

****Current travel restrictions are in place and may affect your entry into Tassie. Check [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for updates.**

For this final instalment of our 3-month road trip, we explore nipaluna / Hobart and the surrounding sights before making our way to the southernmost township of Cockle Creek. Then passing through the capital again, we head out west to Strahan and then back to Devonport for the return ferry.

[Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) cover our first 6-weeks zigzagging down the east coast and no trip to lutruwita / Tasmania is complete without a visit to nipaluna / Hobart! So, let's start there...

The Bernacchi Tribute sculpture at Franklin Wharf is an iconic sight along Kings Pier Marina.

nipaluna / Hobart

Download any camping [app](#) and a search for Hobart will present a range of options, from paddock through to Glamping. There's even an old scout camp and no matter which option you prefer, it's best to book in as they all fill up fast!

The road network in and around the capital is efficient and akin to Hobart's peak hour, meaning it's quick and easy to get around. If you like views over the water and small city living, then grab a real estate guide because this place has it all and you won't want to leave!

Using the retro viewfinder on the Hidden History tour was great.

This visit to lutruwita / Tasmania saw us spending a total of two weeks in the capital city – one week on each side of time spent further south. We opted to stay in a [caravan](#) park by the Richmond turn off and although it was relatively close to the freeway, it was very quiet. Having facilities on-site and an easy drive to town suited us fine, and being able to book a cabin on our return visit when the rain was full-on, gave us much-appreciated flexibility. Being Australia's second-oldest capital city, there's loads of history here and Macq01 Hotel's [Storytelling tours](#) are great! These small-group tours came highly recommended by friends, and our guide for the Hidden History tour was full of entertaining tales and friendly banter. Using retro viewfinders to reveal the past as you stand in the present, we walked the main and back streets learning more about Hobart and Tasmania in a couple of hours than ever before. Or, nipaluna and lutruwita as they are now officially signed and recognised with their traditional Palawa kani names.

COVID normal seems to be the new norm, so whatever you plan to do, particularly in the city, book ahead with the tour operator. Numbers are often limited, and you want your visit to suit your itinerary, not theirs.

The MONA museum is located within Moorilla winery in the northern suburbs of Hobart, on the Berriedale Peninsula.

MONA – the Museum of Old and New Art is a privately owned gallery famous for its eccentricity. It's not for everyone, my husband included, so I was happy to find a companion to hop on the ferry and share MONA's eclectic offerings.

Another Hobart must is the Saturday [Salamanca Market](#). Steel yourself for a crowd if you get there after 8.30 am. You can purchase anything from breakfast to a hand-tooled leather backpack, or bamboo socks. Tasmania has deservedly gained a wonderful reputation for having a thriving artisan scene, plus good food, wine and whiskey. All of which are on show at

the market.

If you're driving, the earlier you arrive, the more likely your chances are of getting a decent parking spot. Hobart parking is metered and monitored, so read the signs and set an alarm to avoid getting a ticket. There is a good hop-on, hop-off tour bus, as well as public transport so you'll find the [MetroTas app](#) handy.



My husband reading the historical information inside the Huts.

I recommend visiting the replica museum of [Mawson's Huts](#) – established by the foundation of the same name and dedicated to *saving Australia's Antarctic history*. It's deceptively small from the outside so, don't rush the visit as there is a fair amount of reading and objects to be checked out. If you go late in the day, ask the friendly volunteers if your ticket may be used to return. This generous offer was made a couple of times during our trip, and we really appreciated it.



nipaluna / Hobart sits at the foot of kunanyi / Mount Wellington.

kunanyi / Mount Wellington

Kunanyi in Palawa kani means, *mountain*, and is the iconic towering summit over Hobart. The road up is very windy and narrow, so watch for overconfident drivers racing towards you or overtaking from behind. It can be pretty scary.

We've been there during previous trips to Tasmania and had the clearest of days. Other times, we've departed when the mountain was bathed in afternoon light only to arrive and find the lookout and paths shrouded in a misty fog. It's literally 10 degrees cooler than the suburbs below, so be prepared with a warm fleece or [rain jacket](#).

There are loads of activities on offer up the mountain – walking and [hiking](#) trails, [mountain biking](#), horse riding, [4WDing](#) and climbing. Plenty of information can be found on the official Wellington Park [website](#).



What a treat it was to see platypus in the stream at Geeveston!

Cockle Creek

The traditional homeland of the Lyluequonny peoples, our next destination was Cockle Creek. This is the southernmost destination by road in Australia and is the gateway to the [Southwest National Park](#). As always, we took a slow approach and stopped overnight at Geeveston, and I'm so glad we did!

The local RSL camp was clean, offered a bar and restaurant, and was next to a stream with a resident platypus. I was lucky to meet a platypus enthusiast, who taught me to look for the muddy pools and wait, wait, wait. He said the platypus would be watching me before deciding to pop up. If that is truly the case, they liked what they saw, as I was treated to four playing at dusk, and five at dawn the next day.

Leaving Geeveston and en route to Cockle Creek, we discovered the BEST hamburgers we have ever eaten! About 42kms north of Cockle Creek is the little fishing village of Dover and opposite the war memorial, you'll find the Dover Top Shot cafe. It's not open every day, so you need to check their [opening hours](#) before your visit, but it'll be worth it just for the

burger.



Being the farthest southern point that's accessible by road, Cockle Creek is referred to as the End of the Road.

The campsites at Cockle Creek are plentiful but popular. It is the start of the infamous South Coast Track, which is a six-to-nine-day hike across to Melaleuca.

We opted for the less arduous Fishers Point walk which starts beside the whale sculpture. It's an easy scramble, but it's best to wear solid shoes, take water and some energy lifting snacks never go astray. We wandered along over a couple of hours and as the sun rose, so did the temperature.

A valid Parks Pass is required for entry into the national park and there is a Tas Parks station in Cockle Creek for registrations, tips and info on current regulations, along with some facilities. The Far South Tasmania website is also a helpful resource and offers a comprehensive tease of walks and sights in the area.



The Aurora Australis Southern Lights are most visible during the winter months.

Look for a sheltered campsite with access to a swimming spot and you have a winner! We had a week at Cockle Creek and it was a true highlight on our Tas-tour.

There was lots of swimming, reading, and photography including capturing some shots of the elusive Southern Lights. I had no idea what I was looking for, even though I had researched many photographic and Astro sites, seeking unique opportunities. But we did see them, and it was pretty exciting!



The World Heritage-listed Port Arthur is a historic convict site.

Port Arthur

From Cockle Creek it was back to Hobart – after another hamburger of course. As mentioned earlier, the rain had us in a cabin at the caravan park and meant we could unload the car. We even left the camper behind as we met up with friends from home and took a quick side trip to the Port Arthur Historic Site.

I hadn't been to Port Arthur for 25 years! It's changed but is just as special. A benefit of not towing the camper was the inexpensive motel on the fence line. Our room key and two-day entry ticket provided 24-hour access to the historic site. We had the whole place to ourselves from dusk till dawn and what an experience that was.

While in the area, we took a boat trip to admire the rugged coastline near Tasman Island. The high cliffs with cascading waterfalls, archways, deep-sea caves, and a variety of wildlife did not disappoint.



The magnificent coastal caves carved into the cliffs near Tasman Island.

Unawanna-allonah / Bruny Island

Having explored Bruny Island on previous trips we decided against another visit, but it's very worth getting the car ferry across for a few days. There are a host of overnight options to both the north and south, including some fabulous camping spots.

It's not far from Hobart and with its fantastic local produce, we consider it to be a tasting plate of the state! The island boasts a spectacular and rugged coastline, native wildlife, whale spotting and birds. There's also South Bruny National Park with camping available, bushwalks, coastal hikes, and plenty of opportunity for kayaking.



Camping lakeside at Left of Field Camping Gardens.

Mount Field

We bid Hobart and friends farewell to head west and settle at quirky Left of Field for what was the Easter long weekend. Anticipating the busy time, this was one of the very few bookings we made before leaving home.

We deliberately arrived a day before the masses to ensure our pick of the campsites. This is a terrific, relaxed campground on the border of Mount Field National Park, which is part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The Palawa peoples hold a deep connection to this land and with some of the world's tallest eucalypt forests, spectacular waterfalls, unique alpine vegetation, along with the glaciated environment, it's easy to understand why. It's yet to be officially recognised which group holds traditional ownership but occupation dates back over 35,000 years and some say it is the territory of Lutruwita's Big River peoples.

The Day trips to Gordon Dam, Lake Dobson, Tryenna, rainforest waterfall walks, 4x4 tracks and back roads kept us busy. The afternoons of music, organised by Adrian who runs the park, were a treat too.

We moved on to The Wall at Derwent Bridge, home of magnificent bas relief timber sculpture panels. No photos are allowed, but the carvings are so worth seeing. From there it was overnight by the waters of Lake Burbury, topped by a spectacular sunrise, before continuing on to Strahan.



Sunrise at Lake Burbury.

Strahan

The traditional land of the Lowreenne and Mimegin, Strahan is famous for many things. The West Coast Wilderness Railway, the Red or Blue Boat tours, and some fabulous beach driving. The campsites in the national park are a little way from town, and the recently updated facilities provide a taste of west coast wilderness.

Bookings are essential for all tours in and around Strahan. We'd missed many opportunities on previous trips, so booked prior to leaving Hobart just to be certain.



Our Tvan all packed up and ready for the ferry ride home.

Homeward bound

From Strahan, we wound our way north and back towards Launceston. From there, we set off for Devonport to board the Spirit of Tasmania once more and find our cabin for the overnight



ferry trip home.

Part 1, Part 2, or Part 3 - Which of these Tasmanian highlights are on your list?