

OVERLAND TRACK

WORLD HERITAGE AREA

DURATION: 6 days

TOUR GRADE:

T1	T2	T3	T4
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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.

CRADLE MOUNTAIN – LAKE ST CLAIR NATIONAL PARK

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. In the peak season, our tour starts at Dove Lake below the dramatic Cradle Mountain and finishes at Cynthia Bay on Lake St Clair, a glacial lake 220m deep, 14km long. At other times, we start at Lake St Clair and finish at Cradle Mountain, and spend a night in Pine Valley as an early side-trip on the way to Windy Ridge and a day base-camping at Waterfall Valley.

ITINERARY & TOUR DESCRIPTION

Day 1:

BCT to Cradle Valley and Waterfall Valley

We make an early start from BCT and travel to Cradle Valley via the bleak Central Plateau and the Great Lake, descending the Western Tiers for a brief stop at the delightful township of Deloraine before continuing to our start at Dove Lake. Skirting Dove Lake we climb the short steep pitch up to Marions Lookout to enjoy the views of

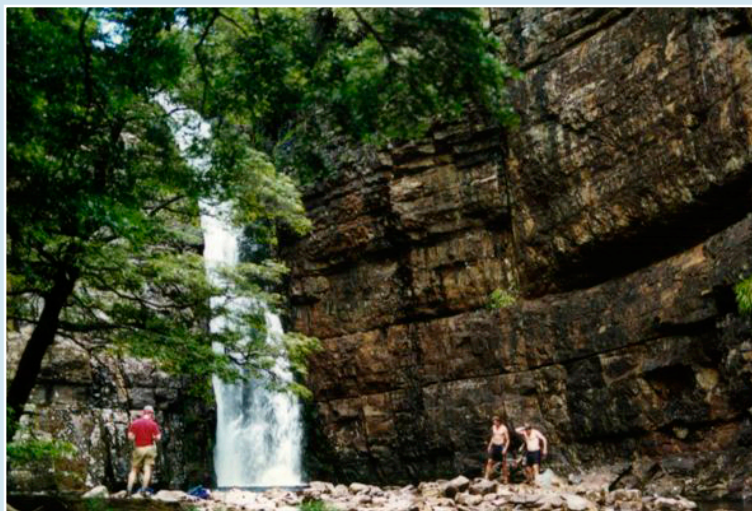
the glacially formed lakes and tarns, and then continue on to Kitchen Hut from where we have the opportunity to scramble up the dolerite of Cradle Mountain (1545m). That night we camp at the delightful Waterfall Valley, having encountered fabulous pandani palms (a distant relative of the heaths), banks of notorious *richeca 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.

Day 2:

Waterfall Valley to Windermere Hut

Before we leave Waterfall Valley, we have the opportunity to climb the nearby distinctive peak of Barn Bluff (1559m) or explore the chain of pretty waterfalls on the Hartnett Rivulet, after which our walk takes us through 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 also allows us time to explore Lake Will with its beach for a swim before we arrive at our evening campsite at Windermere Hut. At Windermere Hut we can relax by strolling around the delightful Lake Windermere with its ancient pencil pines.



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

Day 3:

Windermere Hut to Pelion Hut

Leaving Windermere Hut we proceed again across open moorland to Pine Forest Moor with its splendid lookout over the Mersey River Gorge deep below us. We then steadily climb the flanks of Mt Pelion West, before descending to Frog Flats on the River Forth (the lowest point on the track at 720m) through dense forest before arriving at our evening campsite at the Pelion Hut. At Pelion Hut we can climb Mt Oakleigh (1280m), or just relax after this long day with another chance to freshen up in the Douglas Creek before dinner.

Day 4:

Pelion Hut to Kia Ora Hut

Our first objective today is to climb steadily through pleasant forest to the Pelion Gap which provides an unrivalled view of the country ahead, with Mt Oakleigh, the distinctive Barn Bluff and Cradle Mountain behind us 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 provides 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. A gentle descent concludes the day's walk at Kia Ora Hut and its swimming hole.

Day 5:

Kia Ora Hut to Windy Ridge Hut

We make an early start for the steady climb up 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 Windy Ridge Hut in the forest.

Day 6:

Windy Ridge Hut to BCT

We leave Windy Ridge Hut and follow the Narcissus River downstream through dry open sclerophyll forest, flanking on our right the massive bulk of The Acropolis (1471m), with views of Mt Geryon (1509m) in the background, and gradually descend before crossing the river by a swing bridge to Narcissus Hut at the top end of Lake St Clair (Australia's deepest lake at 200m). If you're brave enough, you can indulge in a swim from the landing while we await our 17km ferry journey down Lake St Clair to complete our walk. We meet our bus at the Visitors' Centre at Cynthia Bay for the scenic drive down the Lyell Highway through the fertile Derwent Valley to BCT for a well-overdue "scrub-up" and a well-deserved home-cooked meal to top off 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.

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