



From
€6,613 EUR

Single Room

€8,076 EUR

Twin Room

€6,613 EUR

Prices valid until
 30th December 2023

18 days

Duration

Tasmania

Destination

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Activity

Tours of Tasmania; exploring colonial history

Feb 05 2023 to Feb 22 2023

Colonial Tasmania Small Group Tour.

History and Scenic Wilderness Beauty, all in one 18 day tour.

These small group tours to Tasmania for the active senior traveller, are especially designed as holidays to Tasmania for those with an interest in colonial history. Naturally, this being Tasmania, we will also travel through many areas of natural beauty, pristine wilderness, spectacular landscapes, stunning scenery and dramatic coastlines on this sightseeing tour. Our small group package tours to Tasmania from



Tours of Tasmania; exploring colonial history

<https://www.odysseytraveller.com.au>

27-Jan-2023

Melbourne and other points of departure will take us on a circular route that begins and ends in Hobart. After exploring the area around Hobart and the east coast, we will journey north through the heart of the island, through lands settled by the early immigrants, until we reach Launceston. From Launceston we'll travel through the Tamar valley along the rugged coastline of the north coast, north west as far as Stanley before heading back south to the pristine wilderness and spectacular landscapes and rugged mountains around Cradle Mountain and then on through Strahan, Queenstown and past Lake St Clair, before arriving back in Hobart. These tours of Tasmania do not explore Southern Tasmania or venture to Flinders Island or King Island. Senior singles, couples and small groups of friends interested in history and any historic site will all find this Tasmania tour itinerary suited to their needs for a great Tasmania holiday package.

Odyssey's Holidays to Tasmania package tours are limited to a maximum of 12 people.

Introduction

On these small package tours to Tasmania, the guided tour program concentrates on the European settlement of Tasmania in the 19th century. The colony had a troubled journey from the start. We'll talk about the tragic history of the original inhabitants after contact with Europeans, but our Tasmania tours will concentrate on the achievements of the settlers, rather than the tragedy of dispossession. After a prosperous period of development in the early years, the island slipped into a prolonged recession in the late 19th and 20th century. This has actually led to the preservation of many early buildings of the kind which were destroyed in the more prosperous regions of the mainland, a benefit to this colonial Tasmania tours package. Consequently on this trip there are numerous small towns with a treasury of historic buildings which, hopefully in these more enlightened times, will continue to be preserved.

The first free settlers arrived in Sullivan's Cove (Hobart) with Lieutenant David Collins in 1804 when he was sent by the British Government to establish a penal settlement on the island. A few free settlers came

specifically to establish farms, but others were members of the military and civil establishments who opted to remain in the colony. A similar settlement was soon formed on the Tamar River, in the Tamar Valley in the north of the island, near to what is now Launceston. Numbers were boosted again by the arrival of the Norfolk Islanders when that settlement was abandoned the first time. The free settlers, who began to arrive in quite considerable numbers, soon established towns and industries on the rich pastures where the indigenous inhabitants once roamed.

Small group tours of Tasmania

Our small group tour pursuing their holidays to Tasmania allows us to tread in the footsteps of the colonists, visiting the churches where they worshipped, the houses in which they lived, the taverns where they drank and some of the mills in which they worked. Men, women and children settled, at first in tents, bark huts and wooden buildings, but remarkably quickly in houses of stone. Little remains of the first buildings but we will be able to explore churches, mills, hotels and houses constructed from the local sandstone which fortunately for the settlers, and us, was so readily available.

Odyssey published articles about Tasmania.

- [Understanding Hobart](#)
- [The Freycinet peninsula](#)
- [Lake St Clair](#)
- [Cradle Mountain, a story.](#)
- [Strahan and the Gordon river.](#)

External articles about Colonial Tasmania

- [The best undiscovered Convict sites in Tasmania.](#)
- [Protest against logging in the Tarkine forest](#)
- [All about the Derwent estuary](#)

Highlights

1. Learn and see important colonial towns and settlements of Tasmania.
2. Travel through and stay in the Cradle mountain National park.
3. Visit Launceston and the North west coast of Tasmania.
4. Travel through to Zeehan and Queenstown learning about the mining.
5. Visit the Wall In The Wilderness sculpture at Derwent Bridge.

Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

Today you arrive in Hobart and settle into your hotel where you will spend the next five nights, using the city as a centre for local exploration around Hobart and Tasmania's east coast .

In the late afternoon meet your programme leader for an initial briefing of our tours to Tasmania itinerary. Details would then be finalised with tour participants on outstanding matters for our Tasmania package tours offered. This evening we collectively join with other members of the group for a welcome dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 2

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

This morning we have an initial talk by a local historian on the colony's early settlement followed by morning tea and then a walking tour through some of the older sections of the town, including visits to Narryna House, built in the 1830s, and the Tasmanian Museum and Art

Gallery. The TMAG precinct is one of Australia's most historically significant sites. Included in the precinct is Tasmania's oldest surviving public buildings, the 1808-10 Commissariat Store and the Private Secretary's Cottage, built prior to 1815.

The afternoon will be free for you to wander at will, or possibly explore some of the other historic sites suggested by your programme leader and tour guide. The Maritime Museum is particularly interesting, as is the old Hobart gaol and Markree House, built in 1926 and reflecting the style of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Day 3

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

This morning after breakfast we will be collected by our coach for a day trip to two early settlements relatively close to Hobart.

Our first stop and a short walk will be at Richmond, a picture-perfect town in the heart of the Coal River Valley. This is the perfect place to learn about Tasmania's past. Richmond has more than 50 Georgian buildings, many beautifully restored and now operating as cafes, restaurants as galleries. The town's most photographed landmark is the Richmond Bridge. Built by convicts in the 1820s, it's one of the oldest bridges in Australia.

The Richmond Gaol is also the oldest gaol in Australia. Standing inside the stone cells gives an eerie insight into the hardships and brutality of convict life in early Van Diemen's Land.

From Richmond we will continue to Pontville, rich in heritage and natural attractions. Pontville sits on a hill overlooking the Jordan River on one side and a vast plain, that was once an Aboriginal travelling route between Tasmania's north and south, on the other. The site was established as a garrison town in 1821 and boomed in the early days for its timber, quarries and proximity to the hunting grounds of the Southern Midlands, which had been fire-stick farmed over thousands of years by the indigenous inhabitants.

As one of Tasmania's oldest settlements, Pontville offers plenty of history to explore on a short walk with several churches and cemeteries as well as the ruins of the first shops and garrison buildings. There are

many fine Georgian residences. Also keep your eye out for 'The Row', sometimes known as 'The Barracks', near the bridge over the Jordan River. The building was erected in 1824 as accommodation for soldiers and is a combination of five cottages – three with roof dormers and two larger cottages with three bays.

In the afternoon we return to Hobart.

Day 4

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

This morning our day trip is a drive west to New Norfolk, the third oldest settlement in Tasmania, established by evacuees relocated from Norfolk Island after the island prison was abandoned in 1807. It's historic past is evident in the many early buildings found in the town including one of Australia's oldest pubs and Australia's oldest Anglican church, St Matthews with its beautiful stained glass windows. New Norfolk also has one of Australia's few traditional village squares.

New Norfolk has a rich hop-growing past and is still the centre of the surrounding hop-growing area, producing most of the hops for Australian breweries. New Norfolk and Plenty, which we also visit on today's day tour, are genuinely fascinating. The richness and variety of their historic buildings, the superb Salmon Ponds at Plenty, the old Oast Houses and the gentle undulations of the countryside on either side of the Derwent River, make this one of the most attractive areas in the whole of southern Tasmania. It is possible for visitors to wander through the old Oast House, visit the historic asylum or just walk along the banks of the river.

Time permitting, we will continue west to Bushy Park which prides itself on being the capital of Tasmania's hop growing region. The most impressive building in the district is Ebenezer Shoobridge's justifiably famous Text Kiln. The 'Text Kiln', as it is known, is an Oast House which was completed in 1867. Shoebidge, who worked his hop-fields with his wife, three sons and five daughters, embraced the idea that 'Union is Strength' and believed that texts from The Bible would be inspiration for his workers. Thus, on the outside walls of the 'Text Kiln' he wrote 'And these words that I command thee this day shall be in

thine heart and thy shall write them on the posts of thine house and on thine gate'. In the middle of the building is the sign 'God is Love' and on the far side is 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life'.

We return to Hobart for the evening.

Day 5

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

This morning we drive south to the Mount Nelson Signal Station which holds a prime position in the hills above Hobart. It boasts panoramic views over Hobart city, the River Derwent and, on a clear day out over the east coast, down to Cape Bruny on Bruny Island and out to Storm Bay. Built in 1811, the Mount Nelson Signal Station was the first signal station constructed in Tasmania. Today, Mount Nelson Signal Station offers a fascinating insight into semaphore signalling, station life and early shipping in the Hobart area.

Our next stop this morning is the historic Shot Tower. The Shot Tower, built by proprietor, Joseph Moir in 1870, is one of Tasmania's most distinctive heritage landmarks. A testament to Joseph Moir's ingenuity, the circular sandstone tower stands 58 metres high and is still one of the tallest buildings in Tasmania. Today, the enormity of Moir's ambitious project is not lost; the Shot Tower, built with the purpose of producing lead shot, is the only remaining circular structure of its kind in the world.

Visitors can climb the 259 steps of the circular staircase to the very top of this iconic industrial tower and be rewarded with scenic views over the River Derwent, Hobart and beyond. You may even find the trek to the top easier than imagined, as the wooden steps were designed to be gentle for the workers carrying heavy sacks of lead in days gone by.

From the Shot Tower we return to Hobart and you have the afternoon free for a final walk, through the streets of Hobart or along the historic dock area.

Day 6

Locations: Launceston

Overview:

This morning we leave Hobart and begin our Tasmania tour around the island. Leaving Tasmania's east coast, we head north towards Launceston, we pass through a number of historic townships, with time to stop and explore.

Our first stop will be in Kempton, just off the Midland Highway. This is a small, early colonial, settlement with a rich collection of historic buildings. These have resulted in it being classified as an historic town. Kempton offers the possibility of exploring a 19th century Tasmanian village largely untouched by modern development.

When European settlers arrived in 1814 they called the district Green Ponds (because it had green ponds). Two years later Anthony Fenn Kemp, a soldier-merchant, settled in the district. Kemp acquired 4,100 acres where he developed an infant wool industry, bred horses and cattle, and introduced a hardy, North American variety of corn. Not surprisingly, in the late 1840s the settlement became known as Kemp Town which later was reduced to Kempton, like Tasmania becoming "Tassie". (Anthony Fenn Kemp is sometimes called "the father of Tasmania", possibly because he had eleven daughters and seven sons, who also bred prolifically.)

Oatlands, with 150 sandstone buildings, is our next stop on this day tour. This is another of Tasmania's oldest settlements and it boasts unchanged Georgian architecture. Much of the town was built in the early 1800s using convict labor provided free by the government. You'll be able to enter many of these sandstone buildings as they now operate as stores or cafés. Perhaps this would be a good opportunity for morning coffee.

Oatlands is covered with informative signs illuminating Tasmanian history. You'll be able to read stories about Tasmania's most fearsome hangman as well as outlaw bushrangers, convicts and Georgian-era farmers. The walk will take you by the most recognisable building in town — The Callington Mill. This 1837-built Tower Mill is still in operation and the only one of its kind in the entire Southern

Hemisphere.

From Oatlands we continue to the small township of Ross. Cobble-style paths and grand old elm trees line the main street, while the Ross Bridge, Australia's third oldest bridge still standing, is possibly the most beautiful of its kind left in the world. The detail of its 186 carvings by convict stonemasons was deemed of such high quality that it won the men a free pardon.

Our final stop along the road to Launceston will be at Campbell Town. Unlike the other towns we visit on our journey, Campbell Town is notable for its wide main street, its elegant English village green in front of The Grange, its handsome convict-built Red Bridge, and the impressive coaching inn, The Foxhunters Return.

Dating from 1833 and constructed by convicts, The Foxhunters Return, a two-storey rubble stone building, was built by Hugh Kean. It is regarded as one of the "most substantial hotel buildings of the period" and the National Trust describe it as "the finest and most substantial hotel building of the late colonial period in Australia." It is possible to inspect the cellars below the building as they are now used by The Book Cellar and are open from 10.00 am – 4.00 pm daily.

You might also like to visit St Luke's Church which was designed by the notable Colonial Architect, John Lee Archer. The foundation stone was laid in 1835 but, because the building contractor got into financial trouble, a new contractor was employed and the building wasn't completed until 1839.

In the late afternoon we will arrive at our Launceston hotel where we will stay for the next five nights. Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.

Day 7

Locations: Launceston

Overview:

This morning we have a guided tour of historic Launceston with a local historian. There is much to see in this city first established by European settlers on the banks of the Tamar River in 1806. We will begin the tour with a visit to the Old Umbrella Shop now owned by the National Trust for Tasmania. A number of the colonial and Victorian buildings have

been restored in the city and our guided walk will take us past many of the best of these.

After a stop for morning coffee we'll visit the renowned Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery which was established in 1891. This is a great place to brush up on some local history and admire Australian and international art. The museum, on Inverness street, is housed in an impressive 19th-century heritage-listed building. It's collections trace the early convict and colonial days, as well as the natural history of Tasmania. The art gallery, on Wellington Street, features 10 different galleries displaying Tasmanian art from colonial days to the present, including historical photos, international paintings, and decorative arts. Its principal attraction is a splendid Chinese temple decorated with gold leaf, containing ceremonial items from mining towns in northeastern Tasmania.

We will also have time to visit Cataract Gorge, on the South Esk River. This is a unique natural formation just minutes from central Launceston. The Gorge has walking tracks, a suspension bridge and panoramic lookouts with spectacular views. Peacocks and native wildlife add to the experience.

On the shady northern side, known as the Cliff Grounds, is a Victorian garden with ferns and exotic plants. There's also a kiosk and tea rooms where you can enjoy a cup of tea and scones. You'll be able to wander across the footbridge that links the two areas or take a chairlift ride across the expansive Gorge.

The rest of the day will be yours to explore.

Day 8

Locations: Launceston

Overview:

This morning we'll rejoin our coach and drive north to George Town, stopping to visit the historic St Matthias Anglican Church at Windermere on the way. On our return journey we'll cross to the western bank of the Tamar River and drive back to our hotel via the "Swiss Village" of Grindelwald and the Tamar valley Island Wetlands.

St Matthias' Anglican Church, surrounded by a beautiful, peaceful 173 year old graveyard, is located in the rural village of Windermere and is

a heritage-listed icon in Northern Tasmania. The church was built in 1842 fulfilling a promise by Dr Mathias Gaunt to his young wife before they left England. His wife was concerned that there may not be a church in the area where they would make their home. Dr Gaunt promised that if there was not, he would build one for her. St Matthias' is one of Australia's oldest rural churches and has been in continuous use since its foundation.

George Town is the third oldest European settlement in Australia. As early as 1804 William Paterson camped on the site and by 1811 a permanent settlement had been established by Lachlan Macquarie and named after the English king, George III. Given that it dates back to 1811 it is hardly surprising that George Town has a wealth of important historic buildings. We'll begin our tour of the town at the George Town Watch House Museum which was originally the local lockup for both male and female offenders. Built in 1843, it has been restored and now offers an insight into the region's history.

We'll also find time to visit Low Head, a sheltered harbour and now a classified historic town about seven kilometres from George Town. The tiny settlement has a 12 m high lighthouse which overlooks the entrance to the River Tamar. It was built in 1888 to replace the original lighthouse which was constructed by convicts in the early 1830s. The nearby pilot station, the oldest in Australia, completed in 1835, houses a Maritime Museum which includes memorabilia salvaged from the many shipwrecks on the north coast as well as some interesting, early diving equipment.

For a complete change of time and place we'll drive back to Launceston via Grindelwald. It was developed in the style of a Swiss village and was the vision of a Dutch immigrant to Tasmania. The town's construction began in 1980 around an artificial lake and the architecture is supposed to give the visitor the feeling that they been transported to Switzerland. You'll be able to make up your own mind about that!

Our final call for the day will be to the Tamar Island Wetlands, a haven for nature lovers-especially birders. First stop should be the interpretation centre, where you can learn about the history of the Tamar River, the wetlands ecosystems, and the resident wildlife. Time permitting, you'll be able to stroll along the boardwalks and admire the lovely views of the Tamar River with its tranquil lagoons. Black swans, great egrets, ducks, swallows, and pelicans are frequently spotted, as

well as frogs and snakes (in summer). Pademelons (small marsupials) often peek out from the fringing grasslands.

After a full day of exploring we will return to our Launceston hotel for the night.

Day 9

Locations: Launceston

Overview:

Today we visit two National Trust properties in the Launceston region. Franklin House is a 1838 convict-built home and gardens that became one of the Colony's leading private schools. Just minutes' drive from the centre of Launceston, this is the city's only house museum. Built for successful businessman, Britton Jones, himself an ex-convict, this rare colonial building went on to accommodate one of the Colony's leading private schools which operated from 1842 until 1866. It became the birthplace of the National Trust for Tasmania in 1960.

In the afternoon we visit Clarendon, our second historic house for the day. Set in 7 hectares of parklands on the banks of the South Esk River, this magnificent three-storey Georgian house has servants' quarters, a heritage walled garden, several farm buildings and a rare avenue of elms.

It was built in 1838 as an extraordinary statement of achievement for wealthy wool grower and merchant, James Cox, who was born in Wiltshire, England. Although Clarendon was built with convict labour, Mr Cox was known to treat his convicts well and he later played a major role in the abolition of transportation and convict labour.

Dinner tonight will be in a local Launceston restaurant.

Day 10

Locations: Launceston

Overview:

Today we spend in Longford, a country town, close to Launceston, full of colonial charm, lovely convict-built buildings and grand estates that relive the past. Longford is a classified historic town with many fine

houses and estates built by convicts in the early 1800s. The town also boasts the elegant Longford Christ Church and settlers cemetery, as well as an impressive collection of hotels and inns.

Longford has a strong agricultural tradition that continues today and a visit to one of its impressive estates provides a real taste of the pioneering days when the original farming families used convict labour to create grand reminders of their English heritage. While in Longford we'll take time to visit Woolmers, a World Heritage listed site, just 7 kilometres from the township.

Woolmers Estate is one of Australia's finest examples of a pioneer farm from the early 1800s and one of Tasmania's World Heritage Convict Sites. Woolmers was continuously occupied by the Archer family from around 1817 to 1994 and is acknowledged as one of the most outstanding examples of 19th century rural settlements in Australia. The estate offers an insight into the social structure of a colonial pastoral estate. The collection of original buildings on Woolmers includes family accommodation, workers' cottages, a former chapel, blacksmith's shop, stables, bakehouse, pump house and gardener's cottage.

The convict assignment system was set up to provide labour to settlers in exchange for food and clothing. The government also saw the system as a cost-effective way to develop colonial infrastructure, assist settlers to develop their land and reform convicts through hard and constant work. The layout and architecture of Woolmers made a strong distinction between master and servant, which the colonial authorities believed was an important aspect in the reformation of convicts.

Built between 1819 and 1821, the Estate's original single-storey house is still evident as part of the later grand gentlemen's residence and surrounded by convict workplaces such as the wool-shed, blacksmith shop, stables, gardens, paddocks and the former chapel. Over time as the estate increased in prosperity, Woolmers became one of the finest colonial estates in Tasmania with grand houses, formal gardens and separate cottages for gardeners and coachmen.

Woolmers provides us with the opportunity to visit a rare farming homestead. While many large farming estates were established in New South Wales and Tasmania, Woolmers is unusual because its homestead and surrounding buildings are in good condition. Woolmers is also unusual for having remained in the ownership of the same family

for over 170 years, until the death of Thomas William Archer in 1994. The 1840s Italianate modifications were designed by William Archer, a family member and the first architect born in the state. The Estate's outbuildings, workshops, cottages, plant and artefacts are a unique record of the range of operations of a property owned by wealthy colonial pastoralists, supported by convict labour. Another outstanding aspect of the place is its extensive collection of artefacts, which reconstruct life during successive periods over the last two centuries. Many of the early convict farm workers can be identified from surviving musters, farm diaries, correspondence and conduct records.

In the afternoon we return to Launceston for our final night in the city.

Day 11

Locations: Thousand lakes region

Overview:

This morning we leave the city and head west into a wilder part of the island, an area renowned for its landscape and pristine wilderness and scenery. Before leaving the more settled regions we have a final colonial estate to visit. Entally House is a historic homestead with various outbuildings, including Australia's oldest conservatory. The property encompasses grand, parklike surroundings with magnificent gardens and a vineyard.

Entally House was the family home of Thomas Reibey who was the Premier of Tasmania from 1876 to 1877. The Entally Estate was established in 1819 by Thomas Haydock Reibey II. Thomas Haydock Reibey II was the eldest son of Thomas and Mary Reibey. Mary, the matriarch of the family, was transported to Australia in 1790 for the crime of horse stealing, then aged 14. She would later marry a junior officer of the East India Company, Thomas Reibey (senior), who established the Entally name as a successful trading company that owned a number of vessels running coal up the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales. Following her husband's death in 1811, Mary became one of the richest and most successful businesswomen in Australia. She then obtained the grant of 300 acres of land upon which Thomas II was to settle and build the homestead and outbuildings. Today, Mary is most recognisable as the face of the Australian 20 dollar

note.

The Estate provided the training grounds for the 1884 Melbourne Cup winner Malua, and includes a cricket oval that's believed to be one of the first in the country; hosting games before Melbourne was settled.

After visiting Entally House we'll continue to the Thousand Lakes region where, availability permitting, we'll spend the night in accommodation designed originally, but now upgraded, for Antarctic exploration training! This is an area of stunning natural beauty.

Dinner tonight will be provided in the Lodge.

Day 12

Locations: Stanley

Overview:

This morning we head north again through Deloraine to Stanley, where we spend the next two nights.

The National Trust has classified Deloraine for its historic buildings. We'll have time to stroll past the historic buildings, grab a morning coffee, and visit the Deloraine Museum. The museum is housed in a building dating from 1856. Originally a family cottage, the building was extended and became the Family and Commercial Inn in 1863. It operated as such until 1894.

From Deloraine we drive north and then take a scenic tour along the coast road through some of Tasmania's most spectacular coastal scenery, including Table Cape near Wynyard, and the famous Nut at Stanley. Some of Tasmania's prettiest towns sit right on the water's edge.

We take time to stop at Rocky Cape National Park which contains many significant Tasmanian Aboriginal sites dating back thousands of years. Vast cave middens and rock shelters reveal much about the lifestyle of coastal Aboriginal people. A strong cultural and spiritual connection to this place continues today, with the Aboriginal community actively involved in the management of the park. Striking rock formations, an incredible variety of flowering plants as well as the important Aboriginal heritage, all make this park worth exploring. This rugged coastline contrasts with the wild blue ocean of the Bass Strait and waves pound the coast with intensity, sending up a salty sea spray

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that fills the air.

On arrival in Stanley we will check into our hotel.

Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.

Day 13

Locations: Stanley

Overview:

Today we can relax in Stanley, a small town with a long history of European settlement. Lord Stanley was the British Secretary of State for War and the Colonies in the 1830's. The town was named for him after the Van Diemen's Land Company was granted land in northwest Tasmania in 1825. The port quickly opened in 1827 and Stanley had its first school in 1841. Soon after, in 1842, Stanley was recognised as an official town.

According to the local tourist bureau, "Stanley is a town of perfectly preserved colonial buildings, genteel cafes and quality B&B cottages, all sheltering in the imposing shadow of the Nut, an immense flat topped, volcanic plug rising 150 metres straight up from the water's edge of the Bass Strait."

This morning we'll visit the Highfield Historic Site which offers a historically accurate vision of a gentleman's home and farm of the 1830s. It sits on a hillside overlooking the lands the manager would have once controlled, with views across to Stanley, The Nut and Bass Strait beyond. The house is being restored over time and its elegant Regency design, convict barracks, barns, stables, and a chapel are surrounded by a large ornamental garden. Edward Curr, the chief agent of the Van Diemen's Land Company, started construction in 1832, and later additions were made by John Lee Archer. The VDL settlement began in 1826 on 350,000 acres granted under Royal Charter by George IV. Today, the original farm has reduced and covers around five acres.

The rest of the day will be yours to rest, or perhaps climb The Nut for panoramic views. Those less physically inclined might prefer to take the chairlift!

Day 14

Locations: Cradle Mountain National Park

Overview:

This morning we leave Stanley and drive to Cradle Mountain National park where we'll spend just one night.

On reaching the northern end of the Cradle Mountain–Lake St Clair National Park, we will be able to check into our accommodation and spend the afternoon exploring the area. The scenery is spectacular and it is possible to do a two-three hour walk around Dove Lake, or much shorter walks along the boardwalks and designated trails.

This evening dinner will be at our accommodation.

Day 15

Locations: Queenstown

Overview:

This morning we head south to Queenstown via Zeehan and Strahan. We'll spend the next two nights in Queenstown.

Hidden in a valley of rugged hills and rainforest, Zeehan was established in the late 1800s after tin, silver and lead discoveries sparked the largest mining boom in the west of the island. Nicknamed 'Silver City', it quickly grew into Tasmania's third largest town and social hub for the entire West Coast region. Today the town attracts geologists from around the world due to the unique geological structures of the region.

It is not surprising then that the West Coast Heritage Centre and Pioneers Museum, with its excellent displays on the area's indigenous, pioneering and mining past, has one of the finest collections of minerals in the world.

Zeehan, like other West Coast mining towns, has seen many booms and busts, making it a living museum full of character and fascinating stories. Today, Zeehan's Main Street is lined with grand old buildings like the Gaiety Theatre, supposedly visited by Dame Nellie Melba, now

beautifully restored and still entertaining locals and visitors.

Strahan sits on the northern end of Macquarie Harbour on Long Bay. The Macquarie Harbour is the terminus for the King River in the north and the Gordon River in the south. Sometimes described as “one of the loneliest places on earth”, Strahan, an outlying post of civilisation, was a regular shipping port in the 19th and early 20th centuries, servicing the mining and timber industries in the area. Strahan also has a strong connection with the convict past, being the nearest maritime base for Sarah Island, a notorious penal settlement during the convict era. The main centre of Strahan now has the feel of a small, isolated fishing village and seaside getaway with Edwardian terrace architecture. We'll have time for a short walk to explore the town before continuing to Queenstown.

Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.

Day 16

Locations: Queenstown

Overview:

Queenstown, the largest town in Tasmania's west, is surrounded by dramatic hills and rugged mountains and was once the world's richest mining town. The copper mining and mass logging in the early 1900s created a surreal and rocky 'moonscape' of bare coloured conglomerate. Although Mother Nature is slowly creeping back into the landscape, the scenic drive into Queenstown, down a spiralling mountain road with over 90 bends, is still nothing short of spectacular and a testament to the brutal reality of Tasmania's mining past.

The facades on the broad main street are still strongly redolent of the high colonial period with the old Victorian hotels, the forbidding Post Office tower and the magisterial Paragon art deco theatre evoking an age of aspiration to grandeur and prosperity.

Being situated in a mountain valley, low clouds roll by straight off the mountainside and it's not surprising that Queenstown is one of the wettest locations in Tasmania with an annual average rainfall of 2408mm.

This morning we'll take a scenic tour including a ride on the steam train, the west coast wilderness railway, through wilderness to Dubbil Barril

and the King River Gorge. As you travel through the west coast's cool temperate rainforest, you will ascend steep wilderness mountains under the power of the revolutionary Abt rack and pinion system – technology that transformed the fortunes of the west coast during the late nineteenth century, and the only operating Abt rack and pinion railway in the Southern Hemisphere. We'll stop at historic stations of the West coast wilderness railway, traverse the deep chasm of the King River Gorge with spectacular views, and see the places where early west coast pioneers lived and worked to create this extraordinary railway.

In the afternoon we return to Queenstown for a short guided tour of the historic township. After this you will have time to explore on your own.

Day 17

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

This morning we take the long drive back to Hobart, via the sculpture wall at Derwent Bridge, and in the National park complex at Lake Saint Clair.

The Wall In The Wilderness sculpture is situated at Derwent Bridge. It is Australia's most ambitious art project undertaken in recent years. Creator/designer, Greg Duncan plans to carve the history of the highlands in 100 metres of timber, most of which will be in rare Huon Pine. The beautifully carved works, set out in relief sculpture, depict the history, hardship and perseverance of the people in the Central Highlands and pay homage to the individuals who settled and protected the area.

Duncan is already known for the uncanny realism he brings to his work and his pieces are sought after by collectors around the world. Each metre of the panels, including horses, thylacines and foresters, represents a month's work. There is nothing like this anywhere else in Australia.

Lake St Clair is at the southern end of the world famous Cradle Mountain National park which –Lake St Clair is part of and forms the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The Aboriginal people of the area called the lake Leeawuleena, meaning sleeping water. Carved out by ice during several glaciations over the last two million years, this

is the deepest freshwater lake in Australia (167 metres/ 547 feet) and the headwaters of the Derwent River.

We'll stop for lunch at Lake Saint Clair with time for a walking tour around the shores of the lake before continuing on our return trip to Hobart.

Tonight we have a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 18

Locations: Hobart

Overview:

Our "Tassie" tours of Tasmania, concludes this morning after breakfast.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 17 nights accommodation.
- 17 breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 6 dinners.
- Travel in modern comfortable air-conditioned coach.
- Sightseeing and entrances as specified.
- Services of a Program Leader and local guides.

What's not included in our Tour

- Return airfares to and from Hobart.
- Airport transfers to/from your Hobart Hotel
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Costs of a personal nature like meals not included, laundry and phone calls.

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, moderate walking on uneven surfaces for 3 - 5 kilometres per day. Suitable for most fitness levels.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.