




 **HANDS**
ACROSS THE WATER


TWELVE APOSTLES
lodge walk

Welcome to Twelve Apostles Lodge Walk 'Signature' Walk for Hands Across the Water

**4 day/3 night
guided lodge
based walk
along Victoria's
spectacular Great
Ocean Walk**



Ready to walk one of Australia's most epic coastlines for Hands Across The Water? Here, you'll find everything you need to prepare and get excited about your adventure, all in one document. From pick up times to gear lists, daily distances to accommodation details, this is your Twelve Apostles Lodge Walk go-to guide.

Your four-day guided walk covers 46.5 kilometres of stunning Victorian coastline. Prepare for untouched beaches and towering Eucalypts just three hours from Melbourne. With expert guides by your side on the track and long table dinners come nightfall, your only task now is to get that bag packed.



The Trip





Introducing

Hands Across The Water

Hands Across the Water is dedicated to enriching the lives of disadvantaged children and communities in Thailand. Hands was established in 2005 after its founder Peter Baines OAM was introduced to the kids of Takua Pa who had lost their parents in the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami. Baines was working in Thailand as a forensic investigator leading the Australian and International teams in the identification of those who died. Instead of pulling out when his work ended, he decided to do something to help the children whose families and livelihoods had been destroyed. Hands was formed and lives began to transform. Starting with the kids of Baan Tharn Namchai, the focus was on building homes for the children that would not only sustain them, but enrich their lives. 16 years on, Hands now operates in seven different locations across Thailand, supporting at-risk children - giving them a safe home and a valuable education. Each and every child who spends a month, year or their formative years growing up with us is valued and matters. Because every child matters.

Website:

handsgroup.org.au

Why walk with us?

Why us? Because we know this turf and we know walking. We've been operating on this coastline since 2005 – before the Great Ocean Walk (104km) officially opened. We custom built our walking lodge three years later; its mid-trail location a welcome retreat at the end of each day. Think foot spas and wine by the outdoor fire pit!

We operate all aspects of our walks: our lodge, vehicles, food, equipment and expert staff. It's this level of quality control that defines us. Managed by The Australian Walking Company this walk sits among fine company, as part of "The Great Walks of Australia."

Choosing us means you're in safe hands. It means we take care of the satellite phone, EPIRB emergency beacon and carry extra water. We're remote first aid trained and your trusty guide will fine tune the itinerary each day, dependent on conditions and walker ability. It means nourishing meals are sorted and a cool drink is handed your way at the trail's end. Walking snacks? Sorted. A blister brewing? We'll take care of it. Walking poles? We can supply and get them just the right height.

What's more you'll be walking with no more than ten like-minded travelers – starting as fellow walkers and departing as friends.

The logistics

Our departures are confirmed to start 60 days prior if minimum numbers (4 guests) have been met.

Departure : 7.45am

Pick up from Travelodge Southbank, 9 Riverside Quay, Southbank VIC 3000 (central Melbourne location for all departures). Self-drivers to the lodge, please arrive at 10.30am.

Return transfer : 5.30-6.00pm

Arrive Melbourne (Travelodge Southbank), Tullamarine Airport (for domestic flights from 6.30pm/international flights after 7:30pm).

Self driving to the lodge

For those who wish to self-drive, please contact our Reservation's team to discuss your options.



Itinerary

At a glance

DAY	WALK SECTIONS	DISTANCE	STAY	MEALS
ONE	Castle Cove to Johanna Beach	*7kms	Twelve Apostles Lodge	-/L/D
TWO	Milanesia Track to Moonlight Head	*14kms	Twelve Apostles Lodge	B/L/D
THREE	Moonlight Head to Princetown	*17kms	Twelve Apostles Lodge	B/L/D
FOUR	Princetown to the Twelve Apostles.	*8kms	Return to Melbourne	B/L/-

* PLEASE NOTE THAT DISTANCES MAY VARY ON TRACKING DEVICES



Day 1

DEPARTURE
POINT AT
8.00AM

Milanesia Track

-38.743676, 143.333031

Twelve
Apostles
Lodge

DEPARTURE
POINT AT
8.00AM

Johanna Beach

-38.762094, 143.378891



Walk time 3.0hrs
inclusive of lunch break



DISTANCE *7km

Ascent 214m

Descent 236m



Grade Easy

PICKUP
POINT

Castle Cove

-38.781932, 143.428198

If you're joining our Melbourne transfer, be ready to depart Travelodge, Southbank (9 Riverside Quay, Southbank VIC 3000) at 7.45am. Here, your guide will introduce you to fellow walkers before departing for a direct three-hour trip to our lodge at Johanna via the inland Colac route. Be dressed and ready to walk. For those who wish to self-drive, please contact our Reservation's team to discuss your options.

On arrival, our lodge managers will greet you and we'll enjoy morning tea together. After checking into your room, we'll gather for the walk briefing and fit out of gear. Your scrumptious hiker lunch will be at the ready and it's then a 10 minute transfer to Castle Cove to start your walk. Leaving the Great Ocean Road behind us, the afternoon begins amongst tea-tree with regular cliff top ocean vistas before entering an enchanting grass tree forest. Soon after, drop down onto Johanna Beach for two kilometres of soft sand walking with the ocean only metres from your feet. This is a prime opportunity to kick those boots off and enjoy barefoot – just don't turn your back on those rolling waves! We'll cross Johanna River (maybe with boots off) and continue to the beach's end where a cool drink is waiting.



Day 2



We'll drive 30 minutes this morning to the most challenging day on the trail. It comes with great reward – the most visually spectacular and isolated sections of the Great Ocean Walk – known as 'the wild side.' Take a winding path that leads from Milanesia Track down through the forest to beautiful Milanesia Beach.

After a gentle beach stroll, we turn upwards for a short, but steep climb that sets the tone for the trail ahead. The trail is dissected by gullies before a gradual climb, which delivers fabulous views back over Milanesia. Rough tree ferns and stands of remnant Eucalypts dot the path before an ascent of 138 steps. The trail continues in a westerly direction until a steady climb leads us out of the forest and into Ryans Den campsite.

From here, coastal views stretch to both Cape Volney and Cape Otway; an ideal place to reflect on your journey so far. The walk from here rises and falls many times as it parallels the coastline before cutting along the ridge behind Cape Volney, providing breathtaking views to the west. A final seated lookout delivers a magnificent vantage point, just metres from the walk's end.



Day 3

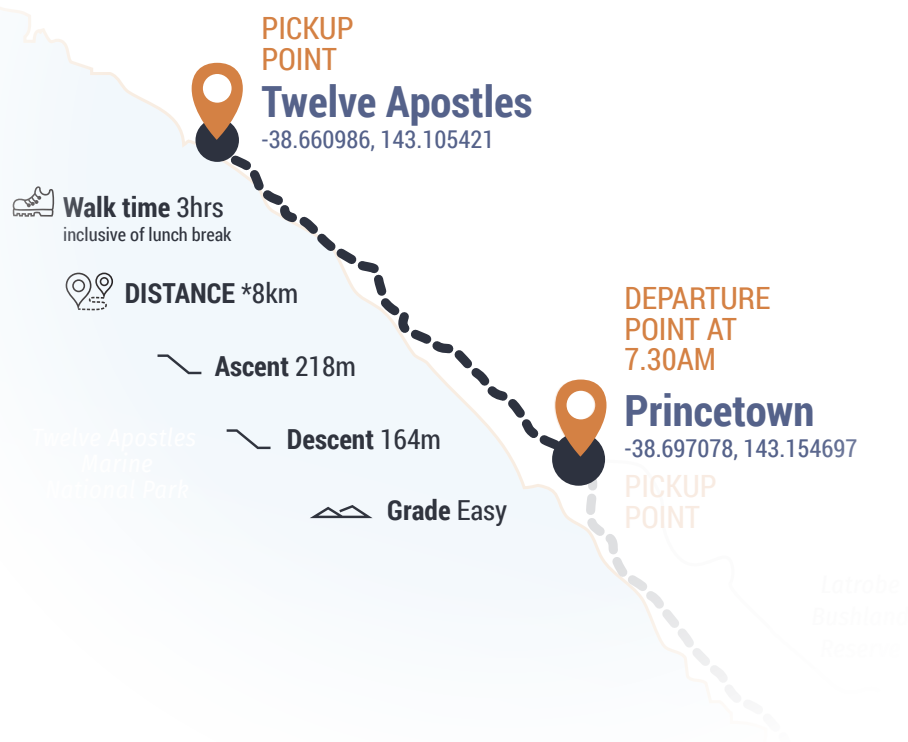


It's a 30 minute transfer to Moonlight Head. The first four and half kilometres gently meander through native stringybark forest providing a contrast to the coast, concluding with a rise to the Gables, one of mainland Australia's highest cliff top lookouts. Tide dependent, you will descend onto Wreck Beach and continue through to a lovely lunch spot past Devil's Kitchen overlooking the distant Apostles. Wilder days will give an insight into the cauldron-like ocean at this part of the coast. A high tide option combines coastal scrub with forest and walks through Devil's Kitchen campsite.

Stunning coastal views to the west this afternoon provide the incentive to keep moving forward. The topography and geology change from sandstone to limestone and its associated coastal flora. This afternoon is gentle walking that finishes at the Gellibrand River, nearby the sleepy hamlet of Princetown, a chance for a swim if weather permits (warmer months). We'll then transfer you back to the lodge for a well-deserved dinner and relaxing final evening.



Day 4



Enjoy your final morning at Twelve Apostles Walking Lodge. After another wholesome breakfast, there's a final pack up, check out and lodge farewell before a 45 minute drive back to Princetown. If you're self-driving, we'll help you relocate your car to the Twelve Apostles carpark before returning to Princetown to complete your final walk to the grand Apostles.

These fabulous natural wonders emerge on slow reveal as the trail rises and falls along the coastline. There is a viewing lookout exclusively for walkers before our final stretch of trail into the Twelve Apostles Visitors Centre. You've made it! Now take to the skies with a thrilling Twelve Apostles Scenic Helicopter Flight for an unparalleled view of the coast. Ten minutes of leg resting, aerial wonder!

We'll then move on to the nearby town of Port Campbell for lunch and an opportunity to change (including an optional shower) before returning to Melbourne. We offer a drop off to the airport and Melbourne CBD after your walk. (5.30/6pm drop off to Travelodge Southbank and to Tullamarine for domestic flights from 6.30pm/international flights after 7:30pm).



A typical day

Choosing Twelve Apostles Lodge Walk means you remember the experience, not the planning! Our staff are up early preparing your breakfast, your lunch, checking the weather forecast and making sure our vehicles are spick and span ready for your morning transfer. We'll even check the drying room to make sure your gear is ready.

Breakfast is typically served from 7am, during which one of our staff will update you on the weather and conditions for the day and recommend what gear you will need. After breakfast a foot dressing/blister service is provided. Pack your lunch and trail snacks, check your water and apply sunscreen. Around 7.45am, we hop on board our vehicle and transfer to your trail head (transfer times vary from 10 – 45 mins). We have found this start timing optimal to complete the larger walk before lunch time and allow us to return and enjoy the lodge earlier.

On the trail our guides moderate the walk pace while uncovering secrets of this coast. Allowing everyone to walk at their own pace, we will walk to the slowest pace and regularly stop to take in all the walk has to offer. Your guides choose the optimum morning tea and lunch stops for the day. At the end of the walk section our van is there to meet you with a cold face towel or drink. Then it's back to the lodge (typically between 3 and 4pm) for a mineral infused foot bath, a cold or hot drink, afternoon tea or a flick through a book from our lodge library. Take a rainwater shower before dinner or indulge in a massage.

Dinner rounds out the day from 6.30pm, including a comprehensive walk briefing for the following day's hike before a restful night's sleep.

During your stay, simply enjoy the walk, the lodge and the meals. Our investment in a quality commercial kitchen, facilities and great staff means that you can relax while our team takes care of everything seamlessly.



What is included?

- / Transfers from Melbourne CBD
- / Transfers back to Melbourne CBD or Melbourne Tullamarine Airport
- / 3 nights eco-lodge accommodation, linen and towels
- / 3 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 3 dinners, daily morning and afternoon tea
- / All walk snacks, fresh fruit and water (stainless steel water bottles provided)
- / Non-alcoholic beverages, house wines and beer
- / Daily walk transfers to/from the lodge
- / Quality gear: day pack, jacket, walking poles, gaiters, weather gear, etc. (gear list below)
- / Expert guides on the trail
- / Walking lodge support staff
- / 1 x communal clothes wash (commercial washer and drying room)
- / Daily use of foot baths, including mineral salts
- / Twelve Apostles 15-minute scenic helicopter flight

Optional extras

- / In-lodge massage service by prior arrangement
- / Additional loads of clothes washing (charges apply)



Gear list

We provide the following:

- / Quality Day Pack
- / Waterproof Jacket (Mont Odyssey)
- / Ankle Gaiters (Sea to Summit)
- / Stainless Water bottles
- / Walking poles (Black Diamond Trail)
- *Fly nets, wet weather pants, pack covers and other weather dependent items are available and offered when required.

We recommend you bring:

- / Hiking boots or shoes (see below for minimum requirements)
- / 2 x 1L Water bottles (or use our Stainless steel ones)
- / 2 x Long sleeve shirt (good sun protection)
- / 1 x Warm long sleeved top, fleece or vest
- / 1 x Thermal top
- / 2 x T-Shirts
- / 2 x Long pants (Please NO Jeans for hiking)
- / 1 x Shorts (especially for summer)
- / 3 x Hiking socks
- / Underwear
- / Sunglasses
- / Sunhat
- / Swimmers (summer only)
- / Small body chamois or towel
- / Toiletries (We provide Myrtle & Moss shower products and also sunscreen and insect repellent)
- / Change of clothes for evening (casual)
- / Lightweight lodge shoes or sandals (We provide crocs for use at the lodge)

To ensure sufficient space, we would kindly request that you avoid excessive baggage – refer to Frequently Asked Questions below. We do have washing facilities at the lodge and one load is included in your walk.

Hiking boots

For your safety and comfort, it is company policy to require you to wear purpose made hiking boots or shoes on this walk. Waterproofness and a well-treaded sole are essential. Whilst ankle support is preferable, it is not essential. New boots should be worn in six weeks prior to walking. It's a great idea to wear them during your training walks leading into the four-day journey with us.



Frequently asked questions

Can I bring a suitcase with me? Is there a luggage limit? We recommend **a small suitcase or wheeled soft bags of no more than 20kg**. Being a lodge-based walk, you only carry a day pack each day and the rest of your luggage stays safely in your room. We therefore have limited hanging and storage space in the bedrooms. We also have limited luggage space in our vehicles. There are clothes washing facilities at the lodge.

Can I bring my own walking gear if I have it? Absolutely. If you have a favourite pack, water bottle, Gortex jacket, etc, you are more than welcome to bring your own.

Are hair dryers, shampoo and conditioner supplied in the rooms? Yes, yes and yes (we use Myrtle & Moss toiletries).

Do you do other pick-ups / drop offs in Melbourne? No, we use the Travelodge Southbank, 9 Riverside Quay, Southbank which is our central pickup location, but other hotels are within a short walking distance of this hotel. These include the Langham Hotel (50m), The Mantra Southbank (200m), Quay West Suites (400m), Quest Southbank (450m). You are welcome to stay elsewhere and make your way to the Travelodge.

NB. Please confirm with us in advance if you are self-driving to Twelve Apostles Lodge.

Are there power points in the rooms to recharge batteries? Yes.

Will I have mobile coverage and WiFi? Twelve Apostles Lodge has mobile coverage with Telstra NextG. Phones serviced by other carriers will not get coverage much outside Geelong on Day One. Important phone calls can be arranged using the lodge landline on request. At the lodge there is limited WiFi available.

Is there a television or DVD player? No.

What phone number can I give to my family or work in case of emergency? +61 (0) 3 5237 4299 (lodge landline) or 1300 767 416 (Office) are the best numbers to give out. Our lodge staff can take messages and get in touch with you on the trail in the event of an emergency.

Where is the lodge? The lodge is located at:

ATER



70 Stafford Road
Johanna, Victoria 3238
See our lodge directions on
our website 'Downloads' page.

GPS Co-ordinates:

Latitude -38.747
Longitude 143.395

The lodge based experience

The lodge is your walking 'home base' at the end of each day. By night, the eco-certified lodge comes into its own. Custom designed to strict sustainability guidelines, its minimalist feel belies a host of walking specific features. Hot rainwater showers, flushing toilets, travertine bathrooms, foot spas, crackling outdoor fire for red wine time, and crisp linen sheets to slip into after a day on the trail. Unpack only once and make our lodge your home.

Traveling alone?

Our lodge has been designed with single travelers in mind. Each of our large double rooms can be divided into two single rooms via a clever partitioning wall with a share internal access bathroom between two. We don't charge single supplements for this feature. If you're travelling as two friends, choose between twin share or two single rooms. Just request at time of booking. Those booking as a single traveler will automatically be given a single room.

We ask that you...

- / Have read these track notes, particularly details about level of fitness and walk preparation
- / Have read the gear checklist (refer below) and packed appropriate clothing and footwear, understanding the luggage size restrictions (refer to FAQs)
- / Have undertaken appropriate walk preparations before the walk (refer below)
- / Before arriving, have notified us of any change to dietary or medical conditions and supplied a medical certificate if requested
- / Have confirmed pickup and drop-off details with us
- / Have made a decision regarding travel cancellation insurance, understanding that cancellations incur cancellation charges as per **www.australianwalkingcompany.com.au/terms**
- / Have checked if ambulance cover for Victoria is in place (some private health insurers may cover) in the event that an evacuation on the trail requires ambulance assistance
- / Have understood that this is a group walk experience where safety and enjoyment are paramount; walking together as a group under the leadership of our guides
- / Understood you need to be dressed ready to walk at pickup on first day
- / Are excited, relaxed and ready to journey with us!

Level of fitness & walk preparation

This walk is graded as moderate. That means you'll be walking with a light day pack (3-5kg) on uneven trails up to 8 hours a day, pacing about 3km/hour. The second day is the hardest, with undulating climbs and descents covering much of the trail and is rated moderate to hard. Keep in mind the guides will be there to encourage and help you through, and with some good preparation your walk will be all the more enjoyable.

We suggest that at least 6 – 8 weeks prior to departure, you begin walking for at least one hour each day at a reasonable pace. Speed is not the essence to bushwalking, rather stamina and confidence on uneven trails. Get comfy with walking at a steady, consistent pace and include hill walking in your preparation. Leave the car at home and opt for the stairs when you can. You'll be grateful for that added leg strength when you hit the trails with us.

Equipment

No need to carry your house on your back! The beauty of this lodge-based walk is that each day, you'll carry just a light day pack of no more than 5kg. This includes your lunch, jacket, water and any personal items (camera, extra clothing etc.) If you don't have the full fancy kit, we have you covered with high quality gear to use during your trip including a comfortable 32-litre day pack, weatherproof jacket, walking poles, water bottles and gaiters. Additional complimentary gear is available dependent upon weather conditions on the day (weatherproof pants, neoprene gloves, etc.) Refer to our gear list below for more details.

Food

Our menus are designed with your nourishment in mind. Prepared by our expert guides, you'll be well fueled with healthy, nutritious food out on the track and at the lodge's long table. We source plenty of fresh, local produce from heirloom vegetables to regional reds. We can also cater for your dietary requirements – just let us know your needs upon booking.

Group size

We keep our groups intimate in size to maximize your experience. We walk with a minimum of four guests and no more than 10, led by two experienced walking guides.



Accommodation

Twelve Apostles Lodge is an environmentally sustainable, award-winning lodge – your hiking home base. It is located 30 minutes from the nearest town and three hours from Melbourne. This modern architecturally designed eco-development incorporates many best practices: self sufficient water supply, on site waste water treatment, low consumption electric and water fittings and hydronic heating. That said we aren't a boot camp! We provide hair dryers in your room, a range of in-house Myrtle & Moss toiletries and can readily cater for special dietary requirements. The lodge has mobile coverage (with Telstra only) and wireless internet. Power points are available in your room to charge batteries.

Our bedrooms can be configured as king, twin share or two single rooms (by partitioning the king room into two) and all have access to a private en-suite bathroom with flushing toilet and rainwater shower.

Our dining area has a guest lounge space, communal dining table and 24 hour tea and coffee making facilities. Here you will also find daily newspapers, and nearby a second lounge and massage room with a selection of reference material, novels and magazines to read during your stay.

We stock a small selection of house and premium wines and locally brewed beers by the bottle. As an eco-accredited operator, we support local wine and beer, however, you are welcome to BYO wine if necessary.

Other guest facilities include our footbaths available for daily use, lodge property walks, and gear drying room. This is where you will find our washing machine. One communal wash (including soap) is included in your walk package. Additional loads are charged – part of encouraging minimal use to protect our environment.

Please do not hesitate to ask our staff for anything to make your stay more comfortable.



More about the area

The Great Ocean Walk

The Great Ocean Walk trail is a long distance coastal bushwalking track that links the township of Apollo Bay in the east with The Twelve Apostles in the west. The walk stretches 104km and takes seven days to complete and we walk 46.5km of this trail. Comprehensive environmental, landscape, heritage and cultural assessments were undertaken to determine the path this walk would follow. This included a thorough geological assessment to ensure the chosen alignment was stable and didn't create erosion. During our walks we will pass semi-permanent, purpose built structures designed for long distance walkers. These provide some shelter and toilet facilities for walkers to use along the way.

A variety of terrains

Beach walking (~10km)

involves both rock cut platforms and sandy beaches. The eroded platforms and rocks can be slippery and uneven with water pooling on the surface. The beaches of the coast are churned up regularly and often the sand can be quite soft underfoot.

Walking trails (~70km)

have a surface 60cm wide and are cleared of vegetation up to 1.2m wide and 2m above the ground. The walking track surface is made up of natural soils, benched and drained. Some boardwalks and crushed rocks have been laid to protect sensitive areas.

Vehicle tracks (~20km)

are generally wide tracks over 2.5m wide and may be cleared of vegetation to 5 or more metres. Vehicle tracks are all local dirt roads, fire trails and management vehicle only tracks made up of natural soils or with crushed rock capping.

Walkers will at times have to climb over or around fallen branches and past vegetation growing back over the track. Weather makes some areas muddy and you should come with the expectation your boots may get wet. At times during the day you may be required to brush your shoes to remove soil and particles. This reduces the possibility of spreading cinnamon fungus which infects the roots of native plants, causing die back in many Australian plants. Please take note of hygiene stations and ensure they are used properly. We need to take care of this precious landscape!

Other information

The Great Otway & Port Campbell National Parks

The Great Ocean Walk traverses the coast and ambles between two of Victoria's most visited national parks, yet you would never know it. Having the coast to yourself feels decadent. The Great Otway National Park follows the winding curves of Victoria's famous Great Ocean Road, boasting some of Australia's most spectacular coastal scenery and ocean outlooks. Our guided journey provides you with a unique insight into the Great Ocean Walk trail – our expert guide providing colourful commentary and facts along the way. Over four amazing days, you'll experience the 'wild side' of this trail, ending at the iconic Twelve Apostles at Port Campbell National Park.

We challenge you to keep the wry smile off your face as you walk into the Twelve Apostles Visitor Information Centre having just had the iconic rock stacks to ourselves from the hiking trail. Hikers - we are the spoilt few!

Climate

Victoria enjoys a temperate climate and reliable rainfall with four distinct seasons. Here is a guide to the hottest and coolest.

Summer December to February the average maximum temperature in south-west Victoria across January and February is 25 degrees Celsius, but can on occasion reach mid to high 30s. Sunscreen is required at all times, even on cloudy days when the UV factor can be higher. Wind can also burn, even when the temperature appears mild. Overnight temperatures vary from 8 to 15 degrees Celsius.

Winter June to August is the coldest time in Victoria. Average maximum temperatures of between 8 and 13 degrees Celsius.

Spring and Autumn September to November (Spring) and March to May (Autumn) can be anywhere in between! Expect mild days, with ocean breezes and winds. Late afternoons cool down, and evenings will require a fleece or long sleeves.

As with all coastal walking, the weather can be unpredictable at all times of the year. Being cooler makes the walking no less enjoyable. Even the wildest days lend themselves to walking this rugged coastline, giving the opportunity to appreciate how a stretch became known as the 'Shipwreck Coast.' Access to a weatherproof jacket is essential, and we recommend walkers bring thermal clothing along (see gear list), just in case.

