

A Hidden Gem of Natural Beauty



Darlington Probation Station - Maria Island - adjacent to where the ferry arrives

by Damien T.

If you are a first-time visitor to Tasmania, it's all too easy to overlook a visit to **Swansea** in your desire to absorb the delights of Hobart. I highly recommend extending your holiday to include several days in this lovely east-coast town. After all, your travel costs to and from the apple isle were already allocated in getting to Hobart, so you get far better value if you extend your holiday, to take in Swansea, St Helens and Launceston as well.



Saltshaker Restaurant in Swansea - fresh sea food cannot get any closer than this!

The road trip along the **Tasman Highway** will reward you with some of Tasmania's most breathtaking scenery. Departing from Hobart, just past **Orford** you will arrive at **Triabunna**. You could plan your trip to arrive at Triabunna in time to take the 30-minute ferry ride out to **Maria Island**. Birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts will love the bush trails as the whole island is a National Park. However, an incredibly memorable way to experience Maria Island is to book a cruise/walk with the award-winning **East Coast Cruises**. You will get to see the **Fossil Cliffs** and the **Painted Cliffs**, secluded bays and sea caves as well as seals, dolphins, eagles etc. Lunch is included and enjoyed in an idyllic, isolated location, which is totally private as you will be anchored rather than on land at that time. The investment of around \$275 per adult is good value when you consider the full trip is over 7 ½ hours and includes a couple of hours exploring the UNESCO heritage site.

Swansea has several cafes, great restaurants (such as **Saltshaker**) and shops, so it is a great place to base yourself to explore the east coast and of course **Coles Bay**. After a full day of sightseeing, you might like a pub meal so that no one has to cook. The **Mill Bark Tavern** is a

very short walk from your accommodation and a good choice as it also boasts a small exhibition of some of the machinery from where it gets its name. A quirkier option, although slightly further along in town, is the **Waterloo Inn**. The Waterloo Inn takes sensational produce for which Tasmania has become famous and elevates it to unbelievable heights. In their own words, the menu *'is written up daily on our menu board and is at the mercy of our shaky handwriting and unreliable chalk pens'*. If you are a foodie, who enjoys a bit of quirkiness, don't miss this place.

Returning from a wonderful day of walking and photographing the amazing views available at **Coles Bay**, take the turn into the **Devil's Corner** cellar door. The location is stunning. Looking out at the rugged coastline, the name becomes very apt. The buildings are modern and classy, which compliments the exceptional friendliness of the service. I recommend selecting some snacks from the food section of this partnership, **Tombolo Freycinet** and enjoy the views while sampling some Devilishly pleasant wines. For something different, perhaps go with the hand-crafted chocolate paring available from premium Devil's Corner wines with local **Tutumaz & The Devil** chocolates.



4 handmade chocolates with perfectly matching wines - at Devils Corner

“ Undoubtedly the best place to stay to explore Coles Bay & the Freycinet Peninsula. ”



'Just Desserts' at Kate's berry farm proves that cold climate berries deliver the most flavour.

There is no getting away from the fact the external appearance of our **API holiday home** in Swansea is a bit of an ugly duckling. However, the soul of this 3-bedroom home comes from the warmth and comfort shining through with its fully equipped kitchen and generous lounge. The combination represents the perfect blend of astonishing value in a location where the more you look, the more you find in the way of unexpected, enduring experiences. Swansea is undoubtedly the best place to stay when you want to experience the Freycinet Peninsula and Coles Bay. **API**

Image acknowledgements:
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