

OVERLAND TRACK

WORLD HERITAGE AREA

OFF PEAK SEASON – MAY TO OCTOBER

DURATION: 8 days

TOUR GRADE:

T1	T2	T3	T4
----	----	----	----

Well defined and wide tracks on easy to moderate terrain, in slightly modified natural environments. You will require a modest level of fitness. Recommended for beginners.

The world renowned Overland Track is usually included in any list of the world's great walks, and justifiably so. It showcases the highlights of Tasmania's spectacular landforms and flora in a memorable 80km trek from Lake St Clair to Cradle Mountain. Discover glacial remnants of cirques, lakes and tarns; temperate rainforests of myrtle beech and sassafras, laurel and leatherwood; jagged mountain peaks of fluted dolerite columns (including Tasmania's highest – Mt Ossa at 1617m); stark alpine moorlands and deep gorges and waterfalls.

ITINERARY & TOUR DESCRIPTION

Our tour starts at Lake St Clair, a glacial lake 220m deep, 14km long, and culminates at the dramatic Cradle Mountain. This approach gives a different perspective to this experience as the walk leads to ever more dramatic alpine scenery as we proceed through temperate rainforest from our start at Lake St Clair to the finish at Cradle Mountain.

Day 1:

BCT to Narcissus Hut

We depart BCT and drive to Cynthia Bay in the National Park via the scenic Lyell Highway through Derwent Bridge. We commence our tour here with an easy day's walk along the lake

through open eucalypt forest that changes gradually to myrtle beech. Our campsite at Narcissus Hut is adjacent to the Narcissus River where you have the opportunity for a swim to freshen up before dinner.

Day 2:

Narcissus Hut to Windy Ridge Hut

We leave the lake now to follow the Narcissus River upstream through dry open sclerophyll forest, crossing the river by a swing bridge and gradually climbing to our destination at Windy Ridge. To our left we flank the massive bulk of The Acropolis (1471m), with views of Mt Geryon (1509m) in the background.

Day 3:

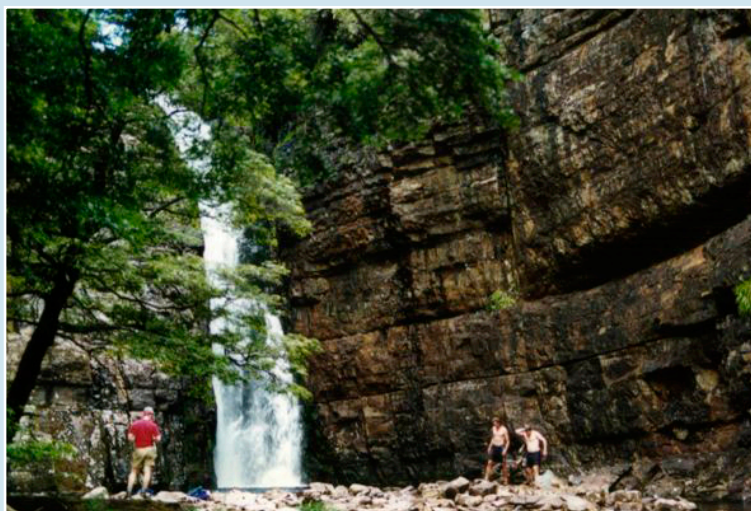
Windy Ridge Hut to Kia Ora Hut

We make an early start for the short but steep climb to the Du Cane Gap on the Du Cane Range. We catch our breath here in the dense forest, and then proceed to the day's sidetrack highlights of Hartnett, Fergusson and D'Alton Falls in the spectacularly steep and deep Mersey River Gorge. We will break for lunch here, and you can brave an opportunity for a bracing dip in the chilly waters of the Mersey, before we rejoin the main track to our evening's destination at the Kia Ora Hut and its swimming hole.

Day 4:

Kia Ora Hut to Pelion Hut

Our first objective today is to climb to the Pelion Gap which provides an unrivalled view of the country ahead, with Mt Oakleigh, the distinctive Barn Bluff and Cradle Mountain on the horizon. From the Gap we have the option of taking a sidetrack to climb Tasmania's highest mountain, Mt Ossa (1617m), or as an alternative, the easier climb up Mt Pelion East (1433m). Either of these peaks provide breathtaking panoramas of the surrounding areas and should not be missed. As we have now reached higher altitudes, you will also have your first opportunity to study the remarkable cushion (or bolster) plant communities on the track to Mt Ossa.



Walkers enjoying a midday swim at D'Alton Falls in the spectacular Mersey River Gorge, Overland Track

A gentle descent concludes the day's walk in the pleasant forest at Pelion Hut with another chance to freshen up in the Douglas Creek.

Day 5:

Pelion Hut to Windermere Hut

From the Pelion Hut campsite we descend to Frog Flats on the River Forth (the lowest point on the track at 720m) through dense forest. We then steadily climb the flanks of Mt Pelion West before crossing Pine Forest Moor with a splendid lookout over the Forth gorge before reaching our destination. At Windermere hut we can climb Mt Oakleigh (1280m), or relax by strolling around the delightful Lake Windermere with its ancient pencil pines. This is a long day, and again a refreshing stream awaits us before dinner.

Day 6:

Windermere Hut to Waterfall Valley.

We now leave the densely forested parts of the track for more open alpine moorland, with many tarns and lakes, and deeply gouged cirques to remind us of Tasmania's glaciated past. A short walking day allows us time to explore Lake Will with its beach for a swim, or to explore the chain of pretty waterfalls on the Hartnett Rivulet at our destination.

Day 7:

Base Camp at Waterfall Valley

The culmination of our tour is this day of exploration around the beautiful Cradle Mountain area from our base camp at Waterfall Valley. With only light packs (lunch and shell clothing) we have the choice of scrambling up the dolerite of Cradle Mountain (1545m) by several routes, or climbing the nearby and distinctive Barn Bluff (1559m). Other options are the views from Marions Lookout above Crater Lake, a visit to the Twisted Tarns, or a circumnavigation of Lake Dove. We will encounter fabulous pandani palms (a distant relative of the heaths), banks of notorious *richea scoparia* (famed for its tough impenetrability), or the brilliant colours of the fagus in autumn. This is alpine Tasmania at its best, and you will long retain vivid memories of this marvellous area.

At the end of our day, we return to Waterfall Valley for our last night on the track.

Day 8:

Cradle Valley to BCT

We first retrace yesterday's steps around Cradle Mountain and then steadily descend to Cradle Valley to the historic Waldheim Chalet. Here our bus will meet us, and after a break at the Cradle Mountain Visitor Centre we then leave for the return trip to BCT. We travel first through open alpine moorland and then enter deep forested valleys before emerging on the Central Plateau at the Great Lake, and on to BCT for a well-overdue "scrub-up" and a well-deserved home-cooked meal to top your experience!

Let us share our love of the extraordinary diversity of Tasmania's unique wilderness areas with you



Give us a call on 1300 882 293 and we'll gladly discuss your needs and interests. Together we'll work out an exciting walking experience that is designed especially for you. Or go to www.twe.travel to check out further information online.

Tasmanian Wilderness Experiences
ABN 65 632 316 265
BASE CAMP TASMANIA
959 Glenfern Road
GLENFERN TAS 7140

local call 1300 882 293
phone 03 6261 4971
fax 03 6261 2786
mobile 0414 238 458
email info@twe.travel
web www.twe.travel

