

## Title:

Tasmania - The Australian Island State

## Word Count:

745

## Summary:

Tasmania is Australia's island state, separated from the mainland by the 240 kilometre expanse of Bass Strait. A land of wild and beautiful landscapes, Tasmania boasts a comfortable temperate climate, quality wine and food, rich history and a leisurely, relaxed lifestyle. Tasmania is home to one of the world's 10 best beaches (Wineglass Bay), the world's best small town (Strahan) and is rated third in the world for wise management of the natural environment.

## Keywords:

tasmania, tour, travel, holiday, vacation

## Article Body:

Tasmania is Australia's island state, separated from the mainland by the 240 kilometre expanse of Bass Strait. A land of wild and beautiful landscapes, Tasmania boasts a comfortable temperate climate, quality wine and food, rich history and a leisurely, relaxed lifestyle. Tasmania is home to one of the world's 10 best beaches (Wineglass Bay), the world's best small town (Strahan) and is rated third in the world for wise management of the natural environment.

More than any other state in Australia, Tasmania enjoys four distinct seasons, each with its own special characteristics. Both local Tasmanians and visitors enjoy the state's temperate maritime climate. Summer is a festive season when the Launceston Festival and the Hobart Summer Festival are held. Autumn is a mellow season with calm, sunny days when the native deciduous beech trees and European trees blaze with a riot of red, orange and gold colours. Winter days are crisp and clear with a dusting of snow on mountain peaks. Spring is cool and refreshing, with gardens bursting back to life as Tasmania celebrates the Blooming Tasmania festival.

Tasmania's capital Hobart is an intriguing blend of the old and the new, a city defined by the river and sea. Hobart's maritime focus can be appreciated with a harbour cruise or drive to the top of Mt Nelson or Mt Wellington - suburbs line the Derwent River, city buildings are clustered around the historic docks and the Derwent estuary broadens into Storm Bay. Only twenty-five kilometres from Hobart is the historic town of Richmond, home to the old Richmond Gaol and part

of Tasmania's early convict origins. The nearby vineyards and wineries of the Coal River Valley are home to many of Tasmania's superb cool-climate wines. Hobart is an ideal base from which to explore southern and eastern Tasmania.

Hobart has more summer daylight hours than any other Australian capital city. Tasmania is the southernmost of the eight Australian states and territories, and enjoys over 15 hours of daylight on the summer solstice (22 December). This is 2.5 more hours of daylight than Darwin (Northern Territory) receives and 1 hour more than Sydney (New South Wales) receives on the same day. Experts at the Launceston Planetarium claim that the day is even longer if twilight periods at dawn and dusk are taken into account. On the other hand, Tasmania receives less daylight than mainland Australian states and territories in winter. Hobart has around 9 hours daylight in winter, 1 hour less than Sydney and about 2.5 hours less than Darwin.

Rainfall in Tasmania varies dramatically from region to region. Hobart is Australia's second-driest capital city after Adelaide, while on the West Coast an annual average of 2400 millimetres ensures that temperate rainforests thrive. Minimal artificial light makes Tasmania's night sky an exceptional location for stargazing, including the wonder of the magnificent Aurora Australis.

Devonport is a diverse and interesting region, home to charming historic towns, beautiful beaches and forests, fine foods and the magnificent craggy peaks of Cradle Mountain. Cradle Mountain is a dramatic mountain peak in the northern section of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, a World Heritage Area. The mountain is one of the most popular features in the park, and is surrounded by stands of native deciduous beech trees, rainforest and alpine heathlands. Icy streams cascade down the mountainsides, and ancient pines are reflected in the still glacial lakes. The walk to the top of the mountain (1,545 metres) takes eight hours return. Lake St Clair is the deepest in Australia (190 metres), having been excavated by glaciers about 10,000 years ago during the last Ice Age. Towering cliffs rise sheer from the waters of the lake, in which fishing and boating are allowed.

The east coast of Tasmania is a region of agreeable contrasts - sunshine and sea, wine and wildlife, rugged cliffs and glorious beaches. A centre of fine food and wine, the area is famous for its fresh, natural produce. It is also home to a series of excellent national parks, including Douglas-Apsley National Park with majestic rivers, eucalypts and Oyster Bay pines, Freycinet National Park which is renowned as a bushwalkers' and sea kayakers' paradise, and Maria Island National Park rich in history, scenic walks and fauna. The east coast's history is told by its place names. Schouten Island and Maria Island were mapped by Dutch navigator Abel Tasman, while the Freycinet Peninsula was charted by

Frenchman Nicolas Baudin. Welsh settlers named the town of Swansea, while Triabunna and Wielangta recall thousands of years of Aboriginal presence in Tasmania.