

# The Southeast



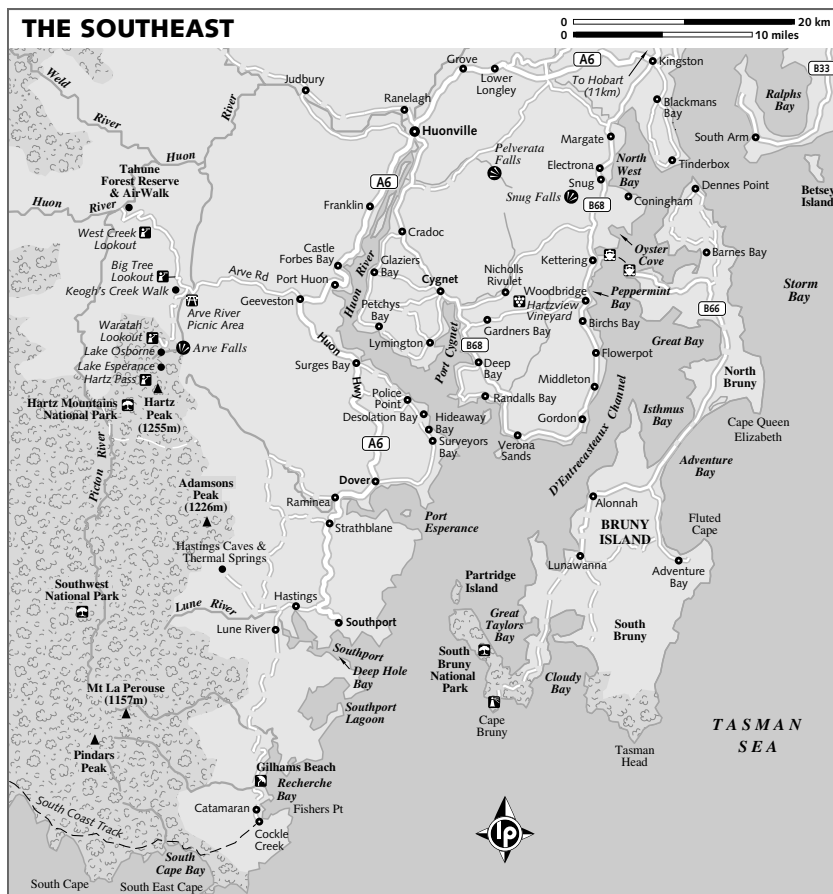
The quiet harbours and valley folds of Tasmania's southeast have much to offer, particularly if you enjoy driving through green, undulating countryside and snacking from roadside produce stores. Once the apple-producing heart of the Apple Isle (in the 1960s there were 2000 orchards in the Huon Valley), the area has since diversified into cherries, apricots, Atlantic salmon, wines, mushrooms, cheese and even saffron, catering to the passing tourist trade. Here, the fruit-filled hillsides of the Huon Valley give way to the sparkling inlets of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Bruny Island awaits enticingly offshore, Hartz Mountains National Park is not far inland, and further south the South Coast Track kicks off at magnificent Recherche Bay.

Francophiles will detect a clear French lineage here. French explorers Bruni d'Entrecasteaux and Nicolas Baudin charted much of the region's coastline in the 1790s and early 1800s, d'Entrecasteaux arriving a good decade before the Brits hoisted the Union Jack at Risdon Cove near Hobart in 1803. The southeast has three distinct areas: the peninsula, including Kettering and Cygnet, Bruny Island, and the Huon Hwy coastal strip linking Huonville with Cockle Creek. The wide Huon River remains the region's lifeblood. Synonymous with the river is the famous Huon pine; sadly, only a few young specimens remain locally. The southeast is also known for its rainbows – the happy by-product of southern latitudes and abundant waterways. On cold, clear winter nights, you might also catch the *Aurora Australis*, the southern hemisphere's equivalent of the *Aurora Borealis* or Northern Lights.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Forgetting the office, courtesy of a couple of days on **Bruny Island** (p136)
- Paddling a sea-kayak over the glassy swells of the **D'Entrecasteaux Channel** (p136)
- Conjuring up images of French explorers' tall ships anchored in remote **Recherche Bay** (p152)
- Tuning-in to the twang, shimmy and stomp of the **Cygnet Folk Festival** (p142), a jazzy January jamboree
- Inspecting a Huon pine hull under construction at Franklin's **Wooden Boat Centre** (p146)
- Smiling at your reflection in an alpine moorland tarn at **Hartz Mountains National Park** (p148)
- Spelunking into the subterranean gloom at **Hastings Caves & Thermal Springs** (p151)
- Riding the **Ida Bay Railway** (p151) – Australia's southernmost railway – to the end of the line





## Getting There & Around

### BUS

**Hobart Coaches** (☎ 132 201; www.hobartcoaches.com.au) runs several buses each weekday from Hobart south through Margate, Snug and Kettering to Woodbridge. A bus also runs once each weekday from Hobart to Snug and inland across to Cygnet. There are no weekend services.

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; www.tassielink.com.au) runs buses along the Huon Hwy from Hobart through Huonville, Franklin and Geeveston to Dover. There are up to seven services a day from Monday to Friday (five of these terminate in Geeveston), and one each on Saturday and Sunday (both terminating in Geeveston).

At 9am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from December through March, a Tassielink bus departs Hobart and continues south all the way to the end of the road at Cockle Creek (bookings essential).

### CAR

The views from the Channel Hwy between Hobart and Woodbridge are lovely, particularly on sunny days when the contrast between lush pastures and the deep-blue channel waters is dazzling. If you then take the road from Woodbridge to Gardeners Bay en route to Cygnet, you'll be rewarded with improbably alluring views on both sides of the ridge. You can also follow the coast from Woodbridge through Verona Sands to Cygnet, occasion-

ally passing very close to the channel – an impressive detour.

Further south, some sections of the side route from Surges Bay through Police Point are surfaced with coarse gravel, which will shake up your spine if you're in an older vehicle. Check your tyres before you leave, and make sure your spare is in good shape.

### TOURS

If you're *sans voiture* (as Bruni d'Entrecasteaux certainly was), you might want to join a south-bound tour from Hobart (see p139 for information on getting to and around Bruny Island on a tour):

**Gray Line** (☎ 6234 3336, 1300 858 687; www.grayline.com.au; tours adult/child \$130/65) Huon Valley day tours visiting Huonville, Franklin, Geeveston and the Tahune Forest AirWalk.

**Peppermint Bay Cruise** (p142) A five-hour cruise down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel to Woodbridge.

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; www.tassielink.com.au; tours adult/child \$16/8) Six-hour bus trips to Huonville on weekdays.

### MARGATE

☎ 03 / pop 745

About 23km south of Hobart (beyond Kingston, covered on p119) is small-town Margate. Train spotters might like to scrutinize the **Margate Train** (☎ 6267 1020; www.view.com.au/margate train; 1567 Channel Hwy; admission free; ☎ 9am-4.30pm), the last passenger train used in Tasmania. It stands idly on a redundant section of track by the highway on the northern side of town, and houses craft shops, antique dealers, the **Pancake Train Café** (mains \$10-19) serving pancakes and light meals, and even a barber and masseuse!

Behind the train is **Inverawe Native Gardens** (☎ 6267 2020; www.inverawe.com.au; 1565 Channel Hwy; adult/child \$8/4; ☎ 9.30am-sunset Sep-May), a private, 9.5-hectare property with landscaped native gardens, trails, water views and 80 species of blow-through birds, including the 12 species endemic to Tassie.

Closer to town is the fabulous **Brookfield Vineyard** (☎ 6267 2880; www.brookfieldvineyard.com; 1640 Channel Hwy; admission free, mains \$9-15; ☎ 9am-6pm, to midnight Fri), Margate's multifaceted hub of all things good: wine, gourmet fare, live music and artsy design. Breakfast until 4pm (nachos, pides, pasta, pies, crepes), Wednesday afternoon craft market, Friday night hootenanny.

**Hobart Coaches** (☎ 13 22 01; www.hobartcoaches.com.au) offers several bus runs from Hobart through Kingston to Margate (\$6.50, 20 to 30 minutes) Monday to Friday, plus two services on Saturday.

### SNUG

☎ 03 / pop 770

Early Euro explorers decided this area was a safe, sheltered anchorage, which spawned the heart-warming name Snug. The town was levelled by bushfires in 1967, when 80 houses burnt down. A temporary caravan village was established beside the oval, which eventually became the present-day caravan park.

**Oyster Cove**, off Manuka Rd 5km south of Snug, was a traditional camp for indigenous people, who called it Mena Loongana or Mannina. In 1847 it became the next destination for the Tasmanian Aborigines who survived Wybalenna on Flinders Island (see p26). In 1995, Oyster Cove was returned to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

**Snug Falls** are 3.5km off the highway (sign-posted). An easy 45-minute return walk, complete with seats and picnic shelters, leads to the foot of the falls. If the weather's hot, just south of Snug at **Coningham** is a safe swimming beach.

One kilometre south of Snug is the **Channel Historical & Folk Museum** (☎ 6267 9169; 2361 Channel Hwy; adult/child \$5/1; ☎ 10am-4pm Wed-Sun), a historical showcase of local timber, fishing and ship-building industries, as well as the destructive 1967 fires. A move to Margate was mooted – look for them there if they're not here.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Snug Beach Cabin & Caravan Park** (☎ 6267 9138; 35 Beach Rd; powered/unpowered sites from \$23/18, cabins \$75-120; ☎ ☎) Grass-sprung, sheltered sites and faux-cedar cabins near the beach. Nearby are man-made distractions like a tennis court, playground and parakeet aviary.

Aside from the decent-value pub fare plated up at low-slung **Snug Tavern** (☎ 6267 9238; 2236 Channel Hwy; mains \$15-20; ☎ lunch & dinner) – steaks, crumbed scallops, roasts – there are slim pickings in Snug come meal time. A trip north to Margate will broaden your options.

### Getting There & Away

**Hobart Coaches** (☎ 132 201; www.hobartcoaches.com.au) runs seven weekday buses from Hobart through Margate to Snug (\$7.50, 30 minutes).

## KETTERING

☎ 03 / pop 300

Blessed with photogenic looks, the lethargic port of Kettering shelters fishing boats and yachts in Oyster Cove Marina, next to the Bruny Island ferry terminal. Most folks just blow through here en route to Bruny, but it's an essential stop for sea-kayakers.

The **Bruny D'Entrecasteaux visitors centre** (☎ 6267 4494; www.tasmaniaholiday.com; 81 Ferry Rd; ☎ 9am-5pm), by the ferry terminal, has information on accommodation and services on Bruny Island, including walk notes and a self-guided driving tour.

At the marina is **Roaring 40s Ocean Kayaking** (☎ 6267 5000; www.roaring40skayaking.com.au; Oyster Cove Marina, Ferry Rd; ☎ closed Jun-Aug), Tassie's leading sea-kayaking tour operator. The company offers gear rental to kayakers, and organises a smorgasbord of kayaking trips to suit all levels of experience. A half-day paddle around Oyster Cove costs \$90; a full day on the D'Entrecasteaux Channel costs \$155, including lunch. A full day around the Tasman Peninsula costs \$255. Overnight trips at venues such as Lake St Clair, Lake Pedder and Freycinet Peninsula are also available, plus night trips around the southwest wilderness (p303).

## Sleeping & Eating

**Oyster Cove Inn** (☎ 6267 4446; www.view.com.au/oyster; 1 Ferry Rd; s/d without bathrooms from \$40/70) A cream-coloured monolith presiding over the boat-cluttered harbour, this large pub has budget singles, twins and doubles upstairs. Kooky carpet, ill-matched linen, raggedy bathrooms – talk about no-frills! The restaurant (mains \$10 to \$25; open for dinner) raises the standards a little, with an extensive menu, local wines, a casual bar and outdoor deck.

**Old Kettering Inn** (☎ 6267 4426; ebaldwin@rezitech.com.au; 58 Ferry Rd; d incl breakfast \$125) On the road to the ferry terminal, this 1894 property amid flower-festooned gardens and offers one commodious suite – bedroom, bathroom, lounge and outdoor deck – with a private entrance. Cooked breakfast included.

**Tulendena** (☎ 6267 4348; www.tulendena.com.au; 29 Bloomsbury La; d \$150, extra person \$30) Just north of Kettering, signposted off the highway, is this quality self-contained abode, sleeping four in mod-con comfort. The house squats in spacious gardens with birds all a-twitter and views from the private terrace. Two-night minimum; discounts for longer stays.

**Hérons Rise Vineyard** (☎ 6267 4339; www.heronrise.com.au; 1000 Saddle Rd; d \$160, extra person \$30) Just north of town, Herons Rise has two upmarket, self-contained cottages set among the vines (a third being built above the pinot-stacked wine cellar), each with a log fire. Breakfast provisions supplied.

**Mermaid Café** (☎ 6267 4494; 81 Ferry Rd; light meals \$8-16; ☎ breakfast & lunch daily, dinner Fri & Sat) Inside the Bruny D'Entrecasteaux visitors centre is this informal licensed café, offering everything from a quick coffee and toasted sandwich to a bang-up meal.

**Farm Gate Café & Providore** (☎ 6267 4997; cnr Channel Hwy & Saddle Rd; lunch \$8-20, dinner \$24-27; ☎ breakfast & lunch Wed-Sun, dinner Fri & Sat) A new addition to the Channel food scene is this bright modern room, serving breakfast (omelettes, French toast or bircher muesli), lunch (chicken, pea and bacon pie; mushroom and thyme risotto) and dinner (twice-cooked duck salad; aged sirloin). Classy stuff.

## Getting There & Away

Four weekday-only buses from Hobart run by **Hobart Coaches** (☎ 132 201; www.hobartcoaches.com.au) stop at Kettering. The 50 minute ride from Hobart costs \$9.

## BRUNY ISLAND

☎ 03 / pop 600

Bruny Island is almost two islands, joined by a narrow, 5km sandy isthmus called the Neck. Renowned for its wildlife (fairy penguins, echidnas, mutton birds), it's a windswept, sparsely populated retreat, blown by ocean rains in the south, and dry and beachy in the north.

Bruny's coastal scenery is magical. There are countless swimming and surf beaches, plus good sea and freshwater fishing. South Bruny is home to the steep, forested South Bruny National Park, which has some beautiful walking tracks, especially around Labillardiere Peninsula and Fluted Cape.

The island was spied by Abel Tasman's beady eyes in 1642, and between 1770 and 1790 was visited by Furneaux, Cook, Bligh and Cox. It was named after Rear-Admiral Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, who explored the area in 1792. Strangely, confusion reigned about the spelling – in 1918 it was changed from Bruni to Bruny.

Tasmanian Aborigines of the Nuennone band called the island Lunawanna-Alonnah, a name given contemporary recognition (albeit

broken in two) as the names of two island towns. Among their numbers was Truganini, daughter of Mangana, chief of the Nuennone band. Truganini left Bruny in the 1830s to accompany George Robinson on his infamous state-wide journey to win the trust of all the Tasmanian Aborigines. Many of Bruny's landmarks, including Mt Mangana, are named after the isle's original inhabitants. For more on Truganini, see p27.

The island has endured several commercial ventures. Sandstone was mined here and used for the Post Office and Houses of Parliament in Melbourne, and coal was also exhumed here. Both industries gradually declined due to lofty transportation costs. Only farming and forestry have had long-term viability.

Tourism is becoming increasingly important to the island's economy but remains fairly low-key. There are (as yet) no homogenised resorts, just plenty of interesting cottages and houses, most self-contained. Too many visitors try unsuccessfully to cram their Bruny experience into one day. If you can handle the peace and quiet, plan to stay a few days.

## Information

The Bruny D'Entrecasteaux visitors centre (opposite) by the ferry terminal can help with accommodation bookings, books and information on walks, camping and driving tours. You can also buy national park passes for South Bruny National Park here. Online, check out www.brunyisland.net.au.

South Bruny has three **general stores**, open 9am to 5pm seven days, all with Eftpos facilities, and all selling petrol, takeaway food and provisions (though not everything your stomach desires adorns the shelves). The largest is at **Adventure Bay** (712 Main Rd) and has a multicaud ATM. The store at **Alonnah** (☎ 6293 1424; 3 William Carte Dr) is also the post office. The third store is at **Lunawanna** (☎ 6293 1297; 10 Cloudy Bay Rd). There are no stores on North Bruny.

There's internet access in Adventure Bay at the Penguin Café (p141) or at the **Online Access Centre** (☎ 6293 2036; School Rd) at Alonnah School (signposted). The centre has complex opening hours – phone ahead.

## Sights & Activities

### MUSEUMS

The curiosity-arousing **Bligh Museum of Pacific Exploration** (☎ 6293 1117; www.brunyisland.net.au

/Adventure\_Bay/blighmuseum.html; 876 Main Rd, Adventure Bay; adult/child/family \$4/2/10; ☎ 10am-4pm) details the local exploits of explorers Bligh, Cook, Furneaux and, of course, Bruni D'Entrecasteaux. The engaging collection includes maps, charts and manuscripts – many of them originals or first editions – plus globes and information on early Antarctic explorations.

At the council offices in Alonnah is the wee, volunteer-run **Bruny Island History Room** (☎ 6260 6366; www.brunyisland.net.au/Alonnah/historyroom.html; Main Rd, Alonnah; admission free; ☎ 10am-3pm), displaying newspaper clippings, photos and records of the island community's past, plus info on walks and attractions around Bruny.

### LIGHTHOUSE

Worth visiting is the 1836 stone **Cape Bruny Lighthouse** (☎ 6298 3114; tours adult/child \$5/2) on South Bruny – the second-oldest lighthouse in Oz! Take a tour (one day's advance booking required) or wander the surrounding **reserve** (☎ 10am-4pm), which has impressive panoramas of the rugged coast.

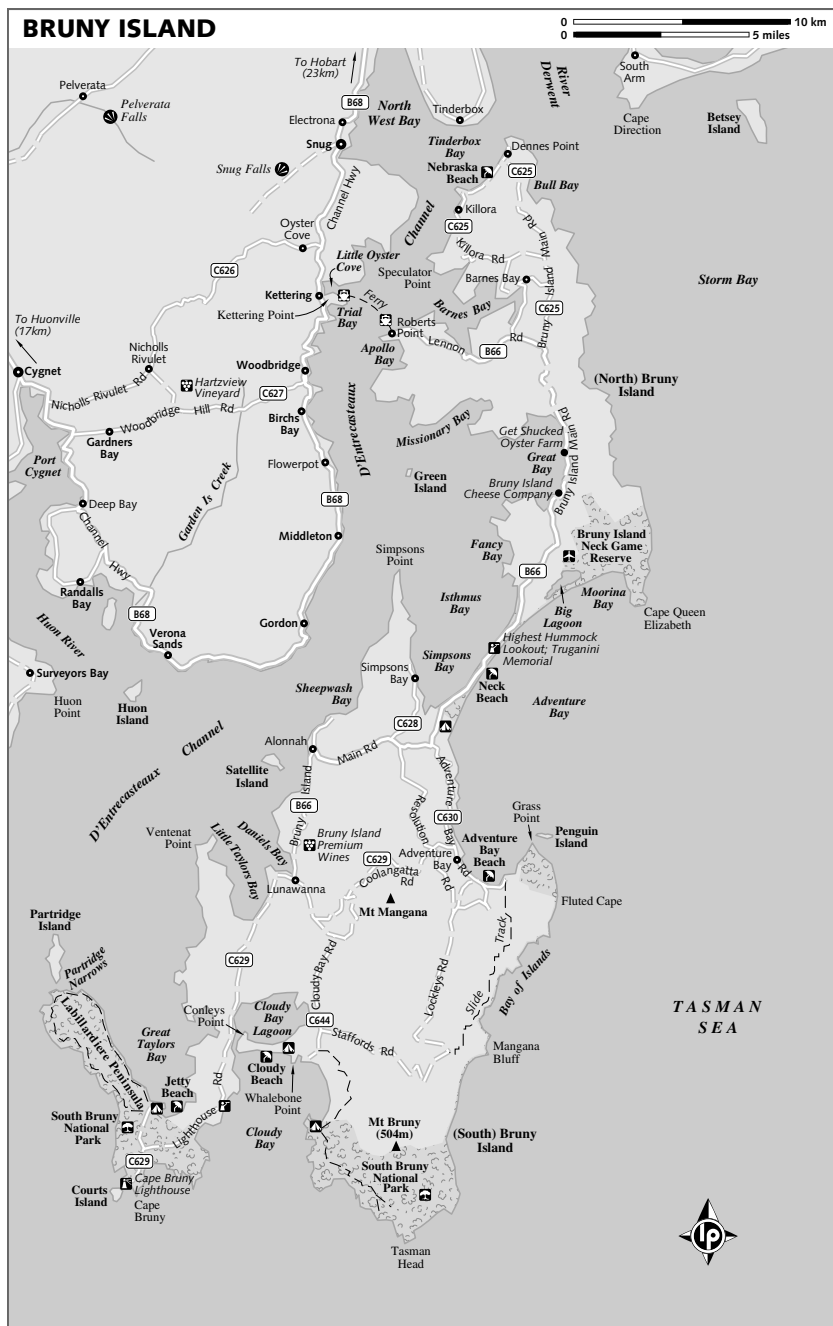
### SOUTH BRUNY NATIONAL PARK & THE NECK

**Fluted Cape**, one of the disparate extremities of **South Bruny National Park** (www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/sthbruny), is east of the small Adventure Bay township. The easy trail leading here from the main beach passes **Grass Point** (1½ hours return), a brilliant breakfast spot on a sunny morning. From here you can walk along the shore to **Penguin Island**, accessible at low tide, or complete a more difficult circuit climbing the cape itself (2½ hours return).

The park's southwestern portion comprises the **Labillardiere Peninsula**, which features jagged coastal scenery and a lighthouse. Walks here range from leisurely beach meanderings to a seven-hour circuit of the entire peninsula (starting and finishing at Jetty Beach camping ground).

For up-to-date information on the national park walks plus other walks around the island, consult the Bruny D'Entrecasteaux visitors centre or check out www.brunyisland.net.au/Walks/brunywalks.html. For national park entry fees, see p64.

**Bruny Island Neck Game Reserve** (www.brunyisland.net.au/Neck/neck.html), on the isthmus between North and South Bruny, is home to mutton birds and little (fairy) penguins that nest in



the dunes. The best time and place to see the penguins is at dusk in the warmer months at **Highest Hummock Lookout**. Park at the Bruny Island Neck Game Reserve sign and climb the 273 steps to the **Truganini Memorial** for broad views of both ends of the island. Another timber walkway crosses the Neck to the beach on the other side. Keep to the boardwalk in this area – mutton birds dig deep holes in the sand that can be hard to see (a broken ankle is a sure-fire holiday bumper).

Bird-nerds can also visit the national park for glimpses of endangered species like the forty-spotted pardalote. During summer there are ranger-led park activities; for details, contact the **Parks & Wildlife Service** (☎ 6293 1419; www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/sthbruny).

### TASTES OF BRUNY

If you're hankering for a quivering sliver of goat's milk cheese (or cow's, for that matter), the **Bruny Island Cheese Company** (☎ 6260 6332, 0428 606 332; 1087 Main Rd, Great Bay) is for you. Opening hours vary – call to confirm they're not knee-deep in curds out the back when you visit.

**Get Shucked Oyster Farm** (☎ 6293 1131; www.getshucked.com.au) is another brilliant Bruny business, cultivating the 'fuel for love' in these chilly southern waters. For a taste, visit the Hothouse Café (p141).

If you're workin' up a thirst, **Bruny Island Premium Wines** (☎ 6293 1008, 0409 973 033; wayaree@dearmail.com.au; 4391 Main Rd, Lunawanna) offers cellar door sales at Australia's most southerly vineyard. Opening hours are irregular – call ahead to guarantee your tasting (pinot noir and chardonnay rule the roost).

### Tours FROM HOBART

From October to April, **Bruny Island Charters** (☎ 6293 1465; www.brunycharters.com.au) operates highly recommended three-hour tours of the island's awesome southeast coastline, taking in rookeries, seal colonies, bays, caves and towering sea cliffs. Trips depart Adventure Bay jetty at 11am daily from October to May, and cost \$95/50 per adult/child. You can also take the tour as part of a full-day trip from Hobart (\$155/110), including lunch and transfers.

Alternatively, travellers without a car could try Bruny Island Charters' **Bruny Island Bus Service** (\$45; ☎ 8am) – a return bus trip from Hobart to Adventure Bay, with admission to the Bligh Museum of Pacific Exploration and

four hours' exploring time (hike the Fluted Cape Walk or bum around on the beach). Call for bookings.

**Bruny Island Ventures** (☎ 6229 7465; www.brunyisland.net.au/Services/brunyislandventures.html) runs small-group Bruny day tours that cost \$130/90 per adult/child. Tours depart Hobart four times a week and peruse the island's prime features, including the Neck, Adventure Bay and Cape Bruny Lighthouse, with meals included.

### ON THE ISLAND

See left for details on the excellent cruise out of Adventure Bay operated by Bruny Island Charters.

**Inala Nature Tours** (☎ 6293 1217; www.inalabruny.com.au; 320 Cloudy Bay Rd) runs highly regarded personalised walking and 4WD tours of the island (from half a day to three days), focused on flora and fauna. The tour leader is a botanist, zoologist and conservationist; her 250-hectare property is home to almost 140 bird species (and one- and three-bedroom cottages for rent). A three-hour walking tour around the property costs \$110 per person; a five-hour 4WD island tour costs \$175 per person.

Other options include fishing charters, with all equipment provided, run by **Ol' Kid** (☎ 6293 1128; www.capcookolkid.com.au), operating from Captain James Cook Memorial Caravan Park in Adventure Bay (p140). Three-hour charters start at \$90 per person (minimum two people).

### Sleeping

Self-contained cottages abound on Bruny, most suitable for midsized groups and offering economical one-week rates. Bookings are essential, as owners/managers and their keys aren't always easily located – the Bruny D'Entrecasteaux visitors centre (p136) is a good starting point. Adventure Bay has the lion's share of accommodation, but there are places at Alonnah (the other main settlement on South Bruny), and at Barnes Bay and Dennes Point (pronounced 'Denz') on North Bruny.

There are no hostels on Bruny.

### BUDGET

#### South Bruny

If you have a vehicle and a tent, the cheapest island accommodations are the free bush camping grounds. Camping on Bruny is restricted to these places to prevent the foreshore being

damaged by indiscriminate tent placement. There are sites within South Bruny National Park (national park passes required) at **Jetty Beach**, a beautiful sheltered cove 3km north of the lighthouse, and at **Cloudy Bay**. There's also a campsite outside the national park at **Neck Beach**, at the southern end of the Neck. All sites have pit toilets and fireplaces; BYO firewood and water.

**Captain James Cook Memorial Caravan Park** (☎ 6293 1128; www.capcookkid.com.au; 786 Main Rd, Adventure Bay; unpowered/powered sites \$16/20, on-site vans \$42-50, cabins \$120) Right by the beach, this grandly named park could do with a few trees, but has decent facilities (including wheelchair-accessible cabins) and welcoming owners who go out of their way to ensure you have a happy stay. Fishing charters are available (see p139).

**Adventure Bay Eco Village** (☎ 6293 1270; www.adventurebayholidayvillage.com.au; 1005 Main Rd, Adventure Bay; powered sites \$20, cabins \$70-130) Beside the beach at the end of Adventure Bay Rd (3km past the general store), with cabins to suit all budgets and wildlife-filled grounds (white wallabies!). No late-night rabble-raising, no tent sites, no pets, no boats (no fun?).

**Hotel Bruny** (☎ 6293 1148; brunypub@bigpond.com; Main Rd, Alonnah; d \$70) There are two squat roadside units on offer at the pub – this doesn't sound too enticing, but they pass muster if all you're after is a clean room and comfy bed for the night.

## MIDRANGE South Bruny

**Lumeah** (☎ 6293 1265; www.lumeah-island.com.au; Adventure Bay Rd, Adventure Bay; d \$140, extra person \$20) Lumeah, an Adventure Bay sawmiller's cottage knocked up 115 years ago, offers accommodation perfect for two couples or two families: two double rooms, two bathrooms and a bunk room sleeping six (maximum 10 guests). It's fully self-contained, 50m from the beach, and has a barbecue area and spa. Nice one.

**Explorers' Cottages** (☎ 6293 1271; www.brunyisland.com; 20 Lighthouse Rd, Lunawanna; d \$140, extra person \$25) Just south of Lunawanna on the way to the lighthouse, these bright, beachy, self-contained cottages sleep four with lounge areas, log fires, board games and outdoor decks.

**Mickeys Bay Eco Retreat** (☎ 1300 889 557; www.mickeysbay.com; 736 Lighthouse Rd, Lunawanna; d \$140, extra person \$25) About 12km south of Lunawanna en

route to the lighthouse is this self-contained, open-plan studio apartment, sleeping up to six. It's a hip, modern design, with polished floorboards, handmade furniture, a BBQ and private beach. Perfect for families.

## North Bruny

**Bruny Beach House** (☎ 5243 8486, 0419 315 626; www.brunybeachhouse.com; 91 Nebraska Rd, Dennes Point; d \$135, extra person \$20) Above the sandy sliver of Nebraska Beach in the north is this large, good-value beach house sleeping four. It's got all the requisite facilities, a wood heater and a super deck on which to sip and scan. BYO supplies; two-night minimum stay.

**Wainui B&B** (☎ 6260 6260; www.wainuibandb.com; 87 Main Rd, Dennes Point; r \$150) Two large, attractive rooms and outdoor deck views are main selling points of this modern B&B at Dennes Point in the island's north. The owner is ex-Merchant Marine, and keeps things shipshape. He'll sell you a BBQ pack for \$35 to cook on the barbie.

**292 Apollo Bay** (☎ 6293 1271; www.brunyisland.com; 292 Apollo Bay Rd, Apollo Bay; d \$175, extra person \$25) This is the closest accommodation to the Roberts Point ferry terminal, which will make life easier if you're contemplating the 7am ferry! Sleeps six in self-contained, view-infused splendour.

## TOP END

### South Bruny

**Morella Island Retreats** (☎ 6293 1131; www.morella-island.com; 46 Adventure Bay Rd, Adventure Bay; d \$170-270) For an extra-spesh occasion, book one of these unique, sequestered cottages 6km north of Adventure Bay (they also have beachfront cottages down by The Neck). Cottages range from sexy retreats for couples (complete with garden bath and hammock for two) to family-sized holiday homes. All are self-contained; design and décor could be described as 'classic castaway'. Prices drop by up to \$50 for stays longer than one night.

**The Tree House** (☎ 0405-192 892; www.thetreehouse.com.au; Alonnah; d \$180, extra person \$25) This is a good-lookin', open-plan timber place overlooking the agriculturally named Sheep Wash Bay. It has two bedrooms, all the mod cons and super-doooper views. The price drops to \$160 for stays of two nights or more. It's a 15-minute walk to the pub.

**St Clairs** (☎ 6293 1300; www.stclairs.com; Lighthouse Rd; d \$210) On the road to the lighthouse (just

past the Explorers' Cottages) is this plush (but not pretentious) getaway cottage built for two, surrounded by bushland. Renting it nets you a spa and cooked breakfast provisions; dinner by arrangement. The tariff drops to \$190 for two nights; \$180 for subsequent nights.

## Eating

Pick up provisions and takeaways at the island's general stores (see p137).

**Hothouse Café** (☎ 6293 1131; 46 Adventure Bay Rd, South Bruny; meals \$9-23; ☎ breakfast & lunch, dinner by arrangement) This café at Morella Island Retreat occupies a converted hothouse (sit inside on a sunny day and you'll start to sprout). Isthmus views and flappy bird life distract you from the menu of interesting snacks and mains (omelettes, steaks, flatbread wraps). Dinner is usually an option in January.

**Bruny Island Smoke House** (☎ 6260 6344; 360 Lennon Rd, North Bruny; mains \$12-20; ☎ lunch Sat & Sun, dinner Fri) Managed with pizzazz, 'BISH' is a winner – gourmet pizzas, smoked fish and meats, cakes, decent coffee and astounding views from the deck. If only they were open more often!

**Hotel Bruny** (☎ 6293 1148; Main Rd, Alonnah; mains \$18-25; ☎ lunch & dinner) An unassuming pub in Alonnah, with outdoor water-view seating to help you unravel, plus a reasonable menu heavy on local seafood. We suspect the smile-free barman was just having a bad day...

**Penguin Café** (☎ 6293 1352; 710 Main Rd, Adventure Bay; 2 courses \$28; ☎ dinner; ☎) Next to the Adventure Bay store, Penguin Café serves fixed-price dinners (soup of the day, beef in red wine, fillet of ocean trout etc) in a cosy wooden room. Wines by the glass or bottle. Ask about their gourmet picnic hampers. Bookings essential. Reduced winter hours.

## Getting There & Away

Access to the island is via **car ferry** (☎ 62723277) from Kettering across to Roberts Point on the north of the island. There are at least 10 services daily, taking 20 minutes one-way. The first ferry from Kettering is at 6.30am (7.45am on Sunday), the last at 6.30pm (7.30pm on Friday). The first ferry from Bruny is at 7am (8.25am on Sunday), the last at 7pm (7.50pm on Friday). The timetable may vary, so double-check departure times. Return fares: cars \$25 (\$30 on public holidays and public holiday weekends), motorcycles \$11, bicycles \$3 and foot passengers free.

The Roberts Point terminal on Bruny is a long way from anywhere. If you don't have your own wheels, see p139 for info on how to get to Bruny on a tour.

## Getting Around

You'll need your own wheels to get around – there are no buses. A bicycle is a great option, but be prepared for long rides between destinations. Bruny has some narrow, winding gravel roads, the slippery, logging truck-infested road over Mt Mangana being the prime case in point. Not all car rental companies are cool with this concept.

## WOODBIDGE

☎ 03 / pop 250

Established in 1874 as Peppermint Bay (after the area's peppermint gums), Woodbridge was eventually renamed by a landowner nostalgic for his old home in England. It's a quiet village sitting squarely on the tourist trail thanks to the sexy Peppermint Bay development (p142), which has consumed the old Woodbridge pub.

About 3km south of Peppermint Bay is another stop for foodies: **Grandveve Cheeses** (☎ 6267 4099; www.grandveve.com.au; 59 Devlyns Rd, Birchs Bay; tastings free; ☎ 10am-5pm daily Sep-Jun, 10am-4pm Wed-Mon Jul-Aug), a farm churning out organic cheese from both sheep and cow's milk. Sample some tasty produce, snack on a cheese platter (the pecorino is perfection) or quaff some pinot noir from the owners' nearby Grandveve Vineyard.

A little further south is **Fleurty's** (☎ 6267 4078; www.fleurty.com.au; 3866 Channel Hwy, Birchs Bay; ☎ 11am-4pm daily), a cool little glass-fronted providore in the trees where you can take a bushwalk, inspect the essential-oil distillery and stock up on homemade jam, vinegar, honey, chutney, herbs, fudge and oils. The café here is great for lunch too (mains \$10 to \$16).

**Hartzview Vineyard** (☎ 6295 1623; www.hartzview.com.au; 70 Dillons Rd, Gardners Bay; tastings \$2 refunded with purchase; ☎ 10am-5pm) is 7km up the hill from Woodbridge, off the road to Gardners Bay. For your palate's pleasure are a range of fortified wines, fruit liqueurs, a peppery pinot noir and a mellifluous mead. Lunch here is also a goer (salads, focaccia, smoked quiches, cheese platters – mains \$10 to \$18). There's also accommodation here (p142).

## Sleeping & Eating

**Teloepa** (☎ 6267 4565; www.teloepa-accommodation.com.au; 144 Pullens Rd; s/d \$88/99, extra adult/child \$22/11) A rural property with two wheelchair-accessible (but unremarkable) self-contained brick units on offer. Pullens Rd intersects with the Channel Hwy on the northern outskirts of Woodbridge.

**Old Woodbridge Rectory** (☎ 6267 4742; www.rectory.alltasmanian.com; 15 Woodbridge Hill Rd; d \$110-130) At the start of the Gardners Bay road is this friendly place with flower-filled gardens and two large en suite rooms in a 1905 rectory.

**Hartzview Vineyard** (☎ 6295 1623; www.hartzview.com.au; 70 Dillons Rd, Gardners Bay; d \$160-200, extra adult/child \$40/20) This secluded hilltop vineyard offers a fully equipped three-bedroom house endowed with antiques, a log fire, breakfast provisions and fine views over Gardners Bay. Dinners by arrangement.

**our pick** **Peppermint Ridge Retreat** (☎ 6267 4192; www.peppermintridge.com.au; 290 Woodbridge Hill Rd; d \$160-220, extra person \$25) Two amazing handmade straw bale and stone studios, complete with composting toilets, recycled timbers, spa baths, huge lofty spaces and brilliant D'Entrecasteaux Channel and Bruny Island views. Each sleeps five; breakfast supplies included. The local wallabies aren't shy.

**Peppermint Bay** (☎ 6267 4088; www.peppermintbay.com.au; 3435 Channel Hwy) On a mesmeric D'Entrecasteaux Channel inlet, Peppermint Bay houses a provedore, an art gallery, the upmarket à la carte Dining Room (mains \$25 to \$30; open daily for lunch, and for dinner on Saturday), and the casual Local Bar (mains \$15 to \$20; open daily for lunch, and for dinner Tuesday to Saturday). The emphasis is on local produce: seafood, fruits, meats, cheeses and other foodstuffs from just down the road, used to fantastic effect. Reduced winter hours. Bookings advised. You can also take a cruise here from Hobart (see Getting There & Away, below).

See also Grandveve Cheeses, Fleurty's and Hartzview Vineyard (p141).

## Getting There & Away

**Hobart Coaches** (☎ 13 22 01; www.hobartcoaches.com.au) has four weekday services; the trip from Hobart takes one hour and costs \$9.

Another option from Hobart is the **Peppermint Bay Cruise** (Map p82; ☎ 1300 137 919; www.peppermintbay.com.au/cruises; Brooke St Pier, Hobart; ☽ cruises noon daily Oct-Apr, Mon, Wed & Fri-Sun

May-Sep), which runs a five-hour float down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel to the sassy Peppermint Bay development. Prices start at \$78/48 per adult/child including lunch at the Peppermint Bay dining room of the restaurant, or prepared at the restaurant and eaten on board. Cruise-prices only from \$48/28.

## CYGNET

☎ 03 / pop 930

Groovy Cygnet was originally named Port de Cygne Noir (Port of the Black Swan) by Bruni d'Entrecasteaux (swans proliferate on the bay). Youthfully reincarnated as Cygnet (a baby swan), the town has evolved into a dreadlocked, artsy enclave, while still functioning as a major fruit-producing centre. Weathered farmers and banjo-carrying hippies chat amiably in the main street and prop up the bars of the town's three pubs. To the south, **Randalls Bay** and **Verona Sands** beaches aren't far away.

January's ever-popular **Cygnet Folk Festival** (www.cygnetfolkfestival.org) is three days of words, music and dance, attracting talent like Jeff Lang and Monique Brumby. The warmer months also provide abundant fruit-picking work for backpackers.

The **Cygnet Living History Museum** (☎ 6295 1602; 37 Mary St; admission by donation; ☽ 10am-3pm Tue & Wed, 12.30-3pm Fri & Sat) is a quaint history room next to the church on the main street, stuffed full of old photos, documents and curios.

Inside a converted Methodist church is the **Living History Museum of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage** (☎ 6295 0004; cnr Cross Rd & Nicholls Rivulet Rd, Nicholls Rivulet; adult/child \$4.50/2; ☽ 10.30am-2.30pm), out of town at Nicholls Rivulet (5km from the turn-off south of Cygnet). The small museum contains historical information and displays of southeast Tasmanian Aboriginal arts, crafts, artefacts and stories, plus a garden and wetlands filled with plants significant to the local Melukerdee Aboriginal band.

## Sleeping

**Cygnet Holiday Park** (☎ 6295 1267; contact@cygnetophotel.com.au; 3 Mary St; unpowered/power sites \$15/25) A bog-basic camping ground accessed via the side road next to the Cygnet RSL. Enquiries and check-in at the Cygnet Hotel, opposite the park.

**Huon Valley (Balfes Hill) Backpackers** (☎ 6295 1551; www.balfeshill.alltasmanian.com; 4 Sandhill Rd, Cradoc; unpowered sites/dm/d/f \$15/25/50/75; ☽ ) Off the Channel Hwy 4.5km north of Cygnet, this

## TOP 10 DEEP SOUTH FOODIE EXPERIENCES

The southeast is emerging as a real gourmet zone, with plenty of rainfall and sunshine sparking a feeding frenzy! Here are some of our favourite deep-south eating encounters:

- Munching into the quintessential Tasmanian apple, fresh from a roadside stall between Huonville and Cygnet (p146)
- Sipping a late-afternoon pinot noir or two at Home Hill (p145), Hartzview (p141) or Panorama Vineyard (p144)
- Sniffing out some peppery pecorino and smooth goat's cheese at Grandveve Cheeses (p141) south of Woodbridge
- Getting agitated after a few oysters ('fuel for love') from Get Shucked Oyster Farm (p139) on Bruny Island
- Winding down from a lazy lunch at the fabulous Peppermint Bay (opposite) restaurant in Woodbridge
- Shucking mussels straight from the rocks along the Esperance Coast Rd (p150)
- Swilling apple cider at the Welcome Swallow Cyderworks (p144) behind Cygnet
- Blowing the steam off a hot, city-worthy espresso from Red Velvet Lounge (below) in Cygnet
- Picking blueberries at the farms along the Cygnet Coast Rd (p144)
- Transcending the average pub meal at the far-flung Dover Hotel (p151)

place has decent rooms, good facilities, extensive grounds and super views from the large communal area (despite all of which, some reader reports are negative). It's especially busy from November to May, when the host helps backpackers find fruit-picking work. A courtesy bus runs to/from Cygnet bus stop. Bike hire is \$15/25 per half/full day.

**Cygnet Hotel** (☎ 6295 1267; www.cygnetophotel.com.au; 77 Mary St; dm/s/d \$30/90/95) The big, red-brick 'Top Pub' on the upper slopes of Cygnet's main drag has lifted its game to provide heritage pub accommodation that's a rung or two above the rest. Budget bunk rooms serve as two-bed dorms. Downstairs you can grab a cold Cascade and a hot dinner at the bar, bistro or more upmarket Black Swan Restaurant.

**Commercial Hotel** (☎ 6295 1296; 2 Mary St; s/d with shared bathroom \$45/60) Upstairs at the rambling old Commercial are decent pub rooms – not a bad option if you're just blowing through town. The bathrooms could use an overhaul.

**Cygnet Bay Waterfront Retreat** (☎ 6295 0980; www.cygnetbay.com.au; 11 Crooked Tree Point; d \$150, extra person \$30) Occupying the ground floor of a fairly bland-looking house is this self-contained apartment, 3km south of town. But forget the architecture – this is *absolute* waterfront, with a private entry, terrace, BBQ area and lawns rolling down to the bay.

## Eating

**School House Coffee Shop** (☎ 6295 1206; 23a Mary St; meals \$5-16; ☽ breakfast & lunch Tue-Sun) Cute coffee shop with geranium-filled window boxes, serving hefty homemade pies, Turkish bread sandwiches, pasta, soups, all-day breakfasts and tempting cakes.

**our pick** **Red Velvet Lounge** (☎ 6295 0466; 24 Mary St; mains \$8-12; ☽ breakfast & lunch; ☽ ) A new breed of hip cafés populates the main street, the best of which is this funky wholefood store and coffee house serving deliciously healthy meals (asparagus, olive and goats' cheese tart, beef rendang curry) to a diverse clientele. Good-looking staff, piles of music mags, mellow tunes, urbane without being yuppie, hippy without being feral – Cygnet has arrived!

**Commercial Hotel** (☎ 6295 1296; 2 Mary St; mains \$10-24; ☽ lunch & dinner) Our favourite Cygnet pub has turned its dining room into an all-day café, serving up a respectable range of light meals (focaccia, salads, pasta), plus hearty plates-full for pub-goers (steaks, roasts, mixed grills and what-not).

**Cygnet Central Hotel** (☎ 6295 1244; cnr Mary St & Garthfield Ave; mains \$12-21; ☽ lunch & dinner) Behind Cygnet's newest pub is a vast dining room overlooking a paddock: veal schnitzels, beer-battered scallops, disquieting carpet design and little joy for vegetarians.

**DETOUR: CYGNET COAST ROAD**

If you're not in a hurry (and why would you be?), don't miss the scenic coast road (the C639) between Cradoc and Cygnet. The direct route along the Channel Hwy (the B68) between these two towns is about 7km (this is the route for **roadside apple stalls!**) but the coastal route is a meandering 27km, past Petcheys Bay and Glaziers Bay.

The C639 heads south from Cygnet main street to Lymington. In January and February you can pick fruit at one of the **blueberry farms** along the way. The farms are also worth seeing in autumn when the bushes turn a spectacular russet-red.

In the backcountry about 15km from Cygnet, the **Welcome Swallow Cyderworks** (☎ 6295 1214; www.southcountrycyder.com; 113 Sunday Hill Rd, Petcheys Bay; ☎ 11am-3pm Wed-Mon), offers tastings and sales.

Further around the coast (6km from the northern end) is the **Scented Rose** (☎ 6295 1816; www.thescentedrose.com; 1338 Cygnet Coast Rd, Glaziers Bay; adult/child \$7.50/3; ☎ 11am-5pm Fri-Mon Oct-Mar), a bloomin'-great garden display specialising in David Austin roses.

One kilometre from the Cradoc junction is the impressive **Panorama Vineyard** (☎ 6266 3409; www.panoramavineyard.com.au; 1848 Cygnet Coast Rd, Cradoc; tastings free; ☎ 10am-5pm Wed-Mon), where you can nose into its acclaimed pinot noir, plus chardonnay, merlot and riesling.

If you want to stay along the coast road, there are a few options:

**Arundel Cottage** (☎ 6295 1577; 643 Silver Hill Rd, Glaziers Bay; d \$125, extra person \$25) Unsophisticated (but homely) self-contained 1960s cottage sleeping four.

**Riverside** (☎ 6295 1952; www.huonriverside.com.au; 35 Graces Rd, Glaziers Bay; d \$200, extra adult/child \$50/35) Deluxe contemporary abode (perfect for two couples) with amazing Huon views from the wide verandas. Fresh flowers, quality linen and homemade breakfast provisions.

**Beaupre Cottage** (☎ 6295 1542; www.beaupre-farm.com; 3 Cygnet Coast Rd, Lymington; d incl breakfast \$210) Gorgeous upstairs-downstairs timber cottage, each level a self-contained double. Bikes, rowboat and BBQ available; three-course dinner with a bottle of wine \$95 for two.

**Getting There & Away**

**Hobart Coaches** (☎ 13 22 01; www.hobartcoaches.com.au) bus 98 travels to Cygnet via Snug only once each weekday (with extra services on Thursdays). The trip takes one hour and costs \$10.

**HUONVILLE & AROUND**

☎ 03 / pop 1530

The biggest town in the southeast, agrarian Huonville sits on the banks of the Huon River 35km south of Hobart, not far from some lovely vineyards and small villages. Having made its name as Tasmania's apple-growing powerhouse, it remains a functional, working town – low on charm but with all the services you need (banks, cafés, supermarkets, petrol, post office).

The Huon and Kermadec Rivers were named after Huon d'Kermandec, second-in-command to explorer Bruni d'Entrecasteaux. Prior to that, the area was known by Tasmanian Aborigines as Tahune-Linah. The region was originally steeped in tall forests – timber milling quickly became a major industry, focusing on the coveted soft-

wood Huon pine. The initial plundering of Huon pine groves nearly wiped the tree out, as it's extremely slow-growing. Today, only immature trees survive along the river. Once the forest was levelled, apple trees were planted and the orchard industry blossomed – it's still the region's primary money spinner.

**Information**

**Huon Valley Environmental Centre** (☎ 6264 1286; www.huon.org; 3/17 Wilmot St; ☎ 9.30am-4.30pm Tue-Fri) Excellent resource for anyone interested in Tasmanian environmental issues.

**Huon visitors centre** (☎ 6264 1838; www.huonjet.com/trips/viscentre1.html; The Esplanade; ☎ 9am-5pm; ☎ ) By the river on the road to Cygnet (also the Huon Jet office).

**Parks & Wildlife Service** (☎ 6264 8460; www.parks.tas.gov.au; 22 Main Rd; ☎ 9am-4.30pm Mon-Fri) Main street office.

**Sights & Activities**

Take a frenetic, 35-minute jet-boat ride through the local rapids with **Huon River Jet Boats** (☎ 6264 1838; www.huonjet.com; The Esplanade; adult/child \$62/40; ☎ 9am-5pm) – bookings recom-

mended. You can also nudge out onto the river in a **pedal boat** (\$14 for 30min).

At nearby Ranelagh (3km west of Huonville) is the super-stylish winery **Home Hill** (☎ 6264 1200; www.homehillwines.com.au; 38 Nairn St; tastings free; ☎ 10am-5pm), producers of award-winning pinot noir, chardonnay and dessert wines. There's also an excellent restaurant here (right).

About 13km from Huonville at Judbury is **Huon Valley Horsetrekking** (☎ 6266 0343; www.horsehavenfarmstay.com; 179 Judds Creek Rd) running horse treks from one hour to two days; a short ride costs \$50. There's also a lovely cottage for rent here (\$120 for a double).

Hooking fish proving problematic? Visit **Snowy Range Trout Fishery** (☎ 6266 0243; www.snowyrangetrout.com.au; Denison River; admission adult/child \$5/2.50; ☎ 9am-5pm) for a guaranteed catch (equipment \$25). It's 28km west of Huonville, past Judbury (signposted). Besides the admission, you also pay by weight for the rainbow or brown trout or salmon you snare.

At Grove, 6km north of Huonville, the **Huon Apple & Heritage Museum** (☎ 6266 4345; appleheritagemuseum@yahoo.com.au; 2064 Main Rd; adult/child/concession/family \$6/3/5/15; ☎ 9am-5pm) has displays on 500 varieties of apples (count 'em) and 19th-century orchard life. Skip the tacky gift shop.

**Sleeping**

**Grand Hotel** (☎ 6264 1004; grandhot@bigpond.net.au; 2 Main St; s/d \$30/50) The only accommodation in Huonville itself is in this stoic old red-brick pub beside the bridge, with plenty of basic budget rooms (shared facilities). Predictable pub meals, too (mains \$13 to \$20).

**Huon Bush Retreats** (☎ 6264 2233; www.huonbushretreats.com; 300 Browns Rd, Ranelagh; d tepees \$115, d cabins from \$240, tent & campervan sites \$24) Gay-friendly, disabled-friendly, wildlife-friendly retreat in a habitat reserve on miserable Mt Misery. On site are modern, self-contained cabins, a larger disabled-access cabin, luxury tepees, tent and campervan sites, plus walking tracks and barbecue shelters. Meals by arrangement. Check the website for directions – it's 10km from Huonville but not well signposted.

**Matilda's of Ranelagh** (☎ 6264 3493; www.matildasofranelagh.com.au; 2 Louisa St; s/d from \$165/195 incl breakfast) At Ranelagh 2km northwest of Huonville is the 1865 Matilda's, one of Tasmania's finest heritage B&Bs (the Queen once stopped here for tea and a pee).

**Eating**

**Café Motó** (☎ 0400-315 533; 4 Wilmot St; mains \$10-14; ☎ ) breakfast & lunch Mon-Fri) The best eatery in Huonville itself is this hip little BYO off the main street, serving Hobart-quality coffee, cakes, quiches, pies and pastries – all homemade, all delicious.

**Huon Manor Bistro** (☎ 6264 1311; cnr Main & Short Sts; lunch from \$15, dinner \$24-28; ☎ ) lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Tue-Sat) A gracious century-old home with a menu showcasing local produce (the emphasis is on seafood – pray the scallops and crayfish are in season). Full menu or cheaper lunch-time and café-style options. Garden seating and wines by the glass.

**Home Hill Winery Restaurant** (☎ 6264 1200; 38 Nairn St; mains \$28-30; ☎ ) lunch daily, dinner Fri & Sat) Home Hill vineyard (left) has a fab restaurant in a slick-looking, rammed-earth building with pasture views. The seasonal menu stars Tassie produce: Bothwell goats' cheese, Huon Valley mushrooms, King Island cream. Morning and afternoon tea, too.

For a quick bite on the riverside tables, try the following:

**Banjo's Bakehouse** (☎ 6264 8755; 8 Main Rd; items \$3-8; ☎ ) breakfast & lunch) Picnic fodder.

**Boat House Café** (☎ 6264 1133; The Esplanade; light meals \$5-15; ☎ ) lunch & dinner Wed-Sun) Burgers and fish and chips from a floating punt.

**Getting There & Away**

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; www.tassielink.com.au) buses depart from Banjo's Bakehouse on the main street. The trip from Hobart takes one hour and costs \$10.

**FRANKLIN & AROUND**

☎ 03 / pop 465

The Huon Hwy traces the Huon River south, passing the settlements of Franklin, Castle Forbes Bay and Port Huon. These were once important shipping ports for apples, but nowadays the old wharves and packing sheds are rotting like old fruit.

Strung-out Franklin is the oldest town in the Huon Valley – the wide, reedy riverscape here is one of Australia's best rowing courses. The town has seen a crop of cool new eateries spring up in the last five years, but not much has changed here architecturally for the last century. An example is the **Palais Theatre** (☎ 6266 3350; www.ds.tas.nu/palais; Huon Hwy; tickets \$2; ☎ 6.30pm 1st Sun of month), begun in 1911 and ultimately an amalgamation of Federation

and Art Deco styles. Classic movies screen here once a month.

The town's much-touted attraction is the **Wooden Boat Centre** (☎ 6266 3586; www.woodenboatcentre.com; Huon Hwy; adult/concession/child/family \$6/5/4.50/18; ☎ 9.30am-5pm). It's part of the School of Wooden Boatbuilding, a unique school running accredited 12-month courses in traditional boat-building using Tasmania's timbers. Stick your head in the door to learn about boat-building, watch boats being cobbled together and hear a sea shanty or two.

Online, check out www.franklintasmania.com.au.

## Sleeping & Eating FRANKLIN

**Whispering Spirit Holiday Cottages** (☎ 6266 3341; www.whisperingspirit.com.au; 253 Swamp Rd; d \$95-140) We're not convinced a spirit can actually whisper (it's probably more telepathic than that), but we get what these guys are trying to say: their homy self-contained cottage and fantastic new two-bedroom, crimson straw-bale unit have soul! Cheaper rates for longer stays. Miniature ponies on site.

**Huon Franklin Cottage B&B** (☎ 6266 3040; www.huonfranklincottage.com.au; 3554 Huon Hwy; d \$100-120) Mustard-yellow house set high above the road to catch the river views, getting good feedback from readers. Offers two cottages B&B rooms plus an outdoor spa at affordable rates. Dinner by arrangement. The owners have another cottage in the middle of town, sleeping six (double \$115).

**Kay Creek Cottage** (☎ 6266 3524; www.kaycreekcottage.com; 17 Kay St; d \$110-130; ☎) A character-laden, self-contained timber cabin, 1km south of Franklin above the main highway. Bonuses include Baltic pine floorboards, stereo, CD collection, games, wood fire, beautiful linen, bucolic setting and magic views. Breakfast extra.

**Franklin Lodge** (☎ 6266 3506; www.franklinlodge.com.au; 3448 Huon Hwy; d incl breakfast from \$140) A two-storey building begun in the 1850s and eventually extended into the current grand Federation edifice. Inside are four en suite rooms, one with spa. Your cooked breakfast might involve feta and spinach pancakes, lemon ricotta pancakes or smoked salmon scrambled eggs.

**Aqua Grill** (☎ 6266 3368; 3419 Huon Hwy; meals \$6-16; ☎ lunch & dinner) Mighty fine takeaway fish and chips and other underwater snacks (try the

## FAST FOOD

All along the Huon Valley roadsides, particularly the B68 between Huonville and Cygnet, you can pull over and buy farm-fresh produce from makeshift applecarts. These usually take the form of tin sheds out the front of farms, stocked with bags of whatever is in season: pears, apricots, peaches, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, boysenberries, strawberries, potatoes, peas, beans, and of course, apples. It's an honesty system – grab your bag, drop some coins in the box and drive off brimming with vitamin C.

curried scallop crepe with white wine and cream sauce).

**Franklin Tavern** (☎ 6266 3205; Huon Hwy; mains \$10-22; ☎ lunch & dinner Wed-Sun) As well as cold beer and a long history, this two-storey, characterful pub (erected 1853), offers simple pub meals and all-day snacks, including toasted sandwiches and Devonshire tea. Sunday's \$10 roast is a steal.

**Franklin Woodfired Pizza** (☎ 6266 3522; Huon Hwy; pizzas \$14-21; ☎ dinner daily, lunch Sun) This tiny tin shack bakes fantastic takeaway pizzas inside a kooky corrugated-iron oven. Try the 'Smoke on the Water' (garlic, salmon, brie, red onion, sour cream, capers and dill). Everybody sing: 'Smoooke on the waaater...'

**Petty Sessions** (☎ 6266 3488; 3445 Huon Hwy; mains \$17-32; ☎ lunch & dinner) A picket fence and picture-perfect gardens enshroud this likeable café, inside an 1860 courthouse. Head for the deck and order classic café fare (salads, BLT, tandoori chicken burgers and seafood fettuccine), or try the house special: abalone chowder.

## CASTLE FORBES BAY

**Castle Forbes Bay House** (☎ 6297 1995; www.castleforbesbayhouse.com.au; 27 Meredith Rd; s/d \$60/85, house d \$100) A 1928 schoolhouse with apple orchards for neighbours. On offer are two B&B rooms (bathrooms down the hall), guest lounge, affable owners, wonderfully overgrown gardens and cooked breakfasts. Next door is a family-sized house for self-caterers, with a huge backyard to cavort in.

**Camellia Cottage** (☎ 6297 1528; www.camelliacottagebandb.com; 119 Crowthers Rd; d \$100, extra person \$20) Charming 1882 farm cottage with an open

fire, nestled into flower-crowded gardens. The cottage sleeps three with limited cooking facilities; breakfast provisions included (juice, breads, jams, free-range eggs). A lazy dog, a couple of chooks and Zach the cockatoo patrol the BBQ area.

**Donalea B&B** (☎ 6297 1021; www.donalea.com.au; 9 Crowthers Rd; s/d from \$100/140) Another CFB B&B with welcoming hosts, chill-the-hell-out views and petal-filled garden. Donalea has two bright rooms (one with spa), a new four-berth apartment, a guest lounge with rampaging log fire, and shelves of trashy romance novels to weep into.

## PORT HUON

**Kermandie Lodge** (☎ 6297 1110; www.kermandielodge.com.au; Huon Hwy; motel s/d \$80/88, unit s/d \$100/110, extra adult/child \$25/15) Roadside complex offering utterly unremarkable (but comfortable enough) two-bedroom units (with kitchen and washing machine), plus cheaper motel rooms. Bring binoculars to watch the tiny TVs.

**Kermandie Hotel** (☎ 6297 1052; fax 6267 0064; Huon Hwy; r \$90) Next to Kermandie Lodge is this 1932 pub with refurbished rooms (all with en suite), plus an outdoor deck with water views – there are worse spots for a few cold jars of Cascade and steak sandwich for lunch or dinner (mains \$11 to \$24).

## Getting There & Away

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; www.tassielink.com.au) services do the one-hour trip from Hobart to Franklin for \$12 (\$14 to Castle Forbes Bay). They pull up at the takeaway shop on Franklin's main street.

## GEEVESTON

☎ 03 / pop 830

Long stigmatised (justifiably) as a redneck logging town, Geeveston, 31km south of Huonville, is battling to become a tourist centre, offering some decent accommodations and eateries close to the Hartz Mountains and Tahune Forest AirWalk.

Geeveston was founded in the mid-19th century by the Geeves family, whose descendants still have fingers in a lot of local pies. In the 1980s the town was the epicentre of an intense battle over logging the Farmhouse Creek forests. At the height of the controversy, some conservationists spent weeks living in the tops of 80m-tall eucalypts to prevent them being felled. The conservation movement ultimately

won – Farmhouse Creek is now protected from logging.

See **Sights** (below) for info on the town's visitors centre. There's a multicard ATM inside the **Geeveston One-Stop Shop** (☎ 6267 1459; cnr School & Arve Rds; ☎ 7am-late) on the road out to the AirWalk. Online, see www.geeveston.com.au.

## Sights

In the town centre is the **Forest & Heritage Centre** (☎ 6297 1821; www.forestandheritagecentre.com; 15 Church St; ☎ 9am-5pm), which acts as the local visitors info hub. It's a pro-lumber kind of establishment (in fact, the whole town has taken on the scent of rampant Forestry Tasmania PR), with a **Forest Room** housing forestry displays, and regular wood-turning demonstrations. Upstairs the **Hartz Gallery** (admission adult/child & concession/family \$5/3/12) showcases the talents of local woodworkers. The centre also handles accommodation bookings, and you can buy Tahune Forest AirWalk and Hastings Caves tickets here (as well as at the venues themselves). Collect a map detailing short walks en route to the AirWalk (see p148).

Another place to browse over local crafts (ceramics, paintings, knits) and timber furniture is the **Southern Design Centre** (☎ 6297 0039; www.southerndesigncentre.com; 11 School Rd; ☎ 10am-5pm).

## Sleeping & Eating

**Bob's Bunkhouse** (☎ 6297 1069; www.bobsbunkhousegeevestonbackpackers.com.au; cnr Huon Hwy & School Rd; unpowered sites/dm \$20/22, s, d & tw \$49; ☎) It's impossible miss this bright-blue, gay-friendly hostel just south of town, next to a colossal swamp gum log taken from the Arve Valley in 1971 (displayed like a trophy without a hint of remorse). Bob's roadside rooms are clean and comfy with shared facilities.

**Cambridge House** (☎ 6297 1561; www.cambridgehouse.com.au; cnr School Rd & Huon Hwy; s/d shared facilities \$70/110, s/d with bathroom \$110/140) A photogenic 1930 B&B offering upstairs accommodation in three bedrooms with shared facilities (ideal for families), or a downstairs en suite room. Baltic pine ceilings and the timber staircase are wonders.

**Bears Went Over the Mountain** (☎ 6297 0110; www.bearsverthemountain.com; 2 Church St; d from \$130; ☎) Right in the middle of town, Bears has four rooms decorated in a whimsical bear theme (with the odd stuffed tiger) – kids will



be in heaven. Complimentary port for cold southern nights.

**Contented Bear** (☎ 6297 0099; 6 Church St; lunch \$9-20, dinner \$24-27; ☺ lunch & dinner) A rustic café run by the Bears Went Over the Mountain owners. Try a homemade scallop pie or beer-battered barramundi for lunch; for dinner it's gotta be the Tassie salmon with king prawns and sesame-and-hollandaise sauce. Eat by the log fire or in the garden (ignore the awful commercial FM rock).

**Kyari** (☎ 6297 1601; 13 Church St; mains \$10-15; ☺ breakfast & lunch) A streamlined eatery in a converted bank, with all-day breakfasts, enticing café fare, a kids' menu and an outdoor deck. Hours are subject to wild variations – call in advance before you get your hopes up.

### Getting There & Away

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; www.tassielink.com.au) buses arrive at and depart from the car park behind the Forest & Heritage Centre. The 1½-hour trip from Hobart costs \$15.

### ARVE ROAD & TAHUNE FOREST RESERVE

The sealed **Arve Rd**, constructed to extract timber from the local forests, trucks west from Geeveston through rugged, tall-timber country to the Hartz Mountains, the Tahune Forest Reserve and the Tahune Forest AirWalk.

Pick up a map from the Geeveston Forest & Heritage Centre (p147) detailing some easy short walks along the Arve Rd, including the following:

**Arve River Picnic Area** Has picnic tables and a ferny forest walk (10 minutes' round trip); 12km from Geeveston.

**Big Tree Lookout** A sub-five-minute walk leading to a timber platform beside a giant 87m-high swamp gum; turn-off is 14km from Geeveston.

**Keogh's Creek Walk** Fifteen-minute streamside circuit, 14km from Geeveston.

**West Creek Lookout** Provides views from a bridge extending out onto the top of an old tree stump; 21km from Geeveston.

About 29km west of Geeveston is the **Tahune Forest Reserve**, its name derived from Tahune-Linah, the Aboriginal name for the area around the Huon and Kermadie Rivers. Here you'll find the hugely successful **Tahune Forest AirWalk** (☎ 6297 0068; www.tasforestrytourism.com.au; adult/child/family \$22/10/45; ☺ 9am-5pm) – 600m of see-through steel mesh walkways suspended 20m above the forest floor. One 24m canti-

levered section is designed to sway disconcertingly with approaching footsteps. Vertigo? There are a couple of ground-level walks here too, including a 20-minute riverside stroll through stands of young Huon pine.

The **AirWalk** is accessible for people with disabilities, and there is a **café** (mains \$6-15; ☺ lunch) and gift shop here too. Drive here under your own steam or take a day trip from Hobart (p135). There are plenty of picnic spots around the reserve, and limited unpowdered campervan spots (no tents). There's a free (unofficial) camp site at the Arve River Picnic Ground about halfway to the AirWalk.

You can assess the Tahune forest from even further above with the **Tahune Eagle Glide** (☎ 6297 0068; www.tasforestrytourism.com.au; adult/child \$33/22; ☺ 9am-5pm). Wannabe eagles are strapped into a hang-glider, which in turn is latched to a 220m cable 30m above the Huon River and forest – a flying fox on steroids! You get two crossings for the price. Eagle Glide is 400m from the AirWalk car park.

### HARTZ MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

If you prefer your wilderness a little less pre-packaged than the Tahune Forest Reserve, head for the **Hartz Mountains National Park** (www.parks.tas.gov.au/natparks/hartz). A century ago, the Hartz plateau was a logging hotspot – stocks of small varnished gums were harvested for eucalyptus oil, which was distilled in Hobart for medicinal applications. But eventually the area was declared a national park, and in 1989 became part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. For national park entry fees, see p64.

The 65-sq-km Hartz Mountains National Park is only 84km from Hobart – within striking distance for weekend walkers and day-trippers. The park is renowned for its jagged peaks, glacial tarns, gorges and wonderful alpine moorlands where fragile cushion-plant communities grow in the cold, misty airs. Rapid weather changes bluster through – even day-walkers should bring waterproofs and warm clothing.

There are some great hikes and isolated, sit-and-ponder-your-existence viewpoints in the park. **Waratah Lookout**, 24km from Geeveston, is an easy five-minute shuffle from the road. Other well-surfaced short walks include **Arve Falls** (20 minutes return) and **Lake Osborne** (40 minutes return). The steeper **Lake Esperance** walk (two hours return) takes you through

### ED PARKER

Hobart-based environmentalist Ed Parker, 31, is a big fan of Tassie's old-growth forests, and is keen to see a more sustainable approach taken towards their management.

**Are Tasmanians keyed-in to environmental issues?** Apparently South Hobart is the greenest-voting suburb in Australia – it's a little world unto itself – but it's actually really polarised here. You'll see five cars with 'Protect Old-growth Forests' stickers on them, then see another couple with 'Greens Tell Lies' and 'I'm a Logger and I Vote' stickers. What's sad is that the state government isn't trying to end this polarisation by promoting genuinely sustainable industries. Forestry employs less people now than it used to, but clears more forest through mechanisation. It shouldn't be called the 'timber industry', because it's all about pulp – a lot of small timber mills around the state have gone out of business. It's not a good direction for the state when we've got booming tourism, hospitality and little boutique industries. To support old-school, polluting industries like the proposed pulp mill (see p47) goes against the trend.

**Are ecotourism and forest-based tourism growing?** Ecotourism should and will grow here. People want to see the forests, the beautiful beaches, the alpine areas – it's what attracts visitors to Tasmania. On the activity front there's recently been funding for trails through the state forests. Personally, I'd like to see more development of mountain bike trails to generate tourism dollars.

**Are there any volunteering, carbon-offset or tree planting programs here that travellers can engage with?** There's a national organisation that travellers can get involved with called **Conservation Volunteers Australia** (CVA; www.conservationvolunteers.com.au). They take volunteers for various projects: tree planting, weed control, translocating threatened starfish. They're great if you want to get your hands dirty. If you're interested in offsetting carbon emissions, check out Greening Australia's program **Breathe Easy** (www.breathesnow.com.au).

**Are you optimistic about the future of Tassie's old-growth forests?** I'm hopeful more than optimistic. If you look at forestry history over the last 15 years, there's not much reason for optimism. It's often cited that much of Tassie's wilderness is already protected – it's true that over 40% is in public reserve, but the majority of this is buttongrass plains or alpine mountaintops. A statistic that gets misused is that 60% of this remaining forest type or another is in reserve... but when you've logged all the rest, you can say that 100% of what's left is in reserve! It doesn't really hold up.

The recent project **Tasmania Together** (www.tasmaniattogether.tas.gov.au) undertook a massive survey of opinions on a whole range of things. Out of it came a number of recommendations. The government adopted most of them, but not the one that found the majority of Tasmanians want an immediate stop to the felling of old-growth forests. They completely ignored that one.

*As related to Charles Rawlings-Way*

high country even agnostics would proclaim as 'God's own'. You'll need to be fairly fit and experienced to tackle the steep, rougher track that leads to **Hartz Peak** (five hours return), which is poorly marked beyond **Hartz Pass** (3½ hours return).

There's no camping within the park, just basic day facilities (toilets, shelters, picnic tables, barbecues). Collect a **Hartz Mountains National Park** brochure from the Geeveston Forest & Heritage Centre (p147) or Huonville visitors centre (p144).

### DOVER

☎ 03 / pop 570

Dozy Dover – a Port Esperance fishing town with a pub, a beach and a pier to dangle a line

from – is a chilled-out spot to while away a few deep-south days. Dover was originally called Port Esperance after a ship in Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's fleet, but that moniker now only applies to the bay. The bay's three small islands are called Faith, Hope and Charity.

In the 19th century this was timber territory. Huon pine and local hardwoods were milled and shipped from here (and also nearby Strathblane and Raminia) to China, India and Germany for use as railway sleepers. Today the major industries are fruit-growing and fish-farming, harvesting Atlantic salmon for export throughout Asia.

There's not much by way of attractions in Dover itself, but if you're heading further south, buy petrol and food supplies here. The

**DETOUR: ESPERANCE COAST ROAD**

The main road (the A6) from Geeveston to Dover heads inland at Surges Bay – an uninteresting but quick 21km dash. The more scenic alternative is to leave the highway at Surges Bay and follow the Esperance Coast Rd through Police Point and Surveyors Bay. Some of this road is unsealed, but it's in good condition. With panoramic water views, the road tracks through Desolation Bay and Hideaway Bay, past mussel-encrusted rocks and the waterlogged pens of commercial salmon farms.

**Huon Charm Waterfront Cottage** (☎ 6297 6314; www.huoncharm.com; 581 Esperance Coast Rd; d \$115, extra person \$25) is actually two rustic cottages (one studio-style sleeping two, the other with two bedrooms) literally on the water's edge at Desolation Bay (ignore the name, it's actually a beautiful secluded little bay). There's quirky décor, with limited cooking facilities.

**Online Access Centre** (☎ 6298 1552; Old School, Main Rd; ☎ 10am-2pm Mon-Fri, 11am-2pm Sat & Sun) is near the wood-fired pizza restaurant.

**Sleeping  
DOVER**

**Dover Beachside Tourist Park** (☎ 6298 1301; www.dovercaravanpark.com.au; 27 Kent Beach Rd; unpowered/powered sites \$20/28, on-site caravans/cabins from \$45/85) Opposite a sandy beach, this proudly maintained park features spotless cabins, a bookshelf full of beachy, raised-gold-font novels and ACTUAL GRASS (the drought hasn't made it this far south).

**Dover Hotel** (☎ 6298 1210; www.doverhotel.com.au; Huon Hwy; pub s/d \$45/70, motel d \$95) Whopping great pub with basic budget rooms above the bar (a tad noisy when bands are rockin' out), motel units out the back, and an adjacent self-contained unit sleeping up to seven (\$190 for four adults). Water views from some rooms, mountain views from others. Pub meals downstairs (see Eating, opposite).

**Smuggler's Rest** (☎ 6298 1396; www.smugglersrest.info; Station Rd; d \$85-105, extra person \$15) Externally this place looks like an old SoCal nightclub (*the Hotel California?*), but there are no disco balls inside, just immaculate self-contained studios and two-bedroom units. The owners have bikes, fishing rods and old golf clubs for guests to play with.

**Anne's Old Rectory B&B** (☎ 6298 1222; www.annesoldrectory.com.au; 6961 Huon Hwy; s \$70-90, d \$90-100, ind breakfast) On the way into town (from the north), offering two über-floral B&B rooms, each with private bathroom down the hall, in a 1901 rectory surrounded by colourful gardens. Sooty the grey cat is too friendly for his own good.

**Driftwood Holiday Cottages** (☎ 6298 1441, 1800 353 983; www.driftwoodcottages.com.au; 51 Bayview Rd; d \$160-220,

f \$190-240) offers modern, self-contained studio-style units or two large, family-friendly houses sleeping four to eight. Sit on your veranda, sip something chilly and watch fishermen rowing out to their boats on Port Esperance.

**STRATHBLANE**

Strathblane is 5km south of Dover.

**Far South Wilderness Lodge & Backpackers** (☎ 6298 1922; www.farsouthwilderness.com.au; Narrows Rd; dm/d/f \$25/\$65/100; ☎ ) On the Esperance River 5km south of Dover, Far South provides some of Tasmania's best budget accommodation, with a bushy waterfront setting, cosy lounge piled high with *National Geographic* mags, quality accommodation and a strong environmental focus. Mountain bikes and kayaks for rent (\$15/35 per day).

**Riseley Cottage** (☎ 6298 1630; www.riseleycottage.com; 170 Narrows Rd; s \$95, d \$115-130, ind breakfast) The garden here is a labour of love, the perfect dressing for this elegant, gay-friendly guesthouse overlooking the water and bushland reserve. Cooked breakfast might entail salsa free-range eggs, gourmet smallgoods from the local butcher, fruits, breads and strong coffee. Three-course dinners (by arrangement) are fair value at \$40 per person. No kids under 12.

**Eating**

**Gingerbreadhouse Bakery** (☎ 6298 1502; Main Rd; items \$4-13; ☎ breakfast & lunch) On the main bend as you curve down into town, this small Germanic bakery dishes out cooked breakfasts, stuffed croissants, homemade pies and tasty cakes, all made on site.

**Dover Woodfired Pizza** (☎ 6298 1905; Main Rd; mains \$9-19; ☎ lunch & dinner Wed-Sun) A snug, wood-panelled eatery offering traditional and gourmet wood-fired pizzas, baked spuds and filling pasta dishes. Eat in or takeaway.

**Dover Hotel** (☎ 6298 1210; Huon Hwy; mains \$16-22; ☎ lunch & dinner) This far-flung pub makes a real effort to depart from the deep fries, schnitzels and steaks omnipresent on Tasmanian pub menus. Nigh-on-gourmet selections include Hastings oysters, Huon Valley honeybrown mushrooms, local scallops and the fresh catch of the day from the local fishing fleet. Kids' menu, tempting desserts and a great wine list too.

Self caterers can stock up at the **Dover Grocer & Newsagency** (☎ 6298 1201; Main Rd; ☎ 6.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 7am-6.30pm Sat, 7am-6pm Sun), a fully stocked store with beautiful deli produce, Tassie wines, and fresh fruit and veggies.

**Getting There & Away**

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; www.tassielink.com.au) buses arrive at and depart from the Dover Store on the main street. The trip from Hobart takes 1¾ hours and costs \$20. There are two services each weekday from Hobart, except from December through to March when an extra service runs every Monday, Wednesday and Friday (en route further south to Cockle Creek).

**SOUTHPORT**

☎ 03 / pop 300

Originally Southport was called Baie des Moules (Bay of Mussels), one of several names it's had over the years. Many travellers don't take the 2km detour off the main road to visit the town, but it's a worthy diversion if only to stay in the B&Bs here, which make good use of the waterside slopes. Unfortunately, public transport won't get you here.

Known as **Burying Ground Point**, the bluff south of town was once a convict cemetery; it's now a public reserve. There's also a memorial to the 1835 shipwreck of the *King George III* in which 35 people bubbled below.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**Southport Tavern** (☎ 6298 3144; southport.settlement@bigpond.com; Main Rd; unpowered/powered sites \$16/20, cabins/motel d \$65/120) A sprawling, faux-colonial pub, general store and caravan park. The weary can bunk down for the night in the caravan park or adjacent motel units; the hungry can nosh up in the dining room (mains \$15 to \$20; open for dinner Wednesday to Monday) or with takeaways (burgers, fish and chips et al) from the store (open 8am to 6pm).

**Jetty House** (☎ 6298 3139; www.southportjettyhouse.com; Main Rd; s/d incl breakfast \$100/140, extra person \$25)

Tailor-made for relaxation (or post-South Coast Track recovery), this rustic, family-run guesthouse down near the wharf is a rambling, veranda-encircled homestead built in 1875. Rates include full cooked breakfast and afternoon tea; dinner by arrangement. Minimum two nights; cheaper rates for longer stays.

**Southern Forest B&B** (☎ 6298 3306; www.southernforest.com.au; 30 Jager Rd; s/d/tr incl breakfast from \$75/110/145) Up the hill opposite Southport Tavern is this hospitable B&B in native bush – simple and Euro-stylish, with plenty of wood and not a hint of twee floral excess. Accommodation is in a wing sleeping six (three bedrooms, two bathrooms and lounge) – ideal for families and groups. No kitchen, but breakfast included.

**HASTINGS CAVES & THERMAL SPRINGS**

☎ 03  
Signposted 10km inland from the Huon Hwy, the excellent Hastings Caves & Thermal Springs facility attracts visitors to the once-thriving logging port of Hastings, 21km south of Dover. The only way to explore the caves (which are within the Hastings Caves State Reserve) is via guided tour. Buy tickets at the **Hastings visitors centre** (☎ 6298 3209; www.parks.tas.gov.au/reserves/hastings; adult/concession/child/family \$22/18/11/55; ☎ 9am-5pm Mar, Apr & Sep-Dec, 9am-6pm Jan & Feb, 10am-4pm May-Aug). Tours leave on the hour, the first an hour after the visitors centre opens, the last an hour before it closes. Admission includes a 45-minute tour of the amazing dolomite Newdegate Cave, plus entry to the **thermal swimming pool** behind the visitors centre, filled with 28°C water from thermal springs (pool-only admission adult/child/concession/family \$5/2.50/4/12). The wheelchair-accessible **Hot Springs Trail** does a big loop from the pool area, taking 20 minutes to navigate (note that the pool is also wheelchair-accessible).

There's a decent **café** (light meals \$6-15; ☎ breakfast & lunch) at the visitors centre, which also sells barbecue and picnic hampers.

From the visitors centre, the cave entrance is a further 5km drive. No public transport runs out this way.

**LUNE RIVER**

☎ 03  
A few kilometres southwest of Hastings is the diminutive enclave of Lune River. Here, Australia's southernmost railway, the **Ida Bay Railway** (☎ 6298 3110; www.idabayrailway.com.au;

## FRENCH CONNECTIONS

Five years ago it seemed the pristine Tasmanian south was about to change for the worse. In 2004 the Tasmanian government gave private landowners permission to log the forests of the northeast peninsula of Recherche Bay – a decision that stirred up controversy in Tasmania and as far away as France.

In 1792 two French ships under the command of explorer Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, *La Recherche* and *L'Espérance*, anchored in a harbour near Tasmania's southernmost point and called it Recherche Bay. More than a decade before British settlers arrived in Tasmania, the French met the Lyluquonny Aborigines here and were carrying out the first significant scientific studies on the continent. There are two heritage sites at Recherche Bay with protected status (relics of the French observatory and garden, not accessible to the public), but the explorers' journals record them venturing far into the bush. With the government's announcement, historians, scientists and conservationists became concerned that the area earmarked for clearfelling was home to yet more sites of historic interest to both Australia and France. Needless to say, tensions between the anti- and prologging groups escalated – the prospect of the kinds of protests seen in Tasmania when the Franklin River was under threat in the mid-1980s loomed large.

Fortunately, in 2006 the land owners agreed to sell the northeast peninsula to the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, and it's now protected as a significant site. Read more at [www.recherchebay.org.au](http://www.recherchebay.org.au) and [www.tasland.org.au](http://www.tasland.org.au).

In other southern developments, a Melbourne property developer plans to build a \$15-million tourist complex at Cockle Creek East (an area which, interestingly, is inside the Southwest National Park, but not part of the World Heritage area). The developer has been negotiating approval with the Tasmanian government since the late '90s. Construction was slated to begin in 2005, but as yet the bulldozers haven't arrived.

328 Lune River Rd; rides adult/concession/child/family \$25/20/12/60; ☎ 9am-5pm daily Oct-Apr, Wed, Sat & Sun only (May-Sep) tracks a scenic 14km, 1½-hour narrow-gauge course through native bush to Deep Hole Bay. Take a picnic lunch and explore the beach, then catch a later train back to Lune River. Trains depart Lune River at 9.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm and 3.30pm during summer, and 10am, noon and 2pm during winter. There's a **café** (light meals \$4-10; ☎ breakfast & lunch) at the Lune River end of the line serving cakes, sandwiches, burgers and bacon and eggs.

## COCKLE CREEK

📍 03

Australia's most southerly drive is the 19km gravel stretch from Ida Bay past the soft-lulling waves of Recherche Bay to Cockle Creek. A grand grid of streets was once planned for Cockle Creek, but dwindling coal seams and whale numbers poured cold water on that idea.

The area features craggy, clouded mountains, sigh-inducing beaches, and (best of all) hardly any people – perfect for camping and bushwalking. The challenging **South Coast Track** starts (or ends) here, taking you through to Melaleuca in the Southwest National Park.

Combined with the **Port Davey Track** you can walk all the way to Port Davey in the southwest (see p303). Lonely Planet's *Walking in Australia* has detailed track notes. Shorter walks from Cockle Creek include ambles along the shoreline to the lighthouse at **Fishers Point** (two hours return), and a section of the South Coast Track to **South Cape Bay** (four hours return). National park entry fees apply to all these walks; self-register at Cockle Creek.

There are some brilliant free **camping grounds** along Recherche Bay, including at Gilhams Beach, just before Catamaran. You can also camp for free at Cockle Creek itself, but national park fees apply as soon as you cross the bridge. Bring all your own provisions, including fuel or gas stoves. There are pit toilets (no showers) and some tank water (boil before drinking).

## Getting There & Away

**Tassielink** (☎ 1300 300 520; [www.tassielink.com.au](http://www.tassielink.com.au)) buses arrive at and depart from the Cockle Creek ranger station. The service runs three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) from December through March. The 3½-hour trip from Hobart costs \$65, returning to Hobart on the same days.

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