



THE RIVERS RUN

The Rivers Run Touring Route in the heart of Tasmania is a scenic journey through a range of landscapes, from tranquil riverscapes, rolling hills and fertile valleys to rugged mountain wilderness and giant forests. The lifeblood of the region is the Derwent River, which flows from its source high in the mountains near Lake St Clair and wends its way down through the Derwent Valley via waterfalls and a network of streams and marshes, gradually becoming a grand river.

The vast range of activities available along the Derwent will give you a sense of the grandeur of Tasmania's great outdoors. Walk among towering trees, hook a trout from Australia's deepest natural freshwater lake or experience the thrill of a jetboat ride through the river's rapids and along its more tranquil reaches.

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

DAY 1

Escape from the city of Hobart and head towards New Norfolk. En route, identify some of the many species of waterbirds at the riverside wetlands of Goulds Lagoon

Cast House, Derwent Valley



Russell Falls, Mt Field National Park

Bird Sanctuary. The black swans frequenting the shores of the Derwent River at Bridgewater have been a welcome sight for passers-by for many years.

New Norfolk, a small town picturesquely sited on the banks of the Derwent River, rewards exploration. Richly endowed with historic buildings and natural beauty, it is also the valley's commercial hub, and it's worth stocking up here with petrol and food supplies before heading out into remoter regions.

For a thrilling time try a whitewater jetboat ride on the river. Before or after, wander along its banks and around the town's historic centre, Arthur Square, on a self-guided walking tour of some of Australia's oldest hotels and churches. Delve into the history revealed by memorabilia at several private museums. Look for the

distinctive architecture of the old oasthouses, once used for storage and processing of hops, a staple ingredient in beer. Climb Pulpit Rock for a breathtaking panorama of this bustling town.

Nearby, at Plenty, don't miss The Salmon Ponds, where the first brown trout in Australia were hatched after surviving the rigours of the sea journey from Great Britain in 1864. The hatchery still contains trout and salmon in six large display ponds set in beautiful grounds amongst century-old trees. The site also has an interesting Museum of Trout Fishing.

DAY 2

From New Norfolk, explore the Heritage and Nature Trail, which travels from the fertile Derwent Valley through the tiny hamlets of Bushy Park, Plenty and Westerway up into the mountains to Mt Field National Park, and beyond to rugged Maydena and the Styx Valley. Select how far west you want to head according to your interests and time available.

The Tyenna River is home to trophy-sized trout, while the Possum Shed is an ideal place to spot a platypus. See the famous Tasmanian devils at Something Wild wildlife sanctuary en route to Mt Field. One of the State's oldest and best-loved national parks, Mt Field offers easy access to some of the wild beauty of Tasmania. It is

only a short walk through the ferns and rainforest to the much-photographed spectacular Russell Falls and Lady Barron Falls. Stride along the Tall Trees Walk and be awed by some of the forest giants. If time permits head deep into mountain country to Lake Dobson and the striking Pandani Grove Walk.

Alternatively head to Maydena and the Styx Valley to marvel at the tallest hardwood trees in the world, which can be found in a tiny reserve – the Big Tree Reserve – in the Styx Valley near Maydena. Rainforests flourish in the Florentine and other nearby valleys. Experience a wet myrtle forest on the Creepy-Crawly Walk. Before you leave, savour the unforgettable scenery of Lake Pedder and the south-west wilderness World Heritage Area.

DAY 3

Journey through farming country to the classified historic township of Hamilton, a centre of government in the early colonial period. The streetscape contains many Georgian buildings still intact and in use today as accommodation, craft galleries or restaurants.

The luxuriant garden at the heritage-listed Prospect Villa is a mixture of English and Italianate styles protected by 170-year-old stone walls and clipped hedges. Tours of the restored Georgian villa are available.

Historic Hamilton





Lake St Clair National Park

Drop into the Art and Craft Gallery and Garden Tearooms at historic Glen Clyde House for either a warm fireside meal in the cooler months or a pleasant alfresco lunch or refreshments in the warmer weather.

The host property Over the Back at Hamilton is an excellent place to see the activities of a genuine Australian sheep farm first hand (contact the proprietors in advance to arrange) and also the place to sample the famous Sweetheart Cake baked for the Danish royal wedding.

A short distance away stop to explore the classified historic town of Bothwell, settled in the 1820s and still retaining its early 19th century ambience. This is a great opportunity to stretch your legs, collect a town map and walk the broad streets to view 53 buildings classified by the National Trust. Most were built by convicts and feature explanatory plaques.

At Bothwell golf lovers can enjoy a round of golf at Ratho, Australia's oldest golf course, where the original Scottish owners of the property first played in 1839 using wooden clubs and 'wood featheries' (feather-stuffed balls). The Australasian Museum of Golf at Ratho is a significant private collection of golf memorabilia – another fascinating drawcard for golfing enthusiasts.

DAY 4

Travel the highlands loop trail up through the Central Highlands of Tasmania to Waddamana, Miena, Bronte Park and the Great Lakes district.

This is where avid fly fishermen from around the world come to cast for wild brown trout in the myriad of lakes and tarns of the region. The trout fishing season commences in August, so it is possible then to try your hand at fly fishing in one of the many streams and lakes world renowned for fishing in this beautiful 'high country' – Great Lake, Arthurs Lake, Lake Echo or Bradys Lake. Take fly fishing lessons from a professional trout guide or use their accredited guides to help you land a "big one", but it is necessary to book through Trout Guides and Lodges Tasmania.

Lake St.Clair, a grand natural lake at the southern end of the famous Overland Track in the Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park, is Australia's deepest natural freshwater lake, stretching more than 17km in the heart of the World Heritage Area. Consider taking a refreshing cruise on the lake with Australia's highest ferry service. Ranger-guided walks are available in the summer season. You can take one of a number of short walks around the lake after calling in to the Parks and Wildlife Visitor Centre for interpretation and bushwalking advice and information.

If you are not travelling on to the West Coast and Strahan or Queenstown, head back south via the alternative route that allows you to marvel at the hydro power schemes and the engineering genius encompassed in their design and operation. Set amidst dramatically steep river gorges the highland Hydro towns of Tungatinah and Tarraleah then give way to the small rural hamlet of Ouse back in the lowlands of the Derwent Valley. Revisit Hamilton and New Norfolk before arriving back in Hobart.