

# 5 Day Lower Franklin River Trip Notes

An unforgettable long weekend. This **five day wilderness whitewater rafting adventure** explores the lower 45 km of the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers World Heritage Area.

As well as some exciting whitewater rafting, you can enjoy days of easy paddling and the chance to take in the serenity of this unique region.

## 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 around lunchtime on 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 you can take some extra luggage with you to Queenstown and leave it with our 4WD contractor (Anthony) while on the river.

## Meeting Point and Time

Our trips start and finish in Hobart. On Day 1 we will pick you up ~1 pm at your accommodation around Central Hobart. It is possible to meet in Queenstown on the evening of Day 1 or morning of Day 2 by prior arrangement. We can organise pickups and drop-offs around Tasmania - extra charges may apply.

## Time of Return

On Day 5 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.

## Grade and Fitness

**Moderate** - A reasonable level of fitness is important and should improve your enjoyment of this trip. On Day 2 you will need to carry your dry bag (backpack) with your personal belongings down a very steep track (~350 m vertical). There will be some portages which may require you to carry your personal equipment around certain rapids. You should feel confident swimming with a buoyancy vest if you fall out, or the raft capsizes.

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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 – 5 Day Lower River

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

### Day 1

After issuing personal dry bags and wetsuits we head off to lunch by the Derwent River. We then follow the Lyell Highway over the Central Highlands, past the King William Range and descend to the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park.

We cross the Franklin and Collingwood Rivers and continue on to Queenstown where we will spend the night. Twin share accommodation, dinner and breakfast are included in this trip.



### Day 2

Following an early breakfast we board our 4WD vehicle for an exciting and spectacular trip over Mt. McCall to the river. On a clear day you can admire expansive views of Frenchmans Cap and the South West. A steep descent of ~350 meters down a foot track leads us to our rafts on the banks of the Franklin River.

After packing the rafts and a safety talk we head down Propsting Gorge and 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.

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## Day 3

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 stones 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. We may be lucky enough to get a visit from the local platypus.



## Day 4

The thick rain forest which clings to the 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 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 14000 years 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 entrance to the Lost World. We lunch on a beach across from the spectacular Verandah Cliffs.

Our final few hours are spent drifting 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.

## Day 5

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 - 7 pm.

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.



# 5 Day Lower Franklin River Trip Notes

## 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)

