

# Southern Ocean & Sandbelt Pilgrimage

Melbourne's firm Sandbelt bunkers paired with the wild, wind-whipped Bass Strait links. A 10-day expedition linking 8 of Australia's finest — from the private Sandbelt masterpieces to Tasmania's dunes and King Island's lighthouse cliffs. Includes hotel bases, booking windows, caddie protocols, and dining picks.

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DURATION

**10 Days**

GREEN FEE BAND

**A\$2,200 – A\$4,000**

START AIRPORT

**Melbourne (MEL)**

BEST MONTHS

**October to April**

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# Route Overview

Royal Melbourne → Kingston Heath → Victoria GC → National Moonah → Barnbougles Dunes → Lost Farm → Cape Wickham → Ocean Dunes

| # | COURSE                      | ACCESS  | LOCATION                | GREEN FEE (EST.) | ACCESS NOTE                                                                        |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Royal Melbourne (West/East) | PRIVATE | Melbourne Sandbelt      | A\$350 – \$500   | International visitors via reciprocal club letter from home club secretary         |
| 2 | Kingston Heath              | PRIVATE | 5m from Royal Melbourne | A\$300 – \$420   | Same reciprocal letter process. One of the world's finest bunker designs           |
| 3 | Victoria GC                 | LODGE   | Cheltenham, 10m         | A\$280 – \$380   | Victoria GC has on-site lodge – staying there unlocks guest play directly          |
| 4 | National Golf Club (Moonah) | LODGE   | Frankston, 30m          | A\$280 – \$360   | On-site accommodation unlocks visitor access. Book lodge well in advance           |
| 5 | Barnbougles Dunes           | PUBLIC  | Tasmania (flight)       | A\$230 – \$280   | Fully public. Book online at barnbougles.com.au – no restrictions                  |
| 6 | Lost Farm                   | PUBLIC  | Tasmania (adjacent)     | A\$220 – \$270   | On same property as Barnbougles Dunes. Stay at the lodge for 2-night package deals |
| 7 | Cape Wickham                | PUBLIC  | King Island (flight)    | A\$200 – \$250   | Fully public. Fly from Launceston or Melbourne. Book via capewickham.com.au        |
| 8 | Ocean Dunes                 | PUBLIC  | King Island             | A\$165 – \$210   | Play same day as Cape Wickham. Dramatic cliff-edge links. Fully public             |

## 💡 Total Travel Overview

4 hours of driving across Melbourne's Sandbelt, plus 2 hopper flights — to Tasmania and King Island. The route is deliberately sequenced from the city's private clubs outward to the remote offshore links. Access Rating: Reciprocal & Lodging Hacks. Booking Window: 6–12 Months Out.

# Booking Windows & Access Matrix

| COURSE            | DIARY OPENS            | VISITOR DAYS             | HCP CAP    | STRATEGY                                                                                               |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Royal Melbourne   | Via reciprocal letter  | No standard visitor days | HCP 18 men | Write to club secretary 12mo out. Include home club letter, WHS handicap certificate, dates requested. |
| Kingston Heath    | Via reciprocal letter  | No standard visitor days | HCP 18 men | Same process as Royal Melbourne. Can pair the two clubs on back-to-back days.                          |
| Victoria GC       | Book Victoria GC Lodge | Every day (lodge guests) | HCP 24     | Lodge booking unlocks tee times. Book lodge 9–12 months out.                                           |
| National Moonah   | Book National Lodge    | Every day (lodge guests) | HCP 24     | On-site accommodation essential for access. Book directly via thenational.com.au.                      |
| Barnbougles Dunes | Online, 12mo out       | Every day                | No HCP     | barnbougles.com.au — straightforward online booking.                                                   |
| Lost Farm         | Online, 12mo out       | Every day                | No HCP     | Package deals with Barnbougles Dunes via the resort.                                                   |
| Cape Wickham      | Online, 12mo out       | Every day                | No HCP     | capewickham.com.au. Book early — King Island has limited flights.                                      |
| Ocean Dunes       | Online, rolling        | Every day                | No HCP     | Play same day as Cape Wickham — just 15 minutes across the island.                                     |

 **Critical Warning**

Royal Melbourne and Kingston Heath accept no standard visitor days — access is exclusively through reciprocal club introductions. Allow 3–4 months for club-to-club correspondence. Submit your home club letter and WHS handicap certificate together. Missing this step means you cannot play these courses.

# Recommended Hotel Bases

#### BASE 1 — MELBOURNE SANDBELT (3-4 NIGHTS)

##### Crown Towers / Langham Melbourne

Luxury city base for Royal Melbourne and Kingston Heath days. Crown Towers Melbourne or Langham Melbourne are the top-tier options for a city anchor. **Essential nights:** One night at Victoria GC Lodge (unlocks guest play) + one night at The National Golf Club Lodge (unlocks Moonah access).

#### VICTORIA GC LODGE — ESSENTIAL

##### Victoria Golf Club Lodge

On-site accommodation at Victoria GC — the only way to unlock guest play. One overnight stay grants full access to tee times on this private Cheltenham course. Book 9-12 months in advance alongside your green fee request.

#### NATIONAL GC LODGE — ESSENTIAL

##### The National Golf Club Lodge

On-site accommodation at The National is essential for Moonah Course access. Book directly via [thenational.com.au](https://thenational.com.au). This is not a luxury hotel — it is the key that unlocks one of Australia's finest courses.

#### BASE 2 — BARNBOUGLE / TASMANIA (2 NIGHTS)

##### Barnbougles Lost Farm Lodge

On-site accommodation directly beside the 18th green — the only logical Tasmania base. Book the 2-night golf package which includes Dunes and Lost Farm rounds. Spectacular ocean views from the clifftop restaurant.

#### BASE 3 — KING ISLAND (2 NIGHTS)

##### Cape Wickham Golf Retreat

On-site lodges with views of the Bass Strait. The only accommodation near the courses. King Island Dairy & Cape Barren also nearby for a local island experience. Book as a package with tee times at Cape Wickham.

#### KING ISLAND ALTERNATIVES

##### King Island Accommodation

Limited options on King Island — book far in advance. The island's remote charm is part of the experience. Visit King Island Dairy for cheese and cream tasting between rounds. ATMs are limited — carry Australian cash.

# Caddie Protocol

| COURSE                     | CADDIE STATUS           | RATE (EST.)           | HOW TO BOOK                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Royal Melbourne            | Highly Recommended      | A\$80–<br>\$110 + tip | Arrange via club when your reciprocal letter is confirmed. Local caddies know the composite course setup and MacKenzie-designed greens. |
| Kingston Heath             | Recommended             | A\$75–<br>\$100 + tip | Request via club secretary when booking confirmed. Bunker strategy is complex — local knowledge is invaluable.                          |
| Victoria GC                | Available               | A\$70–\$90<br>+ tip   | Book via lodge concierge. Redesigned course features some spectacular elevation changes.                                                |
| National Moonah            | Available               | A\$70–\$90<br>+ tip   | Book via National Lodge. Mike Clayton-designed heathland — local caddies understand the routing.                                        |
| Barnbogle / Lost Farm      | Optional                | A\$60–\$80<br>+ tip   | Walking and trolleys standard. Caddies available on request via resort. Tom Doak’s links plays best walking.                            |
| Cape Wickham / Ocean Dunes | Not typically available | Walking               | King Island courses are best walked. The wind off the Bass Strait is the caddie you need.                                               |

 **Tipping Guide**

Standard caddie tip on this trail: A\$30–\$50 per round for a good bag. For Royal Melbourne and Kingston Heath where caddie knowledge is genuinely strategic — navigating the composite course setup and MacKenzie bunker complexes — A\$50–\$70 is appropriate and respected.

## Dining Picks — Per Stop

### Melbourne Sandbelt

**Vue de monde (Melbourne CBD)** — One of Australia's finest. 30 min from Royal Melbourne. Book months ahead. **Attica, Ripponlea** — World's 50 Best restaurant; an essential Melbourne pilgrimage in its own right. **Post-round:** Kingston Heath clubhouse dining is excellent and atmospheric — do not skip it.

### Tasmania / Barnbogle

**The Lost Farm Restaurant on site** — Wood-fired, locally sourced. Spectacular views across the dunes to the Bass Strait. The definitive Barnbogle dining experience. **Stillwater Restaurant, Launceston** — 2.5hr drive but worth it for a night off from the resort.

### King Island

**The Boathouse Restaurant** — Casual, fresh King Island seafood and the island's famous dairy products. **King Island Dairy Cellar Door** — A must-visit for cheese and local produce tasting between rounds. The island's dairy is world-famous for good reason.

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# Master Pre-Trip Checklist

## Bookings & Documents

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- ☐ Reciprocal club letters obtained from home club secretary for Royal Melbourne and Kingston Heath (allow 3–4 months for responses)
- ☐ Victoria GC Lodge booking confirmed (essential to unlock tee times)
- ☐ The National Golf Club Lodge booking confirmed (essential for Moonah access)
- ☐ WHS / Golf Australia handicap certificate printed and digital copy saved on phone
- ☐ Barnboughe resort 2-night golf package booked (includes Dunes and Lost Farm rounds)
- ☐ King Island flights booked (Regional Express from Melbourne or Launceston)
- ☐ Cape Wickham and Ocean Dunes tee times confirmed via capewickham.com.au
- ☐ Travel insurance purchased covering medical evacuation from remote island location
- ☐ All accommodations confirmed with deposit receipts saved

## Equipment

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- ☐ Waterproof suit for Tasmanian and King Island conditions (winds can be severe year-round)
- ☐ Soft spikes — required at all venues on this trail
- ☐ Australia uses metric — GPS set to metres before departure
- ☐ Sun cream essential for Melbourne October–April (UV index frequently extreme)
- ☐ 2 dozen+ golf balls for Cape Wickham ocean edges and Royal Melbourne's deep bunkers
- ☐ Electric trolley recommended for Sandbelt (walking on firm, sloped terrain is tiring)
- ☐ Collared shirt for every round — dress codes strictly enforced at all Sandbelt clubs

## Key Logistics

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- ☐ Melbourne → Launceston flight: ~1h 15m. Launceston → Barnboughe: 2h drive northeast
- ☐ Barnboughe → Launceston / Melbourne → King Island: fly Regional Express (~1hr)
- ☐ King Island has limited ATMs — carry sufficient Australian cash before flying out
- ☐ King Island Dairy is a must-visit between rounds — the best cheese and cream in Australia
- ☐ Hopper flights enforce strict baggage weight caps (~15–20kg total including clubs) — pack light
- ☐ thebrief.golf saved to home screen for course intel and booking updates on the go