Welcome to the Wild Women On Top Cradle Mountain Winter Walk

Ready for an unforgettable winter walk in Tasmania? The crowds are gone, the air is crisp and the iconic Overland Track beckons with winter adventure. Nothing beats this World Heritage Area after a fresh snowfall!

Here you will find everything you need to prepare and get excited about your adventure, all in one document. From pick-up times to gear lists, daily distances to accommodation details, this is your Wild Women On Top Cradle Mountain Huts Winter Walk go-to-guide.

Prepare by day, to trek beneath rugged snowy mountains, past cascading waterfalls and through ancient rainforests. By night, cold winter evenings often deliver the surprise of clear skies dominated by the radiant Milky Way Galaxy cast within a dome of thousands of bright stars!

Enabling this incredible walking experience are our inspiring guides, lightweight packs and the sanctuary of the Tasmanian Walking Company's private-in-park accommodation complemented by hearty home-cooked meals, a glass of wine, hot showers, warm fire, drying rooms and a cozy bed. These simple creature comforts enable you to awaken rejuvenated each morning and truly engage with one of the World's great walking experiences!
The Trip

Trip Summary

**Trip Duration:** 8 days/7 nights

**Grade:** Challenging

**Activities:** Winter trekking with a full pack on the iconic Overland Track

**Summary:** 1 night hotel, Six nights in private huts on the Overland Track

**Price:** $4,295 per person (twin share)

Something extra special

This tailored itinerary includes the following exclusive additions:

- One night’s (twin share) bed and breakfast accommodation at the Cradle Mountain Hotel
- Three course dinner with matching wines at Cradle Mountain Hotel
Benefits of a Wild Women On Top Partner Adventure

Wild Women On Top helps women lead adventurous lives they love. When you join a Wild Women On Top partner adventure, you become part of an incredible team, training and hiking together to maximise everybody’s enjoyment and success. Wild Women On Top support you to get the most out your Wild Adventure, making it a truly transformational challenge.

What Wild Women offer

/ A Wild Women Coach who leads and empowers the team, shares Wild Women culture and traditions and supports you in your preparation for the adventure.

/ An exclusive itinerary tailored to the needs of women, prioritising magic moments of natural exhilaration and breathtaking challenges.


/ Training and preparation to ensure all your teammates are perfectly prepared and fit for the adventure (that means you must be, too!). If you can’t join us for Trek Training in Sydney, you can prepare with the Luvmyhike 12 week online training program and check in with your coach regularly.

/ Everyone must be a member of Wild Women On Top so you’re guaranteed your teammates understand our culture and have like minded goals.

/ The Golden Rules to create a loving, successful and supportive environment during your adventure.

/ A Facebook group to connect you with your team and encourage team building as well as give you direct access to your coach.

/ A complimentary copy of How To Prepare for World Class Treks ebook by Di Westaway.

/ Please note: Tasmanian Walking Company guides and staff are responsible for delivering your extraordinary experience during your adventure. Please direct all pre, mid and post trip feedback to the Tasmanian Walking Company. Your Coach is NOT the tour operator, guide, navigator, or first aider.
## Itinerary

### At a glance

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<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>WALK SECTIONS</th>
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| One | Vehicle Transfers  
Launceston to Cradle Mountain Valley | - | Cradle Mountain Hotel | -/-/D |
| Two | Cradle Valley to Barn Bluff Hut | 12 km (7hrs) | Barn Bluff Hut | B/L/D |
| Three | Barn Bluff Hut to Pine Forest Moor Hut | 12 km (7hrs) | Pine Forest Moor Hut | B/L/D |
| Four | Pine Forest Moor Hut to Pelion Hut | 10 km (7hrs) | Pelion Hut | B/L/D |
| Five | Pelion Hut – Contingency Day | Optional summit trips | Pelion Hut | B/L/D |
| Six | Pelion Hut to Kia Ora Hut | 7 km (7hrs) | Kia Ora Hut | B/L/D |
| Seven | Kia Ora Hut to Windy Ridge Hut | 9 km (7hrs) | Windy Ridge Hut | B/L/D |
| Eight | Windy Ridge Hut to Lake St Clair | 9 km (7hrs) | Return to Launceston | B/L/- |

Please note this itinerary is subject to change depending on weather conditions. We will endeavour to remain as close to the written itinerary as is practicably possible. Our guides will keep you up to date and informed along the way. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call us on 03 6392 2211 or email bookings@taswalkingco.com.au.
Day 1

Launceston – Walkers Base at Quamby Estate – Cradle Valley

Our shuttle will collect guests from The Sebel Hotel Launceston at 2:00pm, before making our way out to the Launceston Airport for a 2.30pm pickup. From the airport, you will be transferred to our Walkers’ Base at Quamby Estate, 25 minutes west of Launceston. Here, you will meet your guides, have a gear check and briefing before heading up to the Cradle Valley.

We will arrive at Cradle Mountain Hotel between 6-6:30pm, so there will be plenty of time for a relaxed dinner before retiring for the evening.
Waldheim to Barn Bluff Hut

After breakfasting at the Cradle Mountain Hotel, you will need to be ready to meet your guides in the Lodge’s reception area at 7.45am. From here, our bus will transfer you to Waldheim and the start of the Overland Track, where we aim to start walking by 8.30am.

Your personal luggage not required for the walk will be transferred to our walkers base at Quamby Estate, stored securely for the duration of your walk and will be accessible upon your return to the Walkers’ Base.

By lunch time, we have walked through our first section of ancient temperate rainforest and witnessed the dramatic glacially carved Crater Lake. The steepest section of the whole Overland Track is behind us. The steepest section is mostly stepped and takes us about an hour (depending on weather conditions). It gets us onto Marion’s Lookout, which, in clear conditions, offers iconic and spectacular views of Cradle Mountain (1,545m), with Dove Lake at its base – worth every step.

If the weather is fine, we stop for lunch by the peaceful Plateau Creek. We then continue on for about another 4 hours around the base of Cradle Mountain, out along the edge of a spectacular glacial cirque. We drop into Waterfall Valley, which we cross before arriving at our hut at the base of the towering Barn Bluff (1,559m).

Several hours of this day’s walk traverses exposed alpine plateau, which allows great views on a clear day. In rough weather, the wind howls over the landscape, making for exciting and sometimes challenging walking conditions.

Some of the track is uneven under foot, however, we take our time to walk carefully and make sure we still look at the wonderful scenery all around.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT DISTANCES MAY VARY ON TRACKING DEVICES*
Day 3

Barn Bluff Hut to Pine Forest Moor Hut

The walking today is undulating, with a few sections of exposed moorland. There are no large hills, and the once notoriously muddy Pine Forest Moor now has a duckboard path over the mud! We may offer an optional side trip to Lake Will.

We travel across plains, where once glaciers sat and slowly moved, scouring out shallow tarns. Now we see plains of button grass, with ancient Pencil Pines sitting with their roots in the water. Rising from the moors, the peaks of Cradle Mountain and Barn Bluff are behind us to the north, and the stately Mount Pelion West (1,560m) directly ahead. Take advantage of the viewing opportunities at several lookout points and complete the day through an enchanting rainforest before arriving to the comfort of Pine Forest Moor Hut.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT DISTANCES MAY VARY ON TRACKING DEVICES*
Day 4

Pine Forest Moor Hut to Pelion Hut

Today we begin with a long slow descent around the base of Mt Pelion West down to the Forth River before it plunges into the Lemonthyme Valley. After a break at Frog Flats by the Forth River, we have a long gentle ascent out of the valley onto the beautiful Pelion Plains with outstanding views of Mount Oakleigh (1,252m). If the weather allows there are many side trips in the Pelion Plains area with mountains all around, some excellent swimming holes, abandoned copper mines, or simply peaceful and humbling spots to rest quietly.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT DISTANCES MAY VARY ON TRACKING DEVICES*
Day 5

Pelion Hut – Contingency/Rest Day

Today is a day of options. If you would like to relax at Pelion Hut and have a rest day, you are most welcome. If the weather is good, we can climb either Mt Ossa (1,617m) or Mt Oakleigh (1,252m). The guides will discuss different options with the group.

Please note if weather conditions are poor throughout another section of the itinerary, the guides may change the rest day to be at a different hut.
Day 6

Pelion Hut to Kia Ora Hut

Begin today with a climb to Pelion Gap, where there are great views both back to the north and forward to the south. Today we allow extra time for additional side trips from Pelion Gap. It’s a further few hours of gentle downhill from the gap to the hut, so it is a very relaxing day, with the option to make it more challenging.
Kia Ora Hut to Windy Ridge Hut

This is a day of waterfalls and majestic forests. We depart Kia Ora hut and walk about an hour of easy travelling to Du Cane, where a hut remains from the long-gone days of animal trapping. A fine spot to rest in the native gardens planted by trapper Paddy Hartnett’s wife during her long stints in the bush with her husband. From there we wander through some of the oldest forest in the National Park with King Billy Pines as old as 2,000 years. Here, we are above the Mersey River, which descends steeply northward towards Bass Strait. There are three major sets of waterfalls, and we opt to visit one or more of these. We will probably take lunch down to enjoy beside one of the falls.

During the afternoon, we make our way over Du Cane Gap, then descend beside the spectacular Falling Mountain to Windy Ridge Hut.
Day 8

Windy Ridge Hut to Lake St Clair

Lake St Clair is Australia’s deepest natural lake and, as with most of this area, it has been shaped by glaciers. Our final day’s walk is mainly through cool temperate eucalypt forest, and bird song is all around. We arrive at Narcissus Hut, at the northern end of Lake St Clair, in time for lunch. We then board the Ida Clair cruise boat, for the spectacular 17km cruise back to Cynthia Bay.

There is a visitor centre at Cynthia Bay, and we usually have about half an hour to look around (and perhaps grab a coffee)!

The return trip to Quamby Estate meanders through the trout fishing mecca of the Highland Lakes, descending the rugged Western Tiers to the broad plains of the Northern Midlands, finally passing through the rural townships of Cressy and Longford.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT DISTANCES MAY VARY ON TRACKING DEVICES*
What is included

/ Return Transfers between Launceston and the walk base/Cradle Valley/Lake St Clair

/ Accommodation (twin share) for one night at Cradle Mountain Hotel, including breakfast

/ Three course dinner and matching wines at Cradle Mountain Hotel

/ Accommodation (twin share) each evening in one of our five private huts - twin share

/ All meals and non-alcoholic beverages, plus a limited selection of Tasmanian wines

/ National Park passes

/ Boat transfer across Lake St Clair (on Day 8 only)

/ Use of a backpack and Gore-tex jacket/Sleeping bag for the duration of the walk

/ Pillows and a comfortable mattress at each hut

/ Sleeping sheet and pillowcase to carry with you/Sleeping bag to carry through

/ Two qualified guides and one hut support staff member for the duration of the walk

/ Your Wild Women Coach joining the walk
Gear List

We provide the following:

- A high quality 65 litre backpack
- Waterproof walking jacket
- Sleeping bag and liner, foam mat
- Either crampons or chains are provided for the duration of the walk – these items you will carry each day
- Snow shoes will be provided if weather conditions necessitate. They will be available for you at our walkers’ base on day one
- Pillows and comfortable mattresses are provided in each hut
- Sunscreen, after-sun care, insect repellent and sorbolene-based skin moisturiser are available in each hut. We still recommend you bring a small amount with you for use on the track
- We also provide biodegradable soap that is suitable for our ecofriendly grey water systems. Please avoid bringing your own soaps, shampoos and conditioners (unless prescribed for medical reasons), as standard products are not designed for use in these sensitive wilderness areas

Essential Gear List

The gear list outlines the essentials required to enjoy your walk in comfort and safety. The items below will be packed into your 65 litre pack (provided) and carried by you. If followed correctly, the pack should weigh about 12-15kg. Your comfort and enjoyment are of paramount importance to us, and keeping your pack weight to a minimum is our goal. Aim for one set of warm clothes for the evening and another set to wear whilst walking plus have a spare warm top. Thermals are necessary due to their lightweight, quick-drying and warm properties. There are no facilities for laundry available at the huts.

Please note that guides will do a thorough gear check prior to departure. If you are unsure about anything on the gear list, please call us or talk to your local outdoor adventure store (e.g. Mountain Designs, Paddy Pallin).

Any luggage not required on your walk can be stored with us.
Essential Items

/ Lace-up walking boots, which provide good support & have strong, treaded soles (e.g. Vibram), waterproof and ankle support. Walking boots must cover the ankle bone. Guests arriving with the incorrect footwear will be unable to start the walk.

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/ Synthetic fleece jacket or jumper

/ Light jumper/long-sleeved top (warm)

/ Down jacket/vest (or synthetic equivalent)

/ Beanie (wool or synthetic)

/ Scarf, neck warmer or buff

/ Waterproof gloves/mittens with insulation

/ Gaiters (long – reaching to just below the knee (available through Bushwalking Hire Gear)

/ Waterproof over pants 3 layer waterproof membrane preferred, nylon acceptable (available through Bushwalking Hire Gear)

/ Shorts and/or light trousers for walking

/ Polypropylene or merino thermal underwear – both long-sleeved top and long johns (2 sets required)

/ Warm long pants (evening hut wear – wool or synthetic)

/ Shirts/t-shirts (3 recommended; avoid cotton)

/ Socks (3 pairs recommended)

/ Underwear

/ Lightweight hut footwear (thongs/sports sandals)

/ Sun hat and sun screen (small bottle for use during the day)

/ Travel towel, body chamois or sarong (bodysized, for showering)

/ Water bottle(s) (2 litres total capacity)

/ Head torch

/ Walking poles with snow baskets (available through Bushwalking Hire Gear)

/ Please note: Denim clothing is not appropriate as it is heavy and very cold to wear when wet
Recommended Items

/ Camera (with spare batteries, or USB or car charger – limited recharging capacity in huts)

Optional Items

/ Pocket day pack (for optional side trips – can be pre-purchased at www.bushwalkinghiregear.com)

/ Instant hand and/or foot warmers

Hire Gear – Bush Walking Gear Hire Tasmania

Gaiters, wet weather over pants, headlamps and walking poles are available for hire from Bushwalking Hire Gear Tasmania. You can arrange this directly by booking and paying online at www.bushwalkinghiregear.com at least one week prior to your walk, to arrange hire and delivery to our walker’s base before departure of your walk.

Frequently Asked Questions

What flights should I book? Due to the nature of the Tasmanian winter weather, we highly recommend you book fully flexible flights. Should the weather become inclement, your group may need to spend an additional night in one of the huts. This is unlikely, however we cannot guarantee it won’t happen.

How much weight do we carry? Before the trip, the guides will carry out a thorough gear check to ensure you have suitable gear. Pack weight will typically be approximately 12-15 kg.

What do we carry? Each person must carry their lunch, wet weather gear, sleeping bag, foam mat (emergency use), spare clothes for the hut, thermals, and warm clothing, plus any extras, such as a camera. It is important that all clothing and equipment that you bring is of an adequate standard. If you need further advice, please speak with our reservations staff. For more detailed information, please refer to the gear checklist.

What style of boots should we have? It is essential you have good quality, lace-up hiking boots with good ankle support. They should preferably be waterproof and have a treaded sole. Boots must be worn in to minimise the risk of blisters. Hiking shoes, approach shoes, walking or running shoes, sandshoes or similar are not acceptable.
**Do we need travel insurance?** You must have travel insurance before joining us on a winter walk. Consideration needs to be given to our cancellation policy, injury, evacuation, delayed flights, illness, etc.

**What will our walk accommodation be like?** Our groups have exclusive use of the only private hut accommodation along the Overland Track. Each hut has been discreetly located off the main trail and offers a hot shower, drying room and a dining and lounge area. The huts have 6 twin rooms with comfortable beds.

**How many guides?** Two guides and one hut support staff member will accompany each trip

**How much does it cost?** The price per person twin share is $4,295.00

**How about food?** The guides prepare scrumptious three-course meals each night. We are quite happy to cater for special dietary requirements. We just need to know in advance.

For example:

- **On arrival at hut:** Antipasto platter, including Ashgrove cloth matured cheddar, Lactos brie, Tasmanian pickled onions, pesto dip, dried apricots and cashews.
- **Entree:** Hearty minestrone soup
- **Main course:** Forest mushroom and pea risotto with parmesan
- **Dessert:** Freshly baked cherry pie with cream

**What time does the trip commence and conclude?** Our shuttle will collect guests from The Sebel Hotel Launceston at 2:00pm, before making our way out to Launceston Airport for a 2:30pm pickup. From the airport, you will be transferred to our walking base 25 minutes west of Launceston. Here, you will meet your guides, have a gear check and briefing before heading up to the Cradle Valley.

We will arrive at Cradle Mountain Hotel by 6:30pm where we will check before enjoying a sumptuous three course dinner with matching wines.

The walk will conclude at Quamby Estate (our walking base) at approximately 6:00pm. There will be a shuttle bus departing at 6.00pm, which goes via the Launceston Airport at approximately 6.30pm, arriving back at The Sebel Hotel Launceston at about 6.45pm.

**How to contact us**

Phone: (03) 6392 2211  
Email: bookings@taswalkingco.com.au
Fitness Recommendations

If you are healthy, have a good level of fitness and have had some multi-day walking experience you should enjoy this winter walk. Depending on weather conditions, it is likely the walk will throw up some added challenges, so this journey is not for the faint of heart. You will need to carry some extra gear, so your pack weight should be between 12-15kgs. Please see full gear list for details.

The Overland Track in Winter

Walking the Overland Track during the colder months is considerably more challenging than our regular walk (season 1 Oct - 1 May). The shorter daylight hours will also have an impact on the journey from hut to hut. Availability of side trip options along the walk and time allocations between huts will vary significantly dependent on weather and on ground snow conditions. Along the Overland Track, you will be walking on some boardwalk, over rocky trails and through rainforest. For more information about the track please visit: [http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/indeX.aspX?base=27921](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/indeX.aspX?base=27921). Ice can have a significant impact on this sort of terrain so we provide crampons or chains to assist. The trail can be quite rugged underfoot and muddy in sections. It is therefore essential that you have good lace-up walking boots, with treaded soles and firm ankle support.
Preparation

The best way for you to maximise your enjoyment of the walk and get the most out of your holiday is to put some extra effort into building up fitness in the weeks leading up to your walk. The greater your level of fitness the less trouble you will have with fatigue or muscle soreness. A higher level of fitness also equates to a higher level of safety when walking in the Tasmanian highlands during the winter months.

It’s not too hard to improve your level of fitness in the lead up to your walk and it is highly recommended that you do so, no matter what your starting point. The best preparatory exercise for walking is walking. While walking you will be using different sets of muscles than you would if you were cycling or playing tennis for example.

We recommend starting training eight weeks before the start date of your walk (or earlier if possible – walking is fun!) Find an hour two or three times a week to go for a walk nearby, with hills. (This is also the time you should be thinking seriously about wearing in your walking boots if you will be walking in a new pair).

Four weeks before the start date, step up your training. Go for three or four longer day walks with boots on and a pack of similar weight to the one you will be carrying on your walk. Take friends and make it an enjoyable experience.

We have asked you to rate your personal level of fitness during the booking process. Based on the definitions outlined below, to join us on a winter walk you will need to be at a minimum of level three (but preferably at level four or five).
Fitness levels

**Level 1:** You choose the elevator over the stairs each time. You do not participate in any organised sport or go to a gym regularly. However, you may go for an extended walk in your local neighbourhood every alternating week. Your level of fitness is adequate but compared to the early morning jogger low. You do not normally carry a day pack recreationally or for work purposes and generally avoid heavy exercise.

**Level 2:** You choose the stairs sometimes because you feel up to it on the day. You have identified the need for exercising but find it hard to find time to do so. You enjoy a weekend walk in your local recreational park or national park but would rather walk to the local cafe if given the chance. You own a day pack but rarely utilise it except for your gym clothes or daily provisions when on the occasional excursion.

**Level 3:** You enjoy a walk 2-3 times a week and occasionally go on an overnight walk. You are in good health and have a reasonable level of fitness. You partake in fluctuating sports or gym activities. You can comfortably carry a reasonably sized backpack of between 5-8 kgs. You can complete 5km of walking on urban terrain within the hour.

**Level 4:** You enjoy a walk and/or run 4-5 times a week and go on overnight walks multiple times a year. Your level of fitness is moderate to high and is supported by a consistent exercise routine which may involve sports and/or gym work. You enjoy longer bushwalks and adventure activities and have set goals when it comes to you fitness in relation to outdoor pursuits.

**Level 5:** You have a high level of fitness and are very conscious about weight, your health and lifestyle. You participate in 30-60 minutes of exercise daily and partake in aerobic and or muscle strengthening exercises weekly. You can carry a full bushwalking backpack in excess of 10kgs with ease and have associated multiday walking experience.