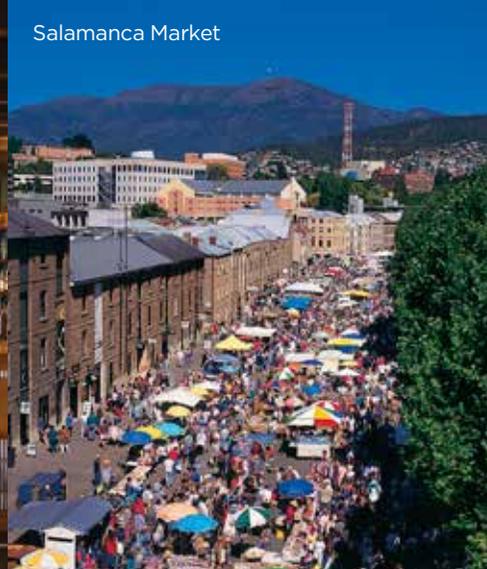


Tasmania

◀ GO BEHIND THE SCENERY ▶

There's never been a better time to explore one of the world's greatest touring destinations - an island of breath taking diversity that often catches people by surprise. From luxury wilderness lodges to harvest markets, outrageous art to moments of pristine solitude - whatever you treasure most in a holiday, you'll find it in Tasmania. Use sections of this itinerary for a short break, or do the whole thing with your own special additions to Go Behind the Scenery with Virgin Australia.





DAY ONE

Hanging out: Art and Hobart's Waterfront



The city of Hobart huddles around the base of Mount Wellington awaiting your arrival. Here folks come to fossick in the remarkable cityscape and to play! Australia's most southern city with its history rich waterfront is both a dock for Antarctic explorers and feasting capital for food lovers. The city lights await and so does the surprise scenery, fresh and stimulating from the first moment to the last.

Galleries on Hobart's waterfront populate colonial buildings. They're reimagined spaces for creative sparks to show off. The shopfronts in themselves are like artworks, set just metres from the waters of the Derwent River. Cobbled walkways hark back to seafaring days and a myriad of quality giftware stores, books, jewellery, home-spun produce fill shelves and dangle from hook and wall.

Get lost at Salamanca in an indeterminate era, weave and wind through doorways and seek out original products with a strong Tasmanian feel. Well-known local artists are displayed in quality spaces, reflecting the value of the islands arts scene to an international audience.

The city is a lively base with plenty of accommodation options. There are beds on the dock or amongst the historic remains, transformed into luxurious harbour side suites. The city also has bunks, bed and breakfasts and boutique hotels. On a visit to Hobart you can always be assured of pure dining experiences with the best chefs sourcing their produce from the local paddocks close to their restaurant plates.

Bruny Island Cruise



Bruny Island Cheese



The Neck, Bruny Island



Kettering



DAY TWO

Bruny Island Love



Take the road south from Hobart for just 45 minutes and quickly swap the urban flurry for the quiet coastal hamlet of Kettering. It is a fishing village at heart with a daily ferry service operating to Bruny Island.

Kettering has crafted a secret source that will keep you lingering longer. The Nutpatch is a store, built nearby a Hazelnut Orchard where nougat and handmade chocolate and confectionary are lovingly made. Get a local treat before you board the ferry to Bruny Island to add a sweet change to your day. The Nutpatch is home grown Hazelnuts at their best.

A Bruny Island journey is like a mini-Tasmanian experience with superb produce, attractions to thrill and nature like a force. This destination within a destination has got the fresh component of produce so easily on show.

A meal at Get Shucked Oysters will have you seated overlooking the farm in Great Bay and Bruny Island Cheeses, add a good dose of passion in their artisan made cheese varieties to taste.

Bruny Island Cruises is award winning and wild. Don't be fooled by the word 'cruise', this boat ride is an adventure, especially with the high likelihood you will watch seals, seabirds, dolphins and whales in their natural habitat, learn much from your guide and see otherwise untouchable coastal scenery that towers from the water.

The lighthouse on Bruny Island in its picturesque southern outpost is the oldest continually manned lighthouse in Australia, convict built and was run with the application of sperm whale oil. Find out more on tour here and stay overnight with a refreshing choice of accommodation on the island.

Franklin



Tahune Airwalk



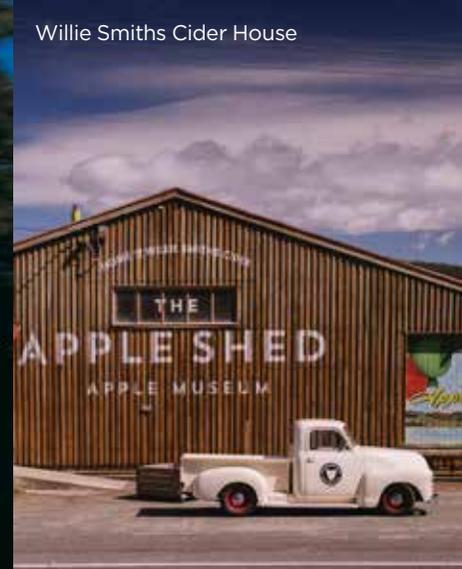
Huon River



Huon River Jet Boat



Willie Smiths Cider House



DAY THREE

Canopy views, a River Rush and Cider



The Huon Valley is a rural corridor to some of Tasmania's most notable southern attractions with mouth-watering pit-stops. The Apple Shed, home of Willie Smith's Cider, an organic Tasmanian favourite is deep-rooted in the farming heritage of the Huon.

This farm does not stand alone, orchards are stitched into the sweeping landscape with budding success stories. The once well-known catch cry for Tasmania as the "apple isle" has been reinvigorated. Once the biggest apple exporter in the country, now increasingly the island is being celebrated for artisan cider boffins with a Huon Valley home to a harvest festival.

Taking its place as one of Australia's top chocolate shops, the Cats Tongue in Huonville swiftly deliver a quality crafted product, homemade on site with techniques to match choc-classics worldwide. Huon Jet Boat are also taking joy rides up the river in this scenic part of the world.

The Hartz Mountain make a great stage backdrop for much squealing and boat-trickery from these fun providers, tucked in an unassuming quiet bend of the Huon River.

A base in Huonville opens up some options for accommodation so that Franklin, Geeveston and the Tahune Airwalk can be explored on the road further south. Fancy the idea of wooden boat building? At Franklin, the Wooden Boat Centre and School is open to the public to share traditional craft and trade (as well as the aroma of cut timber and lessons in workmanship). People travel to the island of Tasmania to get hands on with the 'one of a kind' accredited wooden boat building course, run at Franklin.

Tahune Airwalk is where some people get the nervous leg wobbles and others sing YAHOO! On solid ground, or in the treetops, many activities and trails can occupy you for a day at this facility just out of Geeveston. Entry includes access to the Geeveston Heritage Centre which brings Tasmanian forest stories to life.



DAY FOUR

Eaglehawk Neck Haunts



There is a lot to take in around Eaglehawk Neck, south of Hobart on the Tasman Peninsula. Firstly, there are great chunks of ancient rock that meet the wild Southern Ocean where you can peer into great crevices and be blown away by the view. Aboriginal stories interpreted on signage, that pre-date other attractions in the area by millennia, offer a rare insight into life pre-colonisation.

Native creatures are easily found in these parts. Tasmanian Devil Unzoo at Taranna has fur and feather thick on the ground and in the scrub of their park. Tours and gifts are available on site and visitors can get up close and personal with the beautiful babies of Tasmania's bush.

Feeding time is a drawcard with ripped limbs and snarls that might otherwise be frightening if not from one of the island's wildlife favourites. Can you guess who?

Doo-lishus is a food van with a difference. Visitors to Doo Town will chuckle with glee at the assortment of shacks that Doo Amuse around Pirates Bay, but Doo Not be perturbed by a food van spruiking Tasmanian fare. Try a pie, be it local game or seafood and delight in eating fresh crayfish roadside with the ocean source breathing down your neck.

Port Arthur is the perfect place to lay your head. The World Heritage site at Port Arthur is an open air museum with top of the game facilities, stories to chill and move the most hardy and pristine coastal scenery. Spend some time soaking up the convict history of Van Diemen's Land.

Salamanca Market



Café in Salamanca



Lark Distillery



Barilla Bay Oysters



DAY FIVE

High Sea Eco-Adventures



A trip aboard Tasman Island Cruise is an experience like no other. See Mother Nature in all her glory - sea cliffs rear from the blue to dizzying heights and ocean creatures fly and fin about at all angles in nutrient dense sea.

You'll soon see what all the fuss is about when it comes to Tasmania's beauty on a cruise off the Tasman Peninsula. Tasman Island itself is a landmark that few landlubbers might know, but seafarers rely on with the Tasman Island lighthouse rising from the rocky shores.

Seals are guaranteed, whales are likely in migration periods and sea birds are a sure sight dropping their bodies like bombs to sea depths.

Your final hours in Tasmania are yours. A chance to marinate in all that has been good on your trip. Close by Hobart Airport, is Barilla Bay at Cambridge. Take an oyster farm tour and shuck oysters in a grand finale. Inside there is a popular restaurant and a gift shop for a final splurge. Pick up your favourite local products to share with friends before checking in for your flight across the road.