



TRIP NOTES

GREAT OCEAN WALK—7 DAY

Here are the trip notes for your upcoming 7 day trip to the Great Ocean Walk.

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 **7.20am for a 7.30am departure.**

Your Park Trek guides will drop you back at the same location upon completion of the tour at approximately 5pm.



DAY ONE

Apollo Bay to Shelly Beach

9 kms approx. – 3 hours – easy / moderate grade

The walk officially starts by the Visitor Centre in Apollo Bay and you will travel the entire 105 km journey of the Great Ocean Walk. The trail winds out through the town to the beach-side suburb of Marengo, named by a passing French explorer. Marengo is home to a colony of Australian Fur Seals who hang out on rocks in the bay.

At several points along The Great Ocean Walk we have the choice of walking along the beaches or rock platforms at low tide or following the inland trail. Due to the unpredictable nature of the tides our guides will make a decision which is the safest route for the day.

Continuing onwards the countryside becomes more rural farmland. The trail continues up a small hill with a stile to climb over a fence. There are good views along the coast looking south-west towards Cape Otway and north-east over the ranges surrounding Apollo Bay. There is a conveniently placed rest bench, followed by a steep descent past The Blowhole. We descend down to a beach where we typically rest before heading into a small section of delightful Otway rainforest. The area after Three Creeks Beach can get a bit boggy after rain so be prepared with appropriate footwear.

The trail enters low forest initially, and then starts to climb into the higher forests of the Great Otway National Park just above Shelly Beach. There is a junction on the trail which leads left down to Shelly Beach or right to the car park at Shelly Beach picnic area.

Accommodation: Johanna Seaside Cottages/ Cape Otway Lightstation

Meals: lunch and dinner.

DAY TWO

Day Two - Shelly Beach to Parker Inlet 18km approx. (6 hours walking) moderate grade

The first section of today's walk leads away from the coast and into the towering forests of Mountain Ash that characterise this part of the Great Otway National Park. At up to 65m high these are some of the biggest trees in Australia and walking through the heart of the giant forest is a wonderful experience, though there are some hills to be negotiated.

The trail rejoins the coast at Blanket Bay, an isolated stretch of coast that was one of the original ports for unloading supplies for the Cape Otway Lightstation. Blanket Bay is one of the few safe swimming locations along the walk.

The track then meanders along the cliff tops and through coastal forests to the quiet haven of Parker Inlet. Expect to see black wallaby, echidna, black cockatoo, rosella and other wildlife along the way.

Accommodation: Johanna Seaside Cottages/ Cape Otway Lightstation

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner.



DAY THREE

Parker Inlet to Castle Cove 19 km (7 hrs walking) Moderate grade

At Parker Inlet you can walk along the water's edge following rock shelves and beaches around Point Franklin or take the inland route. A worthwhile side trip is the short walk to idyllic Crayfish Bay, another safe swimming location. The trail then heads inland through manna gums to the Cape Otway Lightstation, which is Australia's oldest continuously operating lighthouse.

The walk from the lighthouse to Aire River winds its way through wind sculpted landscapes of sand dunes, coastal scrub-land and magnificent calcified cliffs. At the Aire River Lookout there are great views down to the estuary where the Aire River meets the Southern Ocean and Glenaire Beach. It's a steady downhill walk to the Aire River Bridge which crosses the river to the picnic area where we have lunch and look out for koalas.

The trail continues through to Castle Cove following the cliff top, offering incredible views back along the coastline.

Accommodation: Johanna Seaside Cottages/ Cape Otway Lightstation

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner

DAY FOUR

**Castle Cove to Milanesia Gate 17 km
(6 to 7 hrs walking) Moderate to hard grade**

Located on a spectacular bend of the Great Ocean Road at Glenaire, Castle Cove is a beautiful beach surrounded by towering cliffs which have high archaeological significance, as dinosaur fossils have been found here.

From Castle Cove the track winds its way along the cliff tops, through heath-lands and forests, offering extensive views along the coast, the forest a mixture of manna gums, spring wildflowers and magnificent expanses of grass trees. Eventually you will emerge onto the broad expanse of Johanna Beach and cross Johanna river. This beautiful beach is one of the best in Australia with superb views and enormous crashing surf.

The trail continues uphill as you walk high above the Johanna River valley's farmland. Don't forget to look back for spectacular coastal views. Some steep climbing through tea tree scrub and blue gum woodland to Milanesia Gate. Expect to see Eastern Grey Kangaroo in the grassy valleys out from Johanna Beach.

Accommodation: Johanna Seaside Cottages/ Cape Otway Lightstation
Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner.

DAY FIVE

**Milanesia Gate to Moonlight Head
13 km (7.5 hrs walking) hard grade**

The walk from Milanesia Gate to Ryan's Den is the wildest and most challenging section of the entire track.

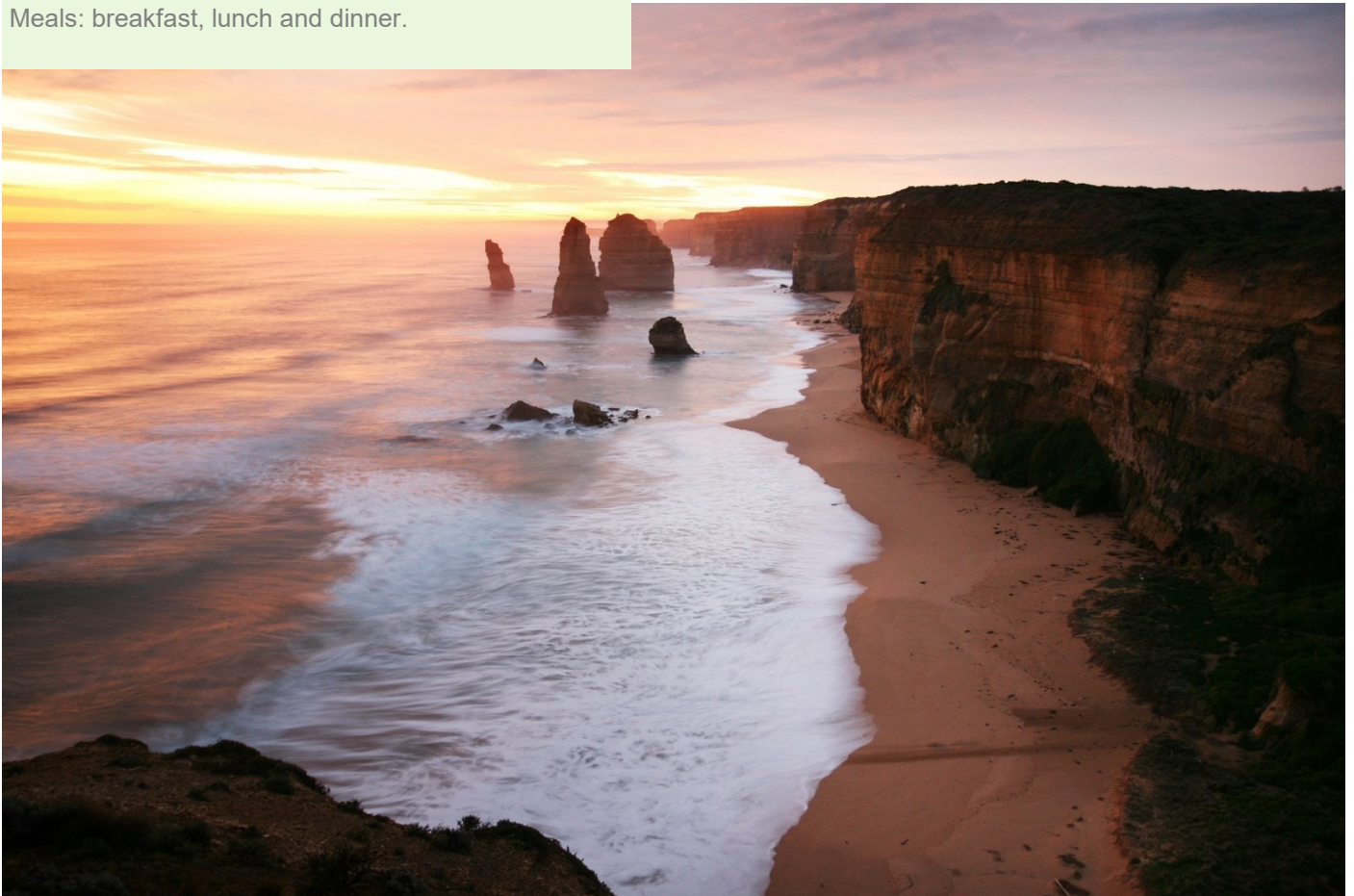
Isolated, rugged and hidden, Milanesia Beach receives few visitors and is all the more special for it. Look for the "beachcomber's cottage" when you reach the beach. If time permits we will pause here and imagine life back then...

From here the trail continues along the high sea cliffs to Ryans Den with breathtaking views all the way back to Cape Otway, and west to Cape Volley.

Enjoy the view over lunch at the tip of Ryan's Den hike-in campground before we continue along steep descents into valleys with sensational remote coastal sea cliff views and finish at Moonlight Head.

Accommodation: Southern Ocean Villas, Port Campbell

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner.



DAY SIX

Moonlight Head, Devils Kitchen to Princetown

17 km (6.5 hrs walking) Moderate grade

After Moonlight Head the track dips down into a valley and follows a newly cut section of track which will lead to The Gables Lookout, perched on one of the highest sea cliffs in mainland Australia.

Continuing along the track through a grove of casuarina trees you will come out near Wreck Beach where at low tide you can descend and see the anchors of two of the many shipwrecks that lie submerged along this coast (*The Fiji* and the *Marie Gabrielle*). From Devils Kitchen you will follow a new section of track that hugs the wild coastal cliffs towards Princetown where our days walking concludes.

This evening we will dine at a local hotel.

Accommodation: Southern Ocean Villas, Port Campbell

Meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner (drinks at guest own expense)



DAY SEVEN

Princetown to Gibson's Steps / Twelve Apostles 7 km (2.5 hrs walking) easy / moderate grade

Our walk starts above the wetlands around Princetown which support a wide variety of bird life. We'll walk down through the Gellibrand River Estuary and reconnect with the Great Ocean Walk on a new track section. This section replaces 1.5km of road walking with about 2km of pleasant walking through the coastal scrub and escarpment. We are now on the home stretch into Port Campbell National Park and the world famous Twelve Apostles soon come into sight.

The Great Ocean Walk now finishes at Twelve Apostles car park, and we recommend, tides allowing, you descend Gibson's Steps to view *Gog and Magog* (not strictly counted as two of The Twelve Apostles) up close from sea level. The last few kilometers can be walked to reach The Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre where you can celebrate your achievements and view The Twelve Apostles up close.

We'll then begin our return journey back towards Melbourne, stopping enroute to eat our packed lunch along the way. Our arrival time in the CBD outside the National Gallery of Victoria (same location as pick up) is approximately 5pm

Meals: breakfast and lunch

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, stewed 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, salmon fillet or Thai chicken. 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 Apollo Bay on route.



ABOUT THE ACCOMMODATION

During this trip we stay at Johanna Seaside Cottages or Cape Otway Lightstation on nights 1-4 and then Southern Ocean Villas on nights 5 & 6.

Johanna Seaside Cottages

The cottages are situated in the heart of the GOR and offer a unique guest experience. Settled in the 1880s, the 260 hectare property is adjacent to Johanna Beach and offers great accommodation in a beautiful setting.

The fully self contained cottages include wood fires, spas and fully equipped kitchens. There is also an indoor heated pool onsite. Our groups use a combination of cottages depending on bedding configuration requirements.

Cape Otway Lightstation Cottages

These historic houses are located in one of the most spectacular settings found along the Great Ocean Road.

Cape Otway Lighthouse is the oldest surviving lighthouse on mainland Australia and considered the most significant. Built in 1848, the lighthouse known as the 'Beacon of Hope' sits 90 metres above the pristine ocean of Bass Strait.

Fully self-contained, this renovated property with open plan lounge and large kitchen provides a great place for groups to enjoy this unique location. The Lighthouse Lodge houses 4 bedrooms and 2 shared bathrooms. You can choose a single supplement if you would prefer not to share a room, this means you would have one room to yourself in the Lodge and would be sharing the bathroom with one or two other guests.

Hairdryers are unable to be used at the Light station as they require excessive electricity to operate. There is an emergency landline onsite, and Park Trek always carry a Satellite phone in case of emergencies. There is no WIFI and limited phone service at the Light station, a digital detox is something we promote on our Great Ocean Walk.

Southern Ocean Villas

Located in a tranquil, landscaped environment on the edge of Port Campbell village, the villas are all fully self contained and ideal for small groups.

Each villa has an open plan kitchen and lounge/dining area along with a scenic outdoor deck. There is a separate laundry with washer and dryer and complimentary Wi-Fi.

Our groups usually stay in 3 bedroom, 2 bedroom villas for two nights.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Park Trek strongly recommends travel insurance, please check with your individual provider for more information regarding unforeseen Covid-19 circumstances coverage

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, min 2 litre
- high factor sunscreen & lip balm
- blister pads and / or tape for rubbing and/or blisters
- antiseptic hand gel
- sun glasses
- walking poles (optional)
- gaiters (recommended)
- camera
- binoculars
- spare batteries for all devices/charger
- Hydralyte

MAIN BAG

Your main bag stays at Cape Otway Lighthouse/Bimbi Park/ Loch Ard Motor Inn for the duration of the trip. You only carry your light day pack while walking.

- 4 pairs long and/or short pants. Preferably loose fitting, lightweight and quick drying
- 3 x Long sleeved shirts
- 6 x T-shirts
- Fleece jacket/woollen sweater – something warm
- Rain jacket/ spray jacket
- Swimmers/bathers and towel (optional)
- 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, who will drive, cook and care for you.
- Transport which includes collecting from Melbourne and returning back. We use a comfortable 12 seater mini coach with a trailer attached for luggage. Plus we use the coach to drop off and pick up during the course of the day.
- 6 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 6 dinners. Plus trail mix, nibbles, fresh fruit
- We have thermos' for tea/coffee during the day
- 6 night's accommodation on a twin share basis at Cape Otway Lighthouse / Bimbi Park & Loch Ard Motor Inn

POST TOUR INFORMATION:

We drop back into Melbourne outside the National Gallery of Victoria at 5pm. 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