



track notes

2 day/2 night Weekend Great Ocean Walk

A weekend experience of the Great Ocean Walk

Introduction

The Great Otway National Park follows the winding curves of Victoria's famous Great Ocean Road. Coastal towns such as Lorne, Wye River, Skenes Creek and Apollo Bay nestle into rolling green hills, some cleared, some densely forested, providing a dramatic backdrop for the coastal swells of Bass Strait and the Southern Ocean.

The Great Ocean Road is one of Victoria's most popular tourist destinations. Our **2 day/2night weekend walks** leave Melbourne and transfer directly to the lodge for dinner and a walk briefing. Then escape the every day with two days of guided walks, chef prepared meals and our exclusive eco- lodge setting. Spectacular beach, cliff top and bush walking on well made trails give you a taste of the Great Ocean Walk. Finish with a viewing of the famous 12 Apostles before returning to Melbourne, physically tired and mentally restored.

At A Glance

Friday:	3.00pm Depart Melbourne	
	3.30pm Airport Pick up	
	Transfer to bothfeet walking lodge in time for dinner and a walking brief.	
Saturday:	Walk Cape Otway – Castle Cove	15km
Sunday:	Part 1: Castle Cove to Johanna Beach	7km
	Part 2: Princetown to 12 Apostles	7km
	Transfer back to Melbourne	

What's Included

Your trip includes:

- Professional naturalist guide
- Services of a bothfeet driver and support vehicle
- 2 nights 4 star eco-lodge accommodation, linen and towels
- Chef prepared meals from dinner on day one to afternoon tea on day three
- Transport to and from Melbourne to join the start of the walking trail
- All national park fees
- Our guide carries comprehensive group first aid kit and emergency satellite phone

bothfeet walking lodge – Great Ocean Road:

Opened in December 2008, the **bothfeet walking lodge - Great Ocean Road** is owned and operated by us for the exclusive use of our walkers. How can you stay? The only way to stay is to join one of our Great Ocean Walks. You won't find our lodge advertised on websites for the general public. It is a walking lodge, built by walkers for walkers. So when you stay you will be sharing your experience with other people hiking the Great Ocean Walk. Set in a natural rainforest amphitheatre, our architecturally designed purpose built haven has been developed to the strictest of sustainable principles. Our facilities are enriched by our experience of knowing what our walkers want.

- 5 king bedrooms with ensuites. Each can be converted to two single rooms with share access to a bathroom between two people.
- Guest lounge
- Licensed dining room with chef prepared meals
- 2 dedicated massage treatment rooms
- 5 foot spas with aromatherapy soaps and oils
- Gear storage area
- Dedicated gear drying room.

Proposed Itinerary

The following itinerary is to be used as a guide only as it can vary due to weather, client preferences, trail conditions and unforeseen circumstances. Our team are professional wilderness guides with training and qualifications in working in the outdoors. They will seek the best alternative itinerary, where necessary.



Friday: Melbourne to Great Ocean Road

3.00pm Depart Central Meeting Point: Crown Promenade Hotel, 8 Whiteman Avenue Southbank
3.30pm Airport pick up for flights that have arrived by 2.45pm

Join your **bothfeet** guide for a transfer directly to the bothfeet walking lodge for dinner and a pre-walk briefing. Enjoy time at leisure and perhaps a twilight walk to see glow worms.

Overnight: bothfeet walking lodge (2 nights)

Saturday: Cape Otway to Castle Cove

From the Cape head westerly towards the Old Lighthouse Cemetery, following signs to Aire River. We soon come out on a sandy path that affords wonderful views of the Southern Ocean and coastline ahead. We'll stay on the high road and make our way to a lookout, from where you will see the river mouth and enjoy beautiful views back up the inlet to the Aire Valley. From here you are about 30 minutes to the bridge below. The flood plains of Lake Craven and Lake Costin are a stunning sanctuary for birdlife, fresh water fish and are in various stages of regeneration. Enjoy lunch at Aire River.

Cross the river and continue across the campground, following the Great Ocean Walk trail signs. There's a short section walking through a tunnel of melaleuca scrub before breaking through on the point to stunning outlooks and a short final walk to Castle Cove lookout.

Walking Distance: 15km Walking Time: 5 - 6 hours Grade: Moderate

Overnight: bothfeet walking lodge

Sunday: Castle Cove to Johanna; Princetown to 12 Apostles.

After a hearty breakfast we face the next stage of our walk. One of the most diverse days, today's walk rejoins at the cliff tops of Castle Cove, the trail head for a lovely coastal path that meanders through heath land, wildflowers and grasstrees before dropping onto Johanna beach itself. The final hike for the morning includes 2km of beach walking with the waves crashing just centimetres from your boots.

After lunch we take the last 7km walk into the 12 Apostles – a stunning walk with the sandstone pillars on slow reveal, each sand dune bringing them closer and closer.

Walking distance: 15km Walking time: 5 hours Grade: Easy/Moderate

Day Packs

You will need a day pack to carry for the 2 days. We recommend approximately 25 litre capacity is adequate to carry lunch, jacket, water and personal effects.

Discover the Otways

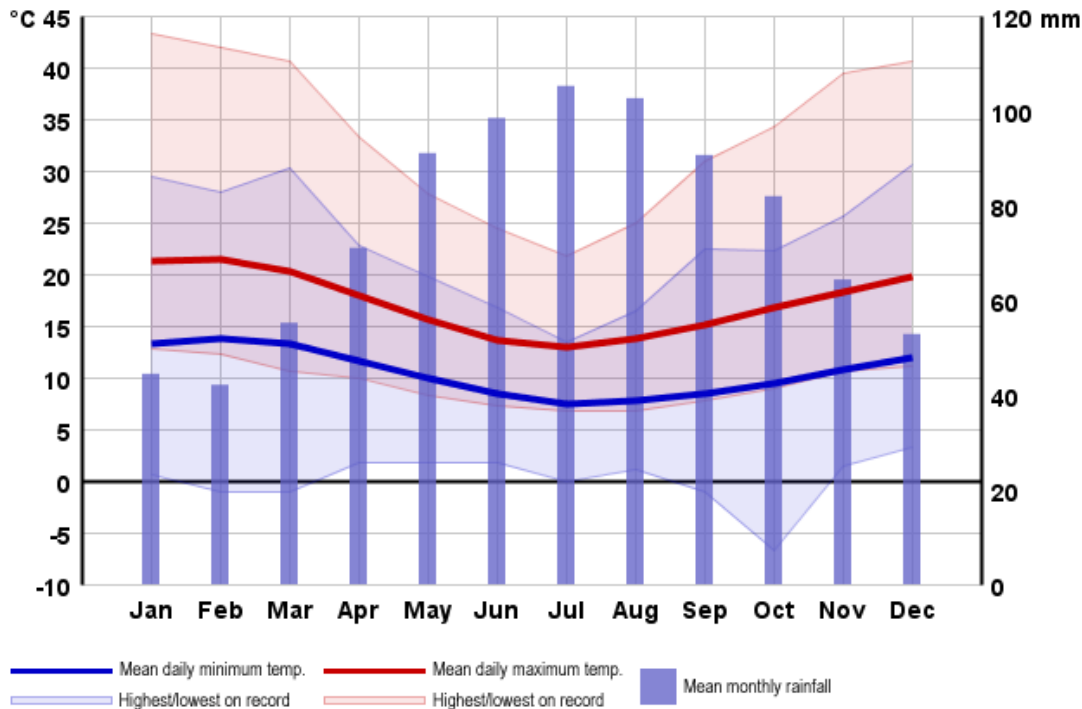
Climate

Victoria enjoys a temperate climate and reliable rainfall with four distinct seasons. Here is a guide to the hottest and coolest.

Summer: the average maximum temperature in south-west Victoria across January and February is 25 degrees Celsius. Sunscreen is required at all times, even on glary days, the UV factor can be deceptive. Wind can also burn, even when the temperature appears mild. Overnight temperatures vary from 8 to 15 degrees Celsius.

Winter: June to August is the coldest time in Victoria, with average maximum temperatures of between 8 and 13 degrees Celsius.

CAPE OTWAY



Spring and Autumn can be anywhere in between! Expect mild days, with ocean breezes and winds. Late afternoons cool down, and evenings will require a fleece or long sleeves.

As with all coastal walking, the weather can be unpredictable at all times of the year. Being cooler makes the walking no less enjoyable. Even the wildest days lend themselves to walking this rugged coastline, giving the opportunity to appreciate how a stretch became known as the "Shipwreck Coast". The use of a weatherproof storm jacket is included for all our guests, and we recommend walkers bring thermal underwear along at all times of the year, just in case!

About the Otways

Set against a dense rainforest backdrop the Great Otway National Park takes in some of Victoria's most spectacular unspoiled landscapes. Rich with wildlife and human history, the Park protects over 60 threatened species and makes a high contribution to the conservation of animals and eco systems in Victoria.

The Otways were formed 150 million years ago when the great southern landmass known as Gondwana began to break up. Then, the most abundant vegetation types were ferns, mosses and liverworts.

The *Gadabanut* (local indigenous people) lived within the coastal and forest areas using the landscape to their advantage. They hunted the coastal woodlands with fire, dingos and spears. Their spiritual and physical connections are still celebrated through descendants. Shell middens, oven mounds and artefact scatters are indicators of an earlier presence. Many sensitive sites are now off limits to tourists.

The steep slopes and tall forests of the Otways were a barrier to European settlement, but settlers moved in from around 1870. Much land was cleared, but extensive forest areas remain untouched.

Fire brings the bush back to life

Bushfires are part of the land management program implemented today by Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Fire releases nutrients to the soil and creates rich seedbeds for newly dropped seed. The first rains after fire bring the landscape alive, and a cycle of regrowth and maturation begins.

A diversity of habitats

Much of the land was cleared by early settlers, but large areas of forest still remain. The vegetation structures in the Great Otway National Park provide a diversity that contributes to the uniqueness of the area. Climate, landform and soils, combined with clearing, logging and manipulation of fire, has resulted in a range of vegetation communities. The Park is an important reserve for this mosaic of vegetation types containing the western most occurrences of several plant species.

Cool temperate rainforest & Wet sclerophyll forest

Victoria's cool temperate rainforest bear floral resemblance with the forests of Tasmania. The diversity of vegetation provides many habitats for a wide variety of animal species to thrive on. There are three sub communities found in the Park: Myrtle Beech/Blackwood, Austral Filmy fern and Leathery Shield fern.

There are five sub communities of wet sclerophyll forest including the Mountain Ash, Messmate, Manna Gum, Mountain Grey Gum and Blue Gum which are all found between Apollo Bay and Lavers Hill. We will see many, if not all of these species during our walk.

Wildlife watching

These diverse communities are home to many species of fauna. Thirty six species of native mammals including one marine species (Australian Fur Seal) are known to occur in the Park. Swamp wallabies, Koalas, Ring Tailed Possums and Grey Kangaroos are all common. A further 13 marine mammal species have been recorded along the coast or in adjacent waters. At night the sound of the Yellow bellied glider can sometimes be heard in forest between Shelly Beach and Blanket Bay.

Five unique threatened mammals occur in the Park, including the Spot-Tailed Quoll, Smoky mouse, Swamp Antechinus, Broad-toothed Rate and Common Bent-wing Bat.

The bird species the Hooded Plover is also under particular threat, as it breeds along the Park's beaches and is vulnerable to disturbances by dogs, walkers and horse riders.

Ten species of skinks occur but the diversity of other reptiles is low. The Leathery Turtle, a threatened species in Victoria, is a rare visitor to the Park's coastlines. Nine species of amphibians have been recorded, but most are largely confined to the coastal strip.

The Great Ocean Walk

The Great Ocean Walk is a long distance coastal bushwalking track that links Apollo Bay with Glenample Homestead at the footcliffs of the 12 Apostles. The walk stretches 91km and takes approximately 6 days to complete. We utilise parts of all three stages of the track and a map of the full walk is included in your kit.

Comprehensive environmental, landscape, heritage and cultural value assessments were undertaken to determine the path the walk would follow. This included a thorough geological assessment to ensure the chosen alignment was stable and didn't create problems with erosion. During our walks we will pass semi-permanent, purpose built structures designed for long distance walkers. These also provide some shelter and toilet facilities for us along the way.



The track involves a variety of terrains:

beach walking: involves both rock cut platforms and sandy beaches. The eroded platforms and rocks can be slippery and uneven with water pooling on the surface. The beaches of the coast are churned up regularly and the sand can be quite soft to walk on.

walking trails: have a surface 60cm wide and are cleared of vegetation up to 1.2m wide and 2m above the ground. The walking track surface is made up of the natural soils, benched and drained. Some boardwalks and crushed rocks have been laid to protect sensitive areas.

vehicle tracks: are generally wide tracks over 2.5m wide and may be cleared of vegetation to 5 or more metres. Vehicle tracks are all local dirt roads, fire trails and management vehicle only tracks made up of the natural soils or with crushed rock capping.

Walkers will at times have to climb over or around fallen branches and past vegetation growing back over the track. Weather makes some areas muddy and you should come with the expectation your boots may get wet. At times during the day you may be required to brush your shoes to remove soil and particles. This reduces the possibility of spreading cinnamon fungus which infects the roots of native plants, causing die back in many Australian plants. Please take note of hygiene stations and times when your guides request you to brush down.

Housekeeping

Insurance

We strongly recommend that all walkers take out travel insurance prior to travelling. It should be noted that the Federal Government Medicare Act prohibits any domestic insurance product from providing re-imbusement for ambulance travel and air ambulance services. For this reason it is recommended that walkers become members of the Victorian Ambulance Service prior to travelling, or have cover through private health insurance.

What to Expect

This adventure is operated by **bothfeet** and includes travel in small mini van vehicles, with a maximum of 10 passengers, guide/transfer driver.

During the trip you will share accommodation with either your travelling companion or you will be matched with someone of the same sex. Single rooms can be made available on request, with share bathroom facilities with one other person.

The detailed itinerary is a guide only and indicates the walking distances for each day. Some days are easier than others, and weather conditions, group fitness and attitude will dictate the time it takes. There is no hurry. Times indicated allow for morning and afternoon tea stops, water breaks and lunch along the way.

Our guides are experienced outdoor leaders who will take the time to make you comfortable if you have not been walking before. Your safety is our guide's first priority. Feel free to approach the guides about anything that may concern you. He/she will be doing everything possible to ensure you get the most out of your trip. Your guide will coordinate every aspect of your trip up.

As much as possible, we will try to take a leisurely pace, allowing you plenty of time to look at the diverse scenery and ecology. We understand some people like to walk on their own at times. We only ask that if you choose to walk further ahead, please stop at each track junction and wait for one of our guides to acknowledge you before you move on. In this way, we know you are on the right path.

Amenities

During the tour we will be well away from towns, so there will be little opportunity to purchase extra items such as film. Our accommodation has flushing toilets and hot showers. There are few toilet facilities during each day's walk, so normal bush etiquette will apply.



Food, Wine and Water

Lunches, snacks and drinking water will be supplied for each day's walk. You will be expected to carry your own lunch and water, while the guides will carry extra water and tea and coffee facilities.

Breakfast and Dinner will be taken at the Lodge. Lunch will be packed and eaten at one of the many picturesque locations along the way. Special dietary considerations can happily be catered for if advised in advance.

Beer, wine and soft drinks are available to purchase at the lodge. The bothfeet walking lodge is NOT BYO.

Mobile Phone coverage

Most of the time, we will be out of mobile phone range. Apollo Bay, Johanna, Lavers Hill and the 12 Apostles receive patchy coverage for some Australian networks, but you should not assume you will be in range.

Wilderness Considerations

bothfeet subscribes to the "leave no trace" principles of tourism, broadly covering attitudes towards:

1. Planning ahead and being prepared
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces; stay on defined paths
3. Dispose of waste properly; carry out what you take in
4. Leave what you find
5. Minimize campfire impacts
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

More information is available at www.lnt.org

Biodegradable soaps and shampoo are provided at the Lodge. If you do bring your own, we ask they too be kind to the environment.

What to Bring

Please see the accompanying gear checklist as a guide of what to bring.

Luggage transport

You will carry only a day pack during the day. Your luggage will be transferred to your room at the Lodge during the day on day 1 and collected again before the van meets you on the final day.

If you are travelling with **bothfeet** as part of a longer itinerary, we encourage you to use the luggage storage facility available at your hotel. Space on the vehicle is limited. Please bring only what you need for the your journey.

Fitness levels

The Great Ocean Walk is an Easy to Moderate graded walk. It involves walking with a light day pack through undulating country for up to 6 hours a day at a moderate to steady pace. To enjoy this tour you will need a reasonable level of fitness.

We suggest that at least 6 – 8 weeks prior to the walk, you begin walking for at least one hour each day at a reasonable pace. Speed is not the essence to bushwalking, rather stamina and confidence in your own abilities. Continuously walking at a steady pace is better than racing ahead and running out of steam before the end. We would strongly suggest that some hill walking be included in your preparation.

To prepare, take every opportunity to walk instead of driving the car, and take the stairs where possible or walk up hills to build leg strength and fitness.

Some may benefit from using walking poles to conserve energy along the way.

Emergency Contact

bothfeet can be contacted 24 hours a day on (within Australia) 1300 767 416 or +61 1300 767 416 internationally. All our guides carry satellite phones and regularly contact our operations manager with status reports throughout each walk.