

Mornington Peninsula National Park



The Coastal Walk

The ocean beaches of the Mornington Peninsula National Park offer wonderful walking opportunities for visitors of all ages and fitness levels. The 30 kilometre Coastal Walk extends from Cape Schanck to London Bridge, taking in almost the entire coastline of the national park. This two day walk features a network of cliff top tracks with spectacular ocean views and dense coastal vegetation, as well as sections of long beach walks which pass by sculpted sand dunes and tidal rock pools. The walk can be divided into smaller sections as a number of short tracks inland provide exit points along the way.

How to get there

The national park is 90 kilometres south of Melbourne. Most access roads are signposted from Point Nepean Road. The eastern part of the park, including Cape Schanck, can be reached from Boneo (Rosebud-Flinders) Road.

The Coastal Walk can be done in either direction but the more spectacular views are provided when walking from east to west, starting at Cape Schanck.

The Coastal Walk is identified on signage by the circular Hooded Plover symbols. Arrow markers also define tracks along the way; orange markers indicate the main 'through route' and blue markers indicate local 'circuit walks'.

Be prepared

Walkers should plan their route to accommodate their fitness level and carry plenty of water, snacks and appropriate wet weather gear. Drinking water and toilet facilities are available only at main day visitor car parks. The weather on the coast can be unpredictable and mobile phone reception is poor in many areas. Always inform someone of your intended route before you set out.

These notes break the full 30km walk into smaller sections. Inland 'escape routes' provide exit points from The Coastal Walk along the way which allows walkers to easily determine their own sections.

Cape Schanck to Gunnamatta

(Distance: 6.7 km)

Leaving the Cape Schanck Visitor Area car park, follow the sealed Cape Schanck Road for 600m back towards Boneo Road. Turn left onto the dirt track which leads into the national park. Follow the walking track through coastal Moonah woodland towards Fingal and Gunnamatta Beach. A detour circuit walk

provides access inland to Fingal Picnic Area car park, drinking water and toilets. Further north a side track leads to secluded Fingal beach via a long path of steep stairs. If you visit the beach, be sure to return to the high track as through access to Gunnamatta is difficult along the beach, especially at high tide. The main track passes through dense coastal vegetation with three spectacular lookouts along the way. When the track drops down onto the eastern end of Gunnamatta Beach, continue along the beach to the day visitor area containing the Surf Lifesaving clubhouse, car park and public toilets.

Gunnamatta to Rye Ocean Beach

(Distance: 4.5 km)

Crossing Gunnamatta car park to the far corner, a link track provides access past a second smaller car park and toilet and out onto the main entry road where the track turns left down to the beach. This section between Gunnamatta Beach and Boag Rocks to the west is along the beach. Upon reaching Boag Rocks, proceed up the sealed road for 150m to the stairs which access the shared walking track and horse trail. Heading back onto the beach, this long stretch of beach walking passes inland escape routes to St Andrews Beach car park, Moana Court and Ocean Drive before finishing at Rye Ocean Beach car park with toilet facilities and drinking water.

Rye Ocean Beach to No. 16

(Distance: 4.1 km)

From Rye Ocean Beach continue along the beach past Gunida Court and Alison Avenue inland tracks and around two small headlands. A red-capped post in the dunes indicates the start of the track leading off the beach (approx 2.5km west of Rye car park). The cliff top track meanders along the rugged coastline past the sandstone outcrop of Lizard Head and the intersection of the inland track to Brewster Road



For further information

Call Parks Victoria on 13 1963
or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au

Park Office
2 Hinton Street
P.O. Box 400, Rosebud

Point Nepean Visitor Centre
Point Nepean Rd, Portsea

Caring for the environment

Help us look after your park
by following these guidelines:

Please take rubbish home with
you for recycling and disposal.

Keep to the formed walking
tracks.

Bicycles are not permitted on
walking tracks.

Dogs and other pets are not
permitted within the park.

Firearms are not permitted in
the park.

Fires are not permitted in the
park.

All native plants and animals
are protected. Leave the park
as you found it.

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before descending onto beach. Continue along the beach past Avon Road and Heyfield Road exits to reach the eastern end of No. 16 beach. Follow the red-capped posts through the dunes along the way. Further along the beach, a set of stairs access the track to the No. 16 car park.

No. 16 to Bridgewater Bay

(Distance: 5 km)

Proceed 100m along the road out of the No. 16 car park and the historic Lifesaving Track heads off into the dense bushland. This is the next section of The Coastal Walk and is a fascinating walk in itself. The 11km Lifesaving Track was built in the 1890s to provide better access to the coast after two devastating shipwrecks. There were 16 strategic points set up along the track as launch sites for rescue operations should ships become distressed. The track passes two inland exits at Carslake Avenue and Tibir Street before reaching picturesque Dimmicks Beach. Continuing on, it traverses sand dunes and spectacular cliff tops as it passes the Pearse Road and Royadie Road exits before reaching beautiful Bridgewater Bay. At this point a circuit walk gives access to St Johns Wood car park and a detour to the intriguing rock pools of Bridgewater Bay, access is available via a steep staircase.

Bridgewater Bay to Sorrento

(Distance: 5 km)

From Bridgewater Bay, continue on the Lifesaving Track past the intersections at Fowlers and Montforts Beaches to Spray Point. A short detour provides access to Spray Point, a spectacular headland with views over Koonya Ocean Beach and back towards Diamond Bay. Escape routes along this section are located at Kirwood Street, Central Avenue, Beach Avenue, Foam Avenue and Spray Point Road.

The Lifesaving Track continues on to Koonya Ocean Beach passing a car park and toilet block at Hughes Road. From the western corner of Koonya lower car park the track leads to Diamond Bay, named to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. A scenic detour circuit can be made at Dog's Head west of Koonya.

From Diamond Bay the track becomes Coppins Track, another historic route with many sections passing over the original 1800s limestone surface. A circuit walk east of Diamond Bay provides access to historic St Pauls Lookout, a strategic observation site for the early settlers and gives stunning views over the Bay of Islands. Continuing west for 1km, The Coastal Walk passes yet another scenic detour at Jubilee Point which, on a clear day provides spectacular views of Cape Schanck to the east and as far as the Otways to

the west. In the 19th Century a rotunda was built on this site but demolished during World War 2 to clear the coastline of landmarks. Follow Coppins Track

past the steps to St Pauls Beach and on to Sorrento Back Beach where there are toilets, drinking water, a Surf Lifesaving clubhouse and café. Escape routes along the way are available at Keating Avenue, Ivanhoe Street, Diamond Bay Road and St Pauls Road.

A separate parknote is available for Coppins Track which provides a heritage guide to the number posts along the track.

Sorrento to London Bridge

(Distance 4 km)

Crossing the road at Sorrento Back Beach, The Coastal Walk continues through the vegetation above the car park and beach (an alternative track from the Surf Lifesaving clubhouse connects back up with the main track above via Coppins Lookout). A short detour to Websters Lookout gives stunning views over the township of Sorrento and Port Phillip Bay. An escape route is available which leads past the Sorrento Cemetery to Normanby Road. Follow the main track past the lookout and descend the stairs to the eastern end of Portsea Surf Beach.

The route now proceeds along this scenic stretch of beach, past the Franklin Road escape route, to the ramp at the Portsea Surf Lifesaving clubhouse, toilets and drinking water. At the top of the ramp, the route turns left up a short pathway linking two car parks. Following the edge of the top car park to the far corner the route becomes part of The Farnsworth Track. The track, built in 1987 with a donation from the notable local Farnsworth family, links Portsea Surf Beach with London Bridge along the cliff tops via two scenic lookouts. At London Bridge, a steep ramp leads to the beach where amazing rock pools are visible at low tide. A public toilet, drinking water and lookout are available at the car park.

A parknote is available for The Farnsworth Track.

London Bridge to Point Nepean

(Distance: 1.7km)

While London Bridge is the end of The Coastal Walk, a pleasant extension through coast Moonah woodlands leads into neighbouring Point Nepean National Park. The track passes Wilsons Folly and comes out on Defence Road. Visitors can proceed to the Information Centre at the park entrance or continue on to the Quarantine Station and historic Forts.

Still feeling energetic?

The Coastal Walk forms part of the 100km Mornington Peninsula Walk which links existing tracks across the peninsula. Now that you've traversed the wild ocean coastline, why not walk the peaceful bay beaches and tranquil inland bushland. A

separate brochure and map are available.