

Great Ocean Walk

Distance: end to end -104km Duration: 7 Days / 6 Nights

Welcome to your next adventure with Inspiration Outdoors.
Here are a few details to help you get prepared...

Pick up and Drop Off:

We depart at 8am from the Melbourne CBD. At the end of the tour, you will be dropped off between 4:30pm and 5:30pm. If you would like to fly out on the last day of the tour you should be able to make a flight around 8pm. Due to extensive road works around the NGV we currently only have one pick-up/drop-off location.

DEPARTURES/ARRIVALS: We depart at 8.00am from Southern Cross Station. There is a loading zone out front of The Age building, which is opposite the south facing side of Southern Cross Station on Collins St. As you walk along Southern Cross Station on Spencer St heading towards Collins Street, cross the road at the lights and turn right up along Collins St towards The Age building. You will see a small park on your left, at the end of this little park and at the entrance of The Age building there is a Loading Zone, this is where we can park the bus, [click here](#) for a map.

Departure City: Melbourne

Where should I stay the night prior to the tour?

With an early departure, we recommend a night in Melbourne for those coming from interstate or overseas. We recommend to our guests the following hotels. All the below hotels are within easy walking distance from the pick up location.

- Travelodge Southbank on Southgate Ave
- Mantra Southbank on City Rd
- Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne on Flinders St
- Vibe Savoy Hotel Melbourne on Spencer St
- The Great Southern Hotel Melbourne on Spencer St

* Please note that there may not be any shops or cafes open (especially for weekend departures) and we recommend organising breakfast the night before.

First day reminder

Once we pick you up it is a 3hr drive to the start of the track (we will stop for morning tea along the way). After arriving at the Apollo Bay Visitor Centre we will begin our days walk, stopping for a picnic lunch after about half an hour. With this in mind please come dressed in your walking attire with your day pack and water bottle ready to go. Your luggage will be stowed in a trailer and accessible upon reaching the accommodation after your first days walk. There is also an opportunity to purchase alcohol on our way through Apollo Bay for the first couple of nights.

Washing facilities?

There are laundry facilities at Johanna Seaside Cottages and at Loch Ard Motor Inn for you to use.

Phone coverage

There is often only Telstra phone reception at Johanna Seaside Cottages. The accommodation does not yet provide WiFi. At Loch Ard Motor Inn, there is WiFi available. We carry satellite phones for emergencies only. If a family member or friend is unable to get in contact with you while on tour please get them to call the office on 08 6219 5164. (During out of office hours, our landline is diverted through to a mobile so just advise them to leave a message if no one answers and we will get back to them as soon as possible).

What should I pack?

- Day-pack – with a thick waist strap to help take some weight off your shoulders. In wet weather, a waterproof cover or a bin bag to wrap your belongings in can be handy
- Shorts/long pants and shirts for walking – as many sets as you wish! Quick-dry material is best, especially for trousers. Don't wear jeans walking.
- Socks – whichever thickness you're comfortable walking in and as many pairs as you like
- Boots/shoes for walking (make sure you wear them in well – see note on footwear below)
- Windcheater or lightweight jumper for walking
- Waterproof jacket*
- Sun protection – hat (secure fitting and/or with chin strap), sun cream, sun glasses
- Casual clothes for evenings
- Torch/headlamp (can be handy when twin sharing for getting up at night and for going back to your cabins after dinner)
- Any preferred first aid supplies – such as your favourite blister treatment! (Your guide will carry a full first-aid kit)
- Water bottle/s or camelback – 2 to 3 litre capacity

*You have to expect some bad weather at any time of the year along the Great Ocean Walk so bring wet weather gear even if the forecast is fine.

Optional items

- Waterproof pants. Some people love them and some hate them – personally, we don't often wear them but there have been times where they have been invaluable!
- Fly net (especially for walks in warmer weather)
- Camera and charger/batteries
- Gaiters for snake bite protection are recommended unless you are wearing long pants and long socks. They're also good for keeping sand out of your shoes.
- Sock protectors (to keep sand and rocks out of your boots)
- Robust sandals for wading/beach sections or for relaxing at the accommodation at the end of the day
- Bathers
- Small towel to carry during the day (to dry feet or for after a swim)
- Beanie and gloves (Depending on the time of year it can be pretty cold early in the morning and at night)
- A lunch container, to avoid squashing your sandwich or you may choose to only bring a salad (with freezer brick and fork if desired)
- Snacks and alcohol – Day 1 and Day 5 are the only opportunities to purchase alcohol during the week if you need to. Some people like to have some snacks for the trail including muesli bars, nuts, lollies etc. Day 1 is the only chance to purchase these items. Our guides do travel to the shops some days so you may be able to get them to pick you up something if you run out.
- Walking poles

Getting ready for your walk...

There is no such thing as an 'easy day' on the Great Ocean walk. There are a lot of ups and downs, quite a few times on soft sand and rocky sections, and there are several short beach stretches with the longest being only 2kms. However, the walk has been designed to make it achievable to those of reasonable fitness by the fact that you only carry a daypack; and you start with short and easier sections, working your way up to longer and more difficult days.

You will be surprised just how your fitness improves over the seven days. Usually by day four people are striding out! A positive mental attitude is most important. If you focus on the scenery, the company and the moment, not on the kilometres, then you find yourself reaching your destination with little problem. If you have done some training prior to the walk you will enjoy it all the more.

The best way to prepare physically for the trip is to walk, walk and walk some more – preferably in sand and over a variety of terrain. Try to walk frequently. Even walking around your suburb will get you walk-fit. By the start of the tour you should be able to comfortably walk 15km, and try and do a few 20km walks on rough tracks.

We know that this type of preparation is difficult to fit into a busy schedule. If you don't have the time to do long walks, we recommend doing regular stair walking sessions. Walking small distances frequently helps a lot as well. For instance, walking 3 - 5km four times a week, and 8km once a week, is a great help. If you're doing short training sessions, make sure you get yourself puffed and sweaty. Otherwise you won't benefit from your efforts.

And start walking in the shoes you will wear on the walk now!

Looking after your feet

Footwear is very personal and we prefer people wear what feels comfortable. Walking shoes shouldn't be too tight, but your foot shouldn't slip around in them either. If you're buying new shoes, go shopping after a long walk so your feet are a bit swollen. The best places to buy walking boots/shoes will have some sort of ramp that you can stomp up and down on and make sure there is no pressure on your toes and heels.



Boots can provide ankle support and help keep the sand out. Some hiking boots can be quite heavy. These are great for cold weather alpine hiking but they do tend to tire your legs quicker and heat your feet. There are plenty of lightweight boots available which are great for most West Australian conditions.

You might prefer to wear sneakers on your walk. They do let in a lot of dirt though and tend to wear out quite quickly on the rough surfaces of a bush track. Sturdy sandals have proven to be a good substitute for shoes when feet have blistered, and for beach sections. You are welcome to bring two pairs and alternate.

The main thing is to make sure you know your footwear well – try them out in a variety of terrains and do a few long walks (15 – 20km) in them before the Great Ocean walk. We cannot emphasise enough that you have well worn in shoes or boots, good socks, and first aid for the prevention and treatment of blisters.

Preventing blisters: To prevent blister formation, we highly recommend using 'fixomull' or a similar tape on heels and toes where rubbing is likely to occur – ask for it at your pharmacy. Some walkers also wear two pairs of socks to prevent blisters forming – a thin inner pair and a thicker outer pair. Others swear by Hikerswool applied between toes and over pressure points.



The principle of blister prevention is to transfer any friction, caused by the movement of your foot inside your shoe, onto the fixomull tape or the extra sock, rather than onto your skin. If you know that your feet have a tendency to blister in certain spots, tape them before you walk. We are happy to help you with this. If you feel any rubbing or a 'hot spot' whilst walking, the best thing to do is stop and do something about it. In all instances, prevention is better than cure. Blisters are very difficult to dress so that you are able to walk comfortably.

Treating blisters: Blister treatments vary and you may have your favourites. The second skin variety seems good, though you will also need good tape to keep it in place. Second skin treatments often have a sterile gel pack that pads and protects the blister from further friction. They can also be used as a (more expensive) preventative measure. Blister Block or Compeed are examples of this type of dressing.

A thick moleskin type plaster is also good to carry for blister treatment. Holes can be cut into moleskin to fit around a blister and a plaster put on top of that. This way there is little pressure put on the blister itself.

Walking poles are very popular these days – especially the lightweight aluminium shock absorbing type. They help to take some pressure off your knees going downhill and can help you get uphill too! However, if you have good knees and strong legs you may not need them.

A lot has been published about the pros and cons of walking poles – we're sure you can get the full story from the net. If you do choose them it's worthwhile practicing how to use them correctly so you get their full advantage. Try to use your arms as much as possible – by placing the poles opposite arm to leg and applying pressure as you step forward. Find someone knowledgeable in the shop where you purchase them to give you some tips. We can always help you when on tour.

Just in case...

We hope that you do not need to cancel your booking. However, if you do, our cancellation fee, based on the notice given prior to the departure date, is:

- More than 12 weeks: \$50 administration fee
- 6 to 12 weeks: loss of deposit
- 4 to 6 weeks: 25% of full tour cost
- 2 to 4 weeks: 50% of full tour cost
- less than 2 weeks: 100% of full tour cost, no refund

If you have any concerns about cancelling, please take out travel insurance covering this contingency. This policy will be adhered to despite the most compelling and compassionate circumstances.