

DOVER – IN THE HEART OF THE WILDERNESS

TASSIE'S TOP TOURISM TOWN

ITINERARY



Port Esperance Regatta

Dover and Far South Escape

This four-day exploration of Tasmania's Far South is a chance to switch off from more metropolitan pressures and just relax and experience tranquillity while discovering the region's natural and human heritage. Take it easy or stretch your legs with several of Tassie's Great Short Walks, explore spectacular waterways, delve into underground wonders, bathe in beautiful forests and uncover hidden gems.

A short break in the area is a perfect getaway for couples and there is a wide range of accommodation choices, from hosted B & B accommodation through to fully self-contained options, some with hot tubs under the stars. Key elements of this itinerary are within Tasmanian National Parks – entry fees apply so ensure you have a valid parks pass.

Day 1 Dover and surrounds

Take in a Far South sunrise from your choice of local accommodation. Enjoy a leisurely breakfast in situ or stroll to the Dover Café for a gourmet breakfast cooked to order. Head to the Dover Wharf to observe the comings and goings of the fishing boats before joining a Peninsula Cruising charter to explore Far South's stunning waterways. Gain a fascinating insight into the aquaculture industry and the history of Port Esperance. Traverse secluded bays and glide past the magnificent Far South coastline while you enjoy a fresh lunch complete with smoked salmon from the source!

Spend the afternoon with a serene walk along Dover's beautiful beaches and call in at the Dover Museum and Gallery for insights into the area's heritage and the work of local artists. Follow this with a visit to the Bakehouse Distillery at the historic Dover Bakehouse. Here you will find sour dough bread and native inspired botanical spirit distilling taking place. Order your woodfired oven bread by Tuesdays (baked on Fridays), or call in for a tasting or purchase of a bottle of sassafras evoked spirit.

For dinner, try the Dover RSL for traditional pub style food and stunning views across the bay or grab a Pizza to go!

Day 2 Southwest Wilderness and Caves

Keen walkers should rise early for the drive south to Cockle Creek. How low can you go? This is as far south as it is possible to drive in Australia; the final 20km is on gravel past tranquil coves and holiday shacks around Recherche Bay. At the end of the road a bronze sculpture of a young southern right whale pays tribute to the survivors of a past industrial scale whaling industry. Interpretive panels detail the Indigenous and European story of this area.

A highlight for the keen walker is the 4-hour return trek to South Cape Bay: Stand on Australia's southernmost accessible point and enjoy the seclusion of this spectacular beach – next stop Antarctica! Others may opt for a shorter stroll along the beach to Fishers Point.

Travel back north and grab a snack at the café at the Hastings Caves Visitor Centre, where you can purchase a combined ticket for the thermal pool and a tour of the caves. The centre also stocks art and design handmade by local artisans.

Bring your togs and enjoy a swim in the thermal pool's naturally heated 28-degree waters surrounded by forest and ferns, with barbecue facilities and picnic tables on the edge of the wilderness. A short boardwalk through the adjacent forest offers a sense of Tasmania's Southwest Wilderness. Allow about 20 minutes to drive a short distance further along the road to arrive at the cave entrance before your allocated tour departure. Tours of the cave last around 45 minutes and involve around 250 stairs. Low lighting allows for spectacular views of subterranean formations.

To finish off a truly stunning day of exploring, enjoy a hearty meal at Australia's southernmost pub, the Southport Hotel.

Day 3 Gemstones, Kayaking and exploring

Following breakfast, drive to Lune River and visit Lunaris Gemstones. The showroom features Tasmanian fossils and minerals many of which were found by the owners as well as a range of crystals, minerals and fossils from around the world.

Spend the morning paddling on the upper reaches of the Lune River with Esperance Adventures, followed by a hearty hot soup lunch at the historic Jetty House. Whilst in Southport, don't miss out on some great coffee and Rose's delicious cookies from the Rocket at the End of the Road, open most days in summer unless the Rocket is travelling to another Galaxy.

Head to one of Southport's white sandy beaches for a stroll or drive to the boat ramp at the Southport Narrows for spectacular views into the Southwest Wilderness, across the bay to Pelican Island and Deep Hole, a safe anchorage for sailors.

Stop in at Touchwood farm on your way through and say hi to the friendly goat herd or maybe even arrive in time to feed the babies! The farm shop offers an array of beautiful soaps and lotions as well as scrumptious goats milk cheeses. If you time it right, you can also pick up some fresh oysters and crayfish from Ocean Blue Treasure on Harveytown Rd as you head back into town.

If you're not tuckered out from your morning's efforts, take a short drive around the Esperance Coast Road and stretch your legs on Roaring Beach, a lovely expanse of gleaming white sand facing out onto the D'Entrecasteaux Channel.

A little further around the road at Huon Aquaculture, salmon farmed in these cool southern waters is available for purchase. Continue north along this scenic road and re-join the A6 at Surges Bay for the return to Dover. Fresh apples and other seasonal produce are often available at roadside stalls with payment in cash via their 'honesty boxes'.

The Post Office Restaurant (open 3 nights) has great reviews for its woodfired pizzas.

Day 4 – Tahune Airwalk and the Hartz Mountains

Start your day with a 15-minute drive and a delicious breakfast at the Old Bank of Geeveston before heading out on the Arve Road into the deep forests of Tasmania's Southwest. Look for the turnoff to the Hartz Mountain National Park at the 13km mark. From the Hartz visitor station, take your pick of beautiful walks: stroll to Lake Esperance, a lovely alpine lake nestled amongst the mountains or if you're feeling a little more adventurous carry on to Hartz Peak, which on a clear day offers views as far as Federation Peak.

Next stop the Tahune Airwalk, newly reopened after extensive closure due to the bushfires of 2019 and then the double whammy of COVID19. This area was badly burned in the bushfires, but many of the tall trees remain and the story of nature's recovery is being told. The treetop walkway offers stunning views of the Huon and Picton Rivers, and there are a range of other activities and short walks available.

After a full day of exploring, make your way back to the tranquillity of Dover and enjoy a relaxed evening reflecting on the wonderful few days spent in the southernmost region of Australia.

Accommodation, attractions and food information: www.farsouthtasmania.com



Hastings Caves, Australia's largest Dolomite Cave

Image credit: Wolfgang Glowacki