

AUSTRALIA

The Great Ocean Walk

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





Table of Contents

Daily Itinerary4

Itinerary Overview 14

Tour Facts at a Glance..... 16

Traveling To and From Your Tour 18

Information & Policies21

Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



Overview

The wild coast of Australia's state of Victoria has long been hidden from view, an unspoiled green ribbon of rolling hills sandwiched between the scenic Great Ocean Road and the tempestuous surf of the Southern Ocean. Today, walkers can finally experience the primitive and pristine beauty of this staggeringly beautiful corner of Great Otway National Park, thanks to the recently completed Great Ocean Walk. Lace up your boots to explore almost 60 miles of untouched wilderness, choosing high trails over towering sea cliffs or beach hikes alongside crashing surf. From the charming village of Apollo Bay to the famed Twelve Apostles sea stacks, this is some of the most remote and remarkable terrain you are ever likely to traverse. Using rustic, homestead-style lodgings in sparsely populated seaside towns as your base, you hike through primeval manna gum forests where koalas linger high in the canopy and past wide grassland grazed by kangaroos. Trace heathland ablaze with vibrant wildflowers and lush wetlands where rivers and waterfalls meet the sea. Marvel at colossal shipwrecked anchors cemented in beach sand and stroll through working farmlands. But perhaps the real beauty of hiking the undulating Great Ocean Walk is this: few people have walked it before you, and it is pure privilege to count yourself among the first to witness its magnificence.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival in Melbourne. Transfer to Apollo Bay. Optional Marriners Lookout Walk; 5.3 miles, easy to moderate

Arrive in Melbourne and make your way by private transfer to Apollo Bay with a Country Walkers representative. The transfer—a glorious three-hour drive along the Great Ocean Road—is one of the world’s most scenic drives and a great way to get acquainted with the sprawling coastal beauty you will soon explore. The road took 13 years to build in the 1920s, laid by servicemen returning home after World War I as a memorial to their fallen brothers. Today, surfers and beach lovers follow the picturesque byway to Apollo Bay from all over the state of Victoria and throughout Australia, drawn not only to the natural beauty and white-sand beaches but also to the many fine restaurants and artsy shops, separated from the beach by a wide, grassy foreshore. The green rolling hills of Great Otway National Park abut the town, providing an inviting and pastoral setting. If you arrive at your lodge early enough, you can rest up on the beach here or wade in the waters of the mouth of the Barham River in Mounts Bay. Alternately, you might warm up for your walking days on the Marriners Lookout Walk, an easy beach and road walk, followed by a steep climb to a breathtaking overlook. Choose from one of Apollo Bay’s many eateries for dinner on your own.

Apollo Bay Guest House, Apollo Bay

Ideally located for easy exploration of Apollo Bay, the Apollo Bay Guest House is situated where the Barham River spills into the Southern Ocean. During your stay, enjoy sweeping views of the coast and keep your eyes open for estuary birdlife. An inviting deck provides the ideal spot to relax and gaze out to sea with coffee or a drink. Vast, generous windows let in the morning light and each finely adorned room is made to feel like home. This graciously appointed lodge is within walking distance of some of Apollo Bay's 20 fine restaurants, whether you're craving fresh seafood, pub fare or Italian. Apollo Bay's Foreshore Reserve, a beachside haven of footpaths, is also nearby.



DAY 2

Shelly Beach Picnic Area to Blanket Bay Day Visitors Car Park; 8.5 miles, moderate

Begin the day with a transfer to Shelly Beach Picnic Area, where a tranquil walking path awaits. As you hit the trail, you follow an inland route into Great Otway National Park through a forest cathedral of towering mountain ash trees, among the tallest in Australia. This was a heavily logged area during early settlement days and you might be able to spot notches in some stumps about three to six feet high; loggers plugged planks into these slots and stood on them to cut the trees. Today, the park is also known for its unique bird species such as pink robins and striated fieldwrens, an extreme variety of beneficial fungi, and a population of elusive koalas. Keep your eyes peeled for them all as you negotiate the rises and falls of this well-worn, wide dirt track. You return to the coast at Blanket Bay, an isolated spot where supplies were once delivered to the Cape Otway Lightstation. You might pause here for a swim, one of your few chances to do so during your trip as many of the beaches you will visit are known for their crashing surf. At Blanket Bay, you meet a representative who shuttles you to an award-winning eco-retreat in Cape Otway, dedicated to the protection of biodiversity in the region. After settling in for your two-night stay, you can join a local conservationist for one of the lodge's renowned dusk walks. Stepping into the twilight, you traverse magnificent bushland, perhaps spotting wild kangaroos



and koalas. You might also see the endangered tiger quoll, a small but fascinating carnivorous marsupial measuring up to three feet long. Later, enjoy dinner in the Great Hall, savoring a two-course menu made with ingredients from your lodge's kitchen garden and from local growers. Your dining venue overlooks the Otway Range and open grasslands often grazed

by wild kangaroos.

Great Ocean Ecolodge, Cape Otway

Resting gently on the pristine grounds of the Conservation Ecology Center, the Great Ocean Ecolodge is embraced by bushland, lush eucalypt rainforests, remote beaches, and steep cliffs. Dedicated to the protection of ecological diversity through education and awareness, the lodge has earned the highest level of Ecotourism Certification. You live under the lodge's sustainability model during your stay, without sacrificing comfort. With only five bedrooms—each one appointed with crisp linens and timeless antiques—you are ensured an intimate and personal experience during which you can learn from the Conservation Ecology Center team about their projects.

DAY 3

Blanket Bay Day Visitors Car Park to Cape Otway Lightstation; 6.4 miles, moderate

Return to Blanket Bay this morning to continue tracing the Great Ocean Walk. Your breathtaking route today leads you through coastal forest dotted with stunted stringybark trees and along a soaring clifftop with stunning views of the ocean and surrounding hills. Soon, you arrive at the quiet haven of Parker Inlet, where the Parker River empties into the ocean. This is one of our favorite spots for its picture-postcard setting and you will want to linger for a rest or a swim. From here, if the tides allow, follow rock shelves and beaches along the water, or take the high inland route. You might depart the main trail for a side trip to idyllic Crayfish Bay, where you can go for a swim. After time here among the impressive rock formations, return to the main route and continue through forests, rolling hills, and farmland blanketed with a stunning display of wildflowers, particularly in spring. Perhaps you will spot the white flowers of the

coastal correa or the coast beard heath. By walk's end, you arrive at the Cape Otway Lightstation, Australia's oldest continually operating lighthouse. This afternoon, you can redeem your provided ticket to explore the station's museum and the lighthouse itself, perched atop a 300-foot cliff overlooking the roiling ocean below. This evening, enjoy dinner back at your accommodation.



Great Ocean Ecolodge, Cape Otway

DAY 4

Cape Otway Lightstation to Castle Cove Lookout; 9.6 miles + optional 1.3-mile beach walk, moderate

Begin today's walk at Cape Otway Lightstation. En route to Station Beach, you pass an old cemetery that is the final resting place of shipwreck casualties, victims of the treacherous waves for which this coast is infamous. You may take a short optional trek to Rainbow Falls, a pretty spring-fed cascade that comes alive with color when the right sunlight shines upon it. After time here, you may choose either the inland or the beach trail, depending on the tides and on your ability to walk on sand for a long distance. We recommend trekking along Station Beach, a magnificent wild stretch of sand pounded by waves and populated by darting hooded plovers. You will want to walk between the high-water line and the dunes to minimize disturbing the tiny birds' nests. Expect to navigate over some rocky outcroppings on the beach. Alternately, the inland walk takes you through wind-sculpted sand dunes and coastal scrubland, tracing high calcified cliffs as you go. You later arrive at the tranquil Aire River estuary and wetlands, a spectacular natural haven where the Aire River spills into the Southern Ocean. Climb inland, upriver, through spinifex forests, rising up and down with the trail, enjoying sweeping views of the rugged coastline and watching for the native echidna, a platypus-like egg-laying mammal covered with defensive quills. Your destination is a lookout over Castle Cove, a stunning beach surrounded by soaring cliffs where dinosaur fossils have been unearthed. Meet your shuttle at Castle Cove Lookout's car park for your lift to your next lodge, where you dine this evening on site.



Aire Valley Guest House, Hordern Vale

With spectacular views of the Aire River Wildlife Reserve, the self-sufficient Aire Valley Guest House is nestled in the hills near Great Otway National Park. The homestead upon which it sits dates to the 1890s and even today the house exudes Old World charm. Each room boasts a lovely French door that opens to a wide veranda, where you may start

each day with breakfast. The centerpiece of the guest house is its kitchen, which has earned national recognition for its “paddock to plate” approach to cuisine. You enjoy a two-course meal here nightly, with produce freshly picked from the gardens.

DAY 5

Castle Cove Lookout to Milanesia Beach Turnoff; 9.1 miles, moderate

Today’s hike leads you to some of the most spectacular ocean vistas and to one of the most gorgeous beaches in Australia. From Castle Cove, trace the cliff tops through heathlands and forests, passing magnificent expanses of manna gums, grass trees with their long-needle-like leaves and tiny white flowers, and patches of wildflowers such as pink heath, the floral symbol of Victoria. Your undulating footpath occasionally emerges from the bush to reveal breathtaking panoramas. Very near here in the protected area of Dinosaur Cove, almost 1,500 fossils of small herbivores and plant life were uncovered. Keep your eye on the skies for the majestic peregrine falcons that nest and hunt in the canopy. Your trail descends to the white sands of Johanna Beach; its broad expanse and enormous crashing surf make it one of the country’s most dramatic coastal havens. Take time to soak in its natural beauty. If you would like to swim, walk up the Johanna River for a dip rather than risking the ocean’s dangerous rip tides. Walk the beach’s soft sands about a mile before ascending inland to rolling hills and bucolic farmland, perhaps spotting a troop of Eastern gray kangaroos napping or grazing in the grassy valleys. Your walk today concludes at the Milanesia Beach Turnoff, where you meet your shuttle. You return here tomorrow to start your day with a walk along the surf of Milanesia. This evening, back at your lodge, you enjoy a well-earned dinner and a relaxing evening in good company.

Aire Valley Guest House, Hordern Vale

DAY 6

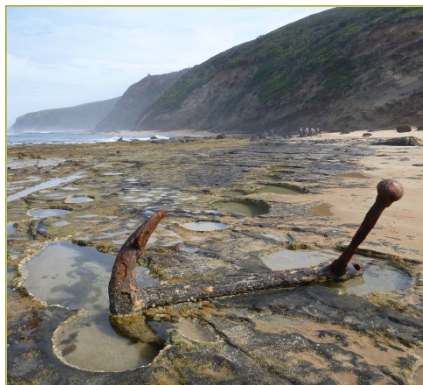
Milanesia Beach Turnoff to Parker Access Track; 7.5 miles, moderate with challenging sections

Return to the Milanesia Beach Turnoff after breakfast and follow the pathway to the shore. This isolated and rugged beach sees few visitors, so you just might have the beach to yourself. Follow the beach for a time before ascending the high sea cliffs into the bush. Your path rises and falls frequently today, crossing creeks and following wooden steps and four-wheel drive tracks, with many scenic rewards of breathtaking rocky coast and sweeping ocean views. From Bowker Hill, you are able to see all the way back to Cape Otway Lightstation. After a break at Ryan's Den campground, continue onto the most challenging leg, traversing the rolling pristine wilderness and coastal forest of Cape Volley. The diversity of plant and animal life here thrives amidst the rich archaeological sites of the Gadabanud people, who to this day cherish their cultural relics you see. Your walk finishes at Moonlight Head, so named after Matthew Flinders was entranced one night in 1802 when rain-soaked clouds broke here to reveal a magical lunar-lit landscape. Your delightful lodge for the night is up the trail a ways along the Parker Access Track. Settle in here, rest, and relax before dinner on site.



Southern Anchorage Retreat, Wattle Hill

Nestled amidst tranquil bushland, the Southern Anchorage Retreat puts the stunning beauty of coastal Victoria right outside your door. Andrew and Maria Devlin are your gracious hosts and they show you to one of their five charming cottages or guest rooms on the grounds, occasionally visited by kangaroos, kookaburras, and native parrots. Intimate and rustic, each conveys the outdoor spirit of the bush with amenities that ensure a relaxing stay. Enjoy a two-course home-cooked dinner in the privacy of your cottage, and you can prepare your breakfast in the full kitchen with fresh eggs from the property.



DAY 7

The Gables Car Park to Gellibrand Bridge. Loch Ard Gorge guided walking tour. Optional Port Campbell Discovery Walk; 8.1 miles, easy to moderate (does not include three additional optional walks/sections of 3.4 miles, 0.4 miles, and 3.1 miles)

You may begin your day with a 3.4-mile walk through a shady forest to the official beginning of today's walk at the Gables Car Park. Or your hosts are happy to give you a lift. As you get underway, you follow a newly established section of trail to the Gables Lookout, perched atop one of Australia's highest sea cliffs. Between June and September, whales can often be spotted from here. Continue through a grove of casuarina trees before emerging onto Wreck Beach. If the tide is low, you can walk the white sands to your next destination, peering out to two shipwrecks from the 1890s. These two anchors poking above the surface are eerie reminders of the treachery of these waters. If it is high tide, follow the inland route over more rolling terrain. Arrive at Devils Kitchen campground, and then follow a mostly flat trail along the wild coastal cliffs toward Gellibrand Bridge in Princetown. Your local Loch Ard Gorge guide, John, meets you here. If you arrive early, you might have time to explore the wetland boardwalks and bird signage across the street. En route to your accommodation in Port Campbell, John brings his 25 years of guiding experience to the fore and leads you on a tour of the Razorback Walk in the spectacular Loch Ard Gorge, sharing insights about local geology, whale migration, the Twelve Apostles rock formations, and the wreck of the Loch Ard. Later, settle in to your motel in Port Campbell, a colorful and lively seaside village. Set on a beautiful sheltered bay and surrounded by cliffs and Norfolk pines, the town feels like a safe haven along a rocky, roiling coast. For a bird's-eye view, consider the Discovery Walk, an invigorating climb up stairs from the beach at Port Campbell Bay. Dinner is on your own tonight—you may choose from several restaurants along Port Campbell's main street or beachfront.

Portside Motel, Port Campbell

Simple, yet comfortable, this relaxed motel is just 800 feet from the town center of Port Campbell, where an array of restaurants, cafés, and shops line an oceanside avenue. A swimming beach is also a short walk away, as is the Port Campbell Discovery Walk. After a day of walking, a private veranda off of each room lets you drink in the ocean air and tranquil gardens add serenity to your stay; you just might feel as if you never left the Great Ocean Walk trails with the natural world right outside your door.



DAY 8

Gellibrand Bridge to the Twelve Apostles. Departure from Camperdown; 4.2 miles, easy

After breakfast, your hosts return you to Gellibrand Bridge, where you begin your walk to the Twelve Apostles, a remarkable group of limestone sea stacks hugging the coast. These magnificent natural towers were created from the constant crash of waves on soft rock. As waves lashed at the headlands, they eroded the rock from both sides until arches formed. Then the arches collapsed, leaving stacks behind. From Gibson Steps, you see the two stacks called Gog and McGog. If the tide is low and time allows, you can walk to the beach for a closer look. After, continue to the Twelve Apostles Visitor Center, where you can follow an interpretive trail along boardwalks and enjoy spectacular views of the famous rock formations. After your visit, your final transfer meets you here and delivers you to the Camperdown train station for connections onward.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

NUISANCE WILDLIFE

The Australian bush (outdoors) is a natural place where wild animals, large and small, live freely. Watch where you walk, sit, and stand. Pay attention and observe a wide variety of wildlife—both friendly and not-so-friendly—on, or near, the track ahead. Walkers occasionally share the trail with a variety of potentially dangerous creatures including snakes, spiders, ants, and insects such as European wasps and honey bees. Walkers with allergies to bites and stings need to ensure they carry appropriate medication. Snakes and spiders do little harm unless provoked or disturbed; stay on the track, watch your step, and be alert. Leeches may be present in wetter areas and during wet weather. While they do no real harm, they can be alarming and cause some distress. If you find a leech attached (they attach to you from overhanging vegetation) simply use salt or a hot match-head on their tail to prompt their release. It is essential that you carry a basic first aid kit while walking. The detailed Route Notes that you will receive prior to your departure provide tips to help you respect the space of nuisance wildlife, prevent encounters, and administer treatment. We encourage all guests to rent a satellite phone; please remember, your local representative is only a phone call away.

A NOTE ABOUT TRANSFERS

While daily transfers on this tour are not long, your arrival transfer from Melbourne to Apollo Bay takes approximately three hours. Please note that the Great Ocean Road, as well as other secondary roads in this area, are very narrow, winding, and exposed to drop-offs at times. If you are prone to motion sickness, please plan accordingly.

A NOTE ABOUT SATELLITE PHONES

It is essential that you carry a cell phone or satellite phone on this tour. Please note, however, there is no cell coverage on long stretches (sometimes all day) of this walk, therefore, we highly recommend you consider renting a satellite phone.

Following are a couple of suggested companies should you wish to rent a satellite phone within Australia and have it sent to your hotel in either Melbourne or Apollo Bay:

Renta 2-Way: renta2way.com.au

Orbit Satellite: orbitsatellite.com.au

SOLO TRAVELERS

As an added safety measure, all solo travelers will be provided with an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) at no additional cost*. EPIRBs are used to alert search and rescue authorities in the event of an emergency and indicate your location by sending out a personalized emergency distress signal. Used only when all other means of rescue or communication have failed, these emergency beacons should only be activated if you have a life-threatening accident or medical emergency (any activation expenses incurred are at your own expense). Solo travelers will receive their EPIRB, along with details of its use, at their orientation meeting on Day 1 of the tour. A pre-paid addressed envelope will also be provided for its return at the end of the tour. On the final day of the tour, this envelope should be handed over to your final accommodation hosts, who will mail it back to our local partner on your behalf. *Please Note: travelers will incur a \$150 fee should the EPIRB not be returned.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Here is one example that highlights our sustainable practices:

Country Walkers is proud to support the **Conservation Ecology Centre** in its dedication to ensuring a future for the wildlife of the Otways, and the wild places on which they depend. The Eco-Allies are a very special group of people who provide regular support which allows for ongoing conservation efforts—from restoring habitats to conducting ground breaking endangered species research. The Great Ocean Ecododge, our standard property for Nights 2 & 3 of this tour, is located within the grounds of the Conservation Ecology Centre. For more information, please visit conservationecologycentre.org.

Itinerary Overview

PLEASE NOTE: your detailed Route Notes will be mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure. While these Route Notes may list a number of accommodation options, your specific accommodations are listed below. Please make sure to bring this Itinerary Overview with you.

STARTING POINT

Melbourne (Melbourne Airport or local hotel), Victoria, Australia

Based upon individual arrival times

NIGHT 1

Apollo Bay Guest House

4 Great Ocean Road

Apollo Bay, Victoria 3233, Australia

Tel 011 61 3 378 520

Email apollobayguesthouse@bigpond.com

apollobayguesthouse.com.au

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHTS 2 & 3

Great Ocean Ecolodge

635 Lighthouse Road

Cape Otway, Victoria 3233, Australia

Tel 011 61 3 5237 9297

Email info@greatoceanecolodge.com

greatoceanecolodge.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHTS 4 & 5

Aire Valley Guest House

2590 Great Ocean Road

Hordern Vale, Victoria 3238, Australia

Tel 011 61 3 5237 9223

Email info@airevalleyguesthouse.com.au

airevalleyguesthouse.com.au

Wireless Internet (not dependable) and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHT 6

Southern Anchorage Retreat

50 Parkers Access Track

Wattle Hill, Victoria 3237, Australia

Tel 011 61 4 2816 0366 (mobile)

Email southernanchorage@bigpond.com

southernanchorage.com.au

Hair dryers and laundry service available. Wireless Internet unavailable.

NIGHT 7

Portside Motel

62 Great Ocean Road (Lord Street)

Port Campbell, Victoria 3269, Australia

Tel 011 61 3 5598 6084

Email portsidemotel@bigpond.com

portsidemotel.com.au

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

ENDING POINT

Camperdown Railway Station, Victoria, Australia, 12:00 p.m.

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH

8 days, 7 nights

DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from January 1 to May 31, 2018 and September 1 through December 31, 2018.

TOUR PRICE

2018 departures	Per person	Single +	Solo Surcharge
January 1–January 31	\$4,298	\$1,000	\$390
February 1–December 15	\$3,948	\$760	\$390
December 16–December 31	\$4,298	\$1,000	\$390

STARTING POINT

Melbourne (Melbourne Airport or local hotel), Victoria, Australia

Based upon individual arrival times

ENDING POINT

Camperdown Railway Station, Victoria, Australia, 12:00 p.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated moderate, with an average of 6 to 10 miles per day (3 to 5 hours of steady walking), plus additional options. This is a linear walk with limited vehicle access points; therefore there are limited options to shorten daily sections. There are no major steep sections but the terrain is undulating most of the way, which can be tiring for some. Walks follow cliff tops, wide forest trails, sandy beaches, and even traverse short sections of private farmland. The undulating terrain includes coastal and forest foot paths, a small amount of closed 4WD tracks, short stretches of beach, and some boardwalking. A few shallow unbridged river crossings may be necessary in periods of heavy rainfall, especially when combined with high tide and ocean swell conditions. Remember: preparation is

the key to ensuring your tour readiness; the more you walk or participate in aerobic exercise prior to your trip, the more you will enjoy your experience!

INCLUSIONS

- » Breakfast daily, six packed lunches (days 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), and five dinners (days 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6); beverages not included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local transfers as noted in the itinerary
- » Orientation meeting with a Country Walkers representative
- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed Route Notes (mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure) and maps (provided at your orientation meeting)
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » A Guest Information Form to complete and return at least 45 days prior to your tour
- » Luggage tags
- » Route Notes and maps
- » Your trip invoice

GRATUITIES

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcome. Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency is preferred.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

STARTING POINT

Melbourne (Melbourne Airport or local hotel), Victoria, Australia

Based upon individual arrival times

Upon arrival, our local representative, Tim Buckley from Auswalk (Tel if dialing locally: 0420 398 080 / if dialing from the U.S.: 011 61 420 398 080), will meet you in Melbourne—either at a Melbourne city hotel or at the Melbourne Airport (in front of the main entrance of Park Royal Hotel, opposite international terminal T2, and accessible via covered walkways from the terminal) and transfer you approximately three hours to your first hotel in Apollo Bay. If you are being picked up at the airport, please follow these instructions for locating your pick-up point:

- Once you have collected your bags at Baggage Claim, exit the Arrivals Hall on the ground floor. Directly opposite you will be the Park Royal Hotel. (If you have any problems locating Park Royal please ask any yellow jacket at the airport to help you).
- Please be standing near the road in front of the Park Royal.
- Then you must phone Tim at Tel 0420 398 080. (If you don't have a mobile phone, please use the public pay phone BEFORE you exit the terminal).
- Tim will promptly arrive within 5 minutes of contacting him.
- If you cannot reach Tim for any reason, please call our local partner, Auswalk (03 9597 9767), who will try to contact Tim on your behalf.

While you are with Tim, he will provide an orientation, ensure you are comfortably settled, and answer any questions you may have. During the briefing, Tim will go over the week's itinerary and may share suggestions for visits, meals, etc.

In order to arrange your arrival transfer and orientation, please provide us with your arrival and departure details by returning your Guest Information Form at least 45 days prior to the departure.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT

Melbourne Airport (MEL), Australia

melbourneairport.com.au

GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

Melbourne Airport, also known as Tullamarine Airport, is the primary airport serving the city of Melbourne and the sole international airport of the four airports serving the Melbourne metropolitan area. It comprises four terminals: one international terminal, two domestic terminals, and one budget domestic terminal. The airport features direct flights to 33 domestic destinations of Australia in addition to destinations in the Pacific, London, Asia, and North America. The airport is 14 miles from the city center, adjacent to the suburb of Tullamarine.

If you are spending pre-tour time in Melbourne, you may travel to the city center via one of the following options:

- » **By taxi:** Melbourne's taxis are a convenient way to get from the airport to your destination. You can catch a taxi from designated taxi stands, unless you have pre-booked one. Taxi stands are located on the ground floor outside Terminals 1 and between Terminal 2 and 3. Taxi stands are located on the ground floor of the transport hub outside Terminal 4. Taxi fares vary based on distance, location, time of travel, and other factors. For a customized taxi fare and time estimate, please visit taxi.vic.gov.au/passengers/taxi-passengers/taxi-fares/taxi-fare-estimator.
- » **By SkyBus:** SkyBus offers an express bus service from the airport to the city center. This service operates 24/7, including all public holidays. Buses run every 10 minutes throughout the day and the fare is \$18 AUD one-way. Tickets can be purchased on arrival at the bus stop or purchased online at skybus.com.au. On arrival at Southern Cross Station in the city, SkyBus provides a complimentary hotel transfer service, subject to availability, during the following hours: 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday to Friday; 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, excluding Christmas day. For more information visit skybus.com.au.

PRE- AND POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

We recommend spending at least one day prior to and/or following the tour to explore the vibrant city of Melbourne. For accommodation, dining, and event suggestions, please visit visitmelbourne.com.

ENDING POINT

Camperdown Railway Station, Victoria, Australia, 12:00 p.m.

An approximate one-hour transfer will be provided from the end point of your final walk at the Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre in Princetown to the Camperdown Railway Station, Victoria. You may plan on arriving at Camperdown Station by 12:00 p.m.

From Camperdown you need to catch a V-Line train service back to Melbourne. The rail journey from Camperdown to Melbourne Southern Cross Station takes approximately two hours and 45 minutes, and costs approximately \$25 AUD. Please visit vline.com.au to view up-to-date train timetables, fares, and to pre-book tickets. Once on the vline.com.au home page, click on “Plan trip/buy tickets,” choose your “From” and “To” stations and date, and then “Look up times.” On the following screen, choose your desired departure and continue from here to complete your purchase.

GETTING FROM MELBOURNE CITY CENTER TO MELBOURNE AIRPORT

Please refer to the “Getting to the Starting Point” section.

Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour’s conclusion, please call your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*, which guarantees peace of mind for every guest. From the moment your reservation is confirmed, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, Self-Guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip early.

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

If you have not already gone through our reservations process, please note that the method by which Self-Guided Adventures are reserved differs in important ways from typical scheduled tours. We encourage all guests to refrain from purchasing plane tickets or making contingent plans until they receive confirmation from us. Here's how the process works:

1. **Reservation Request.** The process begins when you make a reservation request for this tour, either online at countrywalkers.com or by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. Please note the online form does not on its own constitute a final reservation or a guarantee of tour space. If you use the form, one of our Tour Consultants will call within one business day. Outside of 90 days prior to the tour start date, a \$350 per person credit card authorization is required at the time of the reservation request. Within 90 days prior to the tour start date, your final tour cost, pre-authorized to your credit card, is required. If we are unable to accommodate you on your preferred dates/tour (or an alternative of your choice), this payment is fully refunded.
2. **Reservation Request Receipt.** Upon receipt of your deposit and preferred tour start dates, you will be provided with an emailed reservation request receipt, stating your reservation number and reconfirming the details of your reservation request (tour name, departure date, and tour price), while we get working on securing availability with all the hotels.
3. **Confirmation.** Our goal is to confirm your reservation request within five business days; however, this may take longer for a variety of reasons. All of our accommodations are available on a request basis; we

do not hold blocks of rooms and, therefore, must confirm availability at the time of your request. If at all possible, we recommend you provide a range of back-up tour start dates at the time of your initial request. Once your reservation is confirmed, a Tour Consultant will contact you and your credit card will be automatically charged the \$350 per person deposit (or full payment if within 90 days prior to your tour start date). Once you have received our official confirmation, you can make flight reservations.

4. **Final Payment.** Final tour payment is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As pricing is determined over a year in advance, we may be forced to change our listed price over time. However, please note that once your reservation is confirmed, we will always honor the price quoted when you booked.

TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Availability: Since we typically use small, boutique properties for Self-Guided tours, securing availability can sometimes prove challenging, especially on short notice. (Again, we encourage guests to book early and be flexible.) On some tours, if our standard property is not available, we may have alternate hotels of equivalent quality that we have approved. We'll book one of these alternates if the standard property is not available. If the hotel or room type requires a surcharge, we will contact you prior to reserving it. We will not reserve non-approved properties.

Room Category: We typically book standard rooms. If you are interested in upgrading your room type, please contact a Tour Consultant. Please bear in mind that upgrades are not available at every hotel; surcharges will be determined once we know what's available. Triple rooms (or rooms with two beds) can be a rarity. Should you desire such an accommodation, we may need to offer two rooms—supplements may apply. Please allow us extra time to sort the options out.

ORIENTATION MEETING & TRANSFERS

Though Self-Guided tours are a predominantly private experience, there are occasions where you may be in contact with others. Because guests are allowed to pick their own start dates, there may be other Country Walkers travelers staying in the same properties as you or even starting on the same date. For this reason, we may need to combine your orientation meeting with that of other

guests or ask you to share on-tour transfers. This does not mean you need to walk together.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Cancellations must be made in writing. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Air or other travel arrangements to and from your tour are not included in the price of your trip. We encourage you to contact your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or bettertravel@madriver.com), for any additional air, hotel, rail, or transfer arrangements you may need.