

Three days from Launceston

by Damien Thomas

Woolmers Historic Estate

If you are in need of a three-day getaway, out of peak season, Launceston is right up there for options. Even if you have been to Launceston before and know of its links to the Tasmanian Tiger and discovered the Queen Victoria Museum is such a gem, been engrossed by Cataract Gorge (including the evening fauna walks), dined at the wharf, then there is still so much to see and do.

“Most outstanding example of 19th century rural settlements.”

Woolmers Estate and Brikendon

Longford is just 23 km south of Launceston and is home to both **Woolmers Estate** and **Brikendon**. Woolmers Estate was built by Thomas Archer in 1817 and remained in the Archer family until 1994. Not only is it one of the most outstanding examples of 19th century rural settlements, it has also been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage site as a superb example of a convict settlement. There are self-guided options, although I recommend the guided tour. It is the only way to gain access to the interior and see the precious artefacts collected over six generations of the same family.

The out-buildings are extensive, so you quickly realise there would have been over 100 people employed in the cellars, blacksmith's shop, rose garden, walled garden etc.

Then, just down the road - or opposite - you will find Brikendon. This is where Thomas' brother William Archer established the best farm in the Colony on 1150 acres. Convict built, it was innovative for its time and is largely unchanged since 1830. It is beautiful to visit. Find out what a wurzel is, and how they are grown, as they formed part of the farm produce.

Brikendon located in 1150 acres



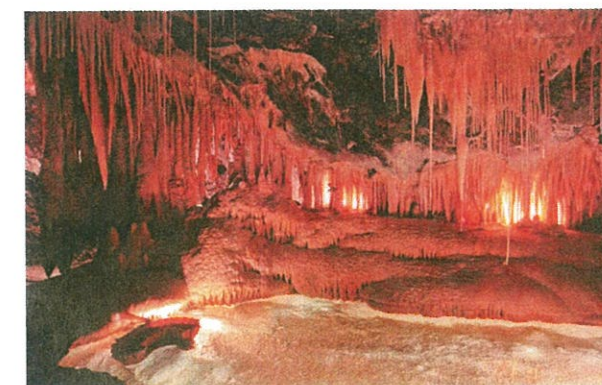
Sample the menu in the Clarendon Arms Beer Garden

Evandale

Evandale is also a little south of Launceston. Wonderfully preserved historic buildings, dating back to 1809 abound. Its High Street is one of the most beautiful to be found in Australia. Visit the antique **Saddler's Store** built in 1840 or drop in for lunch at the **Clarendon Arms Hotel** for one of the best home-made pies and craft beer. In summer, sit in the delightful beer garden with a local musician for accompaniment. In winter, a spot closer to the fire will be more tempting. On Sunday's, the local market adds some flavour to your visit. In February, there is a rather unique event - the **National Penny Farthing Championship**. Determined riders pedal these crazy old devices through the town, lined by colourful spectators.

Mole Creek

Around 70 kms from Launceston, a little past Deloraine, will bring you to some awe-inspiring limestone caves, but be aware there are steps involved and it can be a squeeze in places. The nearby **Marakoopa Cave** is famous for its glow worms, while **King Solomon's Cave** is famous for the unusual formations and thin veils of limestone as well as for being just 9 degrees all year round.



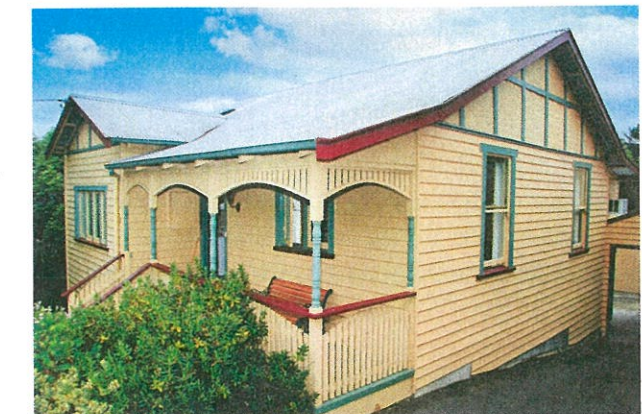
Mole Creek's spectacular cave

More than your average little devil



“One of the most beautiful streets in all of Australia.”

Mole Creek is also the home of many little devils. **Trowunna** is a wildlife sanctuary committed to conservation and education. The guided tours are free and so interactive they will create priceless memories. For an even more rewarding experience, there are VIP tours at an additional fee.



APT's comfortable Eglington Street Cottage

Wondering where to stay? **APT's delightful, comfortable and well-equipped three-bedroom holiday home at Eglington Street, Launceston** offers the best value. Conveniently, stays of three days or more are available most of the year, except during the peak summer period. This allows you to tour several locations and stay in several API Holiday Homes. So, if it is too hard to decide which one to go to - go to all of them! But be warned, you will need to book again to see more of the things you missed out on and have time to dazzle your tastebuds at more cafes and restaurants for which Tassie, and all that clean air and fresh produce, is earning a healthy reputation. See you soon in Tassie! **API**

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