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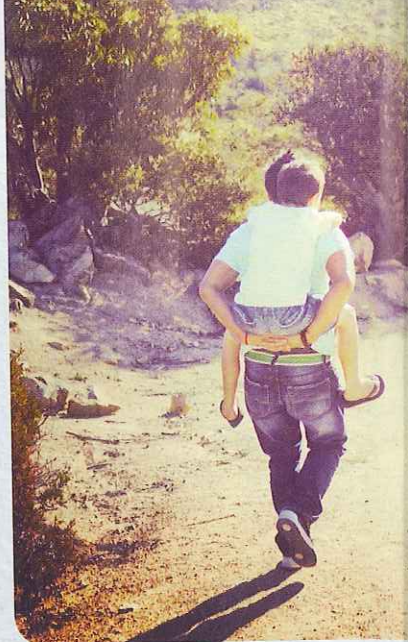
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# Wanderlust

Luxury lovers, design devotees and happy campers alike will find holidays to appeal in *H&G's* annual travel special. A humanitarian project in Cambodia, design hub Helsinki and a Tassie campervan tour line up with a luxury European cruise and a visit to mystical Iceland in this celebration of world travel.

PRODUCED BY VANESSA WALKER IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NINE NETWORK'S GETAWAY TEAM







ROAD TRIP

# Wheels & dolls, baby

A family campervanning holiday around Tasmania serves up fresh air and old-fashioned fun, writes **Vanessa Walker**.

## Day one

**3-HOUR DRIVE FROM HOBART TO FREYCINET HOLIDAY PARK.** We're standing in our Apollo Euro Deluxe campervan at Sorell Woolworths, putting away our groceries and feeling self-conscious that we are doing our chores in the middle of a car park. It's our first few hours in our mobile home and, once we pull out of the car park, we all

experience a thrill as we hit the Tasman Highway, which will take us northwards along the east coast. On one side are beautiful golden fields, broken up by groves of sheoaks and the odd bucolic homestead; on the other, the sparkling blue Tasman Sea. But, after an hour of driving, the kids need a run around so a beach stop is in order. After a head-clearing walk, we go back to the gravel

area we're parked in, flick on the gas, and make a brew. It's my first 'cuppa in situ' experience and I can report it's uncommonly pleasant to sip hot tea beside the seaside. After rumbling through Swansea — too scared to stop for fear of having to parallel park (despite the backing camera) — we pull up at BIG4 Iluka and settle in alongside a small group of other campervanning families.

Shakya, Mila, Tsering and Vanessa take in the beauty of Coles Bay on the Freycinet Peninsula, their trusty campervan close at hand.

**MORE FAMILY GETAWAYS** "Pre children, I'd wax lyrical about far-flung places... what a goose! Now I've had babies, just get me to the destination quickly, give me some options to keep them busy and me sane. At the moment, Sea World has never looked so good, Merimbula on the NSW South Coast is a ripper in any season and Hamilton Island rocks." **CATRIONA ROWNTREE**



## Day two

**BIG4 ILUKA.** We slap on our thongs, walk down past the Freycinet Bakery Cafe and hot-foot it across the Esplanade to Muirs Beach at Coles Bay. We spend hours getting gently roasted, clambering over the rocks and dipping our feet into cool ocean pools. Later, we tuck the kids into the fold-down beds and sit down to a game of chess, the silence of the night disturbed only by the odd rumbling of the water pumps in our 'campervanserai'.

## Day three

**2-HOUR DRIVE TO BIG4 ST HELENS HOLIDAY PARK.** As a fixed-address kind of person I feel proud when we negotiate our first dump point in Bichenno. There were a couple of city slickers in line to empty the toilet tanks — all men, all looking slightly burdened by their

proximity to sewage — but we all manage. Spotting a beautiful place to pull over across the road, we walk along a tree-lined coastal track that sees us emerge near the famous Bichenno Blowhole. Numerous Instagram shots later we herd the kids back towards the campervan for an old-fashioned picnic lunch of sandwiches and chocolate milk, after which they fall asleep until we arrive at St Helens.

## Day four

**4-HOUR DRIVE TO LAUNCESTON.** Before leaving St Helens, we make our way to Binalong Bay. A series of lay-bys lines the road and gliding into one, we walk down to the beach, which is beautifully rendered in blues, whites and greens. The water is so clear that we can hang over the edge of the boulders and

see through the thick kelp to the white sand at the bottom of the sea. After a leg stretch it's back to the highway, where it dawns on us that while we are oohing and ahing over the scenery, our children aren't quite tall enough to peer out the windows. They only have one another to look at, hence the significant amount of argy-bargy. We break the journey by stopping at Pyengana Dairy Company's Holy Cow Cafe and enjoy gourmet burgers while watching cows meander up to the milking shed. It's then time to drive to the city, our campervan easily navigating the winding country roads until we suddenly come upon the narrow, vertiginous streets of Launceston. We immediately feel like a bull in a china shop and, instead of stopping for a look, elect to burn rubber to lodgings on the outskirts of town.



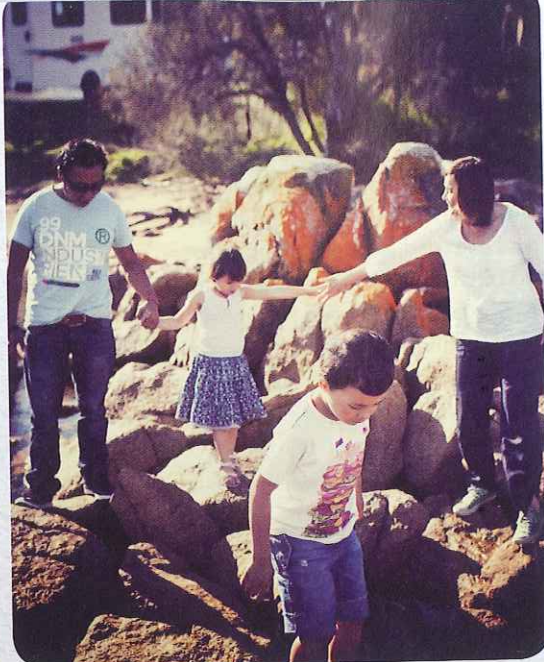
"When I was young, Dad was constantly packing us off on some far flung four-wheel drive trip. We have explored the entire country, from Kakadu to the Red Centre, but the most memorable trips were always to Cape York peninsula — I have since made the trek at least half a dozen times." **discovercapeyork.com.au. NATALIE GRUZEWSKI**





## TO WIT, TURU

Before you embark on a campervan trip, visit [turu.com.au](http://turu.com.au), a one-stop shop listing more than 2000 holiday parks around Australia including facilities and prices. For Vanessa's hard-won tips on campervanning, go to [www.houseandgarden.com.au/travel](http://www.houseandgarden.com.au/travel).



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE** Rock hopping was a daily activity while travelling Tasmania's east coast. Ten kilometres of steep unsealed roads within the Freycinet National Park lead to the Cape Tourville Lighthouse, from where you can see right across the peninsula. A friendly pademelon; Cradle Mountain is home to many a marsupial including possums, quolls, wombats, and bandicoots.



## Days five & six

**2-HOUR DRIVE TO DISCOVERY HOLIDAY PARKS, CRADLE MOUNTAIN.** Tazmazia is a weird and wonderful park of hedged mazes in a place called Promised Land, about 20 minutes out of Sheffield, and it's here where we spend the afternoon getting lost in the mazes (to the sound of semi-lost mothers calling after their semi-lost children). Afterwards, we make for Cradle Mountain, pulling into our clearing in the bush as the sun goes down. By the time we're cooking dinner, the red eyes of pademelons can be seen surrounding the campervan. The next day a courtesy bus transports us past the white trunks of dead snow gums and crepe myrtles and we take our time on the beautiful Dove Lake loop track.

## Days seven & eight

**2-HOUR DRIVE TO DISCOVERY HOLIDAY PARKS, STRAHAN.** I have well and truly got my campervan legs; I sway for the first few seconds after I step down onto land. After leaving Cradle Mountain and hitting the Murchison Highway, there's a shift in atmosphere. This is the wild west coast, home of the once-mighty mining industry. We pass small townships just clinging to existence. After a lovely night at Strahan we catch a coach to nearby Queenstown and board the West Coast Wilderness Railway, a 35km journey through ancient rainforest, along trestle bridges and through the King River Gorge. It's an unforgettable adventure.

## Day nine

**5-HOUR DRIVE TO HOBART AIRPORT TOURIST PARK.** An hour after waving goodbye to Strahan we come upon a patch of road bounded by scree-covered slopes on one side and sheer drops on the other. It is the scariest sector of the drive but soon enough we are on the open road that borders the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. At Hayes we stop at a roadside diner and end up making do with Chiko rolls before steeling ourselves for the bright lights and traffic of Hobart. For this Sydney family, it's the end of an incredible Tassie campervan adventure.

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