



## The Great Ocean Walk

This tour hikes the stunning Great Ocean Walk trail, from the quaint town of Apollo Bay finishing at the iconic Twelve Apostles. It is the ultimate guided tour with a relaxed pace, luxury accommodation and fabulous food and wine.

The hiking is wonderfully varied and includes an amazing variety of coastal environments with a diverse array of flora and fauna - towering gum trees, deserted beaches and fertile farmland. The fabulous hiking is enhanced by the compelling history of Victoria's Shipwreck Coast.

**Cost: \$3050 (Australian dollars) per person based on a twin-share**

**Single supplement \$300\***

*\* Depending on the make-up of the group single travellers may be required to share a bathroom, but not a bedroom.*

### **What's Included?**

- Mick and Jackie Parsons as your **experienced and knowledgeable guides** who will look after your every need and bring this stunning area to life
- **2 nights in luxury bed and breakfast accommodation in Apollo Bay (Captains on the Bay)**
- **3 nights in luxury cottage-style accommodation mid-trail (Southern Anchorage Retreat)**. Cottages have one or two bedrooms. All bedrooms have ensuite facilities. Each cottage has a Jacuzzi. Ample breakfast provisions provided in the cottages.
- **1 night in boutique accommodation in Port Campbell**
- **All meals including quality local wines**
- **Gourmet picnic lunches** each day, snacks en route, drinks at end of hike
- **Delicious dinners:** In Apollo Bay we eat in two excellent local restaurants including the **award-winning Chris's restaurant**. At Southern Anchorage the in-house dinners are prepared by Mick, a qualified chef, and matched to wonderful local wines. In Port Campbell we eat in Waves restaurant in the town centre.
- **Support vehicle**, enabling you to walk as little or as much of the trail as you please
- **Transport** to/from Melbourne in air-conditioned minibus
- **Great Ocean Walk** souvenir map
- Comprehensive **pre-trip information**.

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Melbourne to Great Ocean Walk (3 hour drive) + Hike from Apollo Bay to Shelly Beach (9km)



The tour starts in Melbourne at 9am where we offer two meeting points, either at the Radisson Hotel on Flagstaff Gardens in the Central Business District or at Tullamarine Airport (9.30am). We drive 3hrs to Apollo Bay on the Great Ocean Road. After a picnic lunch we set off on the first hike, following the coast on an easy track out of the town before climbing up into the Otway forests to finish the hike above Shelly Beach. From there we transfer to our Bed & Breakfast accommodation in Apollo Bay where we stay for 2 Nights. Dinner this evening in the award-winning Chris's Restaurant.

### Day 2: Shelly Beach to Cape Otway (25km)

Today we hike through towering mountain ash forests before descending to Blanket Bay where we have our picnic lunch. In the afternoon we walk through dry coastal forest with stunning views over Parkers Inlet, we descend and cross the river before climbing up to a cliff top path through manna gums which leads us to Cape Otway. Transfer back to Apollo Bay where we have dinner in a local restaurant.



### Day 3: Cape Otway to Castle Cove (17.7km)



We depart Apollo Bay after breakfast. Drive to the start of the walk at Cape Otway, see the light station from a viewpoint on the trail and learn about its fascinating history. A sandy track winds through pretty coastal heath passing a secluded pioneer cemetery. If the sea conditions allow, we hike along a wild stretch of Station Beach. We climb up again to a path which winds along the coast before descending to Aire River for our picnic lunch. In the afternoon we hike along small paths above the coast to finish the walk at Castle Cove from where we drive to Southern Anchorage Retreat where we stay for 3 nights. Accommodation is in one or two-bedroom cottages with

ensuite facilities. All cottages have a Jacuzzi. In house dinner matched to local wines.

### Day 4: Castle Cove to Milanesia Beach (13.6km)

Breakfast in your cottages. We drive to the start of the walk at Castle Cove. We enjoy a gentle walk which undulates through coastal heath land with stunning ocean views. We have our picnic at Johanna Beach and then in the afternoon the trail follows the old coach road which gradually climbs away from the coast to where we finish the walk near Milanesia Beach. Transfer back to Southern Anchorage. In house dinner matched to local wines.



## Day 5: Milanesia Beach to The Gables (20km)



We drive to the start of the day's walk at Milanesia beach. Today's walk is the most remote of the walks, we ascend and descend for most of the day through woodland and open countryside. Fabulous views along the Shipwreck Coast. Lunch this day is a hike in picnic (carried by your guides) at remote Ryans Den. In the afternoon we continue our hike passing Moonlight Head to finish at The Gables lookout. A short drive takes us back to our accommodation. In house dinner matched to local wines.

## Day 6: Wreck Beach to Twelve Apostles (17.8 km)

Depart Southern Anchorage after breakfast. We start the day with a hike along haunting Wreck Beach with vestiges of some of the tragic shipwrecks which have given this coastline its name. After the beach we follow a lovely track which hugs the coast affording fabulous ocean views before arriving at the Gellibrand River where we have our final picnic.

This afternoon we have a leisurely walk along coastal paths to the celebratory finish of our walk overlooking the Twelve Apostles. Transfer to the pretty town of Port Campbell where we stay for one night. Final dinner in a local restaurant.



**Day 7:** Return to Melbourne. We will arrive in Melbourne at the Radisson at 12.30pm and then drop off at Tullamarine Airport 1.30pm.

**Walking:** 5½ days of walking

Shortest day: 9km

Longest day: 25km

Hilly terrain with frequent ups and downs. Significant (up to 300m) ascents/descents. The trails are a combination of beach walks, purpose-built paths, vehicle tracks and gravel roads. Sturdy boots with good ankle support are recommended. Walking poles are an advantage, especially for the descents. There is always the opportunity to walk in half day sections if you don't wish to walk the entire route. In order to maximize your enjoyment of your holiday we recommend you exercise regularly prior to the trip in order to build up your fitness level.

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