



TRIP NOTES

GOLDFIELDS TRACK

Here are the trip notes for your upcoming trip on the Goldfields Track walk – Daylesford to Castlemaine.

The trip departs from Melbourne.

Our Park Trek guides will collect you from a central pick up location outside the **National Gallery of Victoria, 180 St Kilda Road** (just outside the entrance to the gallery and the large pools) at **7.30am on the day of departure**. Your Park Trek guides will drop you back at the same location upon completion of the tour at approximately 4.30 to 5pm.



DAY ONE

Daylesford to Hepburn Springs

12kms approx. 6 hours of walking, including breaks (easy to moderate grade)

Once we depart from Melbourne, we head in a north westerly direction and arrive in the idyllic village of Trentham where we will stop at the Red Beard Bakery for morning tea. This historic bakery houses an original wood fired oven. The original Scotch oven was used continuously from 1891 to 1987, weighs 75 tonnes and can bake 600 loaves from one firing. It has been producing sourdough breads since 2005. A window enables customers to see the bakery in action.

From Trentham we head to the famous mineral springs town of Daylesford for our first walk which starts at beautiful Lake Daylesford. There is the chance to have a toilet stop before we embark on our walk. The walk itself is approximately 2.5 hours to Bryces Flat where we enjoy a lovely lunch provided by Park Trek at the picnic area.

After lunch we begin our walk toward Hepburn Springs which will take another 3.5 hours. The track passes by the blow hole, revealing rugged, sheer sided gorges along the creek. The path is narrow and rocky and a distinct view awaits around each bend. From the Blowhole the trail crosses the willow lined Spring Creek several times via handmade bridges. We finish for the day at Golden Springs at approximately 3.30-4pm.

We will head to the famous Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa for a relaxing dip in the natural mineral springs pools. The Bathhouse has been providing the experience of traditional communal bathing since 1895 and comprises of the Relaxation Pool and Spa Pool both providing mineral water bathing, which rehydrates and oxygenates the body giving you a total sense of wellbeing. Please note that you are required to have these items ready in your day pack for day 1, as we will not be stopping at your accommodation prior to the bathhouse.

After a relaxing dip, guests will be taken to the guest house to settle in for pre-dinner nibbles followed by a two course dinner prepared by the guides.

Meals – lunch and dinner

DAY TWO

Hepburn Springs to Porcupine Ridge 12kms approx. 6 hours of walking, including breaks (easy grade)

After breakfast and lunch making we head out from our accommodation to Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve, to begin the walk along the Goldfields Track. Here we have the opportunity to sample some of the local mineral spring water. Today's walk takes us through Beehive Gully, which resembles a mini Grand Canyon 10 – 15m deep, a result of extensive mining. Remnants of shafts, water races, quartz crushing battery and a fan of tailings can be seen.

The track meanders up and down through bushland, emerging at the Chocolate Mill. This local chocolate manufacturer offers a good selection and quality of chocolates, if you wish to purchase any we will have an esky in the vehicle so they can be kept cool and taken back to our accommodation for you. We stop at the Chocolate Mill and indulge in a hot chocolate before making tracks.

The Goldfields Track takes us towards porcupine ridge road to our lunch stop at the view point just before the ridge. At the highest point of the trail we get good views through the trees in both directions.

After lunch we will hop back in the Park Trek vehicle and drive to Daylesford Cider in Musk. This boutique cider maker produces a wide range from organically grown heritage apples and we can enjoy some cider tasting in the picturesque setting.

Mid-afternoon we depart Musk and head to the Convent Gallery in Daylesford. The Convent Gallery was once known as the Holy Cross Convent and home to a group of Presentation Sisters. Since opened in 1991 the heritage building complex has expanded to include several galleries, bars, reception spaces, museum, gardens, gift shop and a café.

Park Trek covers the entry to the Convent Gallery and once inside you can wander around at leisure. From here guests can wander to Vincent Street – the main shopping strip in Daylesford or can choose to revisit the Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa (own expense) before nibbles are served around 6pm followed by a lovely two course dinner prepared by your guides.

Meals – breakfast, lunch and dinner

Overnight Daylesford Manor House



DAY THREE

Porcupine Ridge to Fryerstown 17kms approx. 6 hours of walking, including breaks (easy to moderate grade)

After breakfast and lunch making we pack up and depart from our accommodation and make our way back to Porcupine Ridge (the end of yesterday's walk). From there the track takes us through Sailers Gully where we stop for morning tea.

We continue our walk onto Vaughan where there are mineral springs and a picnic area where we stop to have our lunch, and a swimming hole in the Loddon River. If the weather is warm, swimming in the water hole is an option.

After lunch we continue onto Fryerstown (approximately 2 hours). Nestled in the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park Fryerstown has a strong gold history and was home to 15,000 miners at the height of the gold rush. Several fine buildings remain. The town had a butcher, a blacksmith, a boot factory, 25 hotels and a lolly shop.

Following the end of the walk, guests are then transported back to Daylesford where there is some free time to explore the sights of the town such as the Botanic Gardens, Lake Daylesford, Vincent Street or simply relax at Manor House.

This evening we eat out at a local hotel (own expense) and enjoy some local Daylesford Hospitality.

Meals – breakfast, lunch

Overnight Daylesford Manor House

DAY FOUR

Fryerstown to Castlemaine

8 to 12kms approx. 4 hours of walking, including breaks (easy grade)

After breakfast and lunch making, we pack up and check out of Manor House. Our final day of walking commences from Fryerstown where after a short distance we find the remnants of the Spring Gully mines which was one of the most famous mines of the Castlemaine district operating from the 1850s until the 1930s. The most prominent feature is the high stone-faced loading ramp from which quartz was fed into a stamping battery for crushing.

As we approach Castlemaine, a short sharp climb brings us onto The Monk. In season there are wonderful wildflowers and orchids on this prominent viewpoint. The summit is 200m south of the track with vehicle access via Jacobs Track and is our morning tea stop.

After lunch, which we enjoy at the Botanical Gardens there is time to visit two popular attractions The Mill and Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum.

The Mill, formerly operated as the Castlemaine Woollen Mills built in 1875. This rambling complex of brick factories and chimneys now houses artisans, food and wine outlets, vintage goods and a great Austrian coffee house 'Das Kaffeehaus'. A large Vintage Bazaar is open Thursday to Monday 10am – 5pm.

The Castlemaine Art Gallery & Historical Museum celebrated its centenary in 2013 and is housed in a magnificent heritage listed art deco building. The permanent art collection boasts significant works of the late 1800s by such artists as Roberts, Streeton and McCubbin. The museum displays historical items including photographs, costumes, decorative arts and artefacts from the goldfields.

After we leave Castlemaine and bid farewell to the Goldfields Track we make our last stop on our way back to Melbourne at the well-known Duck Duck Goose and Larder, Kyneton. Located in Piper Street this establishment offers café, larder and providore where you can browse or purchase any items you may like to take home with you.



Accommodation:

Daylesford Manor House

The Manor House, Daylesford, is an 8 bedroom and 8 ensuite bathroom property. This magnificent, vast home was purposely built giving consideration to both privacy and group stays. There is ducted heating, a double sided wood fire place, ceiling fans and split system air conditioning. Guides prepare group meals in the kitchen and group dining is around a large bespoke table in the main dining room inside or in the large outdoor barbecue and dining area. All linen and some toiletries are provided at this lovely accommodation. Please note there are no laundry facilities available.

ABOUT THE MEALS

The food we serve is healthy, hearty and home style. Our menus are designed to showcase the fabulous regional produce. Fresh local cheese, yoghurt, fruit, vegetables, fish and meats are used, supporting local farmers and minimising our food miles. We don't offer five-star dining, but our guides take pride in ensuring that all meals are delicious and plentiful, prepared with top-quality fresh seasonal ingredients.

Breakfast is a continental spread of cereals, fruit, yoghurt, toast and spreads. Coffee and tea are always available at your base accommodation.

Lunch can vary from day to day, but includes meat, salad, bread and wraps. Some days might include something different like roasted chicken.

Dinner is a casual two-course meal of main and dessert prepared by your guides. The menu changes to suit available fresh produce but could include a classic roast lamb or a tasty curry. Dessert may include things like maple baked apples, pears in red wine or seasonal fruit salad.

Snacks Guests can prepare their own trail mix each morning from our self-serve trail mix selection. There will be fresh fruit for the trail and biscuits or fruit cake for tea breaks.

Pre-dinner nibbles Each night we prepare pre-dinner appetizers to encourage walkers to come together and reflect on the day and the adventure ahead. This may include cheese, dips, crackers, fruit platter, soup or similar

Dietary requirements We are able to accommodate guests' specific dietary requirements and can prepare meals to meet individual needs.

Alcohol Our tours do not include alcoholic beverages, however guests are most welcome to bring wine/beer along with them. If you are bringing bottled wine, please pack this well in your main bag to avoid breakages. There are opportunities for guests to purchase alcohol in Daylesford.

GEAR LIST

Please bring you gear in a soft bag rather than hard suitcase to help guides pack the trailer.

DAY PACK—recommend approx. 20 litres, with a load bearing harness

As a walker you will need to have your own day pack and water bladder and suitable hiking shoes/boots. Here is a suggested list of what walkers will need to be wearing or have in their day pack:

- rain jacket
- a fleece jacket
- wide-brimmed hat for sunny days
- beanie or woollen hat for cold days
- water bottle or drinking bladder, 1.5 to 2 litres
- high factor sunscreen
- lip balm
- blister pads and / or tape for rubbing and/or blisters
- antiseptic hand gel
- sun glasses
- walking poles (optional)
- gaiters (optional)
- camera
- binoculars
- spare batteries for all devices/charger
- BYO Tupperware container/lunchbox to carry sandwich/ wrap.

MAIN BAG

Your main bag stays at the Manor House for the duration of the trip. You only carry your light day pack while walking.

- 2 pairs long and/or short pants. Preferably loose fitting, lightweight and quick drying
- 2 x Long sleeved shirts
- 4 x T-shirts
- Fleece jacket/woollen sweater – something warm
- Rain jacket/ spray jacket
- Swimmers/bathers and towel for bathhouse
- Walking socks
- if rain is expected, then having a set of thermal under garments can keep you warm in the face of blustery conditions
- a woollen or fleece hat for cooler weather
- lightweight, quick drying towel
- waterproof, reusable bag for worn clothing
- Comfortable shoes and clothing for evenings and activities
- Underwear
- Toiletries— shampoo/conditioner, body wash, deodorant, sanitary products, insect repellent, toothpaste etc.
- PPE - Masks, Hand sanitiser and Personal use rapid antigen tests



LIST OF WHAT WE PROVIDE:

- Two Park Trek guides
- Transport which includes collecting from Melbourne and returning back. We use a comfortable 12 seater mini coach with a trailer attached for luggage.
- 3 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 2 dinners. Plus trail mix, nibbles, fresh fruit
- We have thermos' for tea/coffee during the day
- 3 night's accommodation on a twin share basis at Daylesford Manor House

POST TOUR INFORMATION:

We drop back into Melbourne outside the National Gallery of Victoria between 4.30 to 5pm. We can also drop off at Melbourne Airport if required—please confirm at time of booking. If you are flying out that night you'll need to book a flight out after 6.30pm.

Pre and Post tour accommodation

We pick up from outside the National Gallery of Victoria on Day 1 at 7.30am.

If you are looking for accommodation close to the National Gallery, here are some options:

- Mantra Southbank Tel (03) 8696 7222
- Quest Southbank Tel (03) 9694 5600
- Oaks Southbank Tel 1300 696 186
- Southbank Apartments (03) 9686 7711