

Great Ocean Walk

Short walks and day hikes

The Great Ocean Walk is a long distance coastal bushwalking track from Apollo Bay to near the Twelve Apostles, passing through the Great Otway and Port Campbell National Parks. It takes seven nights and eight days to complete the 100km walk, although shorter walks and day hikes are possible for visitors who wish to catch a glimpse of this amazing part of Victoria's coast.

Marengo to Shelly Beach	Type: Car shuffle or return Grade: Medium/Hard	Distance: 4.7km one-way Start: Marengo Caravan Park	Time: 2hrs one way Finish: Shelly Beach Picnic Area
Follow low cliff tops overlooking the ocean and climb the exposed and aptly named Bald Hill. This walk takes you onto the beach and through sheltered forest, where you may spot the occasional koala, to picturesque Shelly Beach. Only take alternative coastal routes at low tide and during calm seas. At all other times take the signposted Great Ocean Walk (GOW) inland route.			
Three Creeks Loop	Type: Return Grade: Medium	Distance: 3km loop Start & Finish: Shelly Beach Picnic Area	Time: 1.5hrs return
This moderate grade walk features coastal forests, sea views, beaches and rock platforms. Starting at the Shelly Beach Picnic Area carpark, descend to Shelly Beach. Turn left at the Three Creeks Junction and walk through coastal scrub with views over the ocean to Three Creeks Beach. If conditions are suitable, walk west back around the point to a small beach, where access steps take you in a loop back onto the original track. Return the way you came if you are unsure conditions are suitable.			
Elliot River Loop	Type: Circuit Grade: Medium	Distance: 4km loop Start & Finish: Shelly Beach Picnic Area	Time: 2hrs return
A moderate grade walk featuring river, forest and ferns. Start from the carpark and follow the Elliot River Track down to the mouth of the Elliot River, crossing carefully on the stepping stones. Climb up the ridge along the track, passing through stands of Blue gum and areas of tall Eucalypt forest. Return to Shelly Beach Picnic Area via the management vehicle track.			
Blanket Bay to Parker Hill	Type: Car shuffle or return Grade: Medium	Distance: 4km one-way Start: Blanket Bay campground	Time: 2hrs one-way Finish: Parker Inlet
A diverse walk, weaving its way through pristine coastal forests and grass trees, travelling in and out of gullies, before descending to beautiful Parker Inlet. Two lookouts along the way provide wonderful views into the estuary and over the ocean. Parker Inlet is a great location to explore for its amazing geology and wildlife.			
Parker Hill to Pt Franklin	Type: Car shuffle or return Grade: Easy	Distance: 1.5km one-way Start: Parker Hill	Time: 30mins Finish: Pt Franklin
From the Parker Hill campground, follow the cliff tops to Point Franklin. Looking out to sea along the coast, the Cape Otway Lightstation comes into view. Whales can often be spotted out at sea along this section from July to September. Once you arrive at Point Franklin, walk 300m up the GOW to the carpark. If you have extra time, you can explore the rock platforms and Pt Franklin beaches or take a short walk from the carpark to the rockpools and beautiful beach at Crayfish Bay. You may notice a building on the cliff top above Crayfish Bay, please respect the owners privacy by remaining on the track as this building is on private property.			
Cape Otway Lightstation Cemetery and lookout	Type: Return Grade: Easy	Distance: 2.8km return Start & Finish at: Cape Otway Lightstation carpark	Time: 40min
From the lightstation car park, head west on the gravelled track for about 10 minutes before climbing Paynters Hill to a lookout over the lightstation grounds. Descending the other side of Paynters Hill, turn right and follow the sandy track for approximately 10 minutes to a junction just before the lightstation cemetery. Continue 20m past the junction to explore the cemetery.			
Cape Otway to Aire River- side trip to Rainbow Falls	Type: Car shuffle Grade: Medium	Distance: 10km Start: Cape Otway Lightstation carpark	Time: 4hrs Finish: Aire River
The walk to Aire River winds its way through a wind-sculptured landscape of sand dunes, coastal scrubland and calcified cliffs. From the lightstation carpark head west over Paynters Hill and past the lightstation cemetery. Continue along this section of the GOW to Station Beach. Take the main track over Station Beach to the Aire River Escarpment Lookout. Continue along the track from the escarpment, ending up at the historic Aire River Bridge. Rainbow Falls and Station Beach can also be visited along this hike, but it is an extra 3km if you take this side trip. Rainbow Falls is spring-fed and trickles through algae to the rock platform on the beach below.			

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Aire River Escarpment Lookout	Type: Return Grade: Medium	Distance: 4.2km Start & Finish: Aire River Bridge	Time: 2hrs
	From the Aire River Bridge, follow the sandy track up the dune through tunnels of Coast Beard Heath and coastal scrub to the Aire River Escarpment Lookout, which provides spectacular views to the mouth of the river where it meets the sea and back to the extensive wetland system along this heritage river.		
Aire River to Johanna Beach	Type: Car shuffle Grade: Medium/Hard	Distance: 12.4km Start: Aire River information shelter	Time: 5hrs Finish: Johanna Beach Campground
	This is a long but satisfying walk through diverse terrain to beautiful Johanna Beach. The track passes through coastal heathland with an abundant display of wildflowers in spring. You will also get to experience some awe-inspiring sea views, and if you keep a look out perhaps you'll spot Peregrine Falcons flying overhead. There is no bridge across the Johanna River. Carefully assess the depth of the water before attempting to wade across, as the water can be very deep and the ground very slippery underfoot.		
Milanesia to Moonlight Head	Type: Car shuffle Grade: Hard	Distance: 10.5km Start: Milanesia Beach Gate	Time: 5hrs Finish: Moonlight Head carpark
	From the Milanesia gate, which is located at the end of Hiders Access, head down the track through forest and coastal scrub, with incredible views of Milanesia Beach. There is a heritage shack located on private land just in from the beach. Please respect both the building and owners' privacy by remaining on the track. Cross the small river at the beach access with care, then head west to where the GOW heads inland and uphill. Note that the alternative route along Milanesia Beach should only be attempted during low tides and calm seas. This section takes you to Bowker Point, with dramatic views of the coast. Head west along the coastal cliffs for about an hour until you reach the turn off to Ryans Den. Continue west through diverse coastal woodlands before reaching an open paddock above the Cape Volney cliffs—with some of the highest and most spectacular cliff views along the walk. Continue along the Cape Volney 4WD track descending toward the beach at Submarine Rock, before meandering up to Moonlight Head carpark on Parkers Access Road.		
Moonlight Head to the Gables	Type: Car shuffle or return Grade: Easy	Distance: 3.5km one-way Start: Moonlight Head carpark	Time: 2hrs one-way Finish: The Gables carpark
	From the Moonlight Head carpark, head up Parkers Access for about 200m before turning left and descending into the forest. The track negotiates its way through a series of forested valleys and ridges, past patches of grass trees and She-oaks. The track eventually crosses an old fishing track at its lowest point before heading up towards the spectacular high sea cliffs surrounding The Gable. Along the way, the Eucalypt woodland predominant at the start of the section gradually changes to low scrub, heath and She-oak forests.		
The Gables Lookout	Type: Return Grade: Easy	Distance: 800m one-way Start & Finish: The Gables carpark	Time: 20mins
	This great short walk travels through coastal heath, woodland and thick Casuarina forest before arriving at a lookout with spectacular views of some of Australia's highest sea cliffs.		
Wreck Beach	Type: Return Grade: Hard	Distance: 2.1km Start & Finish: Wreck Beach carpark	Time: 90mins
	This short but challenging walk heads down 366 steps to Wreck Beach. When tides and sea conditions are suitable, you can explore the beach, rock ledges and the anchors of the Marie Gabrielle and the Fiji shipwrecks which can still be seen about 400m and 650m west of the stairs. Imagine being shipwrecked on this beach below these towering cliffs.		
Princetown to Glenample	Type: Car shuffle or return Grade: Medium	Distance: 6km one-way Start: Princetown Recreation Reserve.	Time: 2.5hrs one-way Finish: Glenample
	This walk will reward you with spectacular views of the Twelve Apostles and surrounding coastline. Hike along cliff tops through coastal scrubland and low heath to the end of the walk. Kangaroos are regular grazers in nearby paddocks. Pods of dolphins can sometimes be seen in the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park below, and Southern Right Whales can be seen from May through to October.		

A comprehensive map and guide to the Great Ocean Walk can be purchased from Parks Victoria and Information Centres

Fire - no open fires allowed on the Great Ocean Walk. Gas, fuel stoves & lanterns may **NOT** be lit on days of **Total Fire Ban**. The Great Ocean walk is in the **South West Total Fire Ban District**.

It is your responsibility to know if it is a day of Total Fire Ban.

If in doubt call the **Victorian Bushfire Information Line: 1800 240 667**.

Park closures - be prepared to leave early as **extreme weather may cause the closure of some park areas** for public safety.