

HIKING HIGHLIGHTS OF WESTERN TASMANIA

9 DAYS OF ACCOMMODATED DAYWALKS IN THE TASMANIAN WILDERNESS

A 9-day walking tour visiting Tasmania's South-western and Western wilderness national parks and reserves and featuring a variety of walking landscapes (alpine and sub-alpine) grades (challenging or moderate) and gradients (steep or level/undulating). Several destinations offer a variety of walks to suit a range of fitness levels and routes can be varied to suit. As a finale, the tour concludes with an unforgettable cruise on Macquarie Harbour as a contrast to the style and pace of the previous walking activities. The tour is fully catered and accommodation is provided in twin-share facilities.

TASMANIA

Tasmania's ancient and varied landscape is worlds apart from the continent it belongs to. Forests of ancient conifers and fagus from the Jurassic Age, along with dramatic dolerite cliffs and mountains, are some of the features that make Tasmania's scenery so special. While it does not have the massive scale of the Himalayas or the remarkable pinnacles of Patagonia, it is the last refuge for several mammals that once populated Australia, and one of the few places on earth where you can walk through pristine wilderness environments that have changed little since the time of the dinosaurs. With over 3000km of world class walking tracks, you can choose to walk through a variety of landscapes ranging from glacial tarns to secluded ocean beaches, craggy mountain tops and ancient temperate rainforests.



DURATION: 9 days

TOUR GRADE: **T1** **T2** **T3** **T4**

- T1:** 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.
- T2:** Narrower but distinct tracks which can be muddy in some places, in pristine natural environments. Facilities are minimal and you will encounter few other walkers. You will require a reasonable level of fitness.
- T3:** Marked but often rough and indistinct tracks, often on irregular ground, muddy and wet, in very remote and wild areas. These are challenging walks needing a high level of fitness and some hiking experience.

Day 1:

Hobart

Hobart is Australia’s second oldest capital city. Settled in 1804 on the banks of the Hobart Rivulet at Sullivan’s Cove to provide a solution for Britain’s burgeoning convict population, it is now a modern, lively city with a very active arts and crafts culture, coupled with superb locally-sourced natural produce.

Its cultural credentials are nowhere better demonstrated than at the refurbished Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG), the superbly restored Theatre Royal, or the extravagant Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) at Berriedale. These attractions are contrasted with the relics of its convict heritage at the Port Arthur Penal Settlement and many other convict sites and towns around the State.

On arrival at Hobart, this day is yours to explore and familiarise or reacquaint yourself with Hobart’s delights, prior to meeting at the Hobart Mid-City Hotel, corner Elizabeth and Bathurst Streets, Hobart, at 4:00pm, which is our accommodation for this evening and where we’ll enjoy a group dinner and tour briefing

Day 2:

**Mt Field National Park
T2 15km 290m**

An exciting walk in a uniquely beautiful and diverse environment

Mount Field National Park is one of Tasmania’s oldest national parks, established in 1916 along with Freycinet NP, and is one of its most popular. This is partly because of its proximity to Hobart (94 km) but also because of its wide variety of flora, dramatic glaciated landforms and ready accessibility to most areas of the park.

This walk features examples of all the park’s attractions including sub-alpine forests, stands of ancient pencil pines, the remarkable cushion plants, glacial moraines and block streams, alpine moorlands, exquisite small tarns and lakes, monolithic dolerite boulder fields, dramatic cliffs and peaks, and stunning views. It provides a wonderful introduction to Tasmania’s alpine regions and its flora and topography.

The walk is also characterised by the park’s multiple “personalities” – starting in a sub-alpine forest along moraine-dammed lakes, and finishing with an exhilarating high altitude ridge-top traverse of the Rodway Range among the ice-shattered monolithic dolerite boulders of the “Lions Den” before descending the botanic “riot” of the Urquart Track to our finish.

Our accommodation this (and the following) evening is at the Giants Table Cabins in Maydena.



Day 1: Constitution Dock, Hobart, Tasmania



Day 2: Lake Dobson, Mt Field NP

Day 3:

Mt Wedge, Southwest National Park

T2 7km 780m

A striking mountain, deep in Tasmania's southwest, with magnificent views of Lake Pedder, Lake Gordon and the surrounding southwest wilderness

Mt Wedge (1147m), just over two hours from Hobart, is reached after travelling first through the scenic Derwent Valley and then the bleak and forbidding southwest landscape beyond the timber community of Maydena.

We reach the peak after ascending beneath the canopy of a magnificent, pristine rain forest, then a sub-alpine belt of pandanis, scoparia and heaths, and finally scramble up a dolerite boulder-strewn gully and several "false" summits to gain access to the small summit plateau. The views from the top are sensational – the whole panorama of the southwest is before you, from the lakes below to Frenchmans Cap, the "ice-chewed" Arthur Range and Mt Anne, and even glimpses of the Southern Ocean beyond.

We return to the Giants Table Cabins for our evening dinner.

Alternative Destinations:

Mt Eliza Plateau, Mt Anne Massif

A challenging climb for a superb view of Lake Pedder

Mt Anne (1425m) is the highest mountain in Tasmania's southwest. From Condominium Creek we climb the steep spur from the button grass plain through mountain forest and past High Camp Hut, taking in the spectacular views of Lakes Pedder and Gordon, before negotiating an incredible boulder field leading to Mt Eliza's alpine plateau.

Day 4:

Lake St Clair National Park

T1 15km 0m

A walk in an ancient temperate rainforest

Lake St Clair, Australia's deepest lake at 220m, is the source of the Derwent River. It was gouged out by a glacier during Tasmania's most recent glacial period (18,000 – 12,000 years ago) and dammed by a terminal moraine at Pump House Point. The button grass plains approaching Derwent Bridge are the outwash plains created by the glacial melt water discharge.

To start our walk today we first take the ferry from Cynthia Bay to Narcissus Hut (usually the final hut on the Overland Track) up the Lake to the Narcissus River. From here we return to Cynthia Bay by the Overland Track walking among stands of ancient myrtles, sassafras, leatherwoods and swamp gums with a thick understory of native laurels. The track contours around the lake and we can catch glimpses of it through the dense understory of this ancient temperate rainforest.

Approaching Cynthia Bay we arrive at the junction of several streams at Watersmeet, separated by glacial moraines, and then proceed to our evening's meal and accommodation at Lake St Clair Lodge, where we will stay for two nights.



Day 3: Rainforest, Mt Wedge, Southwest NP



Alternative Destination:
Lake Pedder from Mt Anne, Southwest NP (Photo John Evans)



Day 4: Lake St Clair, Lake St Clair NP

Day 5:

Lake St Clair National Park

T2 17km 700m

An interesting circuit walk through a range of Tasmania's emblematic flora and culminating in stunning 3600 views from a mountain summit with a very different topographical "feel"

Today we walk to Mt Rufus (1416m), climbing steadily through the sub-alpine vegetation to breach an encircling escarpment of Triassic sandstone cliffs before ascending to the summit cairn (an impressive structure built by the early colonial surveyor, James Sprent). The views from the summit over Mts Arrowsmith and Hugel, and the Cheyne Range (all composed of dolerite rock) and Lake St Clair are sensational. We complete the circuit walk by descending to the track through Richea Valley with its pandani plants before joining the Shadow Lake/ Mt Hugel track along an ancient lateral moraine to return to our starting point and the Lodge for the evening.

Day 6:

Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers National Park

A series of short walks to interesting sites en route from Cynthia Bay to Queenstown

Our first stop is the Franklin River nature trail – a short circuit walk in the rainforest alongside the fabled Franklin River (the inspiration for the environmental conservation movement culminating in the salvation of the river and the formation of the Greens Party). This short walk exemplifies the diverse and rich nature of the rainforest in this region of Tasmania in a very high rainfall area (2.5m – 3m/annum).

Our next stop is at Donaghys Hill walk – another short walk to a viewpoint high above the Franklin and Collingwood Rivers with a fine view to the quartzite peak of Frenchmans Cap in the near distance. We walk through a variety of plant communities, including a close encounter with button grass before reaching our viewing platform.

Our last short walk is at Nelson Falls - a pretty waterfall tumbling off the nearby ancient sandstone escarpment.

From here we continue to Queenstown passing through the ghost towns of Linda and Gormanston (dormitory towns for the Queenstown smelter and mine workers early last century) and stop for a brief visit to the Iron Blow – the site of the original copper find at Queenstown.

If time permits, we may take a brief walk up Spion Kop in Queenstown to view the surrounding township and countryside.

Our evening's accommodation is at the West Coaster Motel in Queenstown, and if you're up to it, take in a film at the restored art-deco cinema, the Paragon, it's a great night out!



Day 5: Mt Rufus, Lake St Clair NP



Day 6: Mt King William 1, Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers NP

Day 7:
Macquarie Harbour

An easy day cruising Macquarie Harbour

We'll leave Queenstown early to catch our cruise vessel operated by World Heritage Cruises and departing from the picturesque Strahan wharf. The cruise includes an exciting passage through Hell's Gates (the narrow and potentially dangerous entrance to Macquarie Harbour), a guided tour of the ruins of the notorious convict station on Sarah Island and a cruise up the tannin-stained waters of the Gordon River to the Heritage Landing Walk where you can view centuries-old Huon Pines. The cruise also features a full buffet lunch.

At the conclusion of this, the final activity of the tour, we'll return to the West Coaster Motel in Queenstown before we travel to Hobart the following morning.

Day 8:
Queenstown to Hobart

From Queenstown we'll retrace our journey to Hobart for our evening's accommodation again at the Hobart Mid-City Hotel. And for our last night together we'll enjoy a final group dinner at the Wrest Point Casino to conclude the tour.

Day 9:
Hobart

This day is yours to enjoy as you will – visit the Salamanca Market, the Port Arthur Settlement, the Tahune Airwalk at Geeveston (although you might have had enough of rainforests by now), catch an art-house film at the superb and intimate State Theatre in North Hobart, or catch Rob Pennicott's jaw-dropping Bruny Island Cruise before you make your way back to the mainland.

We hope you've enjoyed your experience in Tasmania and that the wilderness continues to work its magic upon you.



Day 7: Macquarie Harbour

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- We reserve the right to modify the walks or select alternative destinations as deemed appropriate by our Guide(s) taking into account prevailing/forecast weather conditions and client safety
- We reserve the right to book alternative accommodation if necessary subject to capacity and bookings
- Payment terms: 10% deposit on booking, balance 7 days prior to tour departure. Please refer to our cancellation policy and general terms and conditions on our website (www.twe.travel)
- Airport shuttles are not included in the tour price

TOUR INCLUSIONS (What we provide on your tour)

- Qualified Guide/Driver
- Mini-bus with luggage trailer
- Twin-share accommodation where nominated however we reserve the right to use alternative accommodation if necessary
- Meals – Day 1: Dinner (2-course); Days 2 – 8: Breakfast (hearty continental), Lunch (packed for bushwalking), Dinner (2-course); Day 9: Breakfast (hearty continental)
- Guided walks as described, but we reserve the right to modify the walk or select an alternative destination as deemed appropriate by our Guide(s)
- All necessary park passes and permits
- Lake St Clair ferry, Gordon River Cruise fares
- Comprehensive First Aid Kit
- Emergency communication equipment - PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) and/or satellite phone
- Protective shell clothing (jacket and overpants) if required – please nominate garment size when booking
- Daypacks if required – please nominate when booking

TOUR EXCLUSIONS (What you need to bring on your tour)

- Your own personal medications (including sunscreen, blister protection, insect repellent, analgesics)
- Stout walking shoes (well worn-in)
- Waterproof and windproof hiking parka, overpants and gloves
- Warm fleece jacket
- Long-sleeved shirt (preferably synthetic)
- Long pants (best with zip-off shorts, preferably synthetic)
- Thermal underwear (tops and leggings, preferably synthetic)
- Hat or beanie
- Gaiters (optional)
- Camera, spare film and batteries (plus charger)

TASMANIA – GENERAL INFORMATION

TASMANIA'S NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES

With over eighteen national parks and a further thirteen reserves and conservation areas readily accessible from Hobart, Tasmania is a bushwalker's paradise.

In fact, over 30% of Tasmania's landmass is protected in these parks and reserves for bushwalkers and visitors to enjoy. Although there is a concentration in the World Heritage Area (a staggering 20% of Tasmania's landmass that also includes the Overland and South Coast Tracks), parks and reserves can be found throughout all regions of Tasmania and provide a large variety of unique nature experiences.

Tasmania's climatic history and topography have sculpted the landscape over time to create a great variety of landforms and environments including: spectacular fluted dolerite coastal cliff formations on the east and south; dry sclerophyll and wet temperate rain forests in the east and south west (containing the tallest hardwood forests on Earth with many trees reaching nearly 100 metres); alpine moorlands in the high and rugged mountain areas with "ice-chewed" remnants from past glaciations; and bleak wind-scoured button-grass plains in the remote far south west.

TASMANIA'S GEOLOGY

Tasmania is a geologist's dream island – it represents a rich panorama of evolutionary landforms dating back to over one billion years ago; including some of the oldest Pre-Cambrian and Cambrian rocks in the southwest (greater than 500 million years ago) to the more recent Jurassic period (165 million years ago). The break-up of Gondwana enriched this panorama when it triggered massive dolerite intrusions over much of the island. (Dolerite is a dark-coloured igneous rock which defines much of Tasmania and is especially notable in its national parks and reserves). Visitors can also experience some of Australia's biggest and deepest limestone caves, some of which held particular significance for Tasmania's Aborigines, such as the Marakoopa caves.

Since these events, these landforms have been dramatically modified by erosion and glaciation, with the last of three glaciations finishing approximately 12,000 years ago. The legacy of glaciated landforms is pervasive and dramatic: U-shaped valleys; tarns and highland lakes dammed by terminal moraines; deep cirques gouged from mountain sides; boulder "streams" of ice-shattered dolerite blocks; erratic boulders deposited far from their origins by glacier movement; and "ice-plucked" mountain profiles (Frenchmans Cap).

Erosion and glaciation, together with natural earth movements, have shaped the current topography and contributed to the variety of soils and environments that provide such a rich source of the earth's evolutionary history. On our tours you can take the time to explore, absorb and wonder at this dramatic panoramic paradise!

TASMANIA'S FAUNA

Tasmania's isolation, diverse terrain and climate have allowed many species that did not survive on the mainland to thrive in this unique island environment. Some even hark back to the super-continent, Gondwana, including the burrowing freshwater crayfish (virtually unchanged for the last 200 million years, and are still found today in alpine tarns and creeks in the south west). Tasmania also boasts the largest marsupial carnivores in the world such as the famous (now endangered) Tasmanian Devil, the lesser known spotted and eastern quolls, and the now extinct Tasmanian Tiger. The island has also seen the arrival of Asian invaders some millions of years ago, such as rodents and bats who have now adapted to Tasmania's special environment.



TASMANIA'S FLORA

Despite Tasmania's relatively small land mass of approximately 64,000 km², it has a bountiful range of over 2,000 native and introduced flowering plant species, of which over 200 are endemic to the State. Tasmania's mountainous landscapes, with over sixty peaks higher than 900m, generate marked differences in rainfall and humidity from west to east creating a great variety of microclimates and diverse soil types, which provide niches for a huge range of plant species.

Weathered and faulted rock surfaces, sculpted by past glaciers and eroded by heavy rains, also contribute to the range of soil types and plant environments supporting the variety of species.

The World Conservation Union has officially recognised this rich mosaic of vegetation in these regions as an International Centre for Plant Diversity. Few regions in Australia, and indeed the world, offer so much in such a compact and accessible area – come and explore it with us!

TASMANIA'S WEATHER

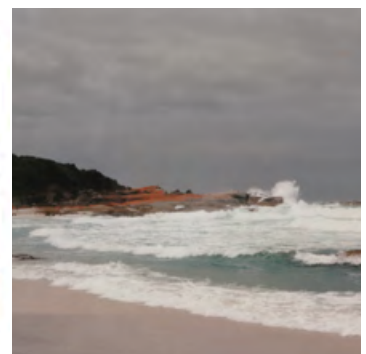
Tasmania lies between latitudes of 40° and 43° south of the equator. However, despite this southerly location it enjoys a temperate and relatively mild climate, especially when compared with northern hemisphere countries that share similar latitudes. This is mainly due to Tasmania's weather extremes being moderated by the surrounding sea, which is no further than 115 km from any point on the island.

The major weather influences are the "Roaring Forties" (the prevailing westerly winds) generating high winds and heavy rainfall on the west and northwest coast, and low pressure systems (which regularly encircle the globe at these southerly latitudes) creating rapid falls in temperature. These low pressure systems are generally short-lived, only serving to briefly punctuate Tasmania's delightfully fresh, clean and invigorating climate. In midsummer daylight lasts for about 15 hours, and about nine in winter. Snow can occur any time during the year in alpine areas (with the heaviest snowfalls in July and August), but there is no permanent snowline.

Tasmania's temperatures range from occasional very hot days in summer to some bitterly cold nights in winter, although typically the weather is extremely pleasant. The table below shows examples of the temperature ranges for the areas we walk in:

Despite the extremes, Tasmania is renowned for having some of the most agreeable conditions in Australia for bushwalking and enjoying the great outdoors, with the "cleanest" air on the planet. Enjoy it with us!

Region	Average Temperature Ranges			
	Summer		Winter	
	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum
Coastal	18°C – 23°C	0°C – 15°C	9°C – 14°C	4°C – 6°C
Highland	17°C – 19°C	5°C – 8°C	6°C – 7°C	-2°C – +2°C



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