

VICTORIA: GREAT OCEAN WALK & TWELVE APOSTLES

7-days / 6-nights small group guided walk along Victoria's iconic coast



Easily accessible from Melbourne, the Great Ocean Walk spans 104km of one of Australia's most spectacular coastlines. It follows a route of coastal *and* forest scenery through the Otway Ranges and is an ideal way to see native Australian bird, marine and animal wildlife. The trail itself passes through two national parks, overlooks a marine national park and a marine sanctuary, yet sections of it will show you an isolation that only the Southern Ocean can offer. Breathe fresh air, marvel at the power of the waves crashing on the cliffs, put your face to the wind and realise there is nothing but ocean between you and Antarctica.

Walk through tall forests, coastal heathlands, wild rocky shores, river estuaries and along windswept cliff-tops with rugged coastal views. Carrying only a day pack and with knowledgeable guides accompanying the group, you are free to enjoy the sights of one of Australia's greatest multi-day walks. On some days there are options to shorten the walk, walk only half a day or to have a day off, should you prefer.

Spend each night in comfortable motel or cottage accommodation and relax while the guides prepare delicious, home-style meals ideally suited to walkers. Each day transfers drop you back to resume walking where you finished on the previous day, so you continue on the route. The final day offers a short walk to the Twelve Apostles with time to view this natural wonder - a fitting end to a great walking holiday.

Cost from: **\$3070** per person twin share, single supplement from \$625 (departures to 31 Mar 2024)
 \$3260 per person twin share, single supplement from \$740 (departures from 1 Apr 2024)

Departs: 12, 19, 26 September, 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 October, 7, 14, 21 November 2023
 24 February, 3, 7, 21, 25 March, 11, 21, 26, 30 April, 8 May 2024

Prices are based on twin share accommodation. Single travellers may share with another single traveller of the same gender at no extra cost. Single use rooms are available at extra cost.

Included: Return transfers from and back to Melbourne CBD; 2 nights' motel accommodation with ensuite, 4 nights' cottage-style accommodation with shared facilities; most meals (except lunch on the last day) including trail snacks; transfers to and from the track; expert guides with a satellite phone, full first aid kit and emergency support, National Park fees.

For walkers short on time, we also offer an all-inclusive **3 or 4 day guided Great Ocean Walk** with eco-lodge accommodation and scenic helicopter flight over the 12 Apostles. Please ask for dates and a detailed itinerary.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Grade: Moderate to Challenging with 9km to 23km per day. Walking up to 7 hours per day with ascents and descents and across uneven ground and sand. There are a few beach sections, some short rocky sections and a good number of hills, but regular walkers should not find the terrain to be too difficult. A good level of fitness is required, best acquired by regular walking.

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Depart Melbourne - Apollo Bay - Shelly Beach

walk @ 9km

Meet in Melbourne CBD at 8am and head for the spectacular Great Ocean Road and Apollo Bay – the start of the Great Ocean Walk. Please arrive in your hiking clothes, with your day pack, ready to walk (your main luggage will be transferred). After a picnic lunch and the chance to spot some Australian fur seals, head off on a relatively easy walk with short sections on the beach and a few hills. Keep an eye out for koalas near Shelly Beach. The day ends with a transfer from Shelly Beach to your accommodation in Apollo Bay.

Day 2: Shelly Beach - Parker Inlet

walk @ 19km

This morning, follow the track away from the coast and into towering forest of Mountain Ash, a characteristic feature of this part of the Great Otway National Park. There are a few ups and downs on the way back to the coast at Blanket Bay, a perfect spot along the walk for a swim and a scenic picnic. After lunch, the track meanders along cliff tops and through coastal forests to Parker Inlet. Look out for black wallabies, echidnas, black cockatoos and other wildlife along the way.

Day 3: Parker Inlet - Castle Cove

walk @ 23km

Walk inland through Manna Gums towards Cape Otway and then back to the coast, past the turquoise waters of Crayfish Bay with views of the Cape Otway Lighthouse as you approach. From Cape Otway the track winds its way through wind sculpted landscapes of sand dunes, coastal scrubland and magnificent calcified cliffs. Closer to Aire River Valley, there are views down to the estuary where the Aire River meets the Southern Ocean at Glenaire Beach. From Aire River, climb up around the next headland, re-joining the coastal track. From Cape Cove lookout, see towering cliffs and sweeping views of the rugged coastline which is of high archaeological significance as dinosaur fossils were once found here.

Day 4: Castle Cove - Milanesia Track

walk @ 17km

Walk along cliff tops, through heathlands, forests, expanses of grass trees and, in spring, beautiful wildflower displays. You may be lucky enough to see peregrine falcons nesting in the clifftops. A highlight is the walk on Johanna Beach with its crashing waves, a popular spot for experienced surfers. From Johanna Beach the path heads towards Milanesia Track through rolling hills, where you may spot Eastern grey kangaroos.

Day 5: Milanesia Beach - Moonlight Head - The Gables

walk @ 16km

One of the most challenging, scenic and remote sections of the walk starts with a descent into Milanesia Beach, a secret, seldom visited beach. Then walk a roller coaster of ups and downs, past farmland, on isolated beaches and sea cliffs to reach Ryan's Den with far-reaching views all the way back to Cape Otway and west to Cape Volney. The walk continues over Cape Volney and ends with a steep climb up to Moonlight Head with rewarding views from The Gables Lookout, the highest ocean cliff lookout on the walk.

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Day 6: The Gables - Wreck Beach - Devils Kitchen - Princetown - Gibson Steps **walk @ 18km**

After breakfast transfer back The Gables, then walk through a grove of Casuarina trees to Wreck Beach, where at low tide you can see the anchors of two of the many shipwrecks that lie submerged along this coast. Follow the high tide route to Devils Kitchen where the trail meanders along cliffs, protected by beautiful coastal heath, all the way to Princetown. The wetlands around Princetown support a wide variety of bird life, including hooded plovers, fairy terns, Australian bitterns, wandering albatross and blue petrels. We cross the Gellibrand River on a trestle bridge and walk the last and most impressive sections of the walk to the Twelve Apostles; through coastal scrub and escarpment and with the limestone stacks in the distance. The walk ends just before Gibson Steps.

Day 7: Gibson Steps -Twelve Apostles & return to Melbourne **walk @ 2km**

This morning takes the short walk from Gibson Steps to the visitor centre, with views of the ocean and the Twelve Apostles. This section marks the end of the Great Ocean Walk. Spend time wandering the boardwalks and viewing platforms before the rush of the crowds, certainly a highlight of the trip. Transfer to Loch Ard Gorge for morning tea, before the drive back to Melbourne. Grab take-away lunch (at own expense) on the way back, arriving in the city CBD by late afternoon.



Other Australian walks available from **Outdoor Travel** include the **Larapinta Trail**, Freycinet Peninsula in Tasmania, **Cape to Cape** walk in Western Australia, the **Flinders Ranges** and Wilpena Pound in South Australia, as well as New Zealand's Milford Sound Track, **Abel Tasman walk**, Routeburn Track, Grand Traverse, Queen Charlotte Walk and Hollyford Valley Walk.

Contact **Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd** direct for more details, travel brochures and reservations:

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