

HIKING JOURNEY

# The Grampians & The Great Ocean Coastal Walk

WALKING IN THE GRAMPAINS, PORT CAMPBELL AND THE GREAT OTWAY  
NATIONAL PARKS

**8 DAYS**



**WALKABOUT**  
GOURMET ADVENTURES

## Journey Overview

Experience the majestic splendour of the well-known Grampians. This unique area offers spectacular scenery with mountain peaks over 1,000 metres and numerous species of wildlife.

We drive past Mafeking, the site of Victoria's last gold rush, where in 1900 over 10,000 diggers lived under canvas in search of their fortune. Throughout the year the national park is ablaze with a seemingly endless variety of wildflowers. It truly is a botanical paradise. Before European settlement in Australia, a large part of the Grampians was occupied by local indigenous.

Today the region contains the greatest concentration of Aboriginal rock paintings in Victoria. Our walks take us to Mt Zero, the Wonderland and Mt William.

Experience the Port Campbell and Otway National Parks - a perfect location for a few days of fascinating coastal walking. We explore long stretches of unspoiled coastline and walk up into the hinterland, which provides shelter for an array of unique wildlife. We visit the famous 12 Apostles, huge limestone pillars worn and weathered by the stormy Southern Ocean.

The magnificent Melba Gully is the jewel of the Otways and renowned for its dense forests of Myrtle Beech. A highlight of our time in the Otways is the opportunity to walk 2 sections of the Great Ocean Walk. The trail goes through some previously inaccessible areas in the former Otway National Park.

## Journey Combination

Departure dates have been arranged to allow both the "The Grampians & Great Ocean Coastal Trail" and "Explore Wilson's Promontory" walks to be combined.

# Journey Schedule

## DAY 1

Melbourne – Ballarat – Great Western – Halls Gap

## DAY 2

Grampians National Park – Wonderland Range

## DAY 3

Grampians National Park – Mackenzie Falls – Mt Zero

## DAY 4

Grampians – Mt William – Dunkeld – Mortlake – Terang – Port Campbell

## DAY 5

Port Campbell National Park

## DAY 6

Port Campbell – Melba Gully – Lavers Hill – Johanna Beach – Maits Rest – Apollo Bay

## DAY 7

Great Ocean Walk

## DAY 8

Apollo Bay – Lorne – Anglesea – Geelong – Melbourne



## Journey Itinerary



### DAY 1

#### Melbourne - Ballarat - Great Western - Halls Gap

We depart from Melbourne at 9.30 am

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and make our way to the outskirts where we join the Western Freeway and continue onto Ballarat. Before lunch we arrive at the historic village of Great Western. This historic wine village was settled in the 1840's by sheep graziers and developed through

the discovery of gold and the planting of grapes. Since 1918 the House of Seppelt has owned the Great Western Winery. One of the most fascinating features of the vineyard are the famous Champagne Drives. Excavated in the 1880's from decomposed granite, this 3 km underground labyrinth of tunnels, houses an impressive collection of wines. Before we commence our tour of these historic drives and our wine tasting we adjourn to the winery's beautiful grounds for our first picnic lunch.

In the late afternoon we continue on the Western Hwy to Stawell where we turn off to Halls Gap. Surrounded by the splendour of the Grampians National Park our accommodation is in an idyllic position.

Set amongst the untouched landscape of the majestic Grampians Mountains and backing onto wetlands abundant in Australian wildlife, our cosy accommodation offers comfort, convenience and tranquillity in the heart of Halls Gap.

Tonight, we dine in one of the Grampians longest established restaurants - The Kookaburra. This culinary institution has been preparing delicious meals for over 25 years - a fine recommendation in itself!

Over this time their menu has always featured classic old favourites, alongside tantalizing and innovative menus that the weary traveller and locals alike recognise for their intensity of flavour, freshness and presentation.

 **1 HOUR**

 **HALLS GAP**



## DAY 2

### Grampians National Park - Wonderland Range

This morning after a delicious outdoor breakfast we drive the short distance to Brambuk -The National Park and Cultural Centre.

Here you can learn about the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park's exceptional environment and the fascinating Aboriginal culture.

The Park is renowned for grand and rugged mountain ranges, spectacular wildflower displays and a wealth of Aboriginal rock art sites.

Today we take the short drive to Wonderland Car Park from where our walk begins. Our lovely bush track meanders along Stoney Creek past an impressive outcrop of rocks.

From here we enter the magnificent Grand Canyon. After winding our way through a rocky woodland, we come to Silent Street. Shortly after, we arrive at the Pinnacle Lookout, where we are treated with awe- inspiring views.

After our relaxing 'picnic with a view' our track descends along the ridgeline down to a stringy-bark forest with grass trees and a multitude of wildflowers, especially during Spring. We continue following our track towards Stoney Creek until we arrive back into the centre of Halls Gap.

Before returning to our lovely accommodation we have time for a refreshing drink in one of the cosy outdoor cafes. For the energetic there is a heated indoor pool to soothe your weary muscles!

Tonight, we have a memorable dining experience in a lovely restaurant in town.

 **5 HOURS**

 **HALLS GAP**

## DAY 3

### Grampians National Park - Mackenzie Falls - Mt Zero

After another delicious breakfast we make our way to the Northern Grampians. The colours, shapes and textures of the Northern Grampians remind one of Central Australia.

Massive sandstone outcrops and eucalypt covered slopes tower above the Wimmera Plains. This is a very different landscape to the Central Grampians and is rich in Aboriginal history.

Before arriving in the northern part of the Grampians we stop at Mackenzie Falls. They are one of the largest waterfalls in Victoria. Flowing year round, the falls sees water cascade over huge cliffs into a deep pool, sending fine sprays of rainbow mist high into the air above a stunning gorge. After allowing plenty of time to enjoy the 2 short walks around the falls we return to the picnic area for our lunch.

Our drive continues on the Western slopes of the Grampians Range arriving at the Mt Zero Picnic Area. The first part of the walk is across the steep slopes of Flat Rock. It then descends briefly to the famous Taipan Wall - a favourite rock face for experienced rock climbers from all around the world.

We retrace our track along the same route with impressive views across to Mt Zero and the Mt Zero Olive groves.

A short stroll from the Hollow Mountain Car Park is the Gulgurn Manja Shelter. Meaning "Hands of Young People" the Aboriginal art-work tells some of the stories and legends of the Jardwadjali people and the mountains they called Gariwerd.

In the late afternoon our route takes us along the Mt Zero Road to Halls Gap where we have time to relax before enjoying a pre-dinner drink in the delightful gardens of our accommodation. Tonight, we return to the Kookaburra Restaurant for another delicious dinner.

 4 HOURS

 HALLS GAP

## DAY 4

### Grampians - Mt William - Dunkeld - Mortlake - Terang - Port Campbell

This morning we leave Halls Gap and travel to the base of Mt William. From here it is only a short walk to the summit and at 1,167 metres it is the highest peak in the Grampians National Park.

Dwarfed eucalypts give way to wonderful views of mountain ranges and distant plains. We retrace our steps where we join our vehicle and continue to the Southern Grampians. At Dunkeld we have spectacular views of Mt Sturgeon and Mt Abrupt. Leaving the high peaks behind us we make our way across the plains of the Western District; renowned for producing some of the finest merino wool in the world.

After our picnic lunch we continue our route South via Terang arriving at the Southern Ocean and our accommodation for the next 2 nights at Port Campbell.

In the early 1800's, sealers and whalers regularly visited this stretch of wild coastline and used the small inlet at Port Campbell for shelter during voyages between Tasmania, King Island and Sydney. The Port Campbell National Park was established in 1964 in order to preserve and protect some of the most dramatic coastline to be found anywhere in the world. We settle into our luxurious accommodation which is positioned in a tranquil and landscaped environment on the edge of Port Campbell. The architect designed luxury villas are stylishly furnished in a peaceful part of the town.

Tonight's dinner is in a delightful restaurant in the centre of town.

 **2 HOURS**

 **PORT CAMPBELL**

## DAY 5

### Port Campbell National Park

This morning, after our delicious breakfast, we travel west along the Great Ocean Road to its start near the Bay of Islands. We gradually work our way back towards Port Campbell stopping at all the sights along the way. One of the most interesting sights is London Arch (formerly known as London Bridge) which spectacularly fell down in 1990 leaving two tourists stranded on what suddenly became an island.

Pounded by the wild Southern Ocean, the Port Campbell National Park has been sculpted over millions of years to become one of the most weathered natural sites in Australia. Sheer limestone cliffs, towering rock stacks, arches, islands and blowholes have all been carved out by the wind and sea.

We allow some time for a short walk along the coast for a closer look at this fascinating landscape. The coast's formation began around 10 - 20 million years ago. Interestingly millions of tiny marine animal skeletons built up beneath the ocean to form limestone.

As the sea retreated the soft limestone became exposed to the natural elements.

Before lunch we call in at Timboon Farmhouse Cheeses. These delicious cheeses are made from organic milk according to traditional cheese making principles giving the cheese a unique quality, texture and flavour.

After a cheese tasting you have the opportunity to purchase a delicious picnic lunch and a glass of wine and relax in the beautiful gardens.

This afternoon we make our way east from Port Campbell to the Loch Ard Gorge. It was at this site in 1878 that the Clipper, the Loch Ard, was wrecked and 52 lives were lost. Two survivors were cared for at nearby Glenample Homestead. In the cemetery near the site of the shipwreck 4 casualties are buried.

Our discovery walk takes us past the Island Archway, Muttonbird Island, Thunder Cave, Broken Head and Sherbrook Estuary. In the Loch Ard Gorge itself we are able to access the small secluded beach where the two survivors of the shipwreck scrambled to safety.

Our next stop is the Twelve Apostles. They are probably one of the most photographed natural wonders in Australia, certainly Victoria. They are stacks of limestone formed about 20 million years ago. Their unusual shape has come about through years of weathering from both the sea and the air. There are frequent small rock falls. In July,

2005 there was an unusual event as one of the original Apostles crumbled to the ocean floor – an accumulation of millions of years of weathering.

The wild and powerful Southern Ocean that sculpts the area’s limestone landscape also shrouds a remarkable seascape beneath the sea. So spectacular and important are these underwater features that a Marine Sanctuary has been established.

Savour the soft afternoon light as we return to our minibus and retrace our route back to our lovely accommodation in Port Campbell. Before dinner why not take a pre-dinner drink near the harbour and watch the sunset over the mighty Southern Ocean. This evening we return to the town to enjoy another delicious dinner in our excellent restaurant.

 **4 HOURS**

 **PORT CAMPBELL**



## DAY 6

### Port Campbell - Melba Gully - Lavers Hill - Johanna Beach - Maits Rest - Apollo Bay

This morning we leave Port Campbell and travel along the Great Ocean Road past the 12 Apostles again and into the magnificent Great Otway National Park.

Formerly Otway National Park, the new park now incorporates a number of former state parks increasing the area to over 100,000 hectares - an increase of more than 60,000 hectares! It is an area of tall trees and valleys of giant tree ferns and a coastline which is mostly inaccessible and rugged. Apart from the towering Mountain Ash eucalypts which are some of the tallest hardwood varieties in the world the other equally impressed variety are the Myrtle Beech which can be located in the damp gullies and more densely vegetated parts of the park.

Our first stop is Princetown where we are able to do a short walk along the Gellibrand River arriving at a welcoming café for morning tea. From here we continue into the Otways.

They have a proud logging history which was at its peak in the early 1960's. Wildlife is also in abundant supply. Wallabies, possums, koalas and grey kangaroos are quite common and often seen.

Our next stop is "the jewel of the Otways" Melba Gully. It comprises a dense rainforest of Myrtle Beech, Blackwood and Tree Ferns. The area was named "Melba Gully" by Mrs Jessie Fry in 1921 after Australia's famous opera singer Dame Nellie Melba. She used to operate tearooms on the site of the currant picnic area. In the 1880's settlers began clearing the forest; sawmills were established and timber tramways were built to carry logs to the narrow-gauge line which ran to Colac. During the 1930's and 1940's Melba Gully was a popular picnic spot for bus tourists.

The property was sold in 1958 to Mr and Mrs Alex Marsden who, very generously, offered it to the Victorian Conservation Trust in 1975. Following their namesakes track we arrive at the "Big Tree", which was the sight of a 300 year old messmate with a 27 metre girth - a reminder of the giant trees which once covered the Otways. Many of the inhabitants of this area are shy and nocturnal. They include possums, wallabies, quolls and platypus.

Birds are more readily observed including Thrush, superb Wrens, Yellow Robins and Rufous Fantails. Some of the most unusual inhabitants are the glow worms which can be seen at night along the walking tracks.

From here it is on to Johanna where we join a section of the Great Ocean Walk. Our route takes us on to the magnificent beach and then in the direction of the mouth of the Johanna River which we saw the source of earlier at Melba Gully. We retrace our steps from the beach and follow the cliff-top path to a beautiful viewpoint with an amazing coastal panorama in all directions.

In the late afternoon we continue our drive along the Great Ocean Road. At Maits Rest, time permitting, we stop for another chance to do a short rainforest walk through this magnificent area. Just outside of Apollo Bay we arrive at our lovely accommodation. Nestled in 20 acres of beautiful green rolling hills all our rooms have magnificent views overlooking the coastline.

Tonight's dinner is in Apollo Bay where we have the opportunity to sample some more of this wonderful coastline's fresh seafood.

 **4 HOURS**

 **APOLLO BAY**



## DAY 7

### Great Ocean Walk

Today we join one of the world's great coastal walks. Stretching more than 90 kms it begins at Apollo Bay and finishes adjacent to the 12 Apostles in the Port Campbell National Park. It passes through stunning forests and the coast of the Otway and Port Campbell National Parks. It also overlooks the Marine National Park and Sanctuary. We begin at the little beach community of Marengo where the track follows the low bluffs along the coast. At Storm Point our track takes us onto the beach for some 800 metres before we divert inland again at Bald Hill. After approximately 2 hours walking, we come to the beautiful Shelly Beach. Our track now heads inland again through coastal forest, wet fern gullies and stands of tall blue gums. At the Shelly Beach picnic area, we break for our picnic lunch. In days gone by, the Gadabanud people's traditional homeland extended across the Otway coast. The area was rich and diverse in plant and animal life and was a gathering, ceremonial and feasting place for thousands of years. In the late afternoon we retrace our steps to Marengo and after a short drive we are back at our idyllic accommodation where you can just put your feet up and admire the fantastic coastal views. Tonight, we have a special treat in store for you at Chris's Beacon Point Restaurant for our final celebratory dinner.

 **5 HOURS**

 **APOLLO BAY**



## DAY 8

### Apollo Bay - Lorne - Anglesea - Geelong – Melbourne

This morning after a leisurely breakfast we make our way along the magnificent Great Ocean Road. Stretching more than 285 kms it is surely one of the world's truly great coastal routes.

It was built after the First World War to provide employment for the returning veterans and to this day is an engineering feat. At Lorne we stretch our legs for a short coastal stroll and a look around this fashionable coastal resort.

We continue past more stunning beaches and in Anglesea we stop for lunch in a funky local café. Before

arriving in Torquay, we take a short detour to iconic Bells Beach, one of the most famous surfing beaches in the world. From here it is only one and a half hours back to Melbourne where our Grampians and Great Ocean Coastal Walk concludes. The expected time of arrival in Melbourne is 5.00 pm.

## Journey Accommodation

Halls Gap Motel, Halls Gap

**NIGHTS 1 - 3**



Southern Ocean Villas, Port Campbell

**NIGHTS 4 - 5**



## Seafarers Getaway, Apollo Bay

**NIGHTS 6 - 7**



## Journey Notes

### PRICE INCLUDES

- Experienced guide.
- Pick up at 9.30 am in Melbourne on Day 1 and drop off at 5 pm in Melbourne on Day 8.
- Twin share accommodation for 7 nights including breakfast and dinners each evening and National Park entry fees.

### NOT INCLUDED IN TRIP COSTS

Picnic lunches on Day 2-8 (guests will have the opportunity each day to buy provisions for their picnic lunch), pre-dinner drinks and in-between meal snacks, personal clothing, laundry, medical expenses and items of a personal nature.

### WHAT TO BRING

Daypack, 1.5 litre water bottle, walking boots, waterproof raincoat, sunhat, bathers, sunscreen and insect repellent. Please restrict your luggage to a maximum of 20 kgs.

## **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 8 days are optional. Guests can choose to have a free day whenever they like. The walking pace 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.

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## Follow the journey.



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