

Hobart is the charming state capital city of the beautiful Australian island state of Tasmania, with an approximate population of just 200,525 people. Hobart is located in the southeast of Tasmania, at the foot of magnificent Mount Wellington (which rises 1271 metres above the city) and nestled around the banks of a busy harbour shore and the tranquil Derwent River. Visitors either fly direct from the mainland or can enter Hobart from the north of the island on the iconic Tasman Bridge and highway, overlooking the islands and peninsulas near Storm Bay that surround this quaint harbour-side city.

As the second-oldest city in Australia, after Sydney, the town boasts a rich European colonial history combined with a relaxed atmosphere that stems from its closeness to nature. The city of Hobart has on its doorstep easy access to the rugged wilderness of gorgeous national parks, mountains, lakes, pristine beaches, and a harbour that is ideal for sailing yachts across on a fresh summer day.

There are no direct international flights to or from Tasmania. Airlines with services between Hobart and the mainland of Australia are Qantas, Virgin Blue, and Jetstar. Hobart's airport is 16 kilometres east of the city centre. The Airporter Shuttle Bus travels between the Transit Centre and the airport (via various city pick-up points), connecting with all flights. Bookings are essential for the Airporter Shuttle Bus service. You can also catch a taxi between the airport and the city centre, but it will cost you more.

Buses leave or arrive at the Transit Centre, located to the west of the city centre, and from Hobart Coaches, right in the heart of the city.

Accommodation in Hobart ranges from budget backpacker hostels, to more expensive Bed & Breakfast cottages, to hotels. The main areas for budget accommodation can be found in the city centre and in the older suburbs surrounding the city centre to the north and west of Hobart.

Sights & Attractions

The main attractions of Hobart centre on its rich history and awesome natural beauty. From the charming historical streets of Battery Point, the famous Salamanca markets, the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, towering Mount Wellington, the Angelsea Military Barracks, Risdon Cove (Tasmania's first settlement, later relocated to Hobart), the Cadbury chocolate factory, and cruises down Derwent River, there is simply so much to see and do in Hobart!

Salamanca Place and the harbourside docks are considered the absolute heart and soul of this port town. The old Georgian warehouses that make up Salamanca Place (built between 1830–1850) have been converted into fantastic art galleries, craft and gift shops, as well a wide range of quality eateries. Visiting this spot is a must when taking in the

sights of Hobart, have a coffee and enjoy the views of yachts sailing across the harbour, then take a stroll through the colourful weekend markets at Salamanca Place.

Traipse through unique Battery Point with its concentration of beautifully preserved nineteenth century buildings, or take a day trip to Australia's most famous convict ruins nearby at Port Arthur to gain an understanding of the tough conditions convicts faced on their arrival in this strange country from chilly England. Located in Hobart itself are the Angelsea Barracks, built in 1814, the oldest military establishment still in use in Australia today and available to tour.

Approximately 8 kilometres up the Derwent River from Hobart is Risdon Cove, the site of the first official European settlement in Tasmania. Although settled in 1803, poor soil and failure to produce crops saw the settlers relocated within just a year to the present day Hobart site. A bloody history surrounds Risdon Cove with a major massacre of the local Aborigines occurring within just months of settlement. This was the start of an act of genocide that nearly totally eliminated the original inhabitants of the land. There is a good audio visual display at the visitor centre which explains the story of early European settlement in Tasmania.

The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, located on the banks of the Derwent River just beyond Government house, are simply magnificent and well-worth visiting. A popular recreational area for locals and tourists alike it is the second-oldest Botanic Gardens in Australia with some unique plant collections.

For truly sensational views of the town and harbour take a journey up Mount Wellington. The view across the Derwent River and down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel is absolutely spectacular from this vantage point. Another popular activity is to cruise down the Derwent River and visit the Cadbury Chocolate Factory, an absolute favourite for chocolate lovers!

The Tasman Bridge is also a uniquely important feature of the city, connecting the two shores of Hobart and visible from many locations.

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Art/Culture/Festivals

Hobart is internationally renowned as the finish of the famous open water Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race which starts in Sydney on Boxing Day (the day after Christmas Day). The yachts start arriving in Hobart about the 28th/29th December, just in time to pop the champagne corks and celebrate New Year!

There is also the Hobart Summer Festival, beginning just after Christmas and ending in mid-January, featuring street performers, concerts, and theatre shows. The Taste of Tasmania is a popular attraction of the Hobart Summer Festival, providing festival goers the opportunity to sample a wide range of food and wine.

The Royal Hobart Regatta, held in February on the Derwent River, is the largest boating carnival in the southern hemisphere. The Australian Wooden Boat Festival is a biennial event that coincides with the Royal Hobart Regatta.

Another biennial event is Ten Days on the Island, a state-wide Tasmanian event held at various venues, to put on display Tasmania's arts and island culture.

The month of June brings the Antarctic Midwinter Festival, March the Salamanca Writers' Weekend, and October the Royal Hobart Agricultural and Horticultural Show. There are a number of other festivals such as the Hobart Fringe Festival, Southern Roots Festival, and the Falls Festival in Marion Bay held throughout the year that also attract a crowd. Celebrating the spring season is the annual Tulip Festival at the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens.

Hobart is home to the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, based at the Federation Concert Hall on the city's waterfront, which offers a year-round program of sensational concerts.

History

Hobart's early European settlement came about as a result of the fears the British held that the French might try to establish a colony on the island. To keep the French out of Australia Governor Philip Gidley King sent Lieutenant John Bowen, with a party of just 49 people (including 35 convicts), to establish a settlement on the Derwent River (originally at Risdon Cove, later moved to Hobart).

Hobart was settled in 1804 and quickly became the main place to transport English and Irish convicts in order to remove them from the United Kingdom. Convict labour built most of the original settlement of Hobart.

In Hobart's early days it gained a notorious reputation as a wild and unruly place, an isolated and rough part of the world. It became a thriving port, with sealers, whalers, and fisherman calling Hobart home.

Ships from Europe, China, Singapore, Batavia and the United States all used the port.

Since World War 1, and the demise of the whaling and seal industry, Hobart has economically become dependant on heavy industry (such as hydro electricity), and light industry, as well as tourism. Hobart has retained a real sense of quaint nineteenth century charm and history, is a place of wild natural beauty, and is known as having the most relaxed atmosphere of any capital city in Australia by far!

Climate

Hobart has a mild temperate oceanic climate, with four distinct seasons. Compared to other major Australia cities Hobart has the second least daily average hours of sunshine, with just 5.9 hours a day (Melbourne has the least). Despite being protected from the worst of the island's weather Hobart does sustain a cold, wet, and windy winter season (June to August). The city rarely receives snow in winter; however, Mount Wellington is often seen with a covering in winter. The temperature ranges from a summer monthly average of 21°C (Degrees Celsius) in February to a winter monthly average of 11°C in July. In summer, there is warm swimming weather and plenty of sun, with many days reaching beyond 30°C. The most temperate time of the year to visit Hobart is in autumn (March to May).

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