

Tasmania, Australia

Destinations: Cradle Mountain, Strahan, Freycinet, Melbourne

Itinerary Includes

- Internal coach class air in Australia
- Round trip airport transfers
- 9 day car rental (automatic)
- 2 nights Cradle Mountain
- 2 nights Strahan
- 2 nights Hobart
- 2 nights Freycinet
- 2 nights Melbourne
- Melbourne half day city tour
- 2 breakfasts 1 lunch (*Superior and Deluxe options include 2 additional breakfasts*)

Day 1 Fly USA to Melbourne

Please note international air from the USA has not been included in the package price.

Day 2 You cross the International Dateline

The International Date Line is an imaginary line on the earth's surface that approximately coincides with the 180th meridian (LONGITUDE), and separates the calendar date. Traveling east across the line takes the traveler back one day; traveling west, takes the traveler forward one day.

Day 3 Welcome to Melbourne, Australia

On arrival into Melbourne you will need to clear customs and make your way to your connecting flight south to Launceston, Tasmania. Upon arrival you will pick up your rental vehicle and drive to Cradle Mountain. This is a two hour drive, although if you have time to spare there are some interesting places to see and scenery to enjoy all along the way.

Separated from mainland Australia by the 240 km stretch of Bass Strait, Tasmania is a land apart – a place of wild and beautiful landscapes; friendly, welcoming people; a pleasant, temperate climate; wonderful wine and food; a rich history; and a relaxed island lifestyle. Australia's island state of Tasmania provides an utterly different experience from the mainland. Forget any notions of arid Outback - Tasmania is a land of rugged mountains, open moors, rolling green hills, long and deserted beaches, pure rivers, forests and dense, impenetrable scrub.

Launceston, Tasmania's second oldest city, was founded in 1805. It has extensive parks and gardens and its well preserved buildings of various periods are a feature. The city is noted in particular for its Victorian streetscapes and Georgian buildings.

Day 4 At leisure, Cradle Mountain

Cradle Mountain National Park has two main focal points: the northern one is Cradle Mountain (about 37 miles south of Burnie) and the southern one is Australia's deepest lake, Lake St Clair (about 31 miles southeast of Cradle Mountain). The park's total size is about 161,000 hectares (397,840 acres) and it covers some of Tasmania's highest country. It is famous for its lakes, peaks, rainforest and moorland. Tasmania's highest mountain is here - Mount Ossa (5,305 feet) - and the island's best known walking track - the Overland Track (53 miles), which takes about five days to walk.

To venture into the wilderness is a personal adventure, an experience that lasts beyond the 'here and

now'. Cradle Mountain is one of those experiences - walk the many trails that make up the Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park, feed the tame wallabies, take a scenic flight, or a guided walk or maybe just sit back and contemplate.

Day 5 Drive Cradle Mountain to Strahan

Today, you will head to Tasmania's Wild West and the remote coastal town of Strahan. Allow at least 2 hours for this drive.

The tiny, remote west coast port of Strahan is the departure point for excursions into Tasmania's spectacular Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park, one of Tasmania's most extensive wilderness areas. The town is located on the shores of Macquarie Harbour and cruise boats and scenic flights [by sea plane] depart daily from the jetty in the middle of town. The cruises take visitors across historic Macquarie Harbour, past the ruins of the Sarah Island convict settlement.

Day 6 At leisure, Strahan

For a really comprehensive tour of this region, take the seaplane scenic flight which takes you inland past towering "Frenchman's Cap", an aptly named alpine peak, over the ranges and canyons of the National Park and onto a breathtaking water landing on the upper reaches of the Gordon River. The return flight circumnavigates Macquarie Harbour so you'll have an excellent perspective of the entire region.

If time permits take a drive out to Ocean Beach, just 6 kilometers to the west of town. This long, lonely stretch of beach, lashed gigantic breakers & winds of the Southern Ocean, somehow typifies the magnificent Wild West coast. While in town, try the local seafood. It's some of the best you will try anywhere.

Day 7 Drive Strahan to Hobart

Depart Strahan and make your way throughout the St Clair and Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Parks before arriving at Mount Field National Park and Russell Falls which is a good stop point for lunch. Here you can walk amongst the world's largest flowering trees and tallest hardwoods. Continue onto Hobart just a short drive from Mt Field. This is an excellent drive with lots of interesting stops along the way.

Day 8 At leisure, Hobart

At your leisure to explore the beautiful city of Hobart which offers a diverse look at the history and traditions of Australia in a unique and friendly environment. Also the drive to Port Arthur convict settlement is excellent with a stop at historic Richmond worth the effort as well.

Day 9 Drive Hobart to Freycinet

From Hobart, the A3 will take you north along the east coast to the town of Swansea. Continue north from here, past a number of boutique wineries to the C302. This road will take you south to the township of Coles Bay - a lovely coastal town and the gateway to the spectacular Freycinet National Park.

Day 10 At leisure in Freycinet

Freycinet National Park is for those interested in a more "off the beaten track" place. The bay has fine beaches for swimming, good bushwalking and bird-watching. There is a wide variety of local flora (over 60 varieties of orchid), and the permanent inhabitants (possums and wallabies) are bold enough to take close-up looks at their human visitors.

Northwest of Coles Bay is Moulting Lagoon, breeding ground of the black swan, and along the northern coast are the grand dunes of Friendly Beaches. Coles Bay is frequently used as a staging point for those wishing to visit the Freycinet National Park. Three pink granite mountains (the Amos, Dove and Mayson)

form the Hazard Range, a signature of the 11,930 ha. park. But the best known attraction is Wineglass Bay. Its perfect formation and white sand make it one of the most photographed natural features in the state.

Day 11 Fly Hobart to Melbourne

Depart Freycinet National Park area, leaving early enough to allow time to stop at Coles Bay to visit the Freycinet Bakery for one of their famous Scallop Pies before continuing south to the Hobart airport. Upon arrival at Hobart airport you will drop off your rental car at the airport depot prior to flight departure to Melbourne. On arrival into Melbourne, you will be transferred to your hotel.

Melbourne, the capital of Victoria and a cultural hub, is known for the good things in life - fashion, food, entertainment and sport. This is a city of style, architecture, trams, theatres and art. The influence of decades of immigration from all over the world has made Melbourne a paradise for those who love food and wine. Whole streets are dedicated to food, whether it is Indian, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Greek, or a host of other styles.

You can't miss the world-class wines either. You'll barely meet a visitor who hasn't fallen in love with Melbourne; rattling trams, parklands singing with blackbirds, stately architecture and palm trees.

Day 12 Melbourne city tour

Melbourne is famous for its magnificent parks and gardens which surround the city. See the famous Floral Clock, Botanic Gardens, Flagstaff Gardens and inspect Captain Cook's Cottage in the beautiful Fitzroy Gardens. See the colorful Victoria Market, Old Melbourne Gaol, Shrine of Remembrance and travel over the Westgate Bridge for panoramic views over Port Phillip Bay.

The afternoon is at leisure to explore the very cosmopolitan city of Melbourne. The many attractions of the city vary from the spectacular parklands and gardens that surround the city, to the museums and festivals that are a continuing part of the city life. Excellent restaurants are on every corner and cater for every taste in the world.

Day 13 Fly Melbourne to USA

You will be met and transferred to the airport for your departure flight.