

10 Day Full Franklin River incl. Frenchmans Cap Trip Notes

This ten day wilderness whitewater rafting adventure takes you the full navigable length (~ 110km) of the Franklin River, deep in the heart of Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area. Our tour includes an optional day walk to the imposing Frenchmans Cap (1,446 m), the monarch of the South West, as well as rafting through the Great Ravine one of Tasmania's most spectacular gorges.



Negotiating the untamed waters of the Franklin River is one of the worlds best whitewater rafting adventures. Unpredictable river levels mean our trip will always be an adventure - it is possible to encounter both very low levels and floods within days of each other. Whatever the level, our spacious self bailing rafts offer the safest and most comfortable way to explore this unique wilderness.

Pre-Trip Meeting and Gear Storage

If you are staying around Central Hobart we will either meet you briefly or drop your dry bags at your hotel the day **before** Day 1 (trip departure day). This meeting is to issue and check gear. We will call you or you can call us to arrange time and location. It is possible to initially meet earlier or later by arrangement.

The preferred place to store excess luggage is where you are staying before or after the trip. The Astor Hotel will happily store your gear if you are staying there. Alternately, we can store gear for you, just let us know at the pre-trip meeting.

Meeting Point and Time

Our trips start and finish in Hobart. On the morning of Day 1 we will pick you up ~7:30 am at your accommodation around Central Hobart. Alternatively we can also meet at Derwent Bridge Hotel on Day 1 at ~10:30 am or anywhere on route to the river. We can organise pickups and drop offs around Tasmania - extra charges may apply.

Time of Return

On Day 10 our tour concludes with a yacht cruise down the Gordon River and across Macquarie Harbour to Strahan. From here our coach will take us back to Hobart, generally arriving back in town around 6 - 7 pm. We often meet at a restaurant for an optional group dinner that night. It may be possible to fly directly from the Gordon River or Strahan to Hobart. This is subject to weather and extra charges apply. Call us anytime to discuss options.

Please note that very occasionally delays can be caused by extreme weather conditions. We recommend catching the last flight out of Hobart on **the day after** the trip. If you wish to fly out on the evening of the last day of the trip, book a flight departing after 8:30 pm at the earliest and let us know before you do. This timing is at your own risk. We will not race to get you back in time to catch your flight.

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Grade and Fitness

Adventurous - A reasonable level of fitness is important and should increase your enjoyment of this trip. The Frenchmans Cap walk (optional) involves an ascent and descent of more than 1000 meters vertical. In addition there may be some portages which may require us to carry equipment around certain rapids. You should feel confident swimming with a buoyancy vest if you fall out or the raft capsizes.

Please read our Terms and Conditions carefully for more detailed descriptions of risks and dangers. <https://franklinriver.com/terms>

Rapids vary from Class 1 to Class 6 though most are Class 2 or 3. The most difficult level run on most trips is Class 4 and it is possible to walk around many of these rapids should you choose. Please call us anytime on 1-800-1111-42 to discuss your individual fitness.

Read more about rafting and grades of whitewater <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rafting>

Itinerary – 10 day Full River incl. Frenchmans Cap

This is a guide only and may alter with river levels.

Day 1

We depart around 7:30 am from Central Hobart / the Astor Private Hotel. We follow the Derwent River, then climb into the Central Highlands, passing Lake St. Clair before descending to the Collingwood River, a tributary of the Franklin. Here your guides will prepare lunch, give a safety briefing and load the rafts with your assistance.

The day is spent mastering the rafts and enjoying easy rapids leading down to our evenings camp at the junction with the Franklin proper. A short climb can take us to Donaghys Hill for panoramic views down the Franklin River and across to Frenchmans Cap.



Day 2

An early start sees us traversing the first of the Franklin's gorges, Aesthesia Ravine. After negotiating the Log Jam and Nasty Notch, we rocket through the rapids of Descension Gorge before arriving at the beautiful Irenabyss (Chasm of Peace), our base for the next two nights.



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Day 3

Today we can attempt to scale Frenchmans Cap (1446 m). In fine weather we'll have views that encompass the entire South West World Heritage Area, including the rapids of the Franklin sparkling below. If the weather is poor or you choose not to climb the Cap, there are a number of lower level walks nearby that offer a different perspective of the river. This is a great place to spend the day and explore the Irenabyss.



Day 4

After a big breakfast it's straight back into the action. Dozens of rapids, interspersed with quiet reaches, lead us past Mt. Fincham, the Jericho Walls and the Crankle and onto our campsite at the base of the Engineer Range. Here we relax at our camp under a canopy of towering sassafras and myrtle trees or on a sandy beach and may go swimming.



Day 5

A spectacular day that brings us to the awesome Great Ravine, one of Tasmania's deepest gorges. Soon after camp we arrive at the massive Blushrock Falls for a short walk and morning tea. We'll tackle the Side Slip rapid first before coming to the Churn. Teamwork and tenacity will be required to portage at least part of this huge obstruction in the river and level permitting run the "corkscrew rapid". Soon after we'll arrive at our camp for a well earned rest on the banks of Serenity Sound deep in the Great Ravine.



Day 6

We'll use all of our well practised white water rafting skills to negotiate the Coruscades, one of the longest rapids on the river. A short float takes us through to our next portage at Thunderush, then its on to the last obstacle, the Cauldron. Our expert guides will ensure that we pass these awesome rapids safely and efficiently. Our final camp at Rafter's Basin is a great place to relax after the achievements of the day.



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Day 7

Today we head into Propsting Gorge, this section has the largest runnable rapids on the river at low to medium levels. After negotiating Ol' Three Tiers we continue through the exciting Trojans rapids before arriving at Rock Island Bend and the Pig Trough, with its delightful waterfall cascading into a fern lined grotto. Safety dictates that we portage the actual Pig Trough rapid before we round Rock Island Bend to tackle the famous Newlands Cascades. This section will have everyone whooping with delight as we plunge through a maelstrom of spray and whitewater.



At rapids-end is a place for a deserved break. On the bank, natural overhangs provide the ideal shelter. Echoing cliffs and plumes of spray add to the magnificent setting. We sometimes spend a day here.

Day 8

The river abruptly leaves the quartzite gorges of the Middle Franklin and enters the limestone country of the lower reaches. Tranquil pools are broken by the occasional large rapid - Little Fall is a great spot for action photography! Slowly the river increases in volume. The Jane River enters from the left just above our midday break on Flat Island, a beach of polished river stone dominated by the impressive Elliot range. We then continue to our evenings camp under a canopy of ancient trees by the deep pool at Blackmans Bend or one of the lower rivers' many sandy beaches. We may be lucky enough to get a visit from the local platypus.



Day 9

The thick temperate rain forest which clings to the river banks is punctuated by limestone cliffs and strange rock formations. The river widens and now flows quietly. There is time to reflect; to conjure up visions of Aboriginal peoples hunting the Ice Age plains in the days before the forest spread to claim the open country. Today we will carefully show you some of the unique limestone caves which sheltered these people some 14,000 year ago.



We then tackle the unexpected Double Fall. Almost immediately we encounter the last step down in the rivers bedrock, Big Fall. It's a deceptive rapid which we portage easily and quickly. Around the corner is the gaping Penghana Cave, a towering vault in the cliffs and the entrance to the Lost World. We lunch on a beach across from the spectacular Verandah Cliffs.

Our final few hours are spent along the mighty Gordon River, carried by the huge volume of water that makes this Tasmania's largest waterway. Soon we reach the picturesque Sir John Falls, our final camp.

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Day 10

Aboard the yacht Stormbreaker we can relax and enjoy breakfast and brunch while cruising down the Gordon River and across Macquarie Harbour to Strahan on the West Coast. A coach trip back to Hobart completes our journey, normally arriving 6 - 7pm.

We have flown directly to Hobart from the river many times and can arrange a sea plane charter flight for you - this is subject to weather and extra charges apply. It may be possible to organise aerial transfers for a group from Strahan to Hobart.



Trip Map

Go to <https://franklinriver.com/map> to view interactive Trip Map, showing details like

- >> Trip outline
- >> Rapids, Gorges
- >> Landmarks, Campsites (some with photos)

