

Tasmania : Wilderness & Franklin River Rafting

Trip Code: PXAT

Version: PXAT Tasmania's Franklin River Rafting



PIONEER



GUIDED GROUP



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Raft the famous Franklin River, a true wilderness adventure
- Enjoy close encounters with native animals, birds and stunning endemic plants
- Trek to the summit of Tasmania's iconic Cradle Mountain (1,545 metres)

- Sailboat cruise along the Gordon River to Strahan

AT A GLANCE

- 9 days rafting
- Max altitude -1,545 metres
- Join at Launceston

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 14 Breakfasts
- 14 Lunches
- 14 Dinners
- 7 nights Wild Camp
- 7 nights Hotel
- 1 nights Camping

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

The Franklin River winds through Tasmania's rugged southwest, carving through dramatic gorges, dense rainforests, and jagged mountains. As one of the world's last great wild rivers, its character shifts from wild and forceful to quiet and tranquil. This rafting expedition offers one of Australia's most pristine wilderness experiences and provides a truly authentic adventure.

Guided by our expert local team, who pioneered this journey back in 1978, you will embark on a nine-day rafting expedition. This remote area offers an escape from modern life with no phone reception or crowds, and you will be wild camping along the river. In addition to the rafting, our adventure includes visits to some of Tasmania's iconic locations, such as the breathtaking Cradle Mountain. We'll also hike through the island's central plateau and northwest regions, exploring their rich history, fascinating flora and fauna, and impressive rainforests.

Is this holiday for you?

For the rafting expedition portion of this trip, you will be rafting or walking in remote areas for between 6 and 10 hours each day, involving a significant amount of physical activity. The Franklin River Rafting trip is rated as moderate to challenging. Rafting is an activity suitable for anyone with reasonable fitness; however, we require that all participants feel confident swimming with a buoyancy aid in case they fall out of the raft. Our leaders will prepare you for such an event before the rafting begins.

The difficulty of the trip will depend on the water levels we encounter. Your guide will teach you the techniques to steer your raft, and it will be up to the crew, under your guide's direction, to make the trip successful and exciting. Whitewater rafting is one of the most thrilling outdoor activities and requires a team effort. The raft guides will analyse the river and select the safest and most practical way through the rapids. Each raft is guided by an experienced river guide. For safety reasons, you are required to wear a buoyancy aid, helmet, and appropriate footwear. There will be sections of portage (where group members will be required to participate in carrying rafts and other cargo overland, around certain sections of river, sometimes requiring more than one trip.) To participate, you should be able to walk over steep, uneven terrain.

Itinerary

Version: PXAT Tasmania's Franklin River Rafting

DAY 1

Arrive in Launceston.

Upon arrival in Launceston, transfer to your hotel by the picturesque Tamar River. Depending on your flight schedule, you may have time to explore the nearby Cataract Gorge, an ideal spot to kick off your Tassie adventure with a refreshing walk. This evening is yours to unwind, recover from any jetlag, or take a leisurely stroll through Launceston to soak in its charming ambiance.



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Exploring Launceston and Pre-Trip Briefing.

After a relaxing breakfast at your riverside hotel, enjoy the morning at your leisure, exploring Launceston at your own pace. After lunch, the group will convene for a mandatory orientation and pre-trip briefing. The briefing will begin at 1:00 PM and last approximately two hours. During this time, you'll receive an overview of the itinerary, an introduction to your friendly guide team, a brief weather forecast, and confirmation of the pick-up times and locations for the following morning's departure. You will also be fitted for your rafting gear ahead of the 9-day expedition along the mighty Franklin River. Following the briefing, you will have time to make any last-minute purchases from the numerous outdoor stores before we meet for an early dinner at one of our favourite local restaurants. In the evening, we will gather on the waterfront to meet our special guest speaker, a local Tasmanian expert. You'll be treated to a fascinating history of the Franklin River, learning about its iconic status in Australia and the successful campaign to save it in the 1970s and 80s. After this inspirational experience we will return to our hotel for the night, ready to venture out into the Tasmanian wilderness tomorrow morning.

Meals: **D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 3

Launceston to Lake St Clair.

This morning, we will pick you up from your hotel and journey south towards Lake St Clair. This stunning body of water is part of the renowned Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, the heart of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Lake St Clair marks the end of Tasmania's most iconic multi-day walk, the Overland Track. En route, we will make an early stop to explore "The Wall." Known as Australia's most ambitious recent art project, creator and designer Greg Duncan has carved the history of the highlands into 100 meters of timber, predominantly rare Huon Pine. The beautifully carved relief sculptures depict the history, hardship, and perseverance of the people in the Central Highlands, paying homage to the individuals who settled and protected the area. After our visit, we will check into our lodge accommodation and embark on a scenic boat ride across Lake St Clair. This will be the perfect introduction to the surrounding landscapes you'll be immersed in over the next nine days!

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 4

Transfer to Collingwood Bridge and Begin Paddling.

This morning, we will start our day with a special welcome on the shores of Lake St Clair. A representative from the Tasmanian Aboriginal community will greet us with a smoking ceremony and cultural discussion, setting a meaningful tone for our journey. After the ceremony, we will transfer to Collingwood Bridge to inflate and load our rafts. Before embarking on the water, our guides will provide a thorough safety briefing and instruction in paddling techniques. Our destination today is either the junction of the Franklin and Collingwood Rivers or further downstream to Aesthesia Ravine.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 5

Raft to Irenabyss.

Today, we will navigate some exciting sections of the river, including the Log Jam, Nasty Notch, and Descension Gorge, before floating calmly through the serene Irenabyss. We'll set up camp on the riverbank just below the gorge, where you'll have the evening to relax and soak in the tranquillity of the wilderness. As your guides prepare a hearty evening meal, take the opportunity to enjoy a cup of tea by the river and watch for wildlife emerging at dusk.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 6

Rafting the Upper Franklin.

Today is a long and beautiful day of rafting, offering both exciting paddling and numerous picturesque sites along the riverbanks. The river's mood will vary depending on recent rainfall. Keep an eye out for the vibrant red flowers of climbing heath cascading down the surrounding rock faces. This evening, you'll enjoy another delicious feast prepared by your guides before turning in for a night under the open sky.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 7

The Great Ravine.

Today, we enter the Great Ravine and face our first major portage at the Churn. The journey includes some challenging sections along the river before reaching the Churn. We'll pass Blushrock Falls, noted for the red hue in the rock. Keep an eye out for a view of Frenchman's Cap from the river. Your passionate guides will share the famous history of the Franklin River, along with intriguing lesser-known tales from their years of adventuring on this wild river. Tonight, we will camp at Coruscades Camp within the Great Ravine.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 8

The Great Ravine to Rafter's Basin

Today, we journey to Deliverance Reach, marking the end of the Great Ravine, and continue on to Rafter's Basin. After breakfast, we'll paddle and portage through a series of challenging spots: Coruscades, Livingstone's Cut, Thunderush, the Masterpiece, and the Cauldron, eventually reaching the Mousehole, a narrow recess with a cat-like boulder overlooking the river. From the Mousehole, it's a

short 2 km paddle to Rafter's Basin, where we will set up camp by Interlude Creek. The terrain around tonight's camp offers a preview of the Lower Franklin we will encounter in the coming days.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 9

Propsting Gorge to Newlands Cascades

Today's destination depends on the weather, aiming for either The Black Forest or Newlands Cascades. Life on the river is heavily influenced by the weather, but your adaptable guides always have a great plan B ready, no matter what Mother Nature throws at us-it's all part of the adventure! We'll paddle through Propsting Gorge and tackle some of the Franklin's best rapids. After lunch, we'll navigate the river's longest rapid, Newlands Cascades. At the bottom of these rapids, a long, large overhang provides a cosy spot to spend the night.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 10

Rafting the Lower Franklin.

Greet the morning with a hot drink in hand, watching the sun creep down the valley walls towards our camp. Huon Pines and Leatherwood trees drape elegantly along the riverbanks. Listen and look for the birds flitting among the branches.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 11

The Lower Gordon River.

Today, our adventure continues as we paddle past Double Fall, Big Fall, and Galleon Bluff, which resembles the sterns of several ships jutting out into the dark water. Shortly after, we float beneath the

impressive overhang of Verandah Cliffs. Our camp for the night is at Sir John Falls on the Gordon River, located about 5 km downstream from the junction of the Gordon and Franklin Rivers. The small wharf in front of our campsite offers a perfect spot for a swim in the Gordon River and for spotting white-bellied sea eagles while your guides prepare our final evening meal.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Wild Camp



Time
6-9 hours rafting

DAY 12

Transfer by Yacht to Strahan, Overnight in Queenstown.

This morning, board the Stormbreaker yacht for a scenic cruise down the length of the river and into Macquarie Harbour. Relax on the deck and take in the stunning views of the expansive Gordon River. Upon reaching Strahan, we will transfer by bus to the picturesque town of Queenstown, located about an hour northeast. Once we arrive, we will check into our hotel for the night and enjoy a private screening of the FRANKLIN movie at the boutique Paragon Theatre. Having just explored the river ourselves, it will be a treat to revisit its historical moments and landmarks while they are still fresh in your memory. Dinner will be arranged at a local eatery, after which you can finally unwind in a comfortable bed for the first time in over a week.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 13

Transfer to Tullah, Montezuma Falls Walk.

After a delicious breakfast, we journey through the Tarkine rainforest to Montezuma Falls, Tasmania's tallest waterfall at 104 meters. The return walk to the falls follows the historic North East Dundas Tramway route. This easy-grade trail offers the chance to gaze up from your feet and admire the thousands of Tree Ferns that line the path to the falls. After lunch at the trailhead, we'll transfer to the lakeside town of Tullah. Once we arrive, we'll check into our accommodation and take in the serene beauty of Lake Rosebery, with Mt Murchison towering at the southern end. We'll enjoy an early dinner in the lodge's expansive beer garden, located on the lake's banks, as we watch the autumn skies of Tasmania change colour over the surrounding peaks-a truly breathtaking sight.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 14

Mt Farrell Hike and Transfer to Cradle Mountain.

This morning, we will set off early for a short drive to our final hike in the Tarkine region: the rewarding Mt Farrell. This return hike begins in lush rainforests filled with Myrtle and vibrant ferns, then ascends into Buttongrass moorland leading to the craggy ridgeline of the mountain, offering stunning views of the Tarkine landscape. After the hike, we will board the bus for a scenic drive to one of Tasmania's most iconic landmarks-Cradle Mountain. Upon arrival, we will visit the newly opened underground viewing platform at Dove Lake and explore the popular Visitor Centre, giving us a preview of the wonders awaiting us over the next two days. Be sure to check out the Cradle Mountain Wilderness Gallery at the hotel, which features a movie room showcasing Wildness, a short film by Tasmanian filmmaker Scott Millwood. This film tells the story of Peter Dombrovskis, Olegas Truchanas, and the battle to save the Franklin River.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 15

Cradle Mountain Summit Walk.

Cradle Mountain, located in the heart of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, offers exceptional natural beauty. The park is renowned for its diverse landscapes, from moss-covered ancient rainforests and deep river gorges to snow-capped peaks, wild alpine moorlands, and glacial lakes. Weather permitting, we may offer the challenging ascent of Cradle Mountain (5,068 feet) as an option for today. This hike, which requires guide approval for participation, covers 13 km with an ascent and descent of 800 meters. The trek, including a significant portion of boulder scrambling, takes about 7 hours to complete. For those preferring a less strenuous option, an alternative hike will be available. Springtime at Cradle Mountain offers a wonderful opportunity to see playful young joeys and hungry echidnas emerging from winter. The area is rich in wildlife, and you might encounter native species such as Tasmanian devils, quolls, platypus, wombats, and the inquisitive black currawong.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel



Ascent
800M



Descent
800M



Time
6-7 hours walking



Distance
13KM

DAY 16**Devils @ Cradle and Return to Launceston.**

All good things must come to an end, but not before we get up close and personal with some of the local wildlife at Devils @ Cradle. On our final morning, we'll visit this Tasmanian devil sanctuary, which serves as a breeding and conservation facility for three of Tasmania's unique and threatened carnivorous marsupials: the Tasmanian devil, spotted-tail quoll, and eastern quoll. During our visit, you'll have the opportunity to observe these extraordinary animals up close, while a knowledgeable keeper provides insights into their life cycles and the challenges they face. After an early lunch, we'll begin our journey back to Launceston. In the afternoon, you can choose to be dropped off directly at Launceston Airport or back in town for a final night's stay (at your own expense) before your flight the following day.

Meals: **B L**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- Professional rafting / wilderness guides
- All accommodation as described
- 14 breakfasts, 14 lunches & 14 dinners
- All rafting and safety equipment
- 80L waterproof gear bag
- All transport by private minibus
- All activities/excursions/entrance fees mentioned except where specified as 'optional'

What's not Included

- Meals not specified in the program
- Travel insurance
- Tips
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

This holiday begins on day 1 at the hotel in Launceston. A single-timed transfer from Launceston airport is included. For people arriving at different times, Taxis are available on arrival or we can arrange a separate transfer at an additional cost.

On the last day, we travel by road back to Launceston, arriving in the afternoon. You can choose to be dropped off directly at Launceston Airport or back in town if you prefer.

You will receive hotel details and local contact information before departure.

Meal Plan

14 breakfasts, 14 lunches & 14 dinners are included in the cost of this holiday.

Food & Water

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your personal bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Traditional recipes include salmon and potato salad lettuce cups, barbecued Tasmanian ocean trout, Tasmanian Wagyu steak, Tasmanian fruit salad with apples and pineapple, twice-cooked pork belly with honey sauce, and beef and winter vegetable pot pie. Due to the cultural connection between Australia and Europe, much of the cuisine on offer is similar to European dishes but often has a Tasmanian twist. In Launceston, there is also a good selection of international cuisine available.

During the rafting portion of the trip, all meals are included, and our guides will prepare good-quality, hearty meals for the group despite the remote location. For the included meals during the remainder of the trip, we will usually dine at local restaurants.

Special Diets

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for vegetarian diets and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (at least 1 month prior to your trip) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your chosen adventure. Please note that options are likely to be limited in very remote locations or alternatives may be more expensive or unavailable. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Passengers must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

Accommodation

On the Franklin River, you will be camping as a group either in caves and rocky overhangs, or under dry, airy tarpaulins. There are no toilets or showers along the Franklin. Due to our strict minimal impact procedures, we carry out all human waste. We use a specially designed toilet system known as 'The Groover'. Your guides will advise you on all toilet procedures prior to departure on the Franklin section of the trip. There are many opportunities to swim or bathe in the mighty Franklin River. A quick-drying micro/travel towel is recommended for washing and drying. Personal hygiene can be further maintained with wet wipes/moist towelettes. Traditional bushwalking tents are not used on the Franklin as they get wet and do not provide the best shelter for the conditions. Rock shelters and tarpaulins are the most appropriate shelter for this type of expedition. A self-inflating sleeping mat (included) will be very useful for comfort in camp.

For the nights on the tour when not on the river, comfortable hotel/lodge-style accommodation is provided. Tasmania's west is a region with a very limited choice of accommodation, and we use carefully selected lodgings that have multiple rooms and shared bathrooms.

Spending Money

Most meals are included in this tour, including all meals during your time on the Franklin River. However, you'll still need to budget for meals that are not included, gifts, drinks, and other personal expenses. For most people, AUD \$1,000 should be sufficient.

Guidance on Tipping

In Australia, tipping is not generally expected or required. Unlike in some other countries, service staff in Australia are paid a fair wage, so tipping is not relied upon as part of their income. However, if you receive exceptional service at a restaurant, café, or bar, leaving a tip is appreciated but entirely optional. It's common to round up the bill or leave a small gratuity of 5-10%, but there's no obligation to do so. In other settings, such as taxis or hotels, tipping is even less common, though you may choose to tip if you feel the service was outstanding.

Tipping is not expected by the guides on this tour. However, if you would like to show your appreciation for excellent service, leaving a tip would be greatly appreciated.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday, we recommend using a soft duffle bag for your luggage. During your time on the Franklin River, all personal clothing and equipment will be kept in dry bags, which are secured to a gear frame on the raft. Any additional luggage can be stored at our agent's office in Launceston while you are on the river.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Most visitors to Australia require a visa obtained prior to arrival.

Passport holders from the following countries can apply for the Australian Tourist Visa online prior to their arrival which allows you a stay in Australia for up to 3 months:

- Canada
- United States
- United Kingdom

Applications can be made using the link below (other nationalities can also check their eligibility for an e-visa here):

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/electronic-travel-authority-601#Eligibility>

New Zealand passport holders do not need to obtain a visa prior to arrival, they will be granted a visa on arrival.

All other nationalities should check with your nearest embassy or consulate.

Currency

The unit of currency in Australia is the Australian Dollar, abbreviated as AUD or symbolised as \$. To distinguish it from other dollar currencies, it is sometimes written as A\$ or AU\$.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. Suggested preparation should include at least one hour of aerobic type exercise, four times a week (including a mix of walking and using a rowing machine). You should include day walking over steep, uneven terrain in your trip preparation.

Climate

Tasmania has a cool temperate climate with four distinct seasons. The warmest months are between December and March. Autumn runs from March to May and has still, sunny days. Winter runs from June to August; during these months, many of Tasmania's peaks are blanketed in snow. Spring is from September to November when you will experience longer, warmer days and fresh, cool nights.

Average maximum temperatures in summer are between 17 and 23 degrees Celsius. Winter maximum temperatures are between 3 and 11 degrees Celsius.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

The Ever Varying Flood: Franklin River Rafting Guide - Peter Griffiths & Bruce Baxter

The Rough Guide to Tasmania (Travel Guide) - James Stewart

Lonely Planet Tasmania (Travel Guide) - Charles Rawlings-Way and Virginia Maxwell

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

On a Franklin River trip all items required for the duration of the journey are packed onto the rafts you will be travelling on. This makes the rafts very heavy, particularly at the beginning of the journey when the raft is full with food for the expedition. Everything we take should be necessary for the journey, please read the packing list carefully and avoid unnecessary items. High value or irreplaceable items, Aerosol cans, Glass Containers of any kind and/or excessive amounts of soap should be avoided.

Please note that you will be provided with: 80 litre - a Watershed dry bag for your personal belongings, Personal Flotation Device - PFD (buoyancy aid), Helmet, Wetsuit - sleeveless to avoid chaffing, Spray Jacket - worn over the wetsuit, Personal groundsheet and a very thick and comfortable Therm-a-rest sleeping mat.

You should bring the following items:

- Warm sleeping bag, at least minus 5 degrees celcius
- Sunglasses and retainer to avoid loosing them
- Lightweight day pack
- Torch - handsfree head torches are best
- Sunscreen (small tube)
- Book (great when stuck in camp)
- Personal Medication and Toiletries
- Warm wool hat
- Sunhat, Baseball caps are best , can be worn under helmet
- Rain Jacket (gore-tex or similar)
- Shoes for camp and hike to Frenchmans Cap
- Shoes for on the river

- Board Shorts
- T- shirts
- Warm socks - no cotton
- Thick fleece or wool jumper
- Camp pants (fleece or quick dry)
- Thermal Top
- Thermal Trousers
- Small camping towel and swimwear

The following items are optional:

- Small lightweight tent - if you don't like the idea of tarps
- Camera - waterproof is best
- Gloves - fingerless ideal, to avoid blisters
- Down Jacket - nothing better for comfort in camp
- Neoprene socks (ensure these fit under the shoes you'll be wearing to raft) - highly recommended

Cotswold Outdoor

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

Why Choose KE

Why KE?

Rafting the Franklin River was honored as the best river journey in the world by Outside Magazine in 2012. This unique holiday is further enhanced with experiences in Tasmania's most iconic locations, including Cradle Mountain.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 21/01/2025 and the trip is subject to change