

Welcome to the Cradle Mountain Signature Walk (4 day)

Join us on the iconic Overland Track, retreating each evening to the only private accommodation along the trail. Over 4 days, the rare beauty and diversity of Tasmania's World Heritage-listed Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park is yours to discover.

Expert guides take the lead across this ancient landscape, converting to chefs come evening. They'll also take the heavy load, leaving you with a light weight pack. At the end of each day, retreat to a hot shower, sumptuous meals, freshly baked bread, a glass of Tasmanian wine and a comfortable bed. We'll walk the first three days of the Overland track and then exit the Wilderness World Heritage Area via the Arm River Track on day four.

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 Cradle Mountain Signature Walk (4-day) go-to-guide.

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Acknowledgement to traditional owners

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this land, we acknowledge and pay respects to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the past and present custodians of the Land. We are privileged to learn from them in the way we care for and share Tasmania's diverse nature and culture, and we strive to walk humbly in the footsteps of those who have walked these paths before us.





Walk at a glance

Trip Duration: 4 days/3 nights



Grade: Moderate* – during daylight savings (September - April) *More in challenging weather. Challenging – outside of daylight savings (April to May).

Accommodation: Private Huts along the track within the National Park



O Activities: Spring/Summer/Autumn trekking with a light weight pack on the iconic Overland Track.









Why walk with us?

We are proudly Tasmanian and have been walking for over 35 years. Our history and reputation will be with you every step of the way. Our hosts design your meals, our guides connect you, our accommodation comforts and shelters you.

The Tasmanian Walking Company was born in 1985, after the Tasmanian Government called for expressions of interest for a commercial operator to develop an "accommodation based" guided walk along the Overland Track in the Cradle Mountain/Lake St Clair National Park.

Since then, we have expanded our horizons and now walk all over Australia, delivering unique experiences to our guests and encapsulating what it means to be 'Truly Tasmanian' every step of the way. We offer our guests the chance to build incomparable memories, being immersed in the magic of the remote wilderness with local produce, world-class guides, local knowledge, lightweight packs and the comfort of knowing that we have you covered -- you don't need to worry about a thing!

Our guides are our best assets. They are highly trained and there with you every step of the way, seamlessly bringing together all elements of a great walking experience to make your time with us unforgettable.

Our accommodation has been architecturally designed with a commitment to sit gently on the natural environment, whilst maximising natural assets and protecting wildlife.

Our vision is to inspire people to connect with and conserve the natural environment and culture of the Australian wilderness for generations to come. We are committed to making a real difference with sustainable tourism at the heart of what we do. Over the years Tasmanian Walking Company has been the proud recipient of many tourism and sustainability awards. In 2020, we launched the Tasmanian Walking Company Foundation (www.taswalkingcofoundation.com.au), a non-for-profit organization to support and advocate for the sensitive environments that we walk amongst.

We want to provide you with an unique opportunity to step out of everyday life into nature and be revitalised. You'll leave your time with us with a fresh, profound perspective of humanity, the environment and wanting to come back for more.

Let us take care of everything, as we take you on an adventure of a lifetime.





Itinerary

At a glance

DAY	WALK SECTIONS	DISTANCE	STAY	MEALS
One	Red Feather Inn to Cradle Mountain Valley to Barn Bluff Hut	12km (7hrs)	Barn Bluff Hut	-/L/D
Two	Barn Bluff Hut to Pine Forest Moor Hut	12km (6hrs)	Pine Forest Moor Hut	B/L/D
Three	Pine Forest Moor Hut to Pelion Hut	10km (5hrs)	Pelion Hut	B/L/D
Four	Pelion Hut to Arm River Valley	14km (6hrs)	Return to Launceston	B/L/-

^{*} PLEASE NOTE THAT DISTANCES MAY VARY ON TRACKING DEVICES.

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
12km (Moderate)

Waldheim to Barn Bluff Hut

On the summit of Cradle Mountain in 1910, Austrian-born Gustav Weindorfer proclaimed, "This must be a national park for the people for all time." It's fitting our journey begins at Waldheim in Cradle Valley, where Weindorfer's story is told. We set off on the track, venturing through ancient temperate rainforest, passing the dramatic glacially-carved Crater Lake.

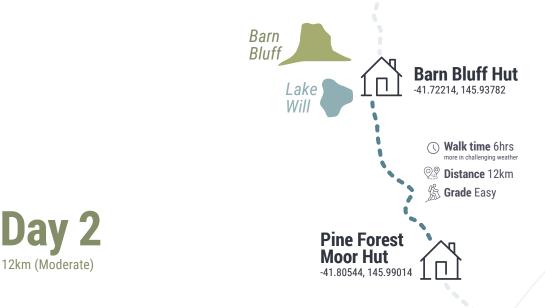
We climb the steepest section of the whole Overland Track today and pause for a hearty lunch. Reaching Marion's Lookout (1,250m) after negotiating steps leading through steeper sections, offers a satisfying reward. Providing weather conditions allow, we enjoy staggering views of Cradle Mountain and Dove Lake. Every uphill step is worth it.

We continue around the base of Cradle Mountain along the edge of a spectacular glacial cirque before dropping into Waterfall Valley. Our private hut awaits, beneath towering Barn Bluff, having completed the steepest part of your journey (excluding side trips). It's a welcome retreat after several hours walking over exposed alpine plateau where some days the wind howls – a reminder of nature's power.









Barn Bluff Hut to Pine Forest Moor Hut

Today we'll be walking across plains where glaciers once rested, slowly moving and scouring out shallow tarns. The track provides an undulating trek with a few sections of exposed moorland and multiple hill climbs and descents.

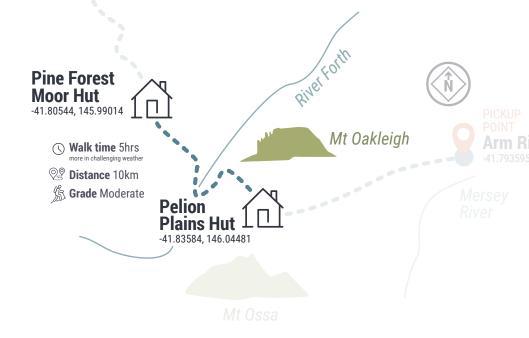
We take our time venturing across vast button grass plains where ancient pencil pines fringe alpine tarns. Rising from the moors, the peaks of Cradle Mountain and Barn Bluff are behind us. Look ahead, and the stately Mt Pelion West comes into view.

Those looking for additional challenge today can take a side trip to Lake Will. Hugged by pencil pines and with its narrow quartzite sand rim, Lake Will is striking. Keep an eye out for gravel mounds along the way, remnants of Joseph Will's coal mining efforts in the 1890s. Further along the track, Lake Windemere offers an opportunity for an invigorating swim.

This evening, at Pine Forest Moor Hut, enjoy dining with views out towards Mt. Oakleigh.









Pine Forest Moor Hut to Pelion Plains Hut

This morning we venture through gorgeous myrtle-beech rainforest as we descend around the base of Mt Pelion West, down to the Forth River before it plunges into Lemonthyme Valley. We'll take a break at Frog Flats beside the Forth River, which happens to be the Overland Track's lowest point.

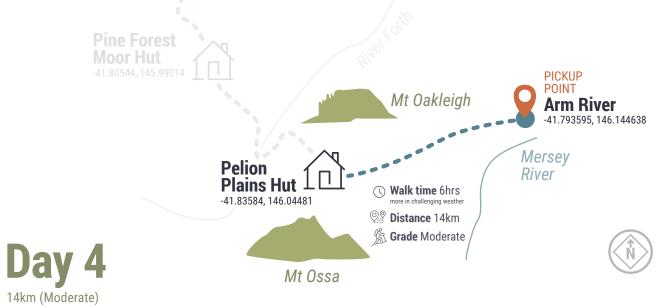
From here, it's a gentle ascent back out of the valley. We leave thick Eucalypt forest behind as the trees part to reveal Pelion Plains. Uninterrupted views of Mt Oakleigh's dolerite spires now come into play.

The Pelion Plains area offers a host of side trips, hugged by mountainous terrain including peaceful nooks to rest and an abandoned copper mine to explore. Come nightfall, we'll be nestled amongst dry sclerophyll forest at Pelion Plains Hut.









Pelion Plains Hut to Arm River Valley

Today, we head east, crossing Pelion Plains and following the southern shore of Lake Ayr, mainly wandering through open eucalypt forests and across button grass plains. We then follow a gradual incline along the Innes Track before having lunch near Wurragarra Creek.

From this point, Mount Pillinger and peaks along the Overland Track dominate our view.

After lunch, we pass the mirror-still waters of Lake Price before a sharp descent into the Mersey Valley near the Arm River. This is where our shuttle bus is waiting. Our return trip to Red Feather Inn takes us through the Mole Creek Karst area and the rural township of Deloraine.





What is included

- Return transfers between Launceston and the start & finish of the walk
- Accommodation (twin share) each evening in one of our five private huts
- All meals and non-alcoholic beverages, plus a limited selection of Tasmanian wines
- National Park and Overland Track passes
- Use of a backpack and Gore-tex jacket for the duration of the walk
- Sleeping bags, pillows and a comfortable mattress at each hut
- Sleeping sheet and pillowcase to carry with you
- Two qualified guides for the duration of the walk

Gear List

The items on the gear list will be packed into your pack (provided) and carried by you on the 4 days guests carry gear.

We provide the following:

- A high quality 50-litre backpack (available on the morning of departure)
- Rain jacket (3-layer membrane; weatherproof and breathable, available on the morning of departure)
- Pack cover and pack liner
- Sleeping sheet and pillow case (sleeping bags provided in huts)
- Lunch container and cutlery
- Basic toiletries (sunscreen, after sun care, insect repellent, Sorbolene-based moisturiser; available at each hut)
- Biodegradable liquid soap (also suitable as a shampoo; available at each hut - we would appreciate it if you used our soap, as it is phosphorus-free and suited to our greywater systems)
- Hut libraries offering a range of books and games (including field guides; some titles are available in every hut along the track)
- * Please note: any luggage not required on your walk can be stored at our office and will be returned to you at the conclusion of your walk.
- * You're welcome to bring your own backpack and rain jacket if you would prefer. These need to be of an appropriate standard and will be assessed by the guides on the morning of departure.







Essential Gear List

When you arrive at our walkers' base it would be great if you could have all the gear you intend to take with you separated from any other luggage (perhaps in a garbage bag). This will make the packing process run more smoothly.

Essential Items

- Please refer to our <u>footwear guide</u> for specific shoe recommendations for this walk.
 - We can not over-emphasise the importance of appropriate footwear. Lower-profile hiking shoes, walking shoes, running shoes, approach shoes, sand shoes, elasticised boots and similar are not acceptable.
- Polar fleece jacket (preferred) or woollen jumper/pullover
- Light jumper (warm)
- Beanie or balaclava
- Gloves or mittens
- Waterproof over-pants (nylon, PVC or Gore-tex)

- Shirts/t-shirts (merino or polypropylene;2-3 recommended)
- Warm, long pants (evening hut wear)
- Socks (2-3 pairs recommended)
- Underwear
- Lightweight indoor footwear (thongs/sports sandals; for hut use)
- Sun hat & sunscreen (small bottle for use during the day)
- Travel towel or body chamois (for showering; light and quick-drying)
- Water bottle(s) or water bladder (2-litre total capacity required; our packs can fit a water bladder - just ask your guides)
- Travel mug for hot drinks out on track
- Gaiters (long gaiters, reaching just below the knee; for protection against mud and rough vegetation)
- Head torch minimum 300 lumens with spare batteries or USB charging cable
- (2 sets: merino or polypropylene longsleeved top and long johns)
- Shorts and/or light walking trousers
- Lightweight, compressible day pack for side trips – should pack down to pocket size.
- Any personal medication, including anti-inflammatories and EpiPens
- * DENIM AND COTTON CLOTHING ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR WALKING

Download Footwear Guide







Recommended Items

- Walking poles (highly recommended for negotiating rocky terrain and muddy patches, as well as assisting with balance and muscle fatigue)
- Camera
- Spare batteries or USB power cord for camera (there are eight USB charging ports in each hut)

Optional Items

Bathers

Tip: Layering

Layering of clothing has long been the basis for dressing in the outdoors and the gear list above follows this principle. When the temperature drops, we add another layer of insulation; if it rains, we add a rain shell on top and when it's warm and dry, we strip off a layer.

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.

- * Your comfort and enjoyment are of paramount importance to us, and our intention is to keep your pack weight to a minimum. Aim for one set of warm clothes for evening and another set to wear whilst walking. Thermals are necessary due to their lightweight, quickdrying and warm properties.
- * While the huts include drying rooms for wet gear, they do not incorporate laundry facilities. If you adhere to the packing list, you should be all set for the duration of your walk.
- * 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.







Frequently Asked Questions

How often do trips depart?

Our 6-day trips depart daily from 1 October through to 1 May each season, and our 4-day trips depart on selected dates during the same period.

What is the accommodation 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 hot showers, a drying room and a dining and lounge area. The huts have 6 twin rooms with comfortable beds.

How many guests will be on my trip?

Each trip requires a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 guests. All accommodation is twin share. If you book on as a single walker or in an odd-numbered group and the trip fills to capacity, you will share a room with another walker of the same gender.

What do we carry?

Each person must carry their lunch, wet weather gear, spare clothes for the hut, thermals, and warm clothing, plus any extras, such as a camera. For detail please refer to the gear list.

How fit do I need to be?

As long as you exercise regularly, are capable of walking an average of 10 km for six consecutive days, and are comfortable with varied terrain, you'll be fine!

There are obviously steep sections and terrain can be quite uneven and slippery under foot, however this is part of the whole experience.

If you have any concerns about fitness, please call 03 6392 2211 and speak with one of our friendly Reservations staff members. We are more than happy to discuss additional information about what you can expect.

How much weight do we carry?

On the morning of your departure, the guides will carry out a thorough gear check to ensure you have suitable gear and help you reduce pack weight.

If you adhere to our gear list, your pack will likely weigh between 8.5 and 9.5kg. With special attention to reducing pack weight, your pack and its contents can weigh as little as 7.5kg. The pack and rainjacket that we provide have a combined weight of 2.5kg, leaving 5-7kg for your personal items.

Please note: This weight is based on the recommended water capacity for this walk. If you choose to carry more water, your pack weight will most likely weigh upwards of 9.5 kgs.







What style of boots should we have?

Please refer to our <u>footwear guide</u> for specific shoe recommendations for this walk.

Do we need travel insurance?

We strongly recommend travel insurance.
Consideration needs to be given to our cancellation policy, injury, evacuation, delayed flights, illness, etc. Please see our Booking
Terms & Conditions for details and contact us if you have any questions.

How about food?

The guides prepare sumptuous meals each night. We are quite happy to cater for special dietary requirements. We just need to know in advance.

For example, here is the dinner menu served at Pelion Hut on Day 3:

On arrival at hut: Grazing plate

Main course: Forest mushroom and pea risotto

with parmesan

Dessert: Creme Brulee

How many guides are there?

Our guides are passionate outdoor enthusiasts, educated interpreters and fantastic cooks all rolled into one. Two knowledgeable guides accompany each trip. This allows plenty of time for interpretation at interesting points along the track, photo opportunities, rest breaks and walking at your own pace.

What time does the trip commence and conclude?

At the start of your walk we ask that you be at our walkers base at Red Feather Inn at 7:00am for a briefing. This allows time for introductions and a gear check before departing for the Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park.

For those staying in Launceston CBD, we offer a complimentary shuttle service from The Chalmers Church (5A Frederick St, Launceston). You will need to be ready in front of the church entrance at 6.30am. For those staying at Quamby Homestead our shuttle will pick you up in front of reception at 6.30am for the 10 minute transfer to Red Feather Inn.

Your walk will conclude at Red Feather Inn at 6.00pm with airport drop offs at 6.15pm and Launceston drop offs at 6.30pm.

Are there age restrictions?

The minimum age for guests walking with us is 12 years old. There are no upper age restrictions, however, for guests walking with us who are 69 or above we do require a GP to sign off on a letter we provide.









Accommodation suggestions pre and post-walk

Red Feather Inn - our walking base

Located in the small township of Hadspen, just a 10 minute drive from Launceston's CBD makes it the perfect accommodation prior to your walk. Red Feather Inn has a range of double and twin heritage rooms and three beautiful cottages which are perfect if you are travelling with friends or family. To see details of the current special rate which includes in room continental breakfast visit our Walker Benefits page.

Quamby Homestead

Set on the grounds of Quamby Estate,
Quamby Homestead is the perfect pre or post
night of accommodation if you would like a little
luxury. The homestead features ten restored
guest rooms which feature antique furniture.
Rooms are appointed with king, queen or twin
bedding, marble or stone bathrooms and
heated floors. To see details of the current special
rate which includes breakfast visit our Walker
Benefits page.

We will provide a transfer to Red Feather Inn for your trip departure on the morning of day one.



Staying in Launceston

For hotel options in Launceston, please visit our Walker Benefits page for a range of special rates available to our guests. Our shuttle service leaves from out the front of our head office at Chalmers Church at 6:30am. Please notify our team prior to your walk if you wish to use this complimentary service.

Parking

Parking is available at the walker base at the Red Feather Inn and at the Quamby Homestead for the duration of your walk.



Fitness Training

Multi-day bushwalking/trekking/tramping/ hiking is a unique physical activity as it involves endurance, joint stabilisation and strength. Being physically prepared ensures that your experience will be enjoyable. We recommend that you undertake some hikingspecific training in the lead-up, ideally starting 6 months in advance to allow your body time to become conditioned.

Hiking-training is more than just regular walking; your body needs to be prepared for not only the duration of the trek, but also the uneven terrain, undulating hills, pack weight and slippery surfaces. Adequate training months before the trek begins will ensure you are skipping around the hut at the end of the day with a smile on your dial.

3-6 months before your walk

If you have limited experience with longdistance treks, ideally you will get started with your training as soon as possible. We recommend starting with a more moderate training program, and gradually increasing the length/difficulty/duration of your walks.

Ideas:

- Try parking your car further from work and walking to/from, then every second day increase the distance you park your car from work
- Getting off your bus a stop earlier and walk the extra distance to work
- Short bush walks or coastal strolls on the weekend
- Encourage a friend or family member to walk with you to increase motivation
- Record distance and duration each day that you walk. Aim to increase either distance or duration each week





5 months before your walk

As you become conditioned and can comfortably walk for 30mins to 1hr every second day (3-4 days per week), it is time to start challenging your cardiovascular endurance by adding hills and stair climbs to your weekly routine. Try to find routes that allow you to walk on uneven ground, as this will help strengthen the muscles of your lower limbs. Start by walking at a relaxed speed up the slope or stairs for the first two sessions (record the time it takes you). Focus these sessions on relaxed breathing and your technique (standing up straight, engaging your bottom muscles as you push through your heels when ascending stairs). Each session following try to increase your pace (decreasing your recorded time).

If you haven't already, start "breaking in" your hiking boots to prevent blisters and determine whether your boots are the right fit and feel. If your boots are more than 10 years old there is a good chance the glue will have deteriorated and they will fall apart. It's better to find this out on your training walk than in the middle of the wilderness!

Stability is essential for injury prevention when hiking, especially when carrying a backpack. This includes stability around your spine and pelvis and your more distal joints such as knees and ankles. Therefore balance, yoga and/or pilates based exercises should be added to your training.

Ideas:

- Single leg balances, keeping a micro bend in your knee
- Advance single leg balance by standing on a rolled towel, foam mat or pillow
- Barefoot beach walking on soft sand for ankle stability
- Pilates based abdominal exercises (various depending on starting level)

4 months before your walk

On your walk you will be carrying a pack, so we strongly recommend that you start wearing a backpack on your training walks. Start with a lighter backpack (~3kgs) and gradually increase the weight of your pack till 100% of the weight you will carry as noted in the Gear List.

Ideas:

- Start to add a longer walk ~2hours at least once a week; this includes wearing hiking boots and carrying a pack
- Soft sand walking
- Walking on dry riverbeds
- Alternating training walks with selected focuses e.g. Mon= hills, Wed= intervals of increased pace, Fri=distance

No doubt you are starting to discover new muscles and feeling a little tight and stiff.

Adding a gentle stretching program (after you have warmed up) will aid in injury prevention.

Aim to stretch major muscle groups such as hamstrings, quadriceps, buttocks and calf muscles. A gentle stretch of the muscles should be felt and pain should never be produced. Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds and avoid bouncing movements.







3 months before your walk

Map out a 7km hike in your area consisting of average hills and flat surfaces. Time how long it takes you to walk this distance (wearing hiking boots and backpack). Complete this hike once per week in conjunction with your other walking. Each week, add an extra km to your hike. By the end of the month the goal is to walk 10km comfortably. This hike is a good chance to practice with all the gear that you intend to take on your actual hike. This will enable you to work out where things are best located in/ on your pack for your individual preference. Now is also good time to add in more strength based exercises.

Ideas:

- Squats (feet are hip width apart, body weight in your heels). Advance by added weights in each hand or increasing repetitions
- Lunges (alternating legs in front, protect your knees by making sure front knee does not come further forward than your ankle, keep torso up straight). Advance by increasing repetitions, adding weights in hands or walking lunges

2 months before your walk

The trekking tour is getting closer and now you are comfortable walking on different surfaces at different intensities. On the actual hike, you may be required to walk long distances on consecutive days in all weather conditions. Aim to walk 30mins-1 hour every day of the week, despite the weather (in addition to your weekly 7km hike).

Continue carrying your backpack that you will actually need to carry on the walk. Ideally by the end of this month you will be able to comfortably carry up to 100% of the required weight on all your training walks.

1 month to go!

This is your "tapering" month, we recommend reducing the intensity of your training in this last month to avoid a burnout. The idea is to keep walking regularly, but decrease your intensity e.g. slower pace, one stair at a time rather than two, decrease your pack weight back to what you will carry on the trek. The last thing you want to do is get an injury just before your walk.

Remember to continue your strengthening and stretching exercises throughout your hike.











Contact us

To make a booking or enquiry:

e: enquiries@taswalkingco.com.au

For existing bookings:

e bookings@taswalkingco.com.au

p (03) 6392 2211

w www.taswalkingco.com.au

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Leave a review

Don't forget to pass on your feedback at the end of your trip! Is there an aspect of the walk that amazed you, or is there something we can do better? Leave us a review on **Trip Advisor** or **Google** to share your stories with other walkers and pass along any feedback for our team.

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Don't miss anything. Get news about our walks, special offers, events and behind-the-scenes stories from Tasmanian Walking Company.
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