Beach and Honeymoon Bay, to the starting point for the Freycinet Peninsula Circuit. ►

## ■ Freycinet Peninsula Circuit – the facts





#### ■ WALKING TIME

2–3 days

#### ■ WALKERS PER YEAR

2500–3000

#### ■ BEST TIME TO WALK

December–April has the warmest average temperatures and longest daylight hours. East-coast winters offer favourable walking conditions, with mild temperatures and less-crowded tracks.

#### ■ TRACKS & DIFFICULTIES

Freycinet Circuit tracks are well formed and easy to follow. PWS prefers walkers to travel anti-clockwise to help stop the spread of *Phytophthora* (see page 10). The section between Cooks Beach and Wineglass Bay includes a long ascent to Mt Graham (579 m). The side-trip up Mt Freycinet (620 m) involves some steep scrambling.

#### ■ MAPS

Freycinet National Park Map and Notes (1:50,000). See page 63 for where to buy maps and track notes.

#### ■ ACCESS & INFORMATION

Tassielink bus service runs regularly between Hobart and the Coles Bay turn-off (**ph. 03 6271 7320, 1300 300 520**); last leg on Bicheno–Coles Bay bus (**03 6257 0293**). The PWS

**A standing camp near Hazards Beach provides accommodation for people in guided groups.**

Visitor Centre (**03 6256 7000, freycinet@parks.tas.gov.au**) is just east of Coles Bay. Freycinet Circuit can be found on the web:

**[www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/freycinet.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/freycinet.html)**

#### ■ FACILITIES & WATER

There are walkers' campsites at Hazards and Cooks beaches and the southern end of Wineglass Bay. There are freshwater streams en route and a hut with limited tank water at Cooks Beach, but the PWS strongly recommends that walkers do not rely on these water sources. This is a fuel-stove-only area. Carry out all rubbish.

The main camping ground at Richardsons Beach has a walkers' camping area. You must book ahead if you're walking during the busy Christmas/New Year and Easter periods. All bookings and inquiries to PWS Visitor Centre.

#### ■ FEES

Walkers must have a current Tasmanian National Parks pass (contact PWS, see page 64). Adults \$5.50/night at Richardsons Beach camping ground; walkers' campsites free.

**T**HE FREYCINET CIRCUIT isn't hard by Tasmanian standards, but any climb from sea level up to 500–600 m elevation deserves respect. It's possible to do the 30 km circuit in two days but it's much more enjoyable to do it in three. Availability of drinking water is the big issue. There's usually – not always – water at Hazards Beach and Cooks Beach campsites, but it's scarce at the Wineglass Bay campsite.

From the walker registration point take Hazards Beach Track, which goes first west then south, skirting the base of Mt Mayson and mostly staying in light eucalypt and she-oak forest about 100 m beyond the waterline. Lemana Lookout provides the first clear view south. The 3 km long Hazards Beach and protected seabird colonies of Refuge Island and Promise Rock take up the foreground; Mt Freycinet and Mt Graham tower behind in the distance. You'll walk over those mountains in the next few days.

The campsite at the south end of Hazards Beach is beautifully located amid she-oaks, near the peninsula's most reliable water source. If you're out for three days, one alternative is to stop here for the night, enjoy an easy two-hour

**Coastal hunter,** *the white-bellied sea-eagle is a prized sight around the western shores of Freycinet National Park. The magnificent bird – actually a giant kite, not a true eagle (eagles have feathered legs) – weighs up to 4.5 kg and has a wingspan of about 2 m.*



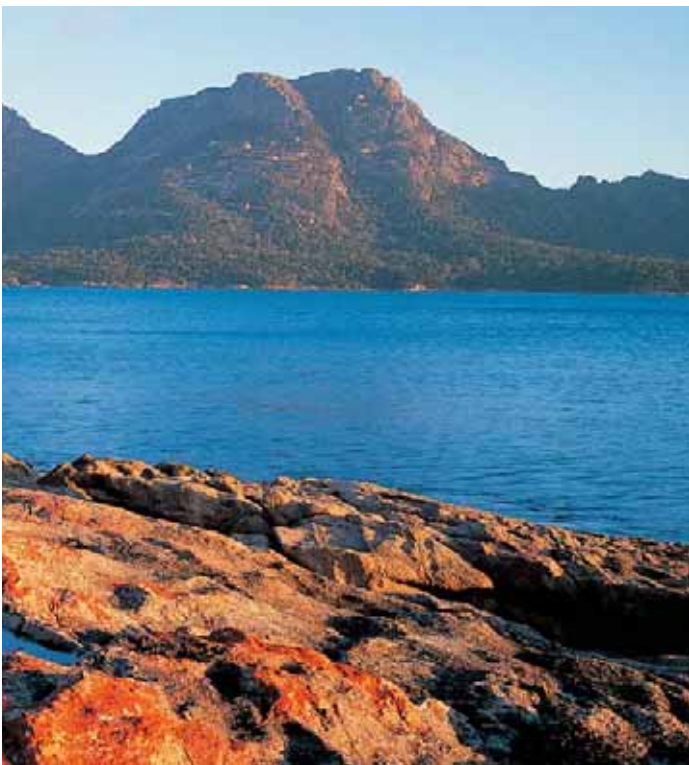


**F**REYCINET is one of Tasmania's most popular national parks with about 160,000 visitors a year, the vast majority of whom will do just one walk. From the main car park there's a 1.3 km uphill ramble to a lookout, from which visitors savour views of one of Tasmania's icons: the brilliant white sand and clear waters of Wineglass Bay.

The Wineglass lookout track is wide and its surface is beaten hard by boot, shoe and sandal. On a sunny Sunday it carries the sort of crowd you'd expect on a city footpath at lunchtime and you give up saying friendly g'days to fellow walkers. Many go no further than the lookout. A fair crowd will continue down to the northern end of Wineglass beach for a picnic and swim, and some will march a distance up the beach. Then they about-face and head back to the car park. If you're walking in from the south on the circuit, the bulk of your day will be peaceful and quiet.

walk to Cooks Beach the next morning and take in Bryans Beach as a side-trip that afternoon. That will mean two fairly easy days before the big push over the mountains to Wineglass on day three. If you're doing the circuit in two days it's better to push on to Cooks Beach campsite on day one. South of Hazards Beach it's easy walking, with lovely filtered views over Great Oyster Bay. A quiet camp at Cooks is just the tonic before tackling the mountains.

**Looming granite peaks** called *The Hazards* guard the northern end of Freycinet Peninsula. The circuit walk begins near the base of 454 m Mt Amos, at right of picture, and follows the bay shore south towards Fleurieu Point.



## THE WESTERN SHORE BY WATER

ONE OF THE BEST VIEWS of the granite peaks of The Hazards and Freycinet Peninsula is from the west when the peaks are enveloped in brooding morning shadow or bathed in fading afternoon sunlight. Problem: immediately west of the peninsula is the 15 km wide Great Oyster Bay. Solution: get out on the water in a Freycinet Adventures sea kayak. The adventure company's three-hour Freycinet Paddle, led by an experienced guide, departs Coles Bay each morning and evening, year-round. For more information phone **03 6257 0500** or go to **[www.freycinetadventures.com](http://www.freycinetadventures.com)**.

Expect to take about five hours to walk from Cooks Beach campsite over the mountains to Wineglass Bay campsite. In clear weather this mountain section is magnificent. The track winds through a mosaic of plant communities – blue gum and lomandra close to the coast; shrubby heath, silver peppermint gum, Oyster Bay pine and even buttongrass higher up. The views from high points are dramatic – south to Schouten and Maria islands, and north towards Wineglass and The Hazards. Once past Mt Graham, the track's mostly downhill, with the cooling waters of stunning Wineglass Bay an incentive to keep moving. From the southern end of Wineglass, it's only an hour back to the car park. □

**Sunset show over Great Oyster Bay** stops walkers (below) headed for Hazards Beach Camp, about two hours from the walk registration point and the perfect place to camp if you've set out mid-afternoon. Next day you'll continue towards Cooks Beach, then tackle the climb to 620 m Mt Freycinet (opposite).







### GUIDED OPTIONS

#### ■ FREYCINET ADVENTURES

2-day walking trip and 3- and 5-day walking/sea kayak trips; camping and standing camp accommodation. **03 6257 0500**, **www.freycinetadventures.com**

#### ■ FREYCINET EXPERIENCE

4 day-walks in Freycinet NP; accommodation at Friendly Beaches Lodge. **03 6223 7565** or **1800 506 003**, **www.freycinet.com.au**

#### ■ TASMANIAN EXPEDITIONS

3-day Freycinet Tour. **03 6339 3999** or **1300 666 856**, **www.tas-ex.com**

#### ■ BEYOND WINEGLASS

3-night boat/walking trip, 1 night camping and 2 at Freycinet Lodge. **03 6257 0101**, **www.freycinetlodge.com.au**

#### ■ TASMANIAN WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

3-day Freycinet Circuit Tour. **03 6261 4971**, **1300 882 293** or **0414 238 458**, **www.bctas.com.au**

#### ■ TIGER TRAILS

3-day Peninsula Circuit walking/camping trip. **03 6234 3931** or **0427 397 815**, **www.tasmaniawalks.com**



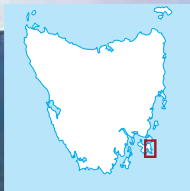


**Imposing cliffs** such as these near Devils Kitchen provide staple views along the Tasman Coastal Trail. The track winds south from here to spectacular Cape Hauy and Cape Pillar.

# The Tasman

WINDSWEPT CLIFFS  
& WILD VIEWS

# Coastal Trail



TASMAN COASTAL TRAIL

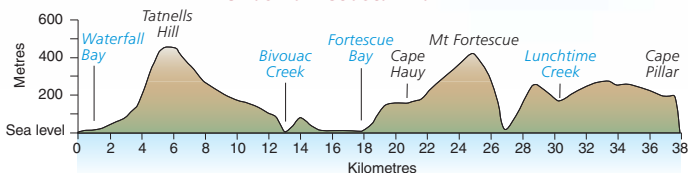
**T**HE TASMAN PENINSULA is a place where landform, ocean, climate and isolation conspire to fashion a coastal landscape that inspires awe and even fear. Only walkers can reach special places on the peninsula that magnify its beauty and grandeur.

The Tasman Coastal Trail follows the peninsula's eastern coastline from Waterfall Bay, near Eaglehawk Neck, to Cape Pillar. It climbs peaks, skirts soaring cliffs and rounds tranquil bays. It passes through tall eucalypt forest, temperate rainforest and coastal heath. ►

## ■ *Tasman Coastal Trail – the facts*



### The Tasman Coastal Trail



#### ■ DISTANCE

45 km

#### ■ WALKING TIME

3–5 days

#### ■ WALKERS PER YEAR

Full length of trail: 100

Waterfall Bay–Fortescue

Bay only: 500

Fortescue Bay–Cape Pillar

via Mt Fortescue: 300

Fortescue Bay–Cape Pillar

via Snake Hill: 350

#### ■ BEST TIME TO WALK

December–April have the warmest average temperatures and longest daylight hours; January–March are the driest months; annual rainfall here is about 230 mm higher than at Maria Island or Freycinet. If particularly severe winds are forecast for the Cape Pillar area it's advisable to delay departure.

#### ■ TRACKS & DIFFICULTIES

Tasman Trail tracks are mostly well formed and easy to follow. There are long ascents up Tatnells Hill (571 m) and Mt Fortescue (490 m). The track over Mt Fortescue passes through a wet forest and is steep and slippery in sections. Great caution must be exercised at cliff-top areas, particularly around capes Haug and Pillar.

#### ■ MAPS

Tasman National Park Map and Notes (1:75,000). See page 63 for where to buy maps and track notes.

#### ■ ACCESS & INFORMATION

Tassielink buses (**03 6271 7320**, **1300 300 520**) run regularly on weekdays between Hobart and Eaglehawk Neck. Private transport is required to and from Fortescue Bay camping ground. Tasman NP is managed from the PWS's Seven Mile Beach office (**03 6214 8100**).



**Hurricane Heath** is the campsite nearest Cape Pillar that provides shelter from raking winds. From here walkers journey east to the spectacular, exposed clifftop sites that characterise the park.

Tasman Trail on the web:  
**[www.parks.tas.gov.au/  
recreation/tracknotes/  
tasman.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/tasman.html)**

#### ■ FACILITIES & WATER

There are walkers, campsites at Waterfall Bay, Bivouac Bay, Wughalee Falls, Bare Knoll and Hurricane Heath. The freshwater streams en route aren't reliable. PWS suggests that walkers have a large water-carrying capacity and refill at every opportunity. This is a fuel-stove-only area. Carry out all rubbish.

The main camping ground at Fortescue Bay is very popular and you should book ahead if walking during the busy November–New Year and Easter periods. All bookings and inquiries to the resident manager (**03 6250 2433**).

#### ■ FEES

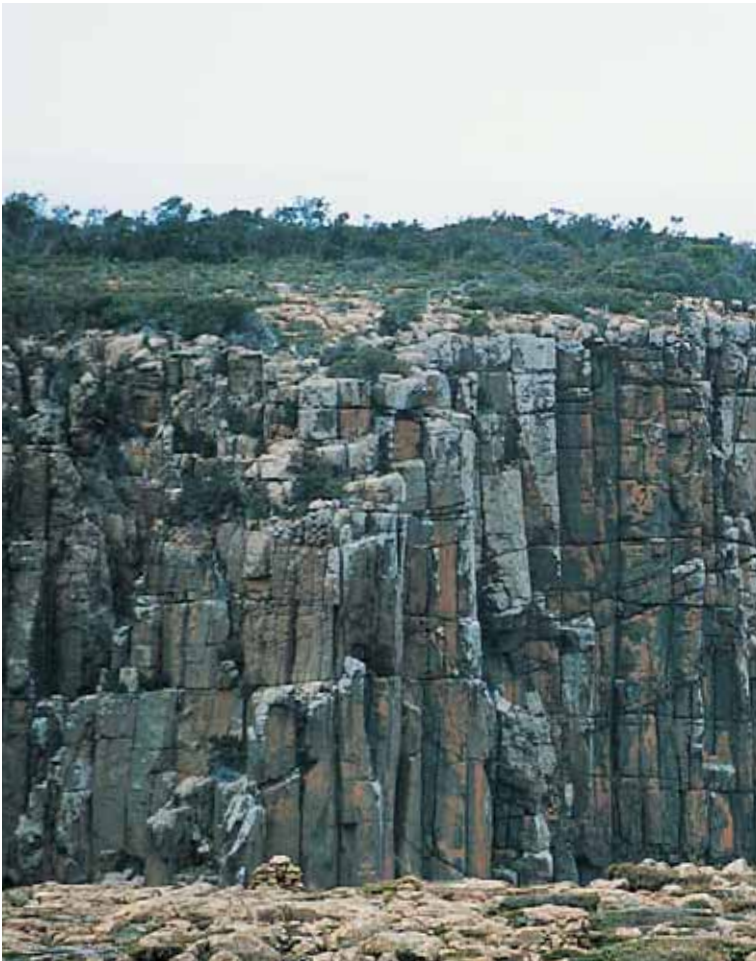
All walkers must have a Tasmanian National Parks pass (contact PWS, see page 64). Tent sites \$5.50/one adult, \$11/two or more, at Fortescue Bay camping ground; walkers' campsites are free.



## HARDY SPECIMEN

**T**HE CAPE PILLAR CASUARINA or capes she-oak (*Allocasuarina crassa*) is found only on Cape Pillar, and survives in the most exposed and desolate spots. In the blown-flat, bonsai-like heath around Perdition Ponds, mature specimens are about 30 cm high, but in sheltered parts of the cape the tree grows to about 2 m. First identified in 1976, the casuarina is listed as rare, but University of Tasmania scientist Dr Greg Jordan, who's studying it, says it's in no danger of disappearing. "This is a plant on the rise," he says. "It's a great adaptor and survivor."

Believed to have evolved during the last ice age, it's now cross-pollinating with its cousin the necklace she-oak, to become the dominant she-oak species of Cape Pillar. Horticulturists have discovered that, in gardens, the she-oak will adapt to more water and nutrients and grow up to 6 m.





**C**OMPOSED OF COLD, grey dolerite (see *Rock of Tassie*, page 44), the peninsula's eastern cliffs have been worn into spectacular shapes – islets, towers, arches, caves and cliffs. Cape Pillar, the south-eastern extremity, is fully exposed to the fury of southern storms and its features have names that leave no doubt about what to expect: Tornado Ridge, Purgatory Hill, Corruption Gully, Hurricane Heath.

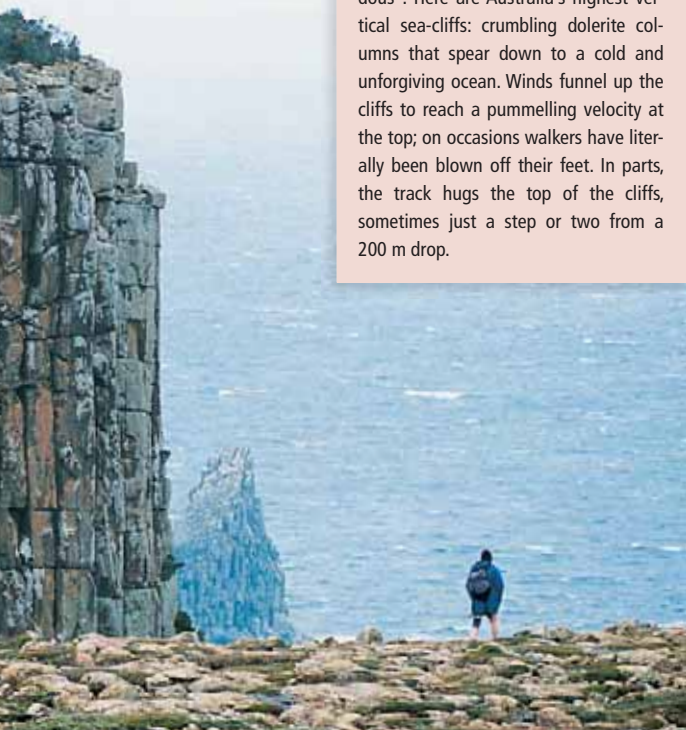
A night spent at Cape Pillar in bad weather is both unnerving and utterly compelling. Squalls drift in off the ocean like waves. The wind gushes through eucalypt and heath with a scouring sound that gathers strength, rising like a crashing breaker. Then the rain comes in great wet gobs, shaking the tent fly and drowning out the wind. You lie snug in your sleeping-bag, wondering what daylight will bring.

**Weathered dolerite (below)** rises more than 200 m above the Tasman Sea in parts of Cape Pillar. Views here seem even more dramatic in the ravaging winds. At the exposed heath near Perdition Ponds, plants such as the Cape Pillar casuarina (opposite) have adapted by growing low among the rocks. Elsewhere on the peninsula, the species reaches 2 m.

#### VIEWS AND VERTIGO

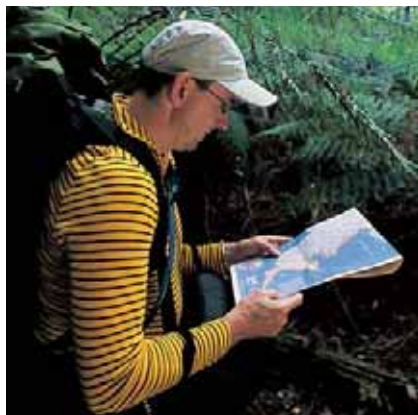
**T**HE TASMAN COASTAL TRAIL is best avoided if you suffer from vertigo. A label on the Tasman National Park map says it all with delicious understatement. "Caution: Along parts of the Tasman Coastal Trail you will be exposed to unfenced hazardous cliff edges."

Beyond Perdition Ponds on Cape Pillar you'll have the best chance to come to terms with "unfenced" and "hazardous". Here are Australia's highest vertical sea-cliffs: crumbling dolerite columns that spear down to a cold and unforgiving ocean. Winds funnel up the cliffs to reach a pummelling velocity at the top; on occasions walkers have literally been blown off their feet. In parts, the track hugs the top of the cliffs, sometimes just a step or two from a 200 m drop.





**Patches of wet eucalypt forest** (left), such as this near Bare Knoll, provide cool, shady breaks from the coastal heath that predominates around Cape Pillar. Tracks are generally well marked, but a map (below) should still be considered essential.



Whatever the weather, the splendour of the area is undiminished. From the cliffs overlooking Clytie Bight, it's a dizzying 200 m drop to the ocean (see *Views and vertigo*, page 33). Lichens spread in delicate blooms on the dolerite. Rain-drops flatten into the cliff with a smack that shatters them into vapour, which is then torn by the updraught over and away into the heath.

Surprisingly, the Tasman Coastal Trail is something of a hidden jewel because the peninsula is known almost exclusively as the home of Port Arthur, Australia's best-known remnant of the convict era and one of Tasmania's most visited sites. The ruins are a short drive west of the Tasman Coastal Trail, but few of the people that make the 90-minute journey from Hobart to Port Arthur are inclined to walk the track. They would if they knew what they were missing. □

#### GUIDED OPTIONS

##### ■ TASMANIAN WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

3-day Tasman Coastal Trail walking/camping tour, Fortescue Bay to Cape Pillar. **03 6261 4971, 1300 882 293** or **0414 238 458, [www.bctas.com.au](http://www.bctas.com.au)**

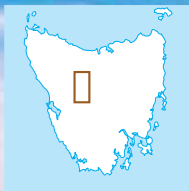




**Bearing south, the  
Overland Track passes  
Crater Lake, Cradle  
Mountain and, in the  
distance at top right,  
Barn Bluff, finishing  
at Lake St Clair.**

# The Overland Track

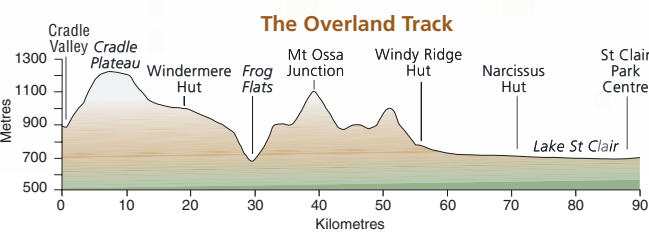
WORLD HERITAGE  
WONDERLAND



**T**HERE'S NO BETTER INTRODUCTION to the Tasmanian World Heritage Area than the Overland Track, the world-famous 80 km walk from Cradle Valley to Cynthia Bay on Lake St Clair. It threads through a glacier-carved landscape that's decorated with tannin-stained lakes, soaring peaks and plunging gorges. There are stark alpine plains and silent green rainforests. Striking plant species include pandani, a giant heath, and fagus, one of Australia's few native cold-deciduous trees. ►



# ■ The Overland Track – the facts



### ■ LENGTH

80 km, 65 km to Lake St Clair

### ■ WALKING TIME

5–7 days (longer if taking more side-trips)

### ■ WALKERS PER YEAR

8500–9000

### ■ BEST TIME TO WALK

December–March is the busiest time. Walkers starting from November–April must book a departure day in advance and may only travel north–south (see *Booking Overland time*, page 43). From May to October there are fewer people on the track and you may walk in either direction. Only very experienced walkers are advised to set out in mid-winter, when daylight hours are short and driving rain and snow are likely.

### ■ TRACK & DIFFICULTIES

Extensive maintenance and track hardening has transformed the Overland in recent decades. Some muddy sections remain, but the track is well formed and easy to follow. The steepest climbs are those up to the Cradle Plateau and on the side-trips to Cradle Mountain summit, Barn Bluff and Mt Ossa.

### ■ MAPS & NOTES

Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair Map and Notes 1:100,000 (TASMAP). *The Overland Track – A Walker's Notebook* (PWS). See page 63 for where to buy maps and track notes.

### ■ ACCESS & INFORMATION

Tassielink **(03 6271 7320, 1300 300 520)** runs bus services to/from Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair year-round (more frequently in summer and autumn). A ferry runs between Narcissus and Cynthia bays on Lake St Clair **(03 6289 1137)** for bookings/timetables. The PWS Cradle Mountain **(03 6492 1133, [cradle@parks.tas.gov.au](mailto:cradle@parks.tas.gov.au))** and Lake



**Superb huts** including New Pelion (above) – the ‘Pelion Palace’ – provide overnight shelter at several points along the track. Walkers, however, must still carry tents.

St Clair **(03 6289 1172)** offices are best for information. Cradle Mountain Visitor Centre **(03 6492 1110)** can assist with accommodation at the walk’s northern end. Overland Track on the web:

**[www.overlandtrack.com.au](http://www.overlandtrack.com.au),**  
**[www.parks.tas.gov.au/](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/overland.html)**  
**[recreation/tracknotes/](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/overland.html)**  
**[overland.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/overland.html)**

### ■ FACILITIES & WATER

Huts at Waterfall Valley, Lake Windermere, Pelion Plains, Kia Ora, Windy Ridge and Narcissus are available on a first-come, first-served basis; walkers using them must have their own food, cooking utensils, fuel stoves and bedding. Do not rely on huts for accommodation. Carry tents and fuel stoves in case huts are full or you need to stop because of poor weather, injury or fatigue. PWS prefers campers to pitch tents near huts, and to use tent platforms where they are provided. There are composting toilets at all hut sites. Water is plentiful in creeks along the route and in tanks at huts.

### ■ FEES

Walkers must have a valid Tasmanian National Parks pass (contact PWS, see page 64). An additional facility fee is payable during the booking season (see *Booking Overland time*, page 43).

## SIDE-TRIPS

**T**HE CRADLE MOUNTAIN–LAKE ST CLAIR region's best views are from side-tracks, which most walkers regard as essential, not optional. Some side-tracks retain the wet and muddy rusticity now largely absent from the much-improved main track. Weather is the biggest influence on which side-tracks you should attempt. The mountain summits are best avoided in poor conditions and you must carry all cold- and wet-weather gear – even if you set out in perfect weather. If the weather holds, attempt every side-track you can. The highlights are:

### ■ CRADLE MOUNTAIN SUMMIT (1545 M)

The track goes east off the main track just south of Kitchen Hut. It's a steep climb over scree. Allow three hours return.

### ■ BARN BLUFF (1559 M)

About halfway along Cradle Cirque this track goes west. It's an easier ascent than Cradle Mountain but very exposed on Barn Cirque. Allow 2–3 hours return.

### ■ LAKE WILL

The track goes west about 4 km north of Lake Windermere. The track passes 19th-century coal-mining works on its way to the lake, a quiet and picturesque alpine tarn. Allow 1.5 hours return.

### ■ MT OSSA (1617 M)

Tasmania's highest point. The track goes west at Pelion Gap (1126 m). The going is steep to Mt Doris, and there's some scrambling towards the Ossa summit. Allow 3–4 hours return.

### ■ D'ALTON AND FERGUSSON FALLS

The track goes east and descends steeply through rainforest to the Mersey River. Unlike the mountain summits, bad weather doesn't mar the view of either falls. Allow 1–2 hours return.

### ■ HARTNETT FALLS

The track goes east and gently downhill to Hartnett, the highest of the Mersey River's falls. Allow about 45 minutes return.



**W**EATHER usually dominates any walker's first impressions of the Overland, particularly those who've cut their walking teeth on easier tracks on mainland Australia or eastern Tasmania. The Cradle Valley is just below 1000 m elevation. Mean annual rainfall here is 2800 mm. Only a few parts of Tasmania and tropical north Queensland are wetter. You'd think that this abundance of rain might diminish the experience. It doesn't. It couldn't. The Overland Track passes through country shaped by wild weather, and is therefore hardly likely to be spoilt by it. And rain often passes quickly, leaving brilliant, clear skies.

**One of Tasmania's most famous vistas, Cradle Mountain is reflected in Dove Lake (below).**

**Autumn colours (opposite) of the deciduous beech, or fagus, make Easter a popular time on the track. The prominent spiky pandani is one of the world's tallest heath plants.**









The track includes some of Australia's most loved wilderness views: Crater Lake and its steep, fagus-draped surrounds, which blaze gold and red in autumn; Dove Lake extending like a mirror below Cradle Mountain's crumbling dolerite towers; Barn Bluff rising above the seemingly impenetrable depths of Fury Gorge; Mt Ossa, Tasmania's highest mountain; and Lake St Clair, Australia's deepest freshwater lake. ►

#### BOOKING OVERLAND TIME

**F**ROM NOVEMBER 2005 a system of controlled departures will operate on the Overland Track during the peak season (November–April). You can reserve your peak-season departure date via the online booking system ([www.overlandtrack.com.au](http://www.overlandtrack.com.au)), which is expected to open in June 2005. The booking system aims to relieve overcrowding at huts and camping areas and to reduce environmental impact. Both measures will enhance walkers' experience. About 75–80 per cent of people who walk the track each year depart during peak season, with Christmas and Easter holidays the busiest periods. Before the booking system, up to 140 walkers started on the same day. Under the new system, daily departure numbers will be limited to around 50 per day and all walkers will travel north to south. Maximum size for groups (independent and commercial) will be 13 and all large groups will be in tents, in clearly signposted group camping areas. Huts will be the domain of independent walkers, alone, or in small parties, but hut accommodation will still be on a first-come basis so, as always, all walkers must carry their own tents. Under the booking system, peak-season walkers will pay a fee in addition to their park-entry fee. You can pay for both when booking.



**Temperate rainforest** often envelops the track, which passes many moss-lined waterfalls, such as this one (left) on a Mersey River tributary. The Overland crosses Pine Forest Moor (above) then flanks spectacular 1560 m Mt Pelion West, background, Tasmania's second-highest mountain, en route to Frog Flats.



#### ROCK OF TASSIE

**D**OLERITE, sometimes called bluestone, covers about 40 per cent of Tasmania and forms the distinctive, columnar appearance of most of its best-known geological features, including Cradle Mountain, Mt Ossa, Mt Wellington and the sea cliffs of the Tasman Peninsula. Dolerite isn't found on mainland Australia, and is one of the geological links between Tasmania and eastern Antarctica. An igneous rock, dolerite formed about 170 million years ago when the supercontinent Gondwana began to break up and weaknesses in the Earth's crust allowed magma to intrude into sub-surface cracks. The magma spread out and cooled below the surface. Later, the sedimentary rocks covering it were removed by erosion, leaving the spectacular vertical columns we see today.

**Crumbling dolerite** columns define most of the Overland's shadowing peaks. Top target for most walkers is 1617 m Mt Ossa (above), Tasmania's highest point, which is accessible in fair weather via a steep side-track. Generally the walking isn't difficult. The hardest scramble on the main track (opposite) is above Crater Lake to Marions Lookout.



#### LUXURY TREKKING

**T**UCKED DISCREETLY off the Overland Track are five well-appointed private huts operated by Cradle Mountain Huts. During the off-season, helicopters resupply the huts with food and fuel and remove all waste in accordance with strict environmental guidelines. Every day between November and May, Cradle Huts guides lead up to 10 guests on a six-day walk on the Overland. These guests do the track in style. Each day they wash in warm showers, eat fresh bread, drink wine with a tasty dinner and sleep on mattresses with pillows. Sound like your idea of a wilderness trip? Remember you still have to walk (Cradle Huts guides are good but not that good) and this comfort comes at a price – just over \$2000 for the 2005–06 season.



## BEWARE THE SCAVENGERS

**N**ATIVE WILDLIFE including possums and long-tailed mice is so attuned to campers' food that animals regularly chew holes in tents and rucksacks to get it. PWS advises Overland Track campsite users to:

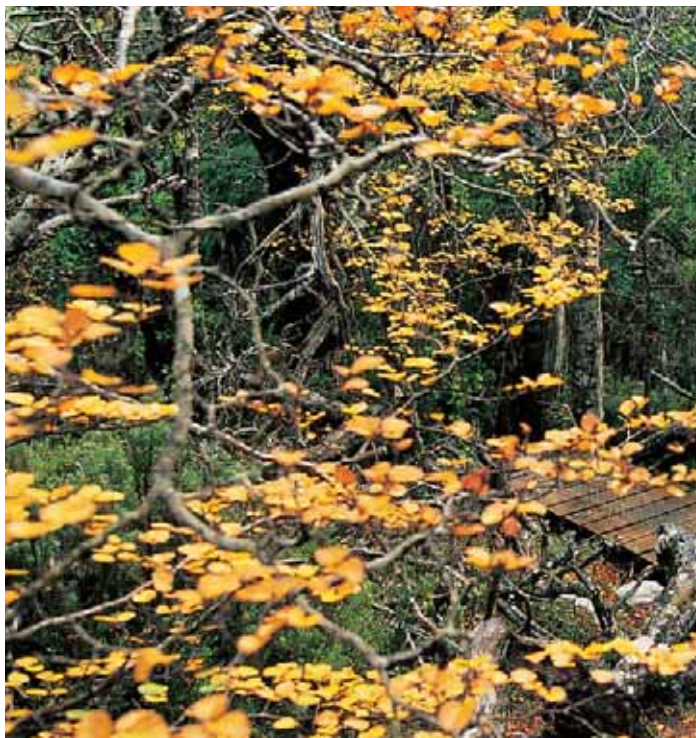
- Minimise packaging taken on the track and carry food in sturdy plastic boxes or plastic screw-top jars;
- Avoid leaving any foodstuffs around;
- Don't store food in external rucksack pockets.

Unattended rucksacks are often rifled by the Overland's crafty currawongs and ravens, who've learnt how to open zippers and Velcro. The birds know that scroggin is often stored in top pockets and they're rumoured to gang up in order to roll over rucksacks for access. Remember: never feed native animals. They can become dependent on handouts, and their health will be harmed.

The Overland's great renown leads some to underestimate it. PWS rangers despair at what they see on the track: walkers without proper footwear or wet-weather gear; people setting out without tents or sufficient food. Track work has improved walking conditions exponentially in recent decades, but this is still a multi-day trek through a wilderness area in a region with extremely changeable weather.

There are longer and more difficult walks in Tasmania, and certainly walks less crowded. But there's only one Overland Track. □

**Just under way,**  
*walkers emerge  
from fagus-dappled  
rainforest above Ronny  
Creek, en route to  
Crater Lake. Ahead  
lies six days in the heart  
of Tasmania's World  
Heritage wilderness.*



**P**ROVIDED YOU'RE PROPERLY EQUIPPED (see *The waterproofing challenge*, page 10), walking in the rain can be a blessed experience. Sure, the big view disappears as mist cloaks hillsides and shrouds treetops, but everything close up becomes vivid. Eucalypt trunks moisten into deeper greens, browns, greys and pinks. Beech and myrtle leaves seem smaller, more delicate and more exquisitely patterned. Hakeas seem spikier, moss banks more elaborate, lichen festoons more pendulous. Bird cries are amplified and creeks run with a calming, muted sound.

## GUIDED OPTIONS

## ■ CRACLAIR TOURS

6-day Overland Track tour.

**03 6339 4488** or **0419 544 748**,  
[www.craclair.com.au](http://www.craclair.com.au)

## ■ TAZ TOURS WILDERNESS

ADVENTURES CRADLE MOUNTAIN

6-day Overland Track Tour.

**03 6492 1181**

## ■ TIGER TRAILS

8-day Overland Track Tour.

**03 6234 3931** or **0427 397 815**,  
[www.tasmaniawalks.com](http://www.tasmaniawalks.com)

## ■ CRADLE MOUNTAIN HUTS

6-day tour with accommodation  
in private huts. **03 6391 9339**,  
[www.cradlehuts.com.au](http://www.cradlehuts.com.au)

## ■ TASMAN BUSH TOURS

6-day Overland Track Tour.

**03 6423 2335** or **0419 325 165**,  
[www.tasmanbushtours.com](http://www.tasmanbushtours.com)

■ TASMANIAN WILDERNESS  
EXPERIENCES

6-day Overland Track tours.

**03 6261 4971**,  
**1300 882 293**  
or **0414 238 458**,  
[www.bctas.com.au](http://www.bctas.com.au)

## ■ TASMANIAN EXPEDITIONS

8-day Cradle Mountain  
Overland Track Tour.

**03 6339 3999** or **1300 666 856**,  
[www.tas-ex.com](http://www.tas-ex.com)



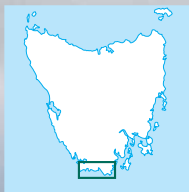




**Afternoon light**  
*bathes Pindars Peak,  
about 13 km east of  
Deadmans Bay and a  
prominent landmark  
along the South Coast  
Track's eastern section.*

# The South Coast Track

SOUTHWEST WILDERNESS  
ISOLATION



**W**HEN ASKED about their experiences on the South Coast Track, most tired walkers tend to wave their arms and jabber disjointed phrases. They'll mention the isolation. The beaches. The islands. The forests. The Iron-bounds. The views. The rain. The mud.

It's not that the 85 km track, which connects Melaleuca and Cockle Creek, defies description. Modern bushwalkers have been writing about it for decades and Aboriginal people used the route for thousands of years. The track is clearly marked. ►

## ■ *The South Coast Track – the facts*

### ■ DISTANCE

85 km

### ■ WALKING TIME

6–9 days

### ■ WALKERS PER YEAR

1100–1200

### ■ BEST TIME TO WALK

December–April sees the warmest average temperatures and longest daylight hours. November–March are the months with lowest average rainfall. PWS advises that only walkers who are well prepared, have thorough experience and good equipment should attempt the track in winter.

### ■ TRACK & DIFFICULTIES

Some parts of the track boast duckboards but muddy and very rough sections remain. The region is

exposed to cold and wet southerly winds; rain falls on average every second day during summer (more often at other times). Walkers should anticipate wet and muddy boots, clothing and equipment. Walkers must have extra food in case they have to wait for favourable conditions for creek, river, beach and mountain-range crossings. Read track notes and Internet pages (see below) thoroughly before setting out.

### ■ MAPS

South Coast Walks 1:100,000 (TASMAP). See page 63 for where to buy maps and track notes.

### ■ ACCESS & INFORMATION

See *Fly in or fly out?* (page 57) for Melaleuca flight contacts. Tassielink buses **(03 6271 7320, 1300 300**





**Melaleuca airstrip** is the arrival point for eastbound walkers, and departure point for the westbound. Flights may be delayed or cancelled because of poor weather. Huts at Melaleuca provide shelter for walkers awaiting aircraft.

**520)** runs services to/from Cockle Creek on Mon, Wed and Fri from early December to late March. The PWS Southwest NP (**03 6288 1283**) and Huonville (**03 6264 8460**) offices have information. South Coast Track on the web:

**[www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/scoast.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/scoast.html)**

#### **FACILITIES & WATER**

There are basic huts sleeping 20 at Melaleuca. Recommended walkers' campsites en route are at Point Eric, Louisa River, Deadmans Bay, New River Lagoon, Surprise

Bay, Granite Beach (east) and South Cape Rivulet. All have pit toilets. There are ample campsites at Cockle Creek. Water is usually not a problem. Most creeks marked on the South Coast Walks map flow throughout summer. Ensure you set out with sufficient water to complete the Ironbound Range and the South Cape Range crossings. This is a fuel-stove-only area. Carry out all rubbish.

#### **FEES**

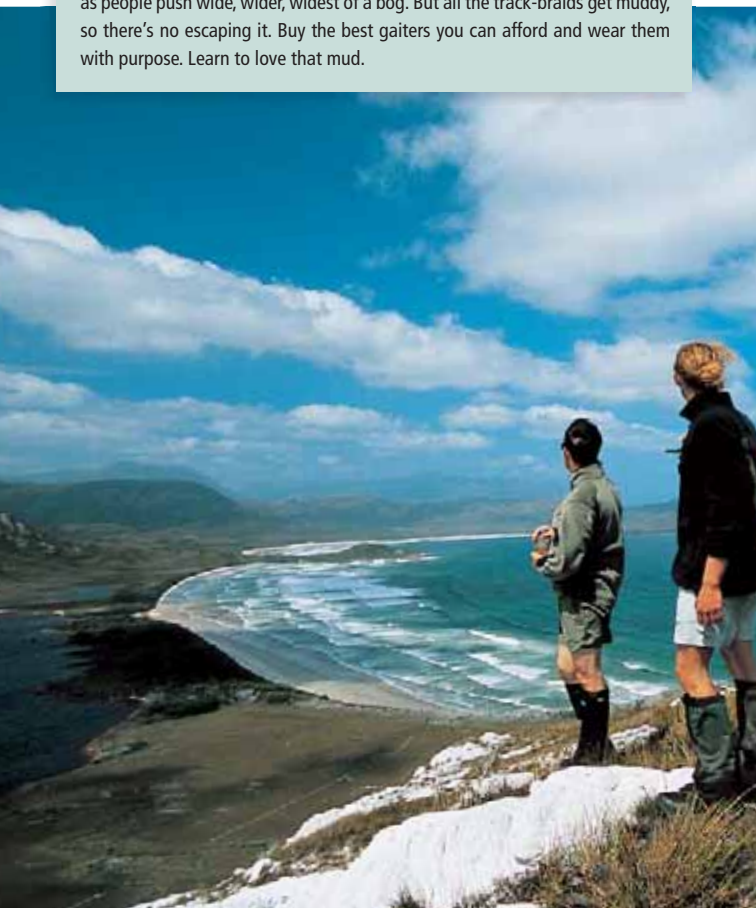
Walkers must have a valid National Parks pass (see page 64 for PWS contact details). Melaleuca huts and all walkers' campsites are free.





### MUD-LOVERS WELCOME

**O**LD-TIME WALKERS will tell you that the South Coast Track isn't the challenge it used to be. Years of toil by track-maintenance teams have tamed scores of difficult sections. Kilometres of duckboards now bridge many boggy moors, giving damaged vegetation a chance to recover. But plenty of mud remains, and you can look forward to many sticky, tiring moments as you wade through bogs. You'll see plenty of evidence of the damage caused by people not staying on the track. In places, multi-stranded tracks scar the heath as people push wide, wider, widest of a bog. But all the track-braids get muddy, so there's no escaping it. Buy the best gaiters you can afford and wear them with purpose. Learn to love that mud.





**B**UT WHEN A SOU'-WESTERLY front rolls in on the Roaring Forties, the rain comes in torrents, washing away lucid thought. Trees bend and snap, and streams rise, stranding walkers short of campsites and leaving them feeling utterly beyond help. This is a coast where one's place in the universe is never in doubt. Money, position, education and status don't count and won't help. Dry boots are objects to worship. A cup of hot soup is better than any gourmet's indulgence.

When the plane departs Melaleuca (see *Fly in or fly out?* page 57) and leaves your party behind, a pervading quiet descends on the bush. You can delay for a time at the Melaleuca bird hide, where you may see the endangered orange-bellied parrot. But eventually you shoulder your rucksack – and it's heavy, packed with at least seven days' food – and head for the coast at Cox Bight.

There are periods of relatively gentle going along boardwalks or beaches (although these can

**Dedicated mud man,**  
guide Ben Christie-  
Johnston (opposite)  
observes the Minimum  
Impact Bushwalking  
code – which means  
sticking to the track  
even when it sticks  
to you.

**Day-one walkers**  
(below) peer east  
from the New Harbour  
Range, over Cox Bight  
to the terrain ahead.  
The most distant  
range, the 1000 m  
high Ironbound Range,  
is the South Coast  
Track's hardest ascent.



be rendered more difficult by wind, rain or fatigue) between a procession of obstacles, minor and major. If heavy rain has fallen, any of several small creeks along the way can present problems, and several others – including Faraway Creek, Louisa Creek, Louisa River and South Cape Rivulet – can be simply impassable. There are several ranges of varying size to cross. The Ironbound Range is the most difficult (see *Over the Ironbounds*, opposite), but the South Cape Range, Red Point Hills and numerous lesser climbs all require work. There will also be wet and boggy sections to negotiate every day (see *Mud-lovers welcome*, page 52).



**Stunning seashore creatures (above)** on beach sections provide welcome relief from the track's frequent challenges, such as the cold and tricky crossing of the Louisa River (below).





**F**ROM THE MOMENT you start on the South Coast Track the Ironbound Range beckons. It's visible days before you reach it and days after you cross it. It's the big barrier, the big presence, the big challenge that divides the track into western and eastern halves.

When you tackle the Ironbounds you'll start the day close to sea level, climb to more than 900 m and descend to almost sea level. The crossing must be completed in a day. There are no campsites en route and the weather can change in the time it takes to unpack a raincoat. The western side of the range is mostly exposed moorland. There's alpine vegetation across the top – pandani, scoparia, pineapple grass and various stunted eucalypts. Magnificent temperate rainforest of myrtle, sassafras and leatherwood dominates the sheltered eastern side.

Tales of crossings are harrowing and hilarious. People reach Deadmans Bay camp exhausted and practically hypothermic after enduring snow and sleet over the top and steady drizzle on the endless, draining, slippery, root-strewn rainforest descent. Then they wash off the mud and grime and discover they're sunburnt! The first few hours of the exposed climb from Louisa River were done under clear skies, and they forgot to put on sunscreen. How funny. How painful. How satisfying to have made it.

#### **Melaleuca flowers**

colour South Coast peat moorlands in spring. The beautiful blossoms feature along the track between the Ironbound Range and the settlement at Melaleuca.



**The Ironbound Range crossing** is the track's most demanding section. It must be done in a day – there are no campsites – and the track on the eastern side (above) is muddy, root-strewn and energy-sapping.



The South Coast Track is an emotional challenge – a mind game. It requires much more preparation and planning than shorter walks. The weather will be bad. Your boots and feet will get wet. Crossing the Ironbunds will be difficult. The reward – which will linger in memory long after you're home – is an after-image of an isolated, weather-battered coastline backed by mountain ranges; of cold waves crashing on a wilderness beach, cloud halos hanging over dramatic peaks and a thin quartzite track snaking over hills. If you're ready to meet its demands, the South Coast Track is an essential destination. □



#### FLY IN OR FLY OUT?

**M**OST WALKERS on the South Coast Track opt to fly in to Melaleuca's short gravel strip and walk east, back to Cockle Creek. The reason is simple. If walkers go east to west and arrive at Melaleuca in bad weather, they may have to wait days before an aircraft can extract them. Stories abound of walkers stranded at Melaleuca stretching their rations beyond any appetising point. The secondary reason for west-east travel is that prevailing winds – westerlies and sou'-westerlies – are at your back, giving a little shove. Two air-charter companies fly to Melaleuca: Par Avion (**03 6248 5390, [www.paravion.com.au](http://www.paravion.com.au)**) and TasAir (**03 6248 5088, [www.tasair.com.au](http://www.tasair.com.au)**). A one-way flight costs about \$150 per person.







**Halfway home.** Walkers at Little Deadmans Bay campsite (above) pack rucksacks and prepare to push on after recovering from the Ironbound Range crossing.

**Tannin-stained waters** of Surprise Rivulet (below) spill across the beach at Surprise Bay. From here, only one major challenge remains for eastbound walkers: the South Cape Range.

#### GUIDED OPTIONS

##### ■ CRACLAIR TOURS

9-day South Coast Track Tour;  
16-day Port Davey Track and  
South Coast Track Tour.

**03 6339 4488** or  
**0419 544 748,**  
[www.craclair.com.au](http://www.craclair.com.au)

##### ■ TASMANIAN EXPEDITIONS

9-day South Coast Track Tour;  
16-day Port Davey Track and  
South Coast Track Tour.

**03 6339 3999** or  
**1300 666 856**  
[www.tas-ex.com](http://www.tas-ex.com)

##### ■ TAS WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

8-day South Coast Track Tour.

**03 6261 4971,**  
**1300 882 293** or  
**0414 238 458,**  
[www.bctas.com.au](http://www.bctas.com.au)

##### ■ TIGER TRAILS

10-day South Coast Track Tour.

**03 6234 3931** or  
**0427 397 815**  
[www.tasmaniawalks.com](http://www.tasmaniawalks.com)



# Tassie's other great walks

**T**ASMANIA IS BLESSED with a tremendous variety of walking options: day-long meanders, multi-day treks and, for the experienced walker, a seemingly limitless supply of trackless wilderness.

Day walks are ideal warm-ups for longer journeys. The booklet *Tasmania's Great Short Walks* covers 60 walks, ranging from 20-minute strolls to strenuous undertakings of several hours. It's available from most visitor information centres or the PWS will post it out – phone **1300 135 513** to order. There's also a version online at [www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/shortwalks/index.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/shortwalks/index.html).

In general, the multi-day tracks excluded from this guidebook are more difficult than those that have been described. A notable exception is the relatively new **Leeaberra Track**, in Douglas-Apsley NP, which is rated by the PWS as moderately difficult. The Leeaberra runs for 28 km from Thompsons Marshes in the park's north to the Apsley River waterhole. It passes through Douglas-Apsley's beautiful dry eucalypt forests and rainforest. On or near the route are spectacular waterfalls, natural swimming holes and stunning views of the Douglas River valley and Tasmania's east coast. Most walkers take 2–3 days to complete the track, depending on the time they devote to side-trips and relaxation. Contact the Freycinet NP office (**03 6256 7000**, [freycinet@parks.tas.gov.au](mailto:freycinet@parks.tas.gov.au)), go to [www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/douglas-apsley/index.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/douglas-apsley/index.html) or see TASMAT's *Douglas-Apsley National Park Map and Notes* (1:50,000) for more information.

Better known, but little used, the **Port Davey Track** is walked by about 200 people each year. This 70 km track, which links Scotts Peak Road and Melaleuca

## THE TASMANIAN TRAIL

**T**HE 477 KM TASMANIAN TRAIL, which extends from Devonport on the north coast to Dover, south of Hobart, is cast as a route for horseriding, mountain biking and walking. The Australian Trail Horse Riders Association played the biggest role in its establishment, and so the route (often following roads or fire trails) and distances between camps (daily average about 32 km) mean that it's better suited to horseriders and mountain bikers than walkers. Some parts of the track make for very pleasant walking – the section across the Gog Range, west of Deloraine, is often cited. But the track misses major national parks and wilderness areas (where horses aren't allowed), and most walkers seem content to exhaust Tasmania's extensive network of wilderness tracks rather than take to the Tasmanian Trail. The net result is positive: horseriders and mountain bikers have their own long, varied trail with little need to dodge slow-moving, pack-laden walkers.



**Cold and isolated**, *Walls of Jerusalem NP preserves a striking alpine landscape of dolerite peaks, glacial tarns, cushion plants and conifers.*

and lies within Southwest NP, takes 4–5 days. The route dissects the Western Arthur and White Monolith ranges and crosses buttongrass plains and several watercourses. There are no strenuous climbs, but isolation, unpredictable weather and classic south-west mud make this a serious undertaking. Contact Mt Field NP (**03 6288 1149**) or Huonville (**03 6264 8460**) PWS office for more information. *South Coast Walks* (1:100,000) has track notes.

Many walkers put **Walls of Jerusalem** NP ahead of the Overland Track for alpine beauty and isolation. Shaped by glacial movement during the most recent ice age, the park's alpine plateau is a wonderland of moraines, tarns and lakes set amid dolerite peaks. Its alpine vegetation includes massive cushion plants and stands of pencil pine. Walkers set out from near Lake Rowallan and enter the park's alpine regions at Herods Gate. There's no single established track (such as the Overland) in the higher reaches; many walkers establish a base camp and cover terrain via day circuits. Wild weather is a big part of the experience. An extended trip here would not be wise for novices. For more information contact the PWS Mole Creek Field Centre (**03 6363 5182**) or see *Walls of Jerusalem National Park Map and Notes* (1:25,000)

A Tasmanian classic, **Frenchmans Cap Track** takes walkers deep into Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers NP to the striking white quartzite summit of 1446 m Frenchmans Cap. The track, which starts beside the Lyell Highway ►



**Donaghys Hill Lookout** affords peerless views of the Franklin River valley and, in the distance, the distinctive Frenchmans Cap dome.

about 55 km east of Queenstown, is 23 km long and considerably more challenging than other Tasmanian tracks. It's recommended that walkers get experience on the Overland and other tracks before attempting Frenchmans. The track surface is rough and muddy for long sections, especially across the poorly drained Loddon Plains – known as “the Sodden Loddons”. Most of the 700 or so walkers who tackle Frenchmans each year take 3–5 days to complete the 46 km return journey. For more information contact the PWS Queenstown office (**03 6471 2511**) or see *Frenchmans Cap Walk Map & Notes* (1:50,000). Frenchmans Cap Track on the web: **[www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/frmans.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/frmans.html)**.

**Federation Peak** is one of Tasmania's most spectacular and isolated mountains and a longed-for objective of many experienced walkers. It's only 1224 m high but of striking appearance – a steep-sided bluff rising above serrated ridges in the heart of the Southwest Wilderness. Most parties set out from Scotts Peak Dam (4–5 days walk to the peak) or Farmhouse Creek (2–3





days). The walk is strenuous, with deep mud and cliffs to negotiate. Unfavourable conditions prevent about 50 per cent of parties from attempting the summit; most plan for 10–12 days in the bush to allow time to wait for better weather. The final climb is extremely difficult; some say dangerous.

Many experienced walkers rate the **Western Arthur Range** as Tasmania's greatest walking challenge. North-west of Federation Peak in the Southwest Wilderness, the range is only 15 km long but breathtakingly spectacular. It's a compact chain of more than 20 major peaks, forbidding cliffs and countless lakes and glacial tarns. The established walking route follows the range's jagged ridgeline from peak to peak. The track is rough and very exposed. It rises and falls through precipitous terrain and is often more reminiscent of a rock-climb than a trek. A full traverse of the range generally takes 10 days. Daily distances are short and exhausting, with the regularly wild weather a major factor – walkers are advised to expect only one clear day in four.

Walkers contemplating Federation Peak or the Western Arthurs should contact either the Mt Field NP (**03 6288 1149**) or Huonville (**03 6264 8460**) PWS offices as a starting point for more information. John Chapman's guidebook *South West Tasmania* is highly regarded.

# Information and contacts

Following are Tasmania's fully accredited walking guides, a summary of the routes they offer and contact details. Note that routes and trip duration may change from season to season.

## ■ BAY OF FIRES WALK

Four-day coastal walk in Mount William NP (accommodation in fixed camp and private lodge), including transport ex Launceston and all food. Phone **03 6391 9339**, [www.bayoffires.com.au](http://www.bayoffires.com.au)

## ■ CRACLAIR TOURS

Walks and tours in World Heritage Area national parks (accommodation in tents or huts), including transport ex Launceston, all food and some equipment. The Overland Track (6 days); Around Cradle Mountain (4); Heart of World Heritage (5); Pine Valley (5); Frenchmans Cap (5); Walls of Jerusalem (4); Walls of Jerusalem & Cradle Mountain (6); Port Davey Track Tour (7); South Coast Track Tour (9); Port Davey Track and South Coast Track Tour (16). Phone **03 6339 4488** or **0419 544 748**, [www.craclair.com.au](http://www.craclair.com.au)

## ■ CRADLE MOUNTAIN HUTS

Six-day walk from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair along the Overland Track (accommodation in private huts with showers), including transport ex Launceston and all food. Phone **03 6391 9339**, [www.cradlehuts.com.au](http://www.cradlehuts.com.au)

## ■ FREYCINET ADVENTURES

Walking and walking/kayaking tours in Freycinet NP (accommodation in fixed camp and tents), including all food and some equipment. Hazards Escape walk (2 days); Freycinet Adventure kayak/walk (3); Freycinet Expedition kayak/walk (5). Phone **03 6257 0500**, [www.freycinetadventures.com](http://www.freycinetadventures.com)

## ■ FREYCINET EXPERIENCE WALK

Package of four day-walks in Freycinet NP (accommodation in Friendly Beaches Lodge). Phone **03 6223 7565** or **1800 506 003**, [www.freycinet.com.au](http://www.freycinet.com.au)

## ■ TASMAN BUSH TOURS

Walks and tours in national parks throughout Tasmania (accommodation in tents and cabins) including transport, food and some equipment. Around Cradle Mountain Tour (3 days); Frenchmans Cap Tour (6); Overland Track Tour (6); Port Davey Tour (7); South Coast Track Tour (7); South West Expedition Tour (16); Walls of Jerusalem Tour (3); Cradle Cabin Tour (2). **03 6423 2335**, **0419 325 165**. [www.tasmanbushtours.com](http://www.tasmanbushtours.com)

## ■ TASMANIAN EXPEDITIONS

Walks and tours in national parks throughout Tasmania (accommodation usually in tents) including transport ex Launceston or Hobart, all food and some equipment. Cradle and Walls of Jerusalem Tour (6 days); Cradle Mountain Overland Track Tour (8); Cradle Walk Tour (3); Freycinet Walking Tour (3); South Coast Track Tour (9); Cradle and the West Walks Tour (6); Walls of Jerusalem Circuit Tour (6); Frenchmans Cap Trek Tour (5); Tasmanian Panorama Tour (13); Port Davey Track and South Coast Track Tour (16); Blue Tiers to Bay of Fires Tour (6). Phone **03 6339 3999** or **1300 666 856**; [www.tas-ex.com](http://www.tas-ex.com)

## ■ TASMANIAN WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

Walks in national parks throughout Tasmania (accommodation usually in tents), including transfers to/from airports, transport to/from walks and before/after walk accommodation at Base Camp Tasmania. Mt Anne Circuit Tour (4 days); Freycinet Circuit Tour (3); South Coast Track Tour (8); Douglas Apsley Circuit Tour (5); Frenchmans Cap Tour (5); Federation Peak Tour (8); Lake Oberon (Western Arthurs) Tour (5); Mt Field Circuit Tour (3); Port Davey Track Tour (6); South West Cape Tour (8); Western Arthurs Traverse Tour (9); Walls of Jerusalem Tour (4); Tasman Peninsula Tour (3); Tasman Trail Tour (4); Overland Track Tour (6). Phone **03 6261 4971**, **1300 882 293**, or **0414 238 458**; [www.bctas.com.au](http://www.bctas.com.au)

## ■ TAZ TOURS WILDERNESS ADVENTURES CRADLE MOUNTAIN

Overland Track Tour (6 days). Phone **03 6492 1181**.

## ■ THE MARIA ISLAND WALK

Four-day walk from McRaes Isthmus to Darlington (accommodation at fixed camps and historic house), including transport to/from Hobart, all food and some equipment. Phone **03 6227 8800**; [www.mariaislandwalk.com.au](http://www.mariaislandwalk.com.au)

## ■ TIGER TRAILS ECO ADVENTURES

Walks in national parks and wilderness areas throughout Tasmania (accommodation usually in tents) including transport ex Launceston, Burnie or Hobart, all food and some equipment. Maria Island Dreaming Walk (4 days); Freycinet Circuit Tour (3); Walls of Jerusalem Tour (4); Overland Track Tour (8); Best of Cradle and Walls Tour (7); Tarkine Forest of the Giants (6); Wild Tarkine Coast (6); Tarkine Rainforest Track (4); South Coast Track Tour (10). Phone **03 6234 3931** or **0427 397 815**; [www.tasmanianwalks.com](http://www.tasmanianwalks.com)

## ■ WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

Various walks in the southwest, specialising in photography trips. Phone **03 6229 2559**, [www.richardbennett.com.au](http://www.richardbennett.com.au)

# Maps & track notes

Lists of TASMAT agents (mainland and Tasmania), Service Tasmania outlets (where maps are usually sold) and sales catalogues are available online: [www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au) > Property, Titles and Maps > TASMAT ▶

For more information about sales outlets, or to place an order, contact TASMAL (ph. **03 6233 7741**, fax **03 6233 6071**, email: [tasmalsales@dpiwe.tas.gov.au](mailto:tasmalsales@dpiwe.tas.gov.au))

Or write to:

TASMAL – Sales orders

Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment

GPO Box 44

Hobart Tas. 7001

Track notes for the Overland Track, Tasman Coastal Trail, Freycinet Peninsula Circuit and South Coast Track are available online: [www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/index.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/tracknotes/index.html)

*The Overland Track – A Walker's Notebook* (\$10) is available from Parks Publications (ph. **03 6233 6285** Mon.– Fri., 9 a.m.– 5 p.m. or email: [publications@parks.tas.gov.au](mailto:publications@parks.tas.gov.au))

## Parks & Wildlife Service Tasmania (PWS)

General bushwalking questions should be directed to PWS Enquiries (ph. **1300 135 513**, Mon.– Fri. 9 a.m.– 5 p.m., or online at [www.parks.tas.gov.au/enquiries.html](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/enquiries.html)).

From December to Easter the PWS bushwalking information officer is available (ph. **1300 135 513**, Mon.– Fri. 9 a.m.– 5 p.m.).

Or write to:

Parks and Wildlife Service

GPO Box 1751

Hobart, Tas. 7001

## Tasmania visitor information

The Tourism Tasmania website ([www.discovertasmania.com.au](http://www.discovertasmania.com.au)) is the best starting point for information about everything there is to see and do in Tasmania. You can make specific information requests through the web page [www.discovertasmania.com/home/index.cfm?display=inforequest](http://www.discovertasmania.com/home/index.cfm?display=inforequest)

Tasmanian Travel Centres in Melbourne (259 Collins St, between Elizabeth and Swanston streets) and Sydney (60 Carrington St, cnr Wynyard St, near George St) have abundant information; you can phone (**1800 806 846**, free call from anywhere in Australia) or email ([tasinfo@discovertasmania.com](mailto:tasinfo@discovertasmania.com)) to request information from them.

There are Tasmanian Travel and Information Centres in Hobart (cnr Davey St and Elizabeth St, **03 6230 8233**), Launceston (12–16 St John St, **03 6336 3133**), Devonport (92 Formby Rd, **03 6424 4466**) and Burnie (Civic Centre, Precinct, Little Alexander St, **03 6434 6111**).