

FACTSHEET

TARKINE FOREST EXPERIENCE

6 DAYS OF CAMPING AND FOREST EXPERIENCE

DURATION: 6 days

TOUR GRADE: T3

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.

To truly experience rainforest you need to live it, breathe it, drink it – and walk it.

Tasmania's only multi-day rainforest walk enters a vast, tree-lined cathedral - Australia's largest tract of cool temperate rainforest. Recognised globally for its ecological significance, this forest is a living remnant of the prehistoric woodlands of Gondwana. The moss-covered understorey is surprisingly open and airy, making the walking highly accessible.

The Tarkine is one of the few remaining places where you can walk through temperate rainforest, unhindered by any sign or device of man for days on end. It is still largely unexplored as a walking region, making this track an incomparable experience of isolation, beauty and wildness. It's a little bit special.

Day 1:

Crossing the Rubicon

Drive south from Burnie into the Arthur River Valley – the forest grows thicker and more ancient around you.

Cross the Arthur river – now you're in the Tarkine.

Leave behind the last signs of civilisation and walk into the wilderness.

Spend the night beside idyllic mystery Creek.

TRACK GRADING

Today contains the most challenging section of the whole walk. Two and a half hours of steady, but not steep, uphill climbing along an old forestry road.

Time: 4-6 hrs

Distance: 7 km

After it collects you from Launceston, our bus makes its way through countryside that gets deeper and older the further we go. To truly enter the Tarkine we have to cross the Arthur River. The landscape we enter is one of profound age and stillness. The Tarkine is a remnant of the forests that once swathed the vast southern supercontinent of Gondwana before its breakup 60 million

years ago.

The major ascent of the day takes around two and a half hours. This is the toughest uphill climb of the whole trip. But it is slow and steady and the old forester's road is easy to negotiate. From this road we join a small trail and here evidence of the modern world disappears amongst the moss-covered myrtle and sassafras trees.

Our first camp is set beside the photogenic Mystery Creek.

Day 2:

Walking Beneath Giants

Awake to your favourite morning beverage (you could get used to this) and a hearty breakfast on the riverbank.

Reach the Tarkine's rainforest plateau and the largest patch of cool temperate rainforest left in the southern hemisphere.

Encounter the first of the giant stringybark trees that watch over the forest and the largest myrtle tree we've ever found.

Walk through the octopus' garden, the first of many ancient myrtle groves.

"Ascending to the plateau has us leave the Eucalyptus behind and into pure rainforest. It's a line in the sand that symbolises the battle between rainforest and fire tolerant species, an incredible story, told by the landscape itself."

-Mark 'Darvis' Davis, TT founder and guide

TRACK GRADING

Today we finish our ascent to the plateau. The uphill sections are a moderate grade with two short sections of steep walking. After this we ascend gently to our night's camp.

Time: 6 hrs

Distance: 7 km

There is no better place or way to be woken than in the Tarkine with a steaming cup of your favourite brew. After breakfast we venture on. The forest structure changes and we encounter giant eucalypts. The Tarkine is home to some of the largest flowering trees on the planet - some of them are 80m tall and so thick that our entire group will be unable to link hands around their base. There is plenty of time today to take in these wonders of the natural world.

We complete our ascent to the fertile, volcanic plateau on which the vast rainforest flourishes.

Amazingly, this area has remained almost unknown to the outside world with many unexplored valleys and wild rivers. The day's highlight is the Octopus' Garden - an ancient grove of myrtle trees twisted and contorted by the weight of centuries. Two deformed giants stand guard at the entrance to this fairytale corner of the forest. Fungi of every colour protrude from the moss.

Tonight's camp is located on the edge of a forest ridge surrounded by myrtle trees, giant tree ferns and a carpet of green mosses and lichens.

Day 3:

Secrets Revealed

Three of the Tarkine's special places reveal themselves.

An ever-changing and diverse range of vegetation.

Night stroll to the glow worm grottos beneath of Tarkine Falls.

The largest myrtle we've ever found.

TRACK GRADING

Today's walk gently climbs across the rainforest-clad plateau negotiating a number of shallow creeks with well designed track routes.

Time: 5 hrs

Distance: 8 km

One of the best things about walking in the Tarkine is the water. Mossy, filtered creeks criss-cross the forest floor making filling your water bottle a joy. The Tarkine's largest myrtle (as far as we know) towers above this part of the forest, drinking deeply from the surrounding streams.

Today uncovers three Tarkine secrets.

A glade of giant tree ferns. This 160 million-year-old species pre-dates even the ancient myrtles making it a visible and touchable link to our Gondwanan past.

The Shrine is a small waterfall that offers the opportunity for a refreshing drink and a bit of peaceful reflection.

Tarkine Falls. Before we stumbled upon this gem of the region, it had plummeted into its fern-lined trough unseen by white eyes for thousands of years. This is where we make our camp for the next two nights.

Day 4:

The Forest From Above

Backpack free day!

Views in every direction from Tarkine lookout. Hunting grounds of the endangered grey goshawk and wedge-tailed eagle.

TRACK GRADING

No rucksacks! Again the track gently climbs across the rainforest plateau before crossing Eastons creek and then ascending for 30 minutes to a buttongrass hill.

Time: 5 hrs

Distance: 9 km

Leaving backpacks at camp we take a diversion to Tarkine Lookout. The path traverses a number of pristine rainforest creeks, before hitting a solid wall of Bauera, Banksia and Tea Tree. This vegetation change marks the edge of a buttongrass island located in a sea of rainforest. It is a 30-minute climb to Tarkine Lookout and a breathless, heady feeling to emerge from the rainforest after days of immersion.

From the summit of this buttongrass knoll you start to get an idea of the scale of the Tarkine as it spreads away from you to every horizon. To the north, we view the Arthur and Keith River valleys, to the east stretches the 18 000 hectare Savage River National Park, and to the south and west lies

the largest patch of temperate rainforest in the Southern Hemisphere. The endangered wedge-tailed eagle and grey goshawk both inhabit the Tarkine and can regularly be seen from the Lookout hunting above the buttongrass. It's not a bad spot to have lunch.

Day 5:

Heaven

Spotting for platypus and the giant freshwater crayfish in Eastons Creek. Heaven.

A short afternoon walk before setting up camp for the last time with views over the forest.

"I remember the first time I stumbled into Heaven like it was yesterday, the five of us were stunned by its remote and tranquil beauty. This is a place that requires quality time spent doing nothing, so that's what we do."

-Darvis, founder, guide and

Tarkine pioneer

TRACK GRADING

The track gently descends through the rainforest along the Banks of Eastons Creek. After lunch the route ascends out of the valley to camp.

Time: 3 hrs

Distance: 6km

Today we follow Eastons Creek through deep myrtle and tree fern country. It's a gorgeous, peaceful walk with opportunities to see two of the Tarkine's most elusive, rare and unusual residents – the platypus and the giant freshwater crayfish.

After crossing the river several times we come across a gorgeous waterhole, suspended between a tumbling waterfall and a gentle cascade. Call it what you like, we call it Heaven. It is one of the most luxuriant rainforest landscapes on the walk. Lunch is served here whilst we relax and soak up the sun and, for the adventurous, you can take a dip in the pristine pool.

The afternoon is short, just a quick ascent to a ridgeline that looks back across the Easton Creek valley and spectacular Blue Peak. After setting up camp for the last time we have the opportunity to relax amongst the ferns collecting our thoughts and memories to take home.

Day 6:

Farewell

A beautiful example of cathedral-shaped callidendrous forest.

Remote river crossings.

A warm welcome back to 'reality'.

TRACK GRADING

Today's walk climbs off the plateau before descending along old forestry roads into the river valleys of the Keith and Arthur Rivers. From here it is a relatively flat, easy walk to the picnic location and your bus journey home.

Time: 4 hrs

Distance: 6 km

It's a sad goodbye to the Tarkine. We start our day by wandering through an astounding open rainforest.

The myrtle trees here have grown so thick and so old that they have blocked almost all light from reaching the ground. This makes it difficult for smaller, younger plants to grow. The result is an echoing, open space beneath a vibrant, moving canopy. Nature's own Sistine Chapel.

We have great fun fording the Lyons and Arthur Rivers. The average depth for both crossings in summer is knee high water. Our guides will give clear instructions on how to cross safely.

And all of a sudden, amid the splashing of your final crossing, we leave the Tarkine behind. Your driver greets you with a cooked BBQ lunch and then we look back to the rainforest one last time before returning you to your life – intact but not unchanged.

OTHER INFORMATION & COMMON QUESTIONS

TOUR INCLUSIONS

(What we provide on a fully-guided overnight tour)

- waterproof hiking parka
- waterproof overpants
- fleece jacket (choice of 300- or 200- weight fleece)
- waterproof gloves
- gaiters
- two-person tent (shared)
- sleeping-bag (synthetic fill, rated to -5°)
- silk or fleece sleeping bag liner
- sleeping mat (choice of standard or lightweight long; or lightweight three quarter length)
- trekking towel
- inflatable pillow
- rucksack (male 75l, female 65l)
- waterproof pack liner
- lunches when on the bus to and from tour
- meals when on tour (prepared by our guides); beverages; snacks
- plate, bowl and mug; cutlery
- stove and fuel (carried by guides)
- toilet paper; hand sanitiser (alcohol based)
- qualified and knowledgeable guides
- comprehensive first-aid kit (carried by guides)
- emergency communications – PLB (Personal Location Beacon) and/or satellite phone, carried by guides
- national park passes
- storage at BCT for your personal effects not required on tour
- free laundry facilities

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

(What you need to bring on your tour)

- personal toiletries
- medication (include sunscreen, blister protection, insect repellent, analgesics)
- underwear (preferably synthetic)

- handkerchiefs
- thermal top
- thermal longs (leggings)
solid leather lace-up walking boots (well worn-in)
woollen socks (three pairs, “Explorer” or equivalent)
long-sleeved shirt (preferably synthetic)
long pants (best with zip-off shorts, preferably synthetic)
- hat or beanie
- lightweight camera (optional)
spare film and batteries (optional)
lightweight head torch (optional)
book/reading material –lightweight & slim (optional)
- bathers (optional)
Trekking Sandals/Crocs/Sandshoes (for river crossings)

Pick Up and Drop Off						
Pick up / drop off city	Pick up time	Drop off time	Accommodation pick up / drop off instructions	Alternative pick up / drop off point	Flying in? Recommended arrival times	Flying out? Recommended departure times
Launceston	8:00am to 8:30am	6:00pm	City centre only	Launceston Backpackers, 103 Canning Street	Prior to 7:30am on the morning of departure	No earlier than 8:00pm

NOTES

1. always choose synthetic fabrics (which dry quickly if wet) rather than cotton or wool (which don't)
2. don't bring any superfluous gear – we aim for the lightest possible load in your rucksack
3. let us know well beforehand if you have any special dietary needs (refer our Tour Booking Form)
4. you are welcome to use your own personal equipment, but call us if you doubt its suitability

ACCOMMODATION

- Twin share quality bushwalking tent
- Single tents are used when there are uneven group members and we also provide single tents on request for single guests.

GROUP SIZE

Maximum of 10 guests per group.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

This is a personal preference however we recommend that you look into purchasing appropriate travel insurance whenever you travel.

YOUR HEALTH

We reserve the right to request medical certificates from our guests to ensure your health and safety on our trips.

COMMON QUESTIONS

1. Pack weight?

You'll start off with a pack that weighs 15-20kgs but it will get progressively lighter as the trip goes on! This includes a share of your food and tent (5-7kg).

2. Washing clothes?

There are no washing facilities on this trip; we recommend that you bring enough clothes to last the entire trip without needing to wash.

3. Amenities?

Pit toilets are used for the duration of the walk.

4. Mobile phone reception?

There are no reliable spots for mobile phone reception on this track. What a great way to escape the mobile for a few days! We ask that you leave your mobile with any luggage that you leave with our driver.

TRACK GRADING

- The trail has been created and tagged by our expert team of track workers and is located in a very remote and wild area.
- The trail winds its way through mostly open rainforest and the ground is soft and bouncy underfoot.
- There are very few sections of mud and these sections are no deeper than a walking boot.
- There are many small creek crossings, some of which require solid sandals with straps to ensure you do not get wet boots.
- The bulk of the walk is on a forest plateau that has small but regular undulating hills. The ascent to the plateau occurs on days one and two. The ascent is gradual for the most part with a few steep slippery sections.
- The final day's walk is when we negotiate the river crossings and the walk ends on an old forestry trail. There are two river crossings, the Keith and the Arthur, which require sandals and will be safely coordinated by your guides. During the summer months, the river crossings are neither deep nor dangerous and can be safely negotiated under the watchful eye of your guides.
- To make sure you are at your fighting weight, we highly recommend you participate in a pre-trip training program. Please contact our office for details.

TRACK GRADING SYSTEM

We grade this tour according to your experience and fitness level. Please read the itinerary and then pick the category that most suits your experience and fitness level. Please bear in mind that these are simply guidelines. We welcome a call and we can guide you through the itinerary.

We strongly suggest all guests participate in our pre-trip training program. It offers a valuable support to help lift your confidence, strength and fitness. Besides, being fit makes you feel good, so any excuse!

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

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