

Tasmania

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Tasmania is only an hour's flight from Melbourne but a world away when it comes to lifestyle, culture and resourcefulness. British Poet Laureate Andrew Motion wrote in English magazine *Harpers & Queen* said: "[The island] is jam packed with people who have deliberately chosen it as the site of the good life: somewhere to be kinder, more composed, more appreciative of important things."

Tasmania's location as the southernmost state of Australia, and washed by the Southern Ocean and the Tasman Sea, gives it a dramatic coastline, some of the world's cleanest air and a clear light that draws painters and photographers from around the world.

The People

From its early years of settlement, the island has nurtured non-conformists and colourful characters. Whether it's tourism operators or locals in the street, you're bound to meet many interesting, down-to-earth people.

Resourcefulness

Plato is credited with "necessity is the mother of invention". The life on the island of Tasmania has led to an inventiveness that has made its mark internationally. The island's natural attributes and the resourcefulness of its people have given rise to leading edge industries including food and beverage, aquaculture, marine manufacturing and training, forestry and timber products, art and crafts, Antarctic services and goods, and mining technology.

The resourcefulness is evident at a community level. For example, one local bakery owner decided that Coles Bay, Tasmania, should be Australia's first plastic-bag-free town. Since April 2003, all retail outlets in Coles Bay, including supermarkets, have banned plastic shopping bags.



An island off an island – bruny Island

Ben Kearney inspired people right across Australia and around the world by coordinating the project. As a result, Coles Bay was awarded the Environmental Excellence Award by the Tasmanian Government. Ben Kearney also won a national Local Hero Award and an Australia Day award, and in 2005 was named Tasmanian of the Year for his efforts.

Island-inspired Artists

American photographer Arthur Rosenfeld said of Tasmania's allure: "There are grander landscapes and broader heavens, but nowhere have I seen such breathtaking contrasts arise so naturally from the dialogue between mountain and forest, clarity and cloud, sun and moon. A person can disappear in beauty like this."

Tasmania may have a higher proportion of artisans and craftspeople per capita than any other state in Australia. In this eclectic environment the arts thrive with writers, dance and theatre companies, one of Australia's leading puppetry companies, wilderness photographers, weavers, jewellers, potters, painters and timber craftspeople. They work with paint, metal, glass, wool, leather and many of Tasmania's native timbers. The stylish artwork and crafts



The Taste of Tasmania

reflect the island's distinctive natural beauty and a capacity for risk-taking that goes back to convict days.

Many Tasmanian performance companies tour nationally and internationally, including one of the world's best small orchestras, the acclaimed Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra www.tso.com.au. Tasmania's professional dance company, Tasdance, is an important player in the Australian dance landscape and works to inspire young Tasmanians with contemporary dance. www.tasdance.com.au

The biennial Ten Days on the Island is an international celebration of island culture. The multi-artform program explores the cultural uniqueness of islands presenting international artists and acts from island locations around the world alongside Australia's finest talent with more than half of the program featuring Tasmanian artists. www.tendaysontheisland.com

Maritime Flavour

Tasmania is a haven for maritime activities, from sailing, cruising and fishing to festivals that celebrate the island's long-standing maritime traditions. This includes the Australian Wooden Boat Festival, which features traditional boat-building skills and wooden vessels from around the world.

The annual Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race is one of the world's great ocean racing classics and attracts international competitors and spectators from all corners of the globe. It culminates at Hobart's Summer Festival, which includes a week-long dockside food and wine indulgence, the Taste of Tasmania.

Cruise options include the beautiful D'Entrecasteaux Channel, the wide reaches of the River Derwent and the dramatic sea cliffs of the Tasman Peninsula in the south; Cataract Gorge and the Tamar River near the major



Antarctic History

northern city of Launceston; turquoise waters and pink granite off the Freycinet Peninsula on the east coast and the Gordon River in the south-west.

On docks around the island you're able to chat to fishermen while they unload their daily catch. For a more personal exploration of the coastline, hire a sea kayak, with or without a guide.

Antarctic Connection

Tasmania has strong historic and scientific links to the frozen continent. The Tasmanian Polar Network provides a wide range of goods and services for intrepid expeditioners, scientists and Antarctic vessels that use Hobart's deepwater port as a base.

Visitors to Tasmania can explore the definitions, perceptions, mythology and motivations of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean at the Islands to Ice exhibition at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Explore the places, the people, the creatures and the phenomena that make the great southern wilderness a world of its own. The exhibition is an invitation to journey south from Hobart across the wild oceans to the Antarctic.

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