

Tasmania Awaits: Insider Tips for First-Time Visitors with Jennifer Johnston

Tasmania is one of our favourite destinations in Australia

Tracy: Tasmania

Tracy: Tasmania is one of our favourite destinations in Australia and in this episode, travel writer Jennifer Johnston shares exactly why, plus get her top tips for first time visitors. Hi and welcome to the Global Travel Planning Podcast. I'm your host, Tracy Collins, who with my expert guest will take you on a weekly journey to destinations around the globe, providing travel inspiration, itinerary ideas, practical tips and more to help you plan your next travel adventure.

Tracy: Welcome to episode 58 of the Global Travel Planning Podcast. this week I am chatting with my friend Jennifer Johnson, all about one of Doug and I's favorite destinations in Australia and one that we are constantly promoting when we are overseas. When people talk to us about Australia and the first thing they say is Australia. Oh, Sydney, Melbourne. And we go, yeah, they're very nice places. We're from Brisbane, but if you're going to come to Australia, places to consider are the Outback, Queensland and this destination that we're going to talk about now.

Jen is a travel writer

So Tasmania. So welcome to the podcast, Jen. It's going to be so good to chat with you. All things Tasmania today. Would you like to introduce yourself, tell us what you do and what is your connection with Tassie?

Jennifer Johnston: Thanks Tracy. Thanks for having me along on the, global Travel Podcast. I'm pretty excited because I listen to pretty much every episode so it's nice to be on the other end. So I hope I can deliver a little bit about Tasmania and why I'm so passionate about it. I sort of reflected on the questions and this one made me think about when I actually first visited Tasmania. It was 1982 and I was in grade 12 and it was my senior high school, trip tour, to Tasmania. So, so, that was a crazy introduction. I think there are about 30, grade 11, grade 12 girls, on a bus tour. We caught the spirit of Tasmania over and yeah, toured around I think for about 10 days and then there was a massive gap, 30 years basically, until I went and did a hike in the Bay of Fires, back in 2012 I just had seen an advertisement and hiking was kind of my jam at the time. So, yeah, that was 2012 and I guess Covid was the next time that I thought about Tasmania because we couldn't, you know, go anywhere internationally. so I booked a flight to Hobart. Couldn't get there. A couple of times, you know, they got, you know, the state would close down or, you know, people from Queensland weren't allowed to leave or what have you. And I think that was 2020. And then I came back and mentioned, something to a friend of mine whose friend happened to be looking after a new estate that was being built just outside of Hobart. And she said to me, you should look that up. And I did. And one thing led to another and I ended up ending investing in some real estate, down there. So I try and get down there about every two, two to three months. And you know, the, the reason I've done that is I'm pretty much almost an empty nester and I thought Tasmania would be a, a great place for me to go down and just explore.

Tracy: More of, and it is a, it's an amazing destination. It really is. I think Tasmania is a

very. It. Honestly, Cap dug a nice heart when we went. We've only been once so far. We were there for three weeks and we loved it. And this is a few years ago now and we still talk about Tasmania. I was like, oh yes, we must go back and explore more. So if anybody is listening to the podcast and kind of wondering about how, what, what's the best way describe Tasmania or how would you kind of encapsulate it in three words? How, what would you say?

Jennifer Johnston: three words is hard. But you know, I'm a travel writer, so I probably am, you know, struggling with just finding three words. But I thought relaxing, you know, because every time I go down there everything just seems to slow down. another word is magical. You know, the Tourism Tasmania team have got this catchphrase, come down for air. And that's exactly what, you know, you do when you go down there. Everything just feels fresh. The light is amazing. So that's why I say magical. And then the other one, probably crossing over a little bit is breathtaking once you leave the city.

Tracy: Sorry, no, I was going to say I think those are great words and yeah, and exactly when you get out the city, it truly is. There's so much that is breathtaking about Tasmania, isn't there?

Jennifer Johnston: There is,

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Jennifer Johnston: there's history, there's landscapes, you know, there's open spaces, there's wilderness. it's producers. But anyway, we'll get to those.

Tasmania should be on everyone's to do list when visiting Australia

Tracy: Yeah, I have to say you just mentioned a couple of things just in those, in those, those words that you've used that kind of struck me. And one is the, the light. The light is amazing when you're there. And also just the, the freshness of everything, like the produce was amazing. So I know we're going to talk more in detail about those, but I think that is the key and actually when I've spoken to people overseas when I talk about Australia, it's the one place that people don't think about. And I don't know if it's, I don't know why, because I'm always going, what about Tasmania? And they think it's too far to go. And I'm like, if you're already going to the mainland of Australia, then going to the island of Tasmania is not going to be that much of a further push.

Jennifer Johnston: So I know when international visitors do make the effort, they can't stop talking about. Definitely should be on everyone's, you know, to do list when they come to Australia. But for some reason people think just because it's an island it's hard to get to. But anyway, we'll come to that. It's not hard to get to.

Tracy: Absolutely right.

First time visitors to Tasmania should know about indigenous history and culture

Okay, so that's a good kind of segue into the things that first time visitors should know before they arrive. So what are the things that you'd say you need to know about Tasmania?

Jennifer Johnston: definitely that it's a lot fresher down south. And I mean, I know I'm speaking and you're speaking from someone who lives in Brisbane, so you know, the temperatures are more mild. but yeah, even in summer it can actually get really, really fresh in Tassie. basically the next piece of land is Antarctica, which is quite a bit away. But you know, when you sort of realize how far south it is and you look at the the longitude, you know, like where it is to New Zealand as well, it's, it's fresh. So that's one thing. the other, other thing I think, you know, it's important to consider is the indigenous history, you know, the, the Palawa people. there's a lot more education about, you know, their history and it's not a very pleasant history. You know, there's been a, on their language because, you know, it was something that was actually being lost because there were so many that you know, were wiped out. But there's a resurgence in the language and I really like going to any events and you know, cultural, sessions that are on say at the art gallery and the museum in Hobart.

Tracy: it is cooler than you may expect if you're thinking about Australia because often people think of Australia or Australia hot, you know, at the beach with your flip flops, swimming costume and doing a bit of surfing. And while I guess you can do that in Tasmania, because the beaches are beautiful, it is cooler than you than you will experience other places in Australia. Though I will mention when Doug and I went, we were there in January and I think it was the hottest January they'd had forever. It was, it was incredibly hot, which was not good for the animals actually on Cradle Mountain. I think they were really suffering from it. so I think that was unusual. but I remember when we're driving around seeing all these signs saying for the winter, beware of ice. Which is clearly something we don't really get in Queensland at all. and then also you mentioned obviously the kind of cultural awareness when you go to Tasmania about the indigenous history and culture in the island. which is really important to have an understanding of or to learn about when you go. So what other things would first time

visitors kind of need to know when they're or expect when they go to Tasmania?

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, the distances, they're not far, you know, like I always think and I'm comparing it myself to, you know, Queensland. For us to drive to the top of the Cape, up to the Cape, it's what, two days maybe? Yeah, yeah, you can drive, you know, like if you come off the Spirit of Tasmania into Devonport, which is sort of in the central north, you can actually drive to Hobart down the south and be there within three hours. You know, so the driving distances aren't as fast but the road network is not, you know like they call them a highway, but really a highway is a single lane. Either way, you will get some highways around, you know, the cities of Launceston and Hobart. But mostly when you go out and start like traveling up to the north, in the central area to say Cradle Mountain. The highways are single lanes. So you've got to be prepared for that, that you won't be needing to go fast. But you know, be aware that it's not you

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Jennifer Johnston: know, 100 and, 120 kilometer highways like we are used to around the rest of Australia.

Tracy: Yeah. So I think you can kind of build your itinerary round kind of small trips over a day. So it doesn't take you a whole day to drive somewhere. I know we, we did a three week drive an itinerary around the island and it was, it was lovely because it wasn't all, you know, sometimes you do trips, and you know my other favorite thing to do in Australia is the Queensland outback. But there you're talking about some serious driving times. Tasmania, you don't have that. So that's really good.

My suggestion is not to try and do everything in Tasmania

Is there anything else you would say, would be good for, for first time visitors to consider.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, first time visitors. My suggestion is not to try and do everything, you know, and I mean this applies probably to pretty much anywhere that you go to. But you know, if you're going to fly in, and you're going to choose either Launceston or Hobart to fly into, I think you can fly into Devonport as well or get off the spirit of Tasmania in. You probably want to concentrate in a region over, trying to do the lap of Tassie is what they call, unless you're prepared, you know, with say two to three weeks. But you know, if, if, if you can just base yourself somewhere and like you say, do day trips, I think you're going to find you'll enjoy it a lot more and get a lot more out of it and you won't come back feeling exhausted. so, yeah, that's a tip I would suggest. but then if you have your heart set on seeing as much as you can because you think you might only come once, then try and choose some of the places that are really the standout places, depending on what your interests are, you know. So if your interests are outdoors and adventures, there's lots of activities and mountain biking and hiking and getting on the water. but if your interests are more wineries and gin distilleries and you know, food, tasting, you know, there's places like the Cradle Tasting Trail, which is absolutely amazing. And you know, I've done it a couple of times and there's like every time I go, last time there were 28 producers on the Cradle Tasting Trail. Next time there's like 33, 34, you know, they just keep popping up. And I don't know if there's an accreditation or something to be part of the Cradle Tasting Trail, but it's one of the places that, you know, you could probably spend at least a week and still not have done everything.

Tracy: And you, know, when you mentioned that my mouth started watering because I

immediately started thinking about the raspberries that we had with our last Christmas. Yeah. And the cheese that we had and the amazing potatoes and the, the big standout for me is the cherries. So, doing, doing that, food trail, honestly 100 recommend it.

So if you were going to say to somebody like starting out planning our itinerary

So if you were going to say to somebody like starting out, planning our itinerary, what would be the kind of top three to five experiences that you would recommend? And I know there's a kind of, there are some things which will appeal to, you know, if you're interested in history or if you're interested in outdoors. But what would you say would be kind of the three, three to five places that you or experiences you'd say, you know, include these, these are amazing. Don't miss these.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, I'm probably a little bit biased towards the islands because I think they're unique. I know Tasmania is an island but they've got Bruny island which is in the south. it's a fantastic day trip experience. you can go on a tour or you can go independently if you've got a car, you know you catch the ferry from Kettering. They've actually got a tasting trail as well. and it's just a beautiful day. Like I've taken many trips with many different people. I've also done a tour independently. one of these days I'd love to do. There's a walking trail on Bruny Island. So that's one. Moriah island is another which is that's one where if you're a hardcore hiker you can really do some amazing hikes. Bishop and Clark is, is quite for the those that really like a sort of grade four hike. I've spent only a day there but I've had friends that have stayed over. There's a accommodation bunk, you know, dormitory style accommodation in something called the penitentiary. I've also known someone who's taken you know their tent in their

backpack and camp there for a couple of days. And yeah, it's just really diverse and it's where you will see hundreds of wombats, you know just grazing, grazing the ground. And it's, it's amazing and, and it's very easy get to. It's a ferry ride just from Tribe Bunner I think it is another one And I guess I'm standing like I'm basing myself around Hobart. But the Huon Valley is gorgeous. It's 20 minutes, 20 minute drive from Hobart and it's got the town of Franklin

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Jennifer Johnston: Franklin which is you know an apple producing town. So there's places where you can stop and get cider and apple pie. Geeveston is really interesting. They've got a lovely little river walk there. you go a little bit further and you come to something called the Hastings Caves which is a really interesting tour. You can go down and you know see some caves. and oh and there's thermal springs there as well. And then if you go a little bit further there's something I don't know if you, you guys did this called the Tahun Airwalk?

Tracy: I don't think so, no.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, it's something that's Oh, I don't know how long it's been there. It did get damaged in some of the bushfires about three or four years ago, but it's come back and it's an experience where it's, you know, you don't have to be a level of fitness but you go on a walkway above the treetops.

Tracy: Oh, okay.

Jennifer Johnston: And you look down and it's overlooking the Huon River.

Tracy: Oh no, we definitely didn't do that. But I'm going to add that into my itinerary next time. I actually also I need to say that we do the islands last time either because Doug's not great on boats so he always avoids boats. So next time I'm going to have to go to Tasmania without him or I'll just have to go and he'll have to stay in Hobart for the day or Weber for the day while I go and do these boat trips. I think got to see these islands.

Jennifer Johnston: You definitely need to see the islands. and Port Arthur, you know, which is just outside of Hobart. That's not for everyone but it is a very popular destination. There's a lot of history associated. I think it's one of the, the first penal settlements in, in Australia and they've preserved it. And it's, it's. The tours are incredible. The tour guides are just, it's very interesting. Yeah. Ah. But you know, if, if convict history isn't your cup of tea, don't, don't do it. But I'll come to you know, cover a little bit more about the Tasman Peninsula in a little bit because that's one of my favorite places to go to and it's very, very accessible from Hobart.

Tracy: Yeah, for sure.

You recommend going up to Stanley in Tasmania for some unique hiking experiences

And are there any other kind of experiences or places that you'd include?

Jennifer Johnston: look, if you're going to make the effort, I highly recommend going up to Stanley. So if you're looking at the map of Tasmania, it's in the top north west side so the left hand side. it's just gorgeous. I just love Stanley. And they've got this volcanic plug that you know, comes out of the ocean. It's called the Nut. and so you know you

come into Stanley and it's, it's just, you know, the first thing you see and just a quaint little town. it's a little fishing, fishing town. It's famous for. You know there's a lobster shack there and then you know if you can get up to that top tip the northwest. I'm just looking at my map here just to remind me of the names of the towns. Smithton and then there's something called Dismal Swamp.

Tracy: Oh that sounds great. You have to go to Dismal Swamp.

Jennifer Johnston: And then that's, that's all very rugged and remote up there. So there is an entrance and I would love to do this one time but you really need a four wheel drive. You can do it on a tour but, but you can go into the Tarkin or Tarkine. I'm not 100% sure how to pronounce that properly but that's in that sort of area is where they film alone. You know the survival show that's on abc I believe.

Tracy: Oh okay, yeah.

Jennifer Johnston: You haven't heard of that?

Tracy: I don't know. You can see I'm looking blankly at you. I don't watch a lot of tv. I think Race around the World is about the thing that I watch the most of.

Jennifer Johnston: yeah, it's a really reality tv. They've shot two seasons of Alone Australia in Tasmania. And you know for those, if it makes them on the podcast, for those that know alone they will recall how completely remote this particular series is. It's in, in Tasmania. So that's in that top northwest corner. and another place that I, I just thought was amazing and I'd really like to spend some more time is Corinna. and that's like there's a wilderness area. I came through Cradle Mountain and then followed this

unsealed road to Corinna and stayed in the wilderness Lodge. And then that's got the, the Pyman river and there's the boat that goes up and down the Pyman river at the Arcadia 2 which is a historical vessel. and it's just like the time I was there I think it was, it was in the middle of winter so the Arcadia was actually out of the water and being serviced. You know which it happens once, once a year or something and you can do kayaking on

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Jennifer Johnston: the river but because it was so cold the guy said no, we're not putting the kayaks out. So yeah, that was annoying. But anyway lots of incredible hikes. you know and I don't think I saw a soul, you know which is a little bit scary. But yeah, just an amazing place. Corunna, highly Recommend if you know, you wanted to try and get into the more quieter and wilder side of Tasmania.

Tracy: Wow, that's amazing.

You've given me some ideas for our next itinerary in Tasmania

Well, you've given me some ideas for, for our next itinerary. We we, we went, we did Hobart, Port Arthur, Peninsula and then we went up to Now I'll probably pronounce this completely wrong. Fre.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, look, I, I say Frey Sanay, but I've heard people say Freshene.

Tracy: Ah, okay, I'm not quite sure. And then we went up to Bay of Fires and Cradle

Mountain and did a little bit of the future. I have to say, Cradle Mountain absolutely blew my mind. I loved the fact. So I spent a lot of time living in Africa where obviously you can't go out walking around where there's wild animals for obvious reasons you don't want to get eaten. but I just loved the fact it's Cradle Mountain. I could go for a walk around and there were wombats everywhere. You just, you, when you say that people go, no, seriously, there were wombats everywhere. It was just fantastic. We stayed at Pepper's Cradle Mountain as well. And underneath our kind, of chalet there was a, a wombat would come out every night about, about 4 o' clock. He would kind of appear and go on the trail, but you could walk next to them. They don't bother. They're quite happy. They And I just thought it was fantastic. It was absolutely mind blowing and as I said, something that you can't do obviously in other parts of the world. So yeah, it just felt amazing to be able to do that.

Jennifer Johnston: Cradle Mountain is one of my absolute, you know, highlights in Tassie and you can go at different times of the year. I've actually got someone that I know that's doing the overland track right now as we speak. so I think she'd be on day, day four. I think it's a six day hike. I think it's a bit of a rite of passage, you know, like it's one of those hikes that true hardcore hikers like to do.

Tracy: Well, it's on my daughter's list. I've just been out to Western Australia and they've just done the, I think, I don't know if what, I don't even know what it's called the one that they did, but they did the one south of Perth for like, I think that was a week. And their next aim is to go to Tasmania and do, do the, do the hike there. That's what they've Got on there on their list. that's something they want to do now. I'm not a hiker. I'm going to say this, I'm not a hiker. I hate hiking with a passion. I got to 55 and decided that I wasn't going to pretend I liked things that I didn't anymore. So I'm very vocal. I don't like sport which will probably a lot of people going what? No, don't like any sport and I don't

like hiking. However, there's loads to do in Tasmania if you don't like hiking as well.

Jennifer Johnston: So did you do the walk around Dove Lake?

Tracy: No, no, because I was gonna say.

Jennifer Johnston: You know, for those that don't like, like hiking, I think it's about an hour and it's, it is a nice walk. there's a few stairs that you, you do have to do but you know that's probably something you could have tackled or maybe we'll tackle next time.

Tracy: I think next time. The reason I'm saying that we didn't do it is because it was like 40 degrees. That's why I said incredibly hot when we were there, which was very unseasonable even for January. They were kind of like this is, I think it was what, between 38 and 40 degrees. It was actually dangerously hot. So we didn't do it. But that's why I didn't do it. But yeah, I can manage an hour and I've done some hikes in New Zealand. but generally I kind of go. It's the thought of doing these like multi day, six day things. Oh no, I know.

Jennifer Johnston: And you've got to carry your own gear, you got to carry your own food, you know you do sleep in huts but you still got to take your own sleeping bag and everything. So yeah, I, yeah I take my head off to people that do that.

Tracy: That's what I was gonna say. Hats off to people that do.

Mount Roland to me is the most beautiful mountain in Tasmania

Now what about any lesser known gems, anything that you kind of think, you know, people may not know about that you kind of want to highlight?

Jennifer Johnston: yes, I have a few. One of them, this is next to or very near to Cradle Mountain is Mount Roland. Now a lot of people don't really know about Mount Roland because Cradle Mountain seems to take all the, you know, the press and everyone talks about Cradle Mountain but Mount Roland to me I think is the most beautiful mountain in Tasmania. So you know that's near the town of Sheffield. We're going back to the central central Highlands In Tassie.

Tracy: I have to say I'm not gonna throw in here, Janet, we, we. Because Doug is from Derby. Yeah, there's Derby and Sheffield. And honestly, when we went through those towns, Doug was like, hey, this is amazing. He still will talk about that. If he talks about, if he's mentioned Tasmania. The first thing they'll say is Derby and Sheffield, which of course British places.

Jennifer Johnston: There's a lot of very English, touches. And I mean, there's a lot of. I've just recently seen someone that I know on Facebook who's, in Tassie and he's English and he's making the

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Jennifer Johnston: comment all the time about, wow, it is just like going back to England. And he's been sharing photos and his friends over in England are saying, I can't remember the name of the regions, but, yeah, basically referring to them as like, yep, it looks like you're in some, some part of England. Yeah, very, very, very similar.

Look, One gorgeous little place that I wanted to, to mention, um

Look, One gorgeous little place that I wanted to, to mention, is Cockle Creek, which is, again, you know, I said Stanley's right at the top. This is right down south. so you basically would go to Huon Valley through Huonville, Dover, go and see the caves, the hasting caves, and end up at Cockle Creek. And that's as far south as you can drive in Australia.

Tracy: Oh, wow. Is there a sign?

Jennifer Johnston: They've got signs saying that. And I, thought, I've got to do this. I've just got to drive down there. So you do. And there's a lovely little beach town, big beach village. Probably wouldn't call it a town. There's probably only about four houses and there's a lovely walk around the coastline. And they've got this, this massive bronze sculpture of a humpback whale. And it's, it's just. Yeah, it's a little treasure, you know. So if you're driving, you know, and driving is your thing, definitely try and try and do that. Particularly if you gone and visited the Huon Valley. You know, make time to go down there. You can do it, do it in a day and be back to your destination. Yeah, I think I mentioned Corinna, in a previous conversation, but that's another one of the hidden gems. it's not hidden, but it's lesser known, you know, less talked about, but I think it's really got a lot of. Lot going for it from the wilderness point of view.

What are some common mistakes visitors make when they Visit Tasmania

Tracy: So what would you say are some common mistakes visitors make when they Visit.

Jennifer Johnston: Tasmania underestimating the temperature, which I think I've probably covered a little bit at the beginning of the conversation. The state is, is actually.

Tracy: It'S small.

Jennifer Johnston: and I've also probably mentioned that, you know, in the. The driving distances aren't that vast. But, you know, I, I don't know what the, the latest statistics are, but there's this I keep reminding myself whenever I visit. There's only like 500, 000 people that live in the whole of Tasmania and apparently 40% of those live in and around Hobart. So you can be driving and I'm sure you and Doug came across this. You can be driving, you know, single roads out, between say, Sheffield and Cradle Mountain. And you won't see another stall.

Tracy: No, you don't. And you're like, where is everyone? I remember we drove from Launceston back down to Ho park to the airport and we took the one of. I think it's like the central road rather than go in the kind of scenic road. And I think we drove for about an hour and a half. I don't, I don't think we saw anybody. It actually started to freak me out a bit. I was like, are we on the right road? Does, Is there anybody else here? And I think we're working on the road at that time. So there was like bits of, bits of kind of bitumen and then there was bits of where there was just stones and they were working on it. And so we kept stopping and starting. So we did see kind of workers on the road, but we didn't see any cars for ages.

Jennifer Johnston: So it just, it just blows, blows me away. There's been so many

country lanes that I've gone down and I'm like, oh, there's no one. And then, you know, like, I don't know the road and I'm just whining around and, you know, trying to just take my time. And then all of a sudden, you know, probably a ute and probably a local comes, right? And I'm like, I'm just going slow.

Tracy: Because I don't know the road.

Jennifer Johnston: But yeah, that's, that's what I love. So that's one. One. One of the things is just be reminded that, you know, it is a, it's a small, population, and you know, I always keep in mind that some of the accommodation experiences are so remote but so amazing that you just really need to give those business owners as much, you know, of a wrap that you can. You know, whether it's on social Media or, you know, platforms that you've got. Yeah, because they're all, you know, struggling. And I think since COVID you know, they're not getting as many visitations or visitors, because people now are going overseas, whereas during COVID a lot of them were coming, you know. So, I've noticed people saying that like in, in the more remote places, not necessarily in the capital cities.

Tracy: Yeah, that's a good point.

Go to Tasmania because you will not regret it, I say

And I think that's another reason, kind of get out then and tell people around the world that, listen to the podcast because we have listeners all over is meaning go and visit Tasmania. You know, when you're planning that trip to Australia and I know all you're going to go, well, I want to go to Sydney, I want to go to Melbourne. I might want to go

and see the Great Barrier Reef. Those are all the things we hear and we go, yeah, okay, do those. But you know what? Go to Tasmania because you will not regret it. And that will be honestly the place you will talk about more than anything. I genuinely believe that because it's probably not what people expect. I think it

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kind of blows our mind a bit. One thing we loved about Tasmania and I said, this is a mistake not to make. If you don't do this, I would stop off at some of the honesty boxes, the. Because it's amazing by the side of the road. And this is something you would see in the UK in maybe some of the islands, maybe some of the more remote places, but you don't see it in kind of, you know, in the middle of England anymore. But you can pull over and there, you know, you can buy your produce, leave the money they have. I couldn't believe it was fridges set up at one place where you go in the fridge, take out whatever it is you want, leave them, leave the money and off you go. And. Oh, that is fantastic.

Jennifer Johnston: It's a wonderful concept. And the Bruny Island Baker has become famous for his fridges that he stocks with fresh bread every, every morning. It's been a massive, social media hit. So anyone on the podcast should go and check out, you know, the Bruny Island Baker. it's just incredible. And he bakes, you know, sourdough loaves and they're gone, I mean, you know, in the morning and puts them in this fridge, not far from the, from his property. And yeah, they're gone, you know, by 11 o' clock. Everyone's disappointed. You've got to get their first thing. So, yeah, so there's Just so many novelty things, you know, like that, which is just beautiful. And if you can support them. Yeah, do it. I mean, I stop at the side of the road and pick up avocado. Do I get avocados? Trying to think the last things. Yeah. Anyway, fresh flowers, you know, all

sorts of raspberries, potatoes.

Tracy: It was amazing. We were there in January, so I guess it was kind of peak time for those things, which was great.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah.

Planet Estate says two to three weeks is a good time to see Tasmania

Tracy: If, Planet Estate, where would you say people base themselves? Would you say, if you're planning, say two to three weeks in Tasmania, would you recommend having a few bases or doing a kind of drive and itinerary and stopping off? Like, this is what we did. We honestly, I think we probably stayed in maybe five places off the top of my head over three weeks. and honestly, you know, three weeks, you're saying we didn't cover, we didn't go to the northwest at all, and that's somewhere we want to go to next. So there's a lot of things to see. But where would you recommend people base themselves?

Jennifer Johnston: Oh, look, if they've got two to three weeks, you know, definitely drive, like whether you want to do it in a motorhome or whether you prefer to do it in a car and say, you know, cabins or, guest houses or bnbs, you know, two to three weeks is a good time to see a lot of Tasmania. If you've got a week. I would definitely try and limit myself to a region or a coastline, you know, and everyone goes to the east coast because, you know, it's got Freshenay and it's got the Bay of Fires and all these amazing places. But, you know, we keep saying, don't forget, you know, the north, the northwest, because it's, it's got so much to offer and people don't necessarily head there because they're

not aware of how amazing it is.

Tracy: Yeah, honestly, we didn't see that on our last visit. Now, what about Australians planning to visit? Because I know you can fly in from Brisbane. We can fly. I know that if you've got a motorhome and a lot of people doing the Lap of Oz when they go to Tasmania, they take over the ferry and do that. I was a bit shocked to how much that costs, by the way, because it's not cheap.

Jennifer Johnston: it's all done on size, you know, so if you've got a motorhome, you're obviously going to be paying a lot more. And if you've got a, you know, a big Prado or You know, big car and a van. It's a lot more. I did check in with, a friend who did it and spent three months there last. I think it was. No, two years ago. And they paid, I think it was over 2000 to take their car and their van over, in December and then come back in, say, April.

Tracy: I think it's definitely. If you're planning to stay for a few months like that, it's definitely. Yeah, definitely cost effective and worth it.

Jen: To go to Tasmania from Brisbane, you can get direct flights

Now, what about if I was planning. Not that I am, but you never know. To go to Tasmania from Brisbane, for example, and let's say I've got four days. What would you recommend? Where would you say. What would you say to do? I'm, kind of throwing that at you, Jen, but I'm just kind of.

Jennifer Johnston: That's great. I'm happy to have anything thrown at me. I'm biased

and I'll probably say Hobart. Like, I've stayed in Launceston once, and that was that Bay of Fires walk that I did back in 2012. and I did go back for a conference in Launceston, and it is lovely. But for me, I always fly into Hobart, obviously, because I've got a place nearby. But, yeah, do that. And then base yourself in Hobart, you know, and do day trips, you know, so you can do Bruny island from Hobart. You could, go up Kunanyi, Mount Wellington. You know, that's something that I haven't actually mentioned before, but definitely something that everyone should do. And hopefully on a clear day, because it's not the greatest on an overcast day, but I think it's 1,200 meters above, sea

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Jennifer Johnston: level and you get the most amazing view of Hobart and beyond. If it's a clear day, you know, you can go to the town of Richmond in a day. You can stop at, Frogmore Creek Winery on the way back for lunch. What else would you do? Take that drive to, you know, through the Huon Valley that I suggested. So, yeah, three to four days. You know, Brisbane, you can get direct flights. don't go via Melbourne or Sydney. direct flight is about to two and a half hours.

Tracy: Yeah. So it's nothing. So, I mean, if you're. If you live in southeast Queensland and you listen to this podcast, there's no excuse not to go and visit.

Jennifer Johnston: Ah.

Tracy: And also, I was going to say as well, because we, we stayed in lots of different accommodation types, so we kind of like to do budget and then we kind of mix that up with Kind of the more expensive. So we stayed in beautiful hotel in Fresne. We stayed in Peppers at Cradle Mountain which was outstanding. So we do that mix up. And the nice

thing about Tasmania is that it offers for every budget. There's everything available from the BBS cabins. We stayed in a cabin actually at Bay of Fires which was amazing. so you've got that so you can mix it up. So if you're on a budget you can go for the more budget end. But if you want something and really to splash the cash and to you know treat yourself there are some really luxurious places to stay as well.

Jennifer Johnston: So yeah some incredible places and I haven't stayed in some of these but you know like I've done research and I. They're on my wish list. But there's a place called the Keep that is got. Well it's near the Bay of Fires. That's absolutely like you know if you google the Keep it's a repurposed industrial facility. anyway it's for couples only. There's another one that I did stay at called Voyager that's a luxury cabin on the Esperance river, you know out the Huon Valley way. Oh my gosh. You have to look at Voyager on, on their Instagram page. It is just one of the most unique stays that I've had. It is luxury but you know could sleep four couples easily. you don't have to just go on your own. It's a bit silly if you go on your own because it's a lovely big big cabin and you mention you know, lux places. I have not stayed here but I've seen plenty of people that, that have had the luxe experience. Is the Sapphire at Freychinet or Freshenay. Yeah that looks incredible. So I'll put that on my, on my wish list.

Tracy: So many. Well I will link to those in the show notes as well and I'm hoping you're going to share some pictures of your trips to Tasmania that we can put in as well in the show notes. That'd be really good.

The best way to get around Tasmania is hiring a car

Now what about, what about getting around? So I mean Doug and I hired a car and

you've mentioned that you can get a camper van. So that's also an option. So for you the best way to get around the island is hiring a car.

Jennifer Johnston: I think you'll see more with the car. You know like I've been to Hobart quite a few times and not hire a car and just use public transport, you know which is, it's, it's pretty good. and if you do a tour, the tour operators will pick you up from your accommodation so you don't have to. But if you are going to get around and see the state properly. Yeah, definitely. If you can hire a car.

Tracy: Right. So that's definitely something, I guess that we, we did and we'd recommend that now if you've been, you hire a camper van. There's plenty of places that you can kind of stop off at, stay at.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, there's Big four Tassie Getaway Parks have cabins, glamping tents, bunk houses, caravan and camping sites. So I haven't, you know, stayed in those. But I know people that have so they're, they're an option. So probably just jump on their website and see you know, where they are around the same.

Tracy: So lots of, lots of options. Now I know we've kind of touched on food. We have touched on throughout this podcast, Jen.

Jennifer Johnston: and distillery.

Tracy: That's what I was gonna, I was going to go to next because I know we've talked about the amazing produce in terms of you know, the fruit and veg, but let's talk about wine and gin.

Jennifer Johnston: Yes. Oh, very famous for wine, cold climate wines. Obviously I have a couple of favorite wineries in and around the state. I'm not going to mention them because I don't know if that's appropriate.

Tracy: Give them a shout out.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah. Tasman Peninsula has Brim Creek Vineyard. Amazing views, from their cellar door, down the valley across the, you know, the vines to Moriah Island. it's become a very popular place for people to stop off and you know, have it, have a try and take away probably at least one, if not a dozen. There's another one down on the

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Jennifer Johnston: peninsula and you pass it as you go to Port Arthur and it's called Bengal Vineyard Shed. They have got beautiful wines and another gorgeous restaurant to sit at and you know, have, have a meal and look out over Boomer Bay, you know, near Dunalli, which is also in the Tasman Peninsula.

Tracy: See, I'm very lucky because Doug doesn't, doesn't drink. So I have a, I have a built in driver. So I'm noting, which is why I need to know where these wineries are because they'll be, they'll be in our itinerary, I tell you.

Jennifer Johnston: You know, and Frogmore Creek is another one that's just outside of Hobart. But I've mentioned that before that, that is amazing. And I have to put a caveat here. I don't eat seafood.

Tracy: No, I don't actually either.

Jennifer Johnston: But I've got to mention these because, you know, people that do would probably want to know. Bicheno apparently has Tassie's best lobster roll at the Lobster Shack. So I'm just going to put that out there. and everyone says you've got to try a scallop pie. Tasmania is famous for its scallop pies and I'm sorry, I haven't. But anyone that is listening to this podcast that likes scallops should definitely try a scallop pie.

Tracy: We did try one because I don't eat a lot of seafood. I'm very, very picky eater. But I did try the scallop pie and Doug did too. And we can attest they are definitely worth trying.

Jennifer Johnston: There you go. and gosh, this would be remiss of me if I didn't mention the ice cream. They have, I think the happiest cows in Tasmania and they make the most creamiest, delicious ice cream. So my pick is vdl, which is Van Diemen's Land ice cream. And you can stop at their factory on the Cradle tasting trail, in Cradle or near Cradle Mountain. But you can actually try their, ice cream when you're in Hobart. Down on the waterfront, they've got a floating shop, you know, so you walk, you know, it's, it's there and it's got all the flavors. So video. but I have found another one called Valhalla, which comes a pretty close second to amazing ice cream. So, yeah, beautiful. And like, if you, you know, go to the Huon Valley and you have apple pie, you're going to have beautiful, fresh, you know, scoop of ice cream with your apple pie.

Tracy: Oh, well, you'll have Doug on that because he, he loves his apple pie. We're going to head to Stanthorpe in a few weeks because guess what? Apple pie Suttons. Yep, it's his favorite. And of course I'll be heading to some of the wineries.

Do you have any advice for anybody looking to enjoy Tasmania affordably

But anyway, now do you have any advice for anybody kind of enjoying Tasmania affordably? Because we know expect, you know, Australia is, is pretty pricey. It's not. Some things are quite expensive here. so what about kind of doing anything free or any local markets or anything like that you would recommend to help with, with people's budgets?

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, I mean, the Salamanca markets a go to every Saturday in Hobart, but I wouldn't say, you know, they're on the Budget side m. But, you know, you can find, fresh produce and craft and things like that. But, there is a market in Hobart on Sunday, a farmer's market. And budget wise, you know, if you go to the national parks, you've got hiking, which doesn't cost anything. However, you do have to have a national parks pass to visit, you know, the national parks. But that's a fairly inexpensive thing. So that's something you can do that won't cost a bomb. I have found, you know, a few walking trails around Hobart that you can do, obviously, for free. There's a lovely little, quiet walk called the Rivulet Walk that takes you the back way to Cascades Brewery, which is something worth a visit. you don't even have to like beer to go there, but it's a historical place and it's a beautiful old building. I haven't stayed in these places, but, my son has. There's a couple of youth hostels, you know, in. In the city that are great. Good location, nice and close. when I first was going down, I'd stay at, accommodation called the Alabama Hotel. right in the middle of, Hobart cbd. and it's a, you know, basic room and shared bathroom. But if you want to be in the heart of the city and not spending hundreds and hundreds of dollars, it's a really great option. And they've got a lovely little bar and coffee sort of, area lounge that you can relax in. And people from the general public can come in and sit in the lounge as well and just enjoy a place to chill out.

Tracy: I think it gives some ideas. Like

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Tracy: we said, you can look at different accommodation options to kind of save a little bit. You've got a lot of produce that is for sale that, you know, like I said, the honesty boxes of fridges, again, which, you know, are good options as well. but it's always good to kind of keep those sorts of things in mind. I'm just thinking if my daughter goes, she'll be looking at how. How much she needs to. To save up to go and do. Do a hike. and, yeah, that's a Three Capes hike, actually. We were talking about that, wasn't it? It's the.

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, the Three Capes hikes. Pretty amazing. You can do the Three Capes hike with a walking company where they take your pack and all you need to do is take. Not. They don't take your pack. Sorry. They. You stay in nice accommodation. So all you need to carry during the day is just a day pack. or you can do it through Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife and you have to get onto their website and actually book, book, in advance, a position because they only allow a certain amount of people in on a certain day because there's obviously only a certain number of beds in each hut that they've got to stay in. But that's a much more economical way to do it. But if you do it that way, you've obviously got to take your own pack and your own food.

Tracy: Yeah, it's good to know that there's options though.

**More tour operators are acknowledging the Palawa people on
Tasmania tours**

now what about kind of social norms, behaviors visitors should consider when exploring the island?

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, I, you know, one of the things I feel is very important and I've noticed doing a few tours, more tour operators are doing this is acknowledging the traditional custodians, the Palawa people. It's, there's no way of glossing over this. It's a very sad and very bleak history in Tasmania. You know, when the Europeans came, there was conflict and you know, there was a loss of a lot of indigenous lives and they weren't treated, treated well. So I think it's a really big bonus that we're seeing. Not, not a bonus, that's not the right word. But I think it's very respectful that there's more acknowledgment, you know, of, of the traditional owners. And I've noticed that, yeah, more tour operators are doing that, which is, yeah, a good, good thing. So it's, I think it's really important for us to acknowledge, you know, the indigenous names as well because they're being adopted in Tasmania and Tasmania is Lutruwita. L U T R U W I.

Tracy: T A Do you know of any tours that are run by the Palawa people?

Jennifer Johnston: Yeah, yeah, look, I, and I admit I haven't done this walk, but I do know a travel writer that has done it and she was blown away by the experience. And it's the Bukalina Walk, and it's coastal and inland Bay of Fires. It's a three night, four day walk and it's led by indigenous guides, Palawa people. So that's another one that's on my bucket list.

Tracy: Brilliant. Well we'll, I'll find some more information. Link to that in the show notes as well.

Jen shares tips for people visiting Tasmania for the first time

Now I always end the podcast with the same question. Same on the UK Travel Plan podcast and the Global Travel Plan podcast. What would be the one tip you would share with someone visiting Tasmania for the very first time I thought about.

Jennifer Johnston: This and I'm actually stealing a little line from someone that I interviewed who is a bit of a legend in Tasmania. His name's Bill Lark. He's the founder of, oh, he and his wife founded Lark Distillery. so they produce gins and whiskies. Very much so. He's the godfather of whiskey. So yeah, Bill, Bill said to me when I interviewed him for a story, when I said, you know, any tips for people coming to Tasmania for the first time? He said, leave yourself plenty of time. And then he added to that, don't pack a full itinerary.

Tracy: I think that's a good, very good recommendation because I think, yeah, go with the flow.

Jennifer Johnston: Go with the flow. Yep. Because, you know, the amount of fresh produce, you know, places to stop at, quaint little, you know, bars and parks, you know, there's so many, yeah. Incredible nature escapes.

Tracy: Well, Tasmania is an amazing destination. It's an amazing place to visit. I know Doug and I can't wait to go. And I'm sure that our listeners are now figuring out how they can add Tasmania into their, their, their bucket list of destinations that they want to go to. It's a lot easier if you're in Australia. So honestly I'd encourage you, if you're Australian and listen to this and you haven't Been to Tasmania, to consider going if you're visiting from further afield and planning a trip to Australia. And I know for many of

you it's a long way to go. Include Tasmania, please. You will not be disappointed. But for this episode of the podcast, thank you so much, Jen for joining us and sharing all your information and tips and love for Tasmania

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Tracy: definitely came across and as I say, I can't wait to visit again. you can get information, and links to some of the places that Jen talks about, talked about in the show notes for this episode, which are [@globaltravelplanning.com](https://globaltravelplanning.com) episode 5, 8.

Jen has started an Instagram account called Travel Bug Within Tasmania

And before we end, Jen, I know that you have started an Instagram account and want to share some information about that and I will link to that in the show notes but give us a bit of info.

Jennifer Johnston: look, I have an Instagram account called Travelbug within. But because I'm so passionate about Tasmania, I decided just recently to start a new Instagram account and, and it's called Travel Bug Within Tasmania.

Tracy: Fantastic. Well, I will put a link to that. I'm going to go and follow that myself from my, my couple of instagram accounts. but yeah, we'll put links to all of those things in the show notes. but for this week, thanks so much, Jen, for joining us. Maybe we can talk a little bit more in depth about some of the destinations within Tasmania next time. That would be cool.

Jennifer Johnston: Love to.

Tracy: Yeah. But for for this episode, Happy Global Travel Planning.

Jennifer Johnston: Thanks, Tracy.

Tracy: Thank you for joining us on this episode of the Global Travel Planning Podcast. For more details and links to everything we discussed today, check out the show notes@globaltravelplanning.com Remember, if you enjoyed the show, please consider leaving us a review on your favorite podcast app, because your feedback helps us reach more travel enthusiasts just like you. Anyway, that leaves me to say, as always, Happy Global Global Travel Planning.

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