



Walking, Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park
© Jason Charles Hill

WALKING IN TASMANIA

Tasmania packs 2,800km of maintained walking trails and 880 separate walks into its small footprint – with 40% of the island protected by national parks, conservation areas, reserves and UNESCO World Heritage areas. Visitors can traverse alpine wilderness, buttongrass plains and temperate rainforest all in a single day – and all within hours of the state’s major gateways.

What makes walking in Tasmania special

WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area covers 1.58 million hectares (25% of Tasmania). Declared by UNESCO in 1982 and extended in 1989, 2010, 2012 and 2013, it’s one of only two World Heritage sites globally meeting seven of 10 natural and cultural criteria.

ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

Ancient forests, glacial lakes and tarns, alpine peaks and dolerite coastal cliffs create Tasmania’s distinctive walking landscapes. Tasmania’s Gondwanan heritage – isolated by rising sea levels 12,000 years ago – supports a high number of endemic species found nowhere else on Earth. Walkers in Tasmania traverse forests of Eucalyptus regnans (the world’s tallest flowering plant), stroll alongside ancient Huon and King Billy pines, encounter fagus (Australia’s only native winter-deciduous tree) and Tasmanian waratahs, and spot endemic wildlife including Tasmanian devils, wombats, pademelons and Tasmanian native hens.

EASY ACCESS

The island’s compact size means many wilderness and walking trailheads are within two hours of major gateways (Hobart, Launceston and Devonport), allowing visitors to start walking the day they arrive.

RANGE OF ABILITIES

Tasmania offers walks suitable for most fitness levels and abilities – from well-graded, wheelchair-accessible trails like Russell Falls to challenging multi-day expeditions over rugged terrain, such as the Overland and South Coast tracks. Many walking tour companies offer guided options following well-built trails, with some offering high-quality accommodation in remote settings.

CLIMATE AND SEASONS

Tasmania’s mild summer provides comfortable walking conditions when mainland destinations experience extreme heat. Each season offers distinct experiences: autumn fagus displays in gold and red, winter snow in alpine regions, spring wildflowers and joeys. Most locations are walkable year-round, depending on walker experience and conditions.

SOUTHERN LIGHTS

Tasmania is one of the few places in the world to witness the Aurora Australis, or the Southern Lights. The remoteness of Tasmania’s walking experiences provide walkers with ample vantages to view billions of stars and a chance to look for the Southern Lights, free from the light pollution of cities.



Path to Hogarth Falls © Paul Fleming



wukalina Walk © Taylor Gentile

Day walks

SHORTER THAN FOUR HOURS

Short walks are located across all regions, ranging from gentle to challenging to suit varying abilities. Popular with entry-level walkers, families and time-limited visitors, these walks allow for multiple experiences in a day.

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service's [60 Great Short Walks](#) includes well-known tracks such as:

- Dove Lake Circuit at Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park
- Russell Falls at Mount Field National Park
- Organ Pipes on Kunanyi / Mount Wellington

LONGER THAN FOUR HOURS

Longer day walks provide wilderness immersion without overnight gear, appealing to experienced day walkers looking for a challenge. Popular choices include:

- Cape Raoul at Tasman National Park
- Mount Rufus at Lake St Clair
- Mount Strzelecki on Flinders Island
- Hazards Beach Circuit at Freycinet National Park

Multi-day walks

Tasmania is well known for its world-class multi-day walking, with terrain ranging from alpine wilderness to rugged coastal routes. The diversity gives experienced independent walkers reason to return, while guided experiences open options for varying abilities with reduced gear requirements. To manage walker numbers, some multi-day walks must be pre-booked with Tasmania's Parks and Wildlife Service.

GUIDED WALKS

Six of Tourism Australia's [15 Great Walks of Australia](#) are in Tasmania:

- Cradle Mountain Signature Walk (Overland Track)
- Bay of Fires Signature Walk
- Freycinet Experience Walk
- The Maria Island Walk
- Three Capes Signature Walk
- Flinders Island Walking Adventure In Comfort

The Aboriginal-owned and operated wukalina Walk in the state's north east provides an immersive four-day

cultural experience with insight into Palawa (Tasmanian Aboriginal) culture and history.

Find more information on guided walks: [Top guided wilderness walks in Tasmania.](#)

INDEPENDENT WALKS

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service maintains independent walking tracks. These are categorised by region, duration and difficulty, plus current safety advice and track information at parks.tas.gov.au

Well-known multi-day options include:

Overland Track

Tasmania's best-known wilderness walk spans 65km of varied terrain through Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, and includes the option to climb Tasmania's tallest peak, Mount Ossa (1,617m). The track takes five to seven days and is open year-round.

The most popular time to walk is during the warmer months from October to May, when walking numbers are capped to protect the sensitive alpine environment. In winter, snow blankets the landscape and only very experienced walkers should tackle the track independently.

Summer season (October–May):

- Bookings essential via Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service
- 34 independent walker places per day
- Bookings open in July each year (and sell out quickly)
- Permit: \$300 AUD (includes National Parks Pass)
- Walk north to south direction only (Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair).

Winter season (June–September):

- No booking required
- Walkers can travel either direction
- National Parks Pass required, no permit fee.

Independent walkers must be self-sufficient with all provisions including tent. Limited basic hut accommodation available.

Guided option: They are run by multiple operators including Tasmanian Expeditions, Wilderness Expeditions and Tasmanian Walking Company (the latter offering overnight stays at private huts).



Three Capes Track

This 48km, four-day track on Turrakana / Tasman Peninsula spans Australia's highest sea cliffs through Tasman National Park. Built to dry-boot standard and suitable for year-round walking, it attracts walkers with reasonable fitness but limited bushwalking experience. The track features three environmentally-sensitive huts with cooking facilities and bunks for every walker, reducing the amount of gear walkers need to carry.

Need to know:

- Bookings are essential year-round via Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service
- Permit: \$625 AUD
- Rangers are posted at each hut
- Walkers must walk the designated route each day.

Guided option: Tasmanian Walking Company (Three Capes Signature Walk) with exclusive lodge accommodation.

South Coast Track

Located in Southwest National Park on the southern edge of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, this 85km track is one of Australia's most remote and rugged walks. Flanked by the Southern Ocean, the track spans coastal terrain between Melaleuca and Cockle Creek, passing the island's southernmost point. The walk takes six to eight days and is suitable for experienced, self-sufficient walkers only.

Need to know:

- Bookings are not required
- Most walkers start at Melaleuca (accessible by light plane from Cambridge Airport near Hobart) and exit via Cockle Creek
- Walk can be completed in either direction
- Careful preparation needed for the challenging, muddy and exposed conditions.

Guided option: Tasmanian Expeditions and Wilderness Expeditions.

Last updated January 2026 with information from Discover Tasmania, Parks & Wildlife Service Tasmania, UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Great Walks of Australia.

Essential information

SAFETY

Weather conditions can change quickly and unexpectedly, and walkers should check the forecast before setting out. Alpine regions can experience snow at any time of year; good planning is essential and walkers should be prepared for all conditions.

Walkers should always carry a warm, windproof and waterproof jacket and wear sturdy, closed-toe footwear. Regardless of the length or location, it's essential to carry appropriate safety equipment, first aid and clothing when walking in Tasmania. A PLB is critical for remote walks.

[Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service](#) has useful safety tips, planning and pack lists.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Tasmania's environment is sensitive and the respectful walking principles of leaving no trace and staying on formed tracks are essential to protect these special places. Camp only at designated sites and carry out all waste. Respect wildlife and never feed or touch animals or birds in Tasmania's wilderness areas.

PERMITS AND PASSES

A Tasmanian National Parks Pass is required to access all national parks and is available from Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service. Holiday passes are a good option for walkers and are valid for two months. National Parks passes are not required to access conservation areas or state forest reserves, although some require permission to enter.

ACCESSIBILITY

Wheelchair access

Wheelchair users can access some tracks in Tasmania's national parks including Russell Falls (Mount Field), Cape Tourville (Freycinet) and Cradle Mountain's Rainforest Walk.

TrailRider all-terrain wheelchairs are available at no charge from several parks, enabling access to more rugged tracks. Bookings required via Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service visitor centres.

Assistance animals

Guide dogs and accredited assistance animals are permitted (contact: parkfees@parks.tas.gov.au).

More information

Most pages on the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service include an 'Access friendly' section with helpful information.

Tourism Tasmania has partnered with [Vacayit](#) to create audio guides for blind and low-vision travellers, plus accessibility information and sensory descriptions, for many Tasmanian wilderness areas.



Three Capes Track, Cape Pillar and the Blade
© Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service

Future developments

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service continues to develop new walking experiences. The Next Iconic Walk project, proposed for the Tyndall Ranges on the west coast, would be a three-day hut-to-hut walk following the Three Capes Track model. Public consultation concluded November 2025. If endorsed, construction could begin in 2026 with an indicative opening in summer 2029.

Who walks in Tasmania

Understanding who Tasmania's walking visitors are helps operators target the right audience, tailor their offer and make the most of every booking.

Market size	Walking enthusiasts represent approximately 47% of total visitors. The segment is significantly larger than most outdoor interest categories and around 75% intend to visit again.
When they visit	While the majority (45%) visit in summer, visitation is fairly distributed across the shoulder seasons: 22% in autumn, 16% in winter and 17% in spring.
Who they are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad appeal across age and gender. Typically travelling as a couple with no kids (36%) and as a family with older children (26%), while 14% come alone. Based mainly in New South Wales, followed by Victoria and Queensland. 39% have a household income of \$150,000 or more.
How they travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63% take a trip every three months. They travel with the same people but to different destinations each time. They bring their own hiking equipment, including walking boots, backpacks and overnight gear.
What else they do in Tasmania	This group tends to also go on day trips, visit historic sites and browse markets.
What drives them	Walkers are looking to rediscover what is important to them. Key destination drivers include clearly signposted trail information, safe campsites and well-maintained trails. Value for money, accessibility and options to suit different budgets also matter. Bushwalkers tend to be passionate conservationists and respond to destinations that reflect genuine environmental values.

Sources: Kantar research commissioned by Tourism Tasmania, 2020. Tourism Tasmania Walking Situational Analysis, 2019. Tasmanian Visitor Survey, year ending Sept 2025.

THE VALUE OF WALKING VISITORS

Walking visitors stay longer and spend more than the average visitor to Tasmania.

	Walking visitors	Average visitor
Annual visitor volume	637,000 interstate and international	
Average length of stay	12.2 nights	9.4 nights
Average spend per person	\$3,513	\$2,691

When time allows, they also seek quality accommodation, dining and complementary experiences, including outdoor activities, local food and wine, art and culture, and touring.

FOUR TYPES OF WALKING VISITOR

1. Lifelong walkers

The largest segment. Generally aged 40 to 65 and above, including empty nesters, soon-to-be retirees and retirees. Many have been walking club members at some point. They participate for social, physical and cultural enrichment and lead active lifestyles. Some may require assistance carrying equipment on multi-day walks. Group size ranges from solo to large groups.

2. Bucket listers

Drawn to iconic, high-profile walking destinations in Australia and internationally. Diverse in age, though the majority are 40 and over. Walk as couples, small groups or solo. International visitors tend to come from the USA or UK. Both domestic and international visitors are open to complementary experiences, including local food and wine.

3. Professionals and busy urban types

Well-educated, aged 30 and above, seeking escape from work and family pressures. They book well in advance and are open to short breaks. This segment includes repeat visitors to Tasmania. Family commitments restrict travel to non-peak calendar periods. Due to time constraints, they are less likely to extend their stay or add on activities.

4. Families

A minor but emerging segment. They travel during school holidays and traditional calendar periods and are less inclined toward overnight walking experiences. Females and families have both been identified as key opportunity markets for growth.

Key insight: Walking in Tasmania evokes escape, energy and calm. This audience is values driven, well researched and loyal to destinations that earn their trust. Highlighting environmental credibility alongside trail quality is as important as the walk itself.

For up-to-date data, visit the [Tasmanian Visitor Survey Analyser](#).

Helpful links

Discover Tasmania: discovertasmania.com.au/things-to-do/outdoor-and-adventure/walks-and-hikes/

Tasmania Parks & Wildlife Service: parks.tas.gov.au

Great Walks of Australia: greatwalksofaustralia.com.au

Facebook: fb.com/tasmania

Instagram: @tasmania

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