

Great Otway National Park

– Lorne and surrounds

Visitor Guide



Expect wide sandy beaches, windswept clifftops with incredible views and lush ferny waterfall walks in this section of Great Otway National Park surrounding holiday hotspot Lorne. Walkers are spoilt for choice here and Sheoak Falls and The Canyon trails are standouts.



Getting there

Great Otway National Park is south of Melbourne via Geelong or Colac. From the east, approach Lorne along the Great Ocean Road by taking either Anglesea Road or Surf Coast Highway from Geelong. From the west, pick up the Great Ocean Road by approaching via Port Campbell. A daily bus service between Geelong, Lorne and Apollo Bay connects with train services to Melbourne.

Things to see and do

Waterfalls

At the end of Erskine Falls Road, 10km north-west of Lorne is the magnificent Erskine Falls. There is a viewing point above the falls and a walking track with more than 270 steps that leads to a lookout at the base of the falls. The falls cascade over one of the highest drops in the Otways.

Walking

The Lorne Visitor Information Centre has free walks and waterfall guides. Serious walkers should purchase a detailed walking guide to plan and prepare for longer, more difficult walks. Sheoak Picnic Area is a hub to begin walks to several waterfalls. All walks are clearly signposted from the picnic area. Dogs are not permitted in the national park roads, tracks and trails in the Lorne area. However, walking dogs on-lead is permitted on the St George River Track in the park near Lorne.



Sheoak Falls – 1.2km, 30 minutes return from the carpark below the falls. Moderate

Easily accessible from Lorne, this is one of the most popular waterfalls in the park. Sheoak Creek is full of water and picturesque all year round, although the falls are at their finest after a few days of heavy rainfall. There are some steep sections.



The Canyon – 8km, 3 hours one-way loop. Difficult

Starting at the Allenvale Mill carpark, this loop walk returns via Sheoak Picnic Area and Allenvale Road while exploring Phantom Falls and The Canyon- with its eight-metre high walls, before making its way past Henderson Falls and Won Wondah Falls, finishing at Sheoak Picnic Area. Take care as there are steep and rocky sections.



Lower and Upper Kalimna Falls – 8km, 3 hours return. Difficult. A longer walk that requires preparation.

Starts at Sheoak Picnic Area and follows the route of an old timber tramway. An alternative return route links you across to bring you back along Garvey Track ending at Sheoak Picnic Area.

Picnicking

Sheoak Picnic Area

The spectacular Sheoak Picnic Area has huge trees and beautiful forest scenery. It is a secluded, cool and quiet location – the ideal place to enjoy a picnic. This is where many walks to waterfalls begin.

Blanket Leaf Picnic Area

Enjoy a picnic in pleasant surrounds at Blanket Leaf Picnic Area. This picnic area has accessible picnic tables, fireplaces and some shelter.

Camping

Allenvale Mill Site Camping Area (walk in 80 metres) is located just beyond the outskirts of Lorne off Allenvale Road on the banks of St George River. This camping area is suitable for school groups. Alternatively, Big Hill Track Camping Area (closed in winter) is an open, easily accessible grassy area surrounded by tall forest. Please note the seasonal closure applies 1 June to 31 October inclusive. Two small, basic camping areas with no toilet facilities can be found at Jamieson (closed in winter) and Sharps Camping Areas. For more information about camping in the national park visit www.parks.vic.gov.au

Swimming

Swimming is very popular at beaches and rivers along the coastline, however many beaches and rivers are exposed to unseen dangers such as currents, rips, reefs and logs. Beaches are not patrolled within Great Otway National Park. Parks Victoria recommends swimming only at beaches patrolled by lifesaving services. Beaches are patrolled by lifesavers when red and yellow flags are displayed.

Be prepared and stay safe

Great Otway National Park is in the South West and Central fire district. Bushfire and severe weather safety is a personal responsibility. Anyone entering parks and forests during the bushfire season or severe weather such as strong winds needs to stay aware of forecast weather conditions.

Check the Fire Danger Rating and for days of Total Fire Ban at www.emergency.vic.gov.au, on the VicEmergency smartphone app or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226. No fires may be lit on Total Fire Ban days. However, gas stoves may be used under certain conditions for food preparation. Be aware that strong winds can occur anytime, which can be hazardous with falling timbers on walking tracks.

On Code Red Fire Danger Rating days and days of severe weather this park will be closed for public safety. Closure signs will be erected but do not expect an official warning. Check the latest conditions at www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 1963.

For emergency assistance call Triple Zero (000). If there is a green emergency marker sign near you, read the information on the marker to the operator.

