

**This itinerary for the town of Walpole and the surrounding wilderness areas provides two options with two nature-based tourism activities for each day for a family of two adults and two school aged children. This allows families to choose their preferred activities over the two days.**

## **DAY ONE: EXPLORING THE WILD HEART OF WALPOLE (KAPAGUP)**

### **OPTION A**

**MORNING:** Begin the day in the forest.

**8:00am** To start your day on the magnificent south coast of WA, drive west for five minutes from the town of Walpole to the John Rate Lookout on South West Highway in the Walpole Nornalup National Park. The Lookout is named after John Rate who discovered the third species of Tingle Tree. The first two are the Red Tingle and the Yellow Tingle and these unique trees only grow within a twenty-kilometre radius of Walpole and nowhere else in the world. Admire the view over the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets from the boardwalk and breathe in the freshness of the forest.

**Note:** You may wish to return to this spot during your stay to go for a walk on this section of the Bibbulmun Track. You can walk from Walpole town centre out along the Bibbulmun Track (12km return) which will take about 3 hours or starting from John Rate Lookout walk the return journey (6.5km) to Mount Clare through the Tingle Forest.

**9:00am** Back in town your first stop is the Walpole Nornalup Visitor Centre and gift shop which provides visitor information from friendly local staff, and a broad range of items to purchase if you are looking for something uniquely "Walpole" to take home with you. While here, purchase your tickets for the Tree Top Walk and the WOW Wilderness Cruise on the inlets. Spend some time browsing the many locally made craft and produce items, and trip souvenirs, including the famous "Walpole Belly Button of the World " T shirt. A variety of free maps for walk trails, bike trails, paddle trails and scenic drives are available here with local information regarding track conditions and places to fish, picnic and explore. There is also a variety of other publications for sale including books by local authors.

**9:40am** Drive for five minutes from the Visitor Centre to arrive at the Walpole Town Jetty, Jones Street, at 9:45am to take the WOW Cruise this morning which leaves at 10:00am. On this trip soak up some amazing scientific and historical facts about Walpole. This fascinating tour of the pristine inlets has been entertaining visitors for over thirty years. It is an engaging two-and-a-half hours of local history, surprising international connections and fascinating flora and fauna facts. You will be entertained by this hilarious and informative morning of local knowledge and storytelling by a seventh generation local and served a delicious morning tea as part of the cruise, following your trek over the sandhill to the ocean or a quiet reverie on the jetty admiring the scenery.

**Note:** There is great coffee available from the mobile "Mavis and Me" Coffee Van based at the Walpole Town Jetty from 7:30am to 2:30pm Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday (except on Market Days at Pioneer Park) and Sunday.

Road name change: The South West Highway becomes the South Coast Highway about one kilometre out of Walpole.

**AFTERNOON:** Treetop Adventures.

**1:00pm** On returning from the cruise, drive 24km east along South Coast Highway, to the Marron Tale Cafe and Marron Farm in Bow Bridge (opposite the Peaceful Bay turnoff) for a delicious lunch of locally grown marron or a choice of other delicious options including vegetarian, vegan and gluten free. The marron is grown on site and you can even purchase marron to take home with you for dinner. There is play equipment in the garden for the children.

**2:30pm** From the Marron Tale drive 17km back to the Tree Top Walk and Ancient Empire Boardwalk. The entry road is signposted on South Coast Highway, turning right into the forest. The Tree Top Walk is fully accessible and climbs forty metres in to the forest canopy providing a memorable vista over the tall trees. It is designed to allow visitors to walk among the tree tops of these magnificent Karri and Tingle trees without impinging on the forest floor. Tickets can be purchased at the Visitor Centre or at the Tree Top Walk shop. You can go around more than once before continuing on to the Ancient Empire Walk which is also accessible with 500 metres of boardwalk and sealed paths. It will take you on a journey among the Red Tingles trees, including walking inside a living tree. There is a further 150 metres of trail with steps. Take some amazing photos to record your special time with the Giants of Walpole.

**Note:** Remember to also check out "the car in the tree" for a photo opportunity.

**4:00pm** Drive to Conspicuous Cliff, turning left onto South Coast Highway (from the Valley of the Giants Road) then right down Conspicuous Beach Road to the car park. Climb the steps (650 metres) up to the viewing platform for a spectacular view over the Southern Ocean. In Winter and in Spring you may have the opportunity to watch whales migrating north. You can then access the beach via a 400-metre boardwalk and steps.

**Note:** This is not a swimming beach. If you are keen for an ocean swim return along Conspicuous Beach Road and turn right to head along Ficifolia Road for 12km (14 minutes) to Peaceful Bay beach.

#### **DAY ONE:**

**OPTION B:** Water based activities for those who have brought their kayaks or canoes with them and are keen to start paddling.

**MORNING:** Begin the day on the water.

**8:00am** Drive 10 km east from Walpole on South Coast Highway to the Nornalup canoe/kayak launch ramp to spend the morning paddling along the Frankland River (Kwakoorillup Beela). Bring some snacks and a bottle of water with you in your backpack for morning tea/lunch. A short paddle will take you 45 minutes to 1 hour (2.9km) to the 602 Road landing, which consists of a small set of steps into the water on the right side of the river. This is a good spot for morning tea before the return paddle if this is far enough for you. You can then spend the rest of the morning paddling around the river in Nornalup, fishing or swimming.

**Note:** The Frankland is 400km in length and the largest river by volume in the region but it is not safe to dive or jump into the water as there are submerged logs and snags below the water line.

For the more energetic paddlers it will take you one-and-a-half to two hours (5.5km) to paddle from the launch ramp to Monastery Landing where the magnificent Tingle Trees are reflected in the still river water. If completing this paddle trail, take your lunch with you and spend some time soaking in the serenity of this beautiful setting. Make sure you allow time for your return journey.

**Note:** Monastery Landing is the iconic spot where, in 1910, the Minister for Lands and Agriculture, James Mitchell, was convinced to protect the area from development because he was so impressed by its natural beauty.

**AFTERNOON:** Knoll Adventures

**1:00pm - 2:00pm** From Nornalup return towards Walpole and turn left into Coalmine Beach

Road to Coalmine Beach Recreation Area and the Knoll, where the forest meets the water. Coalmine Beach Picnic area is a great place for lunch and an inlet swim as it is a shallow area and boat free. The water is much warmer than the Southern Ocean. Drive the one-way road around the knoll and stop at the Channels picnic area or climb down to one of two fishing spots, Bream Beach and Rocky Head and maybe catch your dinner for the evening. There are H shaped walking trails that run through the middle of the loop road which you can explore after lunch.

**Note:** Coalmine Beach is named for the shallow seam of brown coal at the base of the cliffs.

**3:00pm - 4:00pm** Pop into the Walpole Nornalup Visitor Centre for free maps and information and browse the gift shop for a memento of Walpole. Time for a relaxing stroll around Horseyard Hill Walk Trail which is behind the Visitor Centre in town. It begins with a 150-metre boardwalk (wheelchair accessible) crossing a low-lying swamp area, alive with birdlife. This loop walk (2.5km) can begin in either direction taking you through Karri and Tingle Forest in less than an hour. Make sure to stop along the way to discover many forms of fungi and to lean back on the "gazing trunks" to see only the tops of the trees and sky above you. There are interpretive signs placed along the way providing interesting facts about the area.

**EVENING:** Winding down and enjoying the scene.

Stay at one of the many accommodation options in Walpole including Tinglewood Cabins or Coalmine Beach Holiday Park. Enjoy a barbecue outside while watching the sunset at the end of this fantastic day. Be amazed at the spectacular night sky full of stars, providing a natural light show just for you. Enjoy a good night's sleep after your active day with only the sounds of the birds or the ocean in the background to soothe you to sleep.

**DAY TWO: Choose a climbing challenge or a meandering stroll.**

**OPTION A**

**MORNING:** Choose your way to explore the Mt Frankland.

**Note:** Take morning tea or lunch with you as there are barbecues and picnic spots galore. If you prefer to buy your picnic you can purchase a wide variety of take away food from the Golden Wattle Bakery and Green Eats Cafe including vegetarian, vegan and gluten free options.

**9:00am** After breakfast drive through farming area and bushland to Mt Frankland (Caldyanup), which is 29km north of Walpole on the North Walpole Road. This area is part of the Walpole Wilderness and is home to the Menang People who are the Traditional Owners of Mt Frankland National Park. Here you can choose between an easy stroll on the accessible Mt Frankland Wilderness Lookout, a more challenging loop around the base of the giant rock or the vertical climb up to the top of the granite peak, or do all three.

Allow 30 minutes for the 600metre Lookout Walk. This Wilderness area is home to Tingle, Jarrah and Karri forest. The huge granite peak of Mt Frankland is the central feature of this wild landscape. You will see forests, wetlands and heathlands which are home to many native animals.

The walk around the base of the monolith on the Caldanyup Trail loops around the base of the rock via the Caldanyup Lookout. It will take you between 1 to 2 hours depending on how many times you stop to admire the view, take a photo of a fairy wren or robin or just sit in the stillness. This 1.6 km loop trail is of moderate difficulty and you need to wear covered walking shoes.

The Mount Frankland Summit is 1.2 km of moderate difficulty. It has over 300 concrete steps and a short vertical ladder climb at the top which requires a moderate level of fitness. Once up on high it is worth every effort to see these incredible views of the Karri Forest, the Frankland River

below and even the southern coastline on a clear day.

**Note:** Remember to take water, sunscreen and insect repellent if it is a warmer day. Enjoy your lunch at one of the many picnic spots at Mt Frankland or take it with you to the next amazing place in the forest. There are toilets, a shelter and picnic sites with barbecues near the car park. Check the weather before proceeding to the summit.

**AFTERNOON:** Discover local art, craft and stunning beaches.

**1:00pm** Travel to Fernhook Falls which is a 10-minute drive (6km) drive from Mt Frankland, via Mt Frankland Road and Beardmore Road, where the Deep River flows into Fernhook Falls. There are several barbecue areas with gas BBQs and a seating area. A perfect spot for a picnic morning tea or lunch if you haven't already eaten. In summer, the calm water is great for swimming and kayaking in Rowell's Pool but if you visit in winter, you will see the splendid cascade of water over the granite rocks and the "cappuccino effect" of the frothy saponin from the local plants.

**3:00pm** The Walpole Wilderness on the rugged south coast of WA has been the inspiration for many local artists. Wend your way towards Mandalay Beach from Fernhook Falls for 35km along Beardmore Road, turn left onto South West Highway and then turn right into Long Point Road at Crystal Springs Holiday Accommodation in the D'Entrecasteaux National Park.

The windswept beach is a place of great natural beauty with incredible views of limestone cliffs, Chatham Island and the Southern Ocean. This area is a popular fishing spot with boardwalks down to the rugged beach. A walk along this beach is an essential part of this experience and you may even glimpse a section of the wreck of the Mandalay at low tide. The beach is named after the Norwegian Barque, Mandalay, which was wrecked on the coast here in 1911.

**Note:** Remember take only memories, leave only footprints. Park entry fees apply in this National Park. You can purchase a National Park pass from the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCAs). Passes are available as a digital download to display in your vehicle. See the website: <https://shop.dbca.wa.gov.au/pages/park-pass-information#types>

After exploring Mandalay return to town and take a look at Petrichor Art Gallery which exhibits and sells both local and regional artists' diverse and outstanding works of art. This is also an opportunity to spend time next door in the Makers Collective which showcases locally handcrafted items including beautifully designed timber pieces.

**DAY TWO:** Walking the Giants Trails or trail bike riding for those who have their trail bikes with them.

### **OPTION B**

Morning: Explore the Giants Trails your way.

**9:00am** For a day of adventure on the trails go trail bike riding or hiking on the new Giants Trails in the Walpole Nornalup National Park. You can begin your hike or ride at the Walpole Trail Head next to the Visitor Centre in Pioneer Park. This is the beginning of the Once Upon A Time Trail. At the other end is the Giants Trailhead, which can be accessed from the Valley of the Giants Road. The Giants Trails link the towns of Walpole and Nornalup with the Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk. Both trailheads have picnic tables, toilets and sealed road access. Signage at the beginning of the Walpole Pioneer Park Trailhead provides details about the trails and the Visitor Centre has a free Giants Trails map for you to carry with you.

### **Trail Details**

The trails vary in length from 1.7km(one way) to 13.7km.

**Hiking only:** Tinglebell (3.6km or 7.2km loop return incorporating the Bibbulmun Track and Glass Slipper)

**Dual use trails are shared between cyclists and hikers including:**

Once Upon A Time (3.3km)

Kingia's Landing ( 1.8km)

Rapunzel's Tower (2.3km) Note this is a one way climb for cyclists.

Labyrinth (6km) Also a one way climb for cyclists.

Glass Slipper (1.7km) which links the Tree Top Walk, the Pleated Lady tree and the Ride Through Tree.

**Cyclists Only:**

Wonderland (9.6km) One Way from east to west.

Robin's Hood (6.6km) One Way descent only.

Gatekeepers (5.5km) One Way.

Riverrun (13.7km) One Way. For more experienced mountain bikers. (Steeper terrain).

The Trails are designed to be family friendly and are good for beginner trail bikers with basic trail bike skills.

**DAY TWO****OPTION B**

Afternoon: Hilltop Vistas and a Giant Swimming Pool

1:00pm After your morning of mountain biking or trail walking, drive to Hilltop Road (turn off is 3km out of town heading east on South Coast highway). This is a gravel road but suitable for a two-wheel drive car.

Travel 6km up to Hilltop lookout where you have a beautiful view across the Frankland River and out to Saddle Island, where the Nornalup Inlet enters the Southern Ocean. From here you can do a return walk (5km) on a section of the Bibbulmun Track to the Giant Tingle Tree which will take 1.5 hours return.

Alternatively, drive on 2.1km to the, wheelchair accessible, Giant Tingle Tree Loop Walk (1km) which takes less than an hour. The understory in this area includes the Tassel Flower, Karri Wattle and Bracken Fern.

After completing the Loop, drive 7km to Circular Pool continuing on Hilltop Road which becomes Jones Road and then Pool Road. Circular Pool is a popular picnic spot on the Frankland River with rapids in the winter and a large tranquil pool in the summer. The paved paths lead to viewing platforms overlooking the Frankland River and down to Circular Pool and into the forest. There is a boardwalk around the pool and a picnic area. It is wheelchair accessible and has toilets.

**EVENING:**

6:00pm There are several options for dinner in Walpole if you would like to eat out tonight. The Walpole Hotel Restaurant; The Tree Top Walk Motel restaurant (Indian Curries a specialty) and The Philippine Magic Café (a fusion of Australian and Asian). All have children's menu options.

During the school holidays the Forest by Night at the Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk is an adventure under the stars with a guide by torchlight. Tickets need to be purchased in advance for this tour which runs from 7:30pm - 9:00pm. Search [ourwaparks.org.au](http://ourwaparks.org.au).

There are many more options for trail adventures and expeditions in the Walpole Wilderness but these experiences will begin your exploration of this unique and beautiful place.