

5 Day Lower River

An unforgettable long weekend. This [five day wilderness whitewater rafting adventure](#) explores the lower forty kilometers of the Franklin River wilderness World Heritage Area. As well as some exciting whitewater rafting, you enjoy days of easy paddling and the chance to take in the serenity of this unique region.



Meeting Point and Time

We meet at 1 pm at the Astor Private Hotel, Level 2, 157 Macquarie Street, Hobart (03) 6234 6611. Individual river bags (60+ litres) and paddling gear will be issued here. Excess luggage may be stored at the Astor if you are staying there, otherwise we can secure it in our equipment container. It is possible to meet at Queenstown on the evening of day one or morning of day two by prior arrangement.

Time of Return

We expect to return to Hobart by early evening, between 6 and 7 pm. Our tour concludes with a yacht cruise on the Gordon River then across Macquarie Harbour to Strahan. From here our coach will return to Hobart. Please note that very occasionally delays can be caused by extreme weather conditions. We recommend catching the last flight out of Hobart **on the day after** the trip.

Grade and Fitness

Moderate - This tour is ideal for families with children and to get a taste of the Franklin River. A reasonable level of fitness is important and should improve your enjoyment of this trip. Rapids range from Grade One to Grade Five, though most are Grade Two or Three. The most difficult level run on most trips is Grade Four and it is possible to walk around most of these rapids should you choose. You should feel confident swimming in a buoyancy vest should you fall out of the raft. Please call us on 1800 111 142 anytime if you would like to discuss your fitness level.

Read more about rafting and grades of whitewater (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rafting>)

Itinerary – 5 Day Lower River

This is a guide only and may alter with river levels.

Day 1

After issuing personal bags we head off to lunch by the Derwent River. We then follow the Lyell Highway over the Central Highlands, past the King William Range and descend to the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park. Here we may take a short walk to Donaghy's Hill and admire the expansive views of Frenchman's Cap and the south west. A short drive takes us to Queenstown and our accommodation.



Day 2

Following an early breakfast we board our 4WD vehicle for an exciting and spectacular trip over Mt. McCall to the river. A steep descent of ~350 meters down a foot track leads us to our rafts. After packing the rafts and a safety talk we head down Propsting Gorge and through the exciting Trojans rapids before arriving at Rock Island Bend and the Pig Trough, with its delightful waterfall cascading into a fern lined grotto. Safety dictates that we portage the actual Pig Trough rapid before we round Rock Island Bend to tackle the famous Newland's Cascades. This section will have everyone whooping with delight as we plunge through a maelstrom of spray and whitewater. At rapids'-end is a place for a deserved break. On the bank, natural overhangs provide the ideal shelter. Echoing cliffs and plumes of spray add to the magnificent setting. We sometimes spend a day here.

**Day 3**

The river abruptly leaves the quartzite gorges of the Middle Franklin and enters the limestone country of the lower reaches. Tranquil pools are broken by the occasional large rapid - 'Little Fall' is a great spot for action photography! Slowly the river increases in volume. The Jane River enters from the left just above our midday break on Flat Island, a beach of polished river stones dominated by the impressive Elliot Range. We then continue to our evenings camp under a canopy of ancient trees by the deep pool at Blackman's Bend. We may be lucky enough to get a visit from the local platypus.

Day 4

The thick rainforest which clings to the banks is punctuated by limestone cliffs and strange rock formations. The river widens and now flows quietly. There is time to reflect; to conjure up visions of Aboriginal peoples hunting the Ice Age plains before the forest spread to claim the open country. Today we will carefully show you some of the unique limestone caves which sheltered these people some 14000 years ago. We then tackle the unexpected 'Double Fall'. Almost immediately we encounter the last step down in the rivers bedrock, 'Big Fall'. It's a deceptive rapid which we portage easily and quickly. Around the corner is the gaping Penghana Cave, a towering vault in the cliffs and entrance to the "Lost World". Our final few hours are spent drifting along the mighty Gordon River, carried by the huge volume of water that makes this Tasmania's largest waterway. Soon we reach the picturesque Sir John Falls, our final camp.



Day 5

Aboard the yacht 'Stormbreaker' we can relax and enjoy breakfast and brunch while cruising down the Gordon River and across Macquarie Harbour to Strahan on the West Coast. A coach trip back to Hobart completes our journey, normally arriving 6-7pm. We have flown directly to Hobart from the river many times and will provide this option when an appropriate aircraft becomes available. It may be possible to organise aerial transfers for a group from Strahan to Hobart.



Trip Map

Go to <https://www.franklinrivertasmania.com/map/> to view interactive Trip Map, showing details like

- >> Trip outline
- >> Rapids, Gorges
- >> Landmarks, Campsites (some with photos)

