

HIKING JOURNEY

Explore Mallacoota & Croajingolong National Park

6 DAYS



WALKABOUT
GOURMET ADVENTURES

Journey Overview

- Experience a very personalised walking holiday with a maximum of 11 guests.
- Stay in Karbeethong lodge, a stylish boutique guesthouse oozing with atmosphere and old-world charm.
- Enjoy delicious dinners each evening after pre-dinner drinks in front of the open fire overlooking Mallacoota Inlet.
- Discover pristine walking trails besides sparkling waterways and deserted beaches.
- Wonder at the pristine wilderness of Gipsy Point and the Wallagaraugh River.
- Explore the extensive waterways of Mallacoota Inlet with local captain Dale Winward aboard the historic MV Lochard and the Gipsy Princess.



Journey Schedule

DAY 1

Melbourne – Bairnsdale – Mallacoota

DAY 2

Karbeethong Lodge – The Narrows – Croajingolong NP

DAY 3

Mallacoota Coastal Walk

DAY 4

Coastal Clifftop Walk to Shipwreck Beach

DAY 5

Gipsy Point and Wallagaraugh River Wilderness

DAY 6

Karbeethong – Lakes Entrance – Melbourne



Journey Itinerary

DAY 1

Melbourne – Bairnsdale – Mallacoota

We depart Melbourne at 9.30 am from

Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens
380 William St, Melbourne

and make our way out of the city and head east to the Princess Hwy. We travel through Latrobe Valley with the Great Dividing Range to the north and the Strzelecki Ranges to the south. We stop for a break in Traralgon and later in Bairnsdale. Just to the south of us are the magnificent Gippsland Lakes – they are Australia’s largest inland waterway covering 600 square kms. They are separated from the ocean by the famous Ninety Mile beach. In the tiny township of Genoa we turn off the Princess Hwy and follow the road beside Genoa River. Our route takes us past Gipsy Point, idyllically located on the banks of the Wallagaraugh River. Shortly after we arrive at our destination – Karbeethong Lodge in the late afternoon. Historic Karbeethong Lodge was built by the Buckland family in 1922. It is one of the few original guesthouses on the coast still operating as a guesthouse today. The name Karbeethong means “moonlight shining on water” in the local indigenous dialect. Over the years it has inspired many of our great artists, poets and writers including Banjo Patterson and EJ Brady. The lodge is beautifully located on the edge of Mallacoota Inlet with spectacular views over the water and Croajingolong National Park. We settle into our very comfortable accommodation and then meet in the cosy lounge room in front of the open fire for our “welcome” drinks. Afterwards we move into the dining room for the first of our lovely dinners.

 **1 HOUR**

 **KARBEETHONG LODGE, MALLACOOTA**

DAY 2

Karbeethong Lodge - The Narrows - Croajingolong NP

This morning after our scrumptious breakfast we begin our walk directly from the lodge and make our way to the lake. Our trail takes us beside the Mallacoota Inlet past the historic Buckland Jetty and boathouse and into the national park.

Mallacoota inlet consists of a Bottom Lake and a Top Lake and is surrounded by the Croajingolong NP. The inlet was formed by the flooding of the Genoa River valley when sea levels rose at the end of the last ice age. The national park covers 88,000 ha and stretches from the NSW border in the north and all the way to Bemm River in the south. It is home to ancient forests, pristine inlets, giant sand dunes and abundant wildlife. It contains some of Victoria's most remote wilderness areas in the state.

Our trail hugs the shoreline as we enter a narrow stretch of waterway connecting the Bottom Lake with the Top Lake known as The Narrows. On the opposite shoreline we pass Snapper Point before the stretch of water becomes quite slender hence the name. It is a very popular spot for recreational fishing and the most popular fish are bream and flathead. It is also a haven for birdlife – dotterels, oyster catchers and crested terns. Two of the most sought-after birds to view are the azure kingfishers and the white breasted sea eagles. Along our trail we shall see scratchings on the side of the track – this is a sign that the lyrebird is nearby and to hear the loud mimicry of them is one of the true wonders of the bush in this area. We are also likely to see flocks of brilliantly coloured rainbow lorikeets as they feed on the bloodwood and banksia blooms.

After approximately 7 kms we come to the Captain Creek jetty and picnic area – this is a perfect spot for our picnic lunch. We have a lovely view from here over the water to Double Creek Arm and towards Quambie Point, on the edge of Top Lake. After allowing time to absorb this pristine environment we retrace our steps back to our comfortable lodge. Time to rest up before we meet again in the cosy lounge room for our aperitifs and another delicious dinner.

 **4 HOURS**

 **KARBEETHONG LODGE, MALLACOOTA**

DAY 3

Mallacoota Coastal Walk

This morning we take the short drive into town and park at Capt Stevenson's point where we have a great overview of the Mallacoota Bottom Lake. In 1842 Capt. Stevenson, who captained whaling ships along the coast, built a house here – it was the location of a large Aboriginal Shell midden which when excavated revealed stone and bone tools, shell deposits and animal remains. Depending on the tide we can follow the shore line into Devils Inlet which will lead us all the way around to Bastien Surf Beach and Bastien Point which now has a modern but controversial boat ramp to allow ocean going vessels to access the Tasman Sea. Bastien Surf Beach is where the locals hang out and is considered to be one of the best surfing spots in East Gippsland. From here we can continue our coastal walk towards beautiful Betka Beach – it is a lovely location for us to have our lunch. The inland waters of Betka River break through to the ocean opening up a fast flowing shallow area. When the entrance is closed off it becomes a warm and still natural playground – a great place to have a safe swim. Our route continues onto Quarry Beach with its jagged sedimentary headlands rising up to 30m high – the rock formations and patterns are exceptional. Our coastal path continues onto Secret Beach which boasts some beautiful rock pools and a sea cave accessible during low tide and of course as the name implies it has a beautiful secret beach. Along our route we are likely to see bloodwoods and angophora trees. In winter to early summer the coastal heathlands are ablaze with colour – grasstrees, scrub she-oaks, prickly tea trees and pink swamp heath are some of the plants which dominate. Keep your eyes open for small orchids growing in the heaths and bushland. The majority of mammals found in Croajingolong are nocturnal but most days you can spot eastern grey kangaroos grazing in open areas adjacent to bushland. Other common animals are possums, both brushtailed and ring-tailed. More difficult to spot are the eastern pigmy possums. Goannas and eastern water dragons are more common especially around the jetties and nearby waterways. We rejoin our vehicle for the drive back to Karbeethong Lodge where we can rest up before joining our hosts, Graeme and Jennifer for another delicious dinner.

 **4 HOURS**

 **KARBEETHONG LODGE, MALLACOOTA**

DAY 4

Coastal Clifftop Walk to Shipwreck Beach

This morning we take a short drive to Quarry Beach on the southern side of the township of Mallacoota. This beautiful beach is bordered by prominent 30 metre-high jagged headlands which have formed from steeply dipping metamorphic rocks. Today we join the Old Coast Road walking trail which takes us along a cliff top walk as far as Shipwreck Creek. Our first stop is Secret Beach – this secluded gem is the jewel in the crown of the beaches in this area, accessible only by staircase and home to some beautiful rock pools. At low tide there is a natural sea cave which is accessible so there is an opportunity for us to spend a bit of time here exploring.

From here our path takes us back up onto the cliffs where we continue onto Pebbly Beach. Along our route we are likely to see bloodwoods and angophora trees. In winter to early summer the coastal heathlands are ablaze with colour – grass trees, scrub she-oaks, prickly tea trees and pink swamp heath are some of the plants which dominate. Keep your eyes open for small orchids growing in the heaths and bushland.

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At beautiful Shipwreck Creek we break for our lunch – it is a lovely remote location with direct access to a gorgeous beach. In the afternoon we retrace our route back to Quarry Beach where we have a short drive back to Karbeethong for some relaxation in front of the open fire and another delicious dinner.

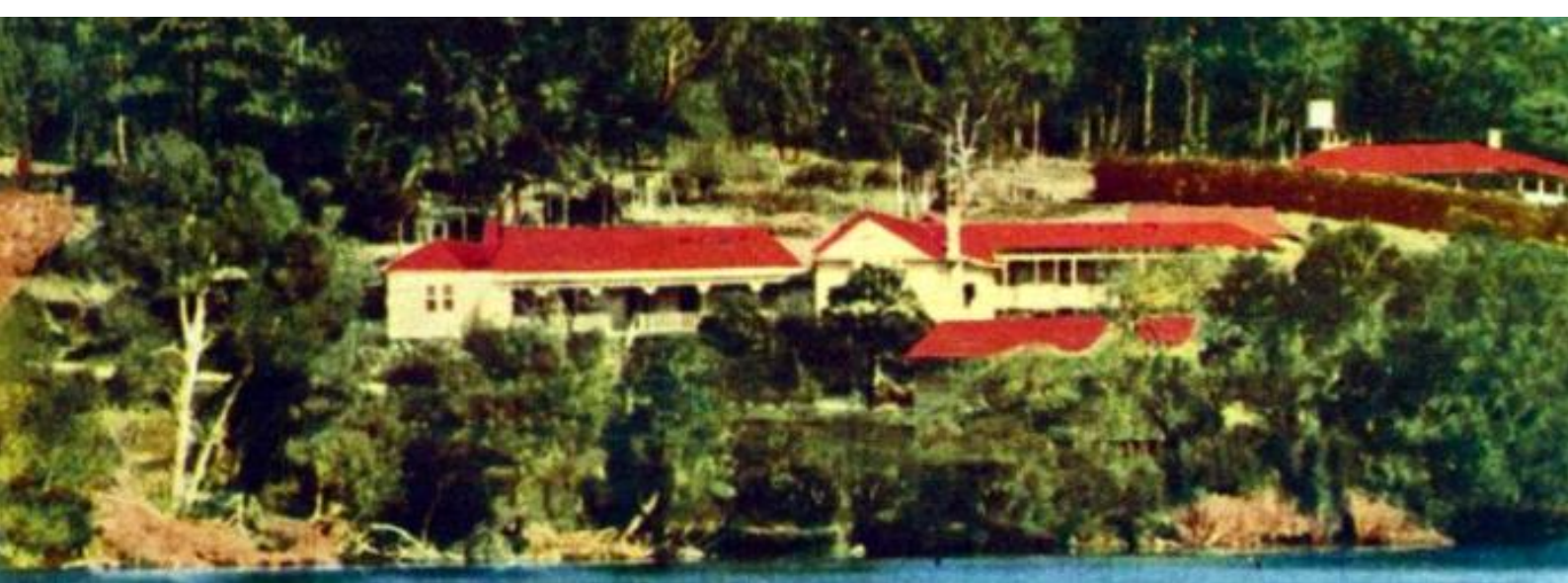
 **4 HOURS**

 **KARBEETHONG LODGE, MALLACOOTA**

DAY 5

Gipsy Point and Wallagaraugh River Wilderness

This morning we take a short drive up to beautiful Gipsy Point above Top Lake on the lower reaches of the Wallagaraugh River. This sleepy little settlement lies within the traditional lands of the Bidawal people. In the early 1870s schooners from Melbourne began making their way up the Mallacoota Inlet as far as Gipsy Point. It is located 8 kms from the township of Genoa so it was a more convenient way for stores to be brought to the area than by road. In the 1880s Gipsy Point was used as a wattle bark camp and mill and in 1890 a store was established and a town was gazetted in 1901. Shortly after the Lake View Hotel was built and together with the local store, they proved to be a drawcard for people to visit the area as provisions from Melbourne could be purchased here. In 1918 the road from Genoa was extended to Mallacoota and thus began the decline of Gipsy Point as the inlet's port. Certainly, one of the most important institutions which has put Gipsy Point on the map has been the Gipsy Point Hotel. It had an amazing location perched high above the water looking down over the tranquil setting where the Genoa and Wallagaraugh rivers meet the incoming waters from the Mallacoota Inlet. It has had a colourful history and none more colourful than the story about its favourite guest "Joe the boulder"!



The Gipsy Point Hotel, Mallacoota, Victoria 1964.

Joe the bouncer in the pub

Strangers think they've had one too many, but the pub regulars are no longer jumpy when a kangaroo they call Joe breasts the bar.



Joe with Dorn Davis and Laurie Temme, Derek

Cowen, Ross Davis and Ted Hocking. Pictures: Keith Barlow

By BILL WELLS

Joe's no lounge lizard, but he is easily the biggest bouncer among the regular drinkers at his local pub. Everybody moves over when he nudges up to the bar to get his "morning special" – a handful of indigestion tablets.

Who is going to argue with the close personal friend of a licensee – particularly when the friend is a 2.1-metre-tall kangaroo?

Joe sprang into the local life-style at the Gipsy Point Hotel near Mallacoota, Victoria, 12 years ago. He was orphaned after his mother was hit and killed by a car. The licensee, Dorn Davis, and her late husband, Doug, nurtured him carefully until he was fit enough to head back to the bush.

But by then it was too late. Joe was well and truly hooked on bar life.

He tried the wide-open spaces a couple of times running with a local pack but before long headed back to the hotel.

“He is as gentle as can be, but he certainly is a smart one,” said Dorn as Joe stretched out a paw for a second round of his favourite digestion tablets.

“He thumps in here like a shot if he thinks there is something going on, which has shattered a few strangers who feel sure they are seeing things.

“He doesn’t like beer, which is just as well because we would have to bar him.

Alcohol of any sort would make him sick and might even kill him. Joe is more of a foodaholic. Indigestion tablets and nuts are his favourites, but he doesn’t turn his nose up if he’s offered chocolate biscuits.”

Joe’s also a bit of a pool fan, but doesn’t see any point in using cues. He could have become the pub champ, but none of the regulars will take him on in a two-paw game.

Not that Joe wastes too much time with the boys at the bar. Like most pub bounders he never confuses conviviality with business and wheeler-dealing.

He has learned to open almost any door with a quick two-paw jiggle, but he restricts his breaking and entering prowess to the guest rooms where he carefully sorts out the tea and coffee packs before getting stuck into the sugar.



Anyone for pool?

“He usually sneaks only into empty rooms,” said Dorn, “but occasionally he makes a mistake. One of our guests left, convinced the place was haunted by a giant kangaroo.”

“Fortunately, Joe always plays it cool when he gets sprung. The only time he landed in trouble was when he went into one room, ate all the sugar, and then for dessert swallowed a lot of sleeping tablets he found.

“He just managed to totter out to a tree in the garden before falling asleep. He spent the rest of the day there flat out.”

Middle-aged by kangaroo standards, Joe’s idea of bliss is a full stomach and a patch of warm grass to sleep on, but he doesn’t mind a game or two between snoozes.

– *Australian Women’s Weekly, Wednesday November 5 1980.*

After admiring the views from the site of the former Gipsy Point Hotel we make our way to the jetty where we meet Dale Winward again who is also the owner and skipper of the Gipsy Princess. Dale also has a farm on the upper reaches of the Wallagaraugh River so our plan today is to explore this majestic section of waterway and enjoy a lunch on the banks of the river near his farm. Dale was an abalone diver in his early days so he can explain to us the history of the abalone industry in this area. His passion today, however, are sea urchins, more specifically his sea urchin pate which he is currently working on.

Another highlight of our trip today is the opportunity to see the magnificent local white-bellied sea eagle up close. Dale says there is a nest along the river which we shall see which has been here as long as he can remember. Each year a female returns to nest and care for her chicks. In the late afternoon we return to beautiful Gipsy Point and take the short drive back to Karbeethong and freshen up for our final evening at our lodge.

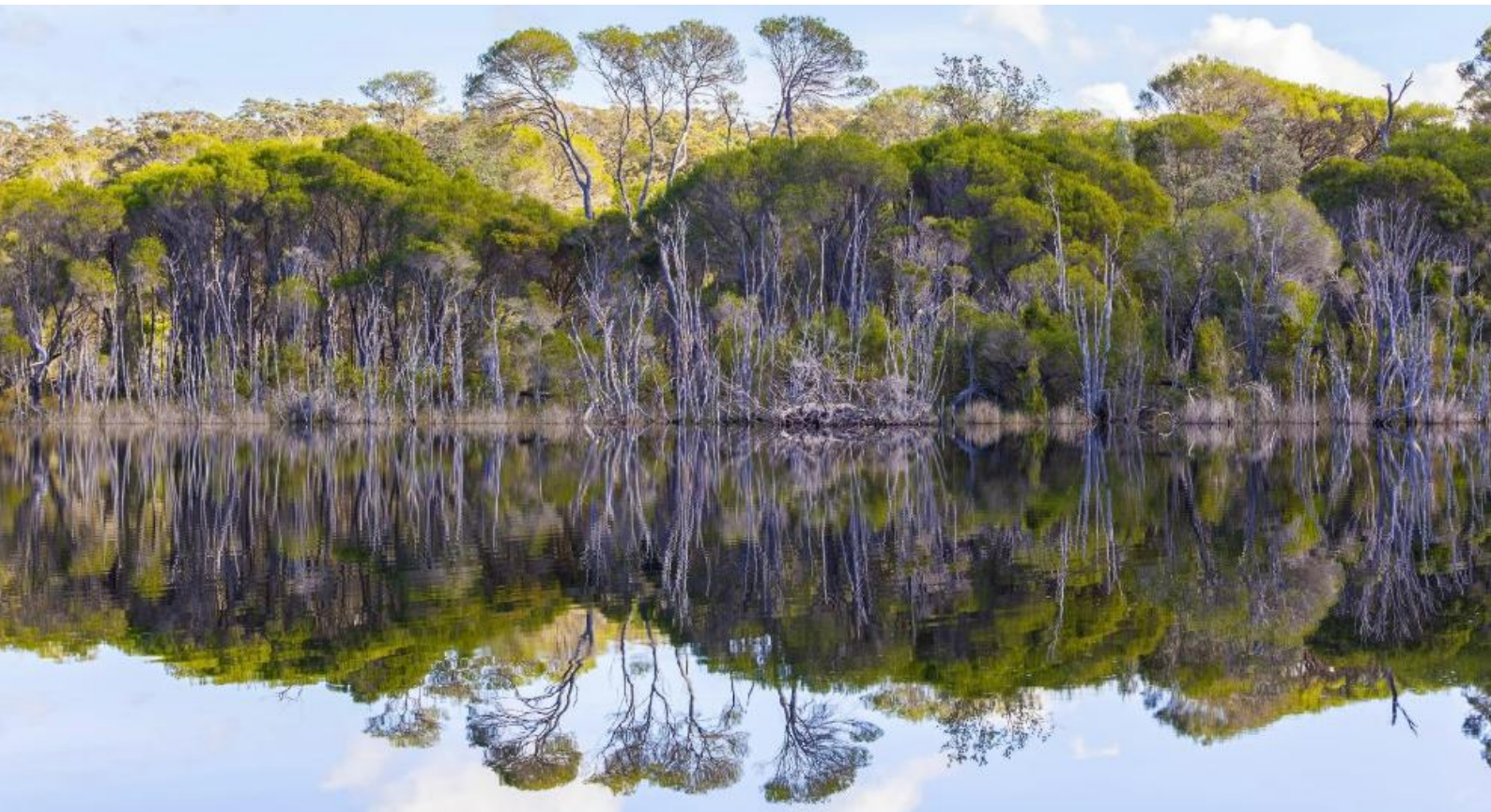
 **3 HOURS**

 **KARBEETHONG LODGE, MALLACOOTA**

DAY 6

Karbeethong - Genoa Falls - Lakes Entrance - Melbourne

This morning after our last breakfast we leave our piece of paradise at the edge of Mallacoota Inlet and make our way back to Genoa where we join the Princess Hwy. Shortly after we take a short walk to the beautiful Genoa Falls. These very pretty waterfalls drop over a series of basalt shelves flowing into the Genoa River which then makes its way into Mallacoota Inlet. Our route takes us to Cann River where we shall stretch our legs and we then continue onto Lakes Entrance for our lunch break. This seaside town is known as the seafood capital of Victoria because of its large number of fishing trawlers operating in the area. It is also known as being the gateway to Australia's largest inland waterway - the Gippsland Lakes. This magnificent lake system is fed by 6 major rivers - the Avon, Thompson, Latrobe, Mitchell, Nicholson and Tambo which all drain their waters from the Victorian High Country in the Great Dividing Range. After lunch we continue our route to Bairnsdale and then onto Latrobe Valley and Melbourne where our tour will conclude at the Radisson on Flagstaff at approximately 6.00 pm.



Journey Accommodation

Karbeethong Lodge, Mallacoota

NIGHTS 1 - 5



Journey Notes

PRICE INCLUDES

- Experienced guide.
- Lunch on day 5.
- Twin share accommodation for 5 nights, breakfasts and dinners each evening.

NOT INCLUDED IN TRIP COSTS

Lunches (except on day 5), evening drinks and in between meal snacks, personal clothing, laundry, medical expenses and items of a personal nature.

WHAT TO BRING

Day pack, 1.5 litre water bottle, walking boots, waterproof raincoat, warm hat, sunhat, bathers, sunscreen and insect repellent. Walking poles will also be handy. As we are

restricted with the amount of luggage, we can carry in our vehicles please ensure that your CASES DO NOT EXCEED 20 KG's per guest.

PRE-WALK PREPARATION

We suggest that prior to your walking holiday you prepare yourself to obtain a level of fitness that will allow you to enjoy your walking holiday.

This, of course, is dependent upon your existing fitness level. Remember, the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the holiday!

- Start with some short walks which include stairs or hills and increase the length of walks over a couple of months.
- We suggest you carry a backpack with water, camera, jacket, snacks, etc. to assist you with your preparation and allow you to get used to the extra weight on your back.
- We also ask that your boots are comfortable and well-worn in.
- Perhaps enjoy some walks through our local national parks and over uneven surfaces to gain confidence with your boots or new walking shoes.

PLEASE NOTE

Single rooms can usually be arranged for a supplement. Please ask us for details. We shall endeavour to match people together if they would like to share a twin room with another guest to avoid paying the Single Room Supplement.

However, as this is not always possible 'single' clients will have to pay the supplement. All Walks during the 6 days are optional. Guests can choose to have a free day whenever they like.

The walking pace on the walking holiday is leisurely.

Guests do not have to be experienced; however, a good level of fitness is necessary.

CONTACT

Guide: Graeme Clarke

Tel: 0458 955 272

Get in touch and book your journey today.

 0461 277 612

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Follow the journey.



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