

FACT FILE

MOUNTAIN BIKING IN TASMANIA

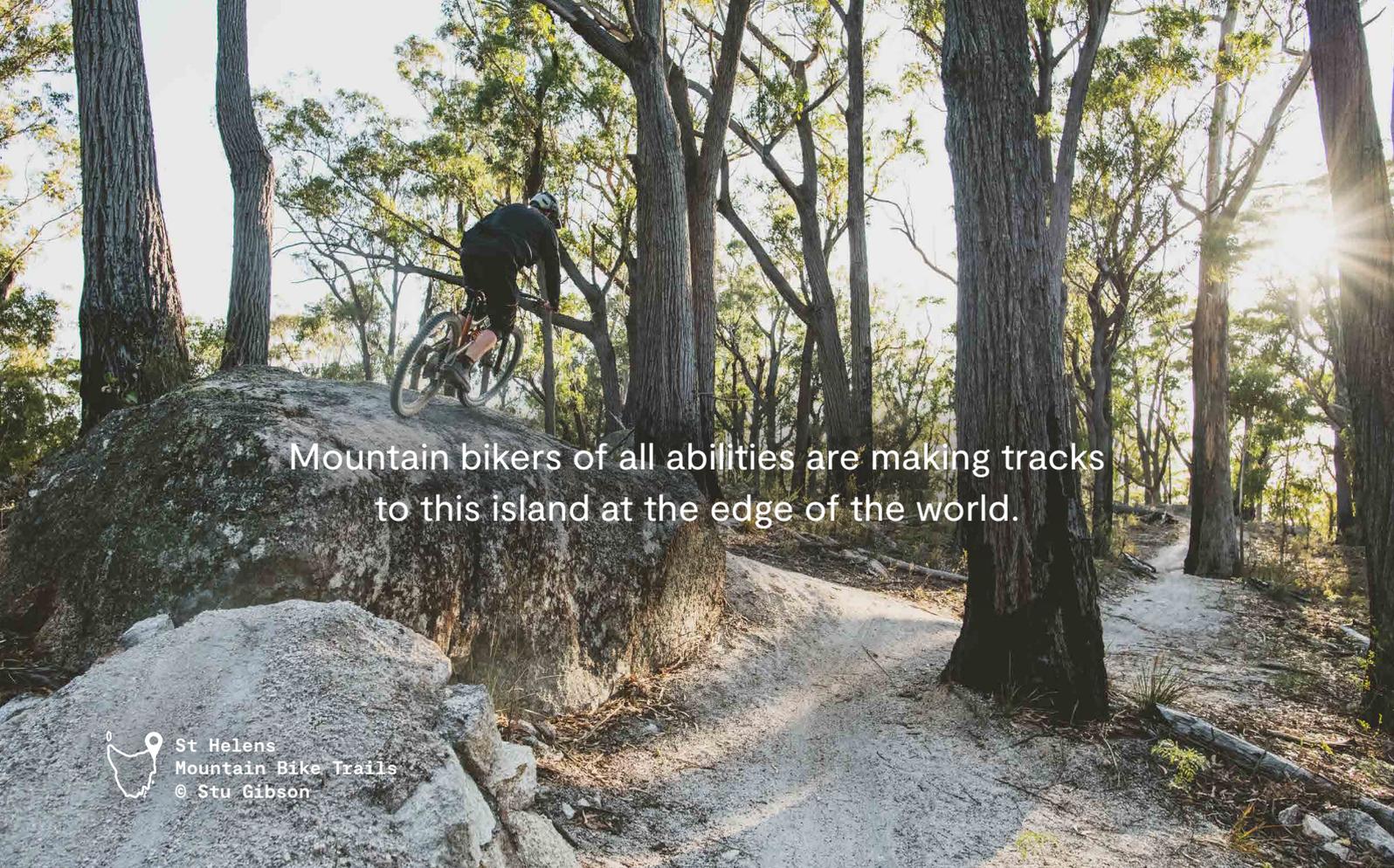
UNORDINARY ADVENTURES



Blue Derby Mountain Bike Trails,
Sawtooth Lookout
© Flow Mountain Bike

TASMANIA

COME DOWN FOR AIR



Mountain bikers of all abilities are making tracks to this island at the edge of the world.



St Helens
Mountain Bike Trails
© Stu Gibson

What's out there

Known as Australia's mountain biking capital, Tasmania is threaded with purpose-built, award-winning tracks through spectacular landscapes – from sky to sea, rainforest to beach, granite to hero dirt. Since 2015 more than 400 kilometres of trails have opened and entire towns are now dedicated to serving mountain bikers. The presence of high-profile international events such as the Enduro World Series (EWS) has thrust Tasmania onto the world stage and mountain biking is booming on the island, with scores of new trails, shuttle businesses, accommodation and eateries popping up to cater for riders. Whether you prefer a purpose-built flowy single track, a gnarly gravity ride, a cross-country adventure or something to suit the whole family, this is the place of mountain bike dreams.

What makes mountain biking in Tasmania special

WORLD-RENOWNED TRAIL DESIGN

Tasmania's major trail networks have been custom-built by two leading trail builders, World Trail and Dirt Art, and are maintained by full-time teams. Among best-practice examples, two Blue Derby trails have been named EWS trails of the year.

TRAIL DIVERSITY

Whether you're a gravity racer seeking a downhill thrill, a rider chasing the flow on a purpose-built single track, an advanced jump-seeking shredder, or an absolute beginner feeling dirt under tyres for the first time, there's something for everyone in Tasmania. Purpose-built single tracks, gentle loops, pump tracks and wilderness trails cater for enduro, gravity and climbing riders of all abilities.

QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Trails are built within Tasmanian wilderness, with stunning scenery as part of the experience. The elevation, topography and terrain of the natural environment have been incorporated into trails to enhance the ride.

ACCESSIBLE REMOTENESS

Tasmania's best-known bike parks are located near the island's gateways, only an hour's drive from the major airports and the ferry terminal.

MOUNTAIN BIKING TOWNS

Many trails are located near quintessential Tasmanian country villages and towns, offering riders a deep connection with the landscape and the people, as well as services tailored for mountain bikers, such as shuttle services, tours, good food, entertainment and bike-friendly accommodation.

BLUE DERBY

Threaded through forests of giant ferns and myrtle in north-east Tasmania, the trails at [Blue Derby](#) cater to all skill and fitness levels. With 125 kilometres of purpose-built trails, expect loads of berms, booters, jumps and flow. The earth here, known as “hero dirt”, sticks like glue to bike tyres and retains moisture extremely well, creating a safe and enjoyable riding experience unrivalled in Australia.

The trail network is built in the enduro-style, with uphill and downhill sections. If fast and flowy is your thing, check out Krushka’s or Flickity Sticks. Those seeking full-fledged EWS gnar should ride Kumma-Gutza or Detonate, named EWS trails of the year in 2019 and 2017 respectively. Detonate is spectacular, squeezing through a handlebar-wide gap in a giant granite boulder. Other popular rides from the trailhead include Kingswall, Trouty, Dam Busters and Derby Tunnel. While there are plenty of trails and loops easily accessible from the trailhead, consider taking a shuttle to maximise riding time and enjoyment. Shuttles are available from the trailhead to popular trails such as Blue Tier, white-knuckle gravity trail Atlas and the high-speed flow descent Black Stump. Shuttle operators include Vertigo MTB, Mad MTB, Up Down and Around, and Evolution Biking; the latter has recently added all-terrain vehicles to its shuttle fleet. The three-day Blue Derby Pods Ride, with private pods nestled in the forest, adds a little luxury to the adventure.

The trail network is based in the former tin-mining town of Derby, about 90 minutes’ drive north-east of Launceston. This little town has a great atmosphere and caters specifically for mountain bikers, its main street lined with bike shops, bike hire, shuttle services and workshops for repairs and services. And the trailhead itself is located conveniently in the middle of town.

A range of accommodation is available in Derby, from a free riverside campground to contemporary guest houses. Many of the lodgings have opened since the trails were established in 2015 and are particularly suited to groups and families. Options include Dales of Derby, which can sleep up to 24 people, Derby Lodge, Derby Forest Cabins, Tin Mountain and Blue Derby River Cabins. Many of these lodgings feature facilities such as bike-wash stations, work stands and secure bike storage.

Hungry (and thirsty) riders are spoilt for choice in Derby, from breakfast burritos at Two Doors Down Café and pizza at The Hub, to good old-fashioned country hospitality at the Dorset Hotel and craft beer at Side Tracked, a pop-up bar by local brewery Little Rivers Brewing Co.

ST HELENS MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

Located on Tasmania’s east coast, just an hour’s drive east of Derby, the [St Helens Mountain Bike Trails](#) spans a spectacular stretch of coastline and two

trail networks: the Bay of Fires Trail, and the St Helens Stacked Loop Network. Whether you dream of shredding serious downhill, enjoy cross-country flow or seek a day of family fun, this mountain bike destination has an experience for everyone.

There aren’t many places in the world where you can ride from the mountains to the sea. The **Bay of Fires Trail** starts high on the Blue Tier’s trailhead, near Derby, and ends on the east coast in the Bay of Fires Conservation Area. This epic 42-kilometre ride traverses rainforest and sub-alpine terrain, climbs through giant granite boulders and emerges on the white sand at Swimcart Beach. Riders should allow 4.5 hours to complete the trail, and carry everything that they might need, including water and food. Given the trail length, e-bikes are a great choice for this ride. There’s a shuttle service from the town of St Helens to the trailhead near Derby.

Nearby, the **St Helens Stacked Loop Network** has scenic routes for all experience levels on 68 kilometres of trails and eight stacked loops. The trailhead is at Flagstaff, a few kilometres from St Helens, and it’s easily accessed via the signposted Townlink trail. Facilities at the trailhead include a bike hygiene station, toilets and The Lid café. From the trailhead, take Rock Lobster for a few sendy little jump lines, roll through Pearla’s berms and rollers or catch a shuttle to Loila Tier, the drop-off point at the top of the network. From Loila Tier, there are six blue and black diamond descents, including Salty Dog, a gravity-fed ride along granite ridgelines, and Dreaming Pools, a 27-kilometre adventure trail past natural waterfalls and rock pools.

The north-east fishing town of St Helens has a range of accommodation, eateries and mountain bike services. Shuttle operators based here include Gravity Isle and St Helens MTB Adventures. Giant’s concept store hires and sells bikes. Lodgings include the Big 4 Caravan Park, with a bike-wash station and secure bike storage, NRMA St Helens Waterfront Holiday Park, located just a short ride from the bottom of Townlink, and boutique camping at the Bay of Fires Bush Retreat. Refuel with waterfront fish and chips at the floating eatery Skippers, in the beer garden at The Social, or in the sleek surrounds of the Parkside Bar & Kitchen.

MAYDENA BIKE PARK

Welcome to the largest gravity park in the southern hemisphere. Located in the Derwent Valley, just over an hour’s drive north-west of Hobart, Maydena Bike Park has more than 73 trails and a massive 820-metre vertical elevation. Steep and technical for the most part, this park is best suited to experienced riders, though there are 10 kilometres of new family-friendly trail on the lower slopes, with more green trail on its way.

The park has a bike shop, bike hire, shuttles and a full workshop for mechanical repairs and services. Entry pass options vary; one option includes all-day shuttle uplifts.

Shuttles run to the summit 9.30am–4pm daily. A full range of Bike School lessons are scheduled daily, including Intro to Bike Park, Bike Park 101 and Learn to Fly.

The park has more than 100 kilometres of trail forming more than 73 individual trails, with more in development. Good starting points for amateur gravity riders are Pandani, Scandinavia and Regnans Ride, the world's longest purpose-built beginner mountain bike trail. The Wilderness Trail offers intermediate riders 5.5 kilometres of uninterrupted track through lush forest, descending almost all 820 metres of the mountain and with only three trail crossings on the way. Maydena's best-known trails for advanced riders include King Brown, a steep, berm-filled descending trail, Styx & Stones, a black diamond trail with plenty of line choices, and Yeah Gnar > Gnar Yeah, the steepest track at Maydena. Regardless of the trail, it's a good idea to wear knee pads and a full-face helmet, particularly on the more difficult trails.

The MBP Canteen, beside the finish-area jump site, is an action-packed spot for lunch. The park's second on-site café, The Summit, is located at 1100 metres at the top of the trail network and offers 360-degree views over the southwest wilderness. In the town of Maydena, Giants' Table & Cottages offers pub-style meals and beds in authentic forestry workers' cottages. Other accommodation includes Left of Field Caravan Park, which has an outdoor bath tub ideal for soaking tired legs, and Mount Field Campground.

Maydena Bike Park hosts Enduro Fest, a three-day event spanning racing, social riding, skills clinics, and entertainment.

WILD MERSEY MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

Riders of any age and ability can take on the trails carved into the wild terrain of the island's north west. At **Wild Mersey Mountain Bike Trails**, 70 kilometres of green, blue and black trail connect three separate trailheads, the country towns of Latrobe, Railton and Sheffield, and the largest pump track in Tasmania. Expect serious switchbacks and flowy trails through old mining sites, rock quarries and lush fern-lined forests that descend to the Mersey River flats.

Head further west to try the trails at Kelcey Tier, Penguin Mountain Bike Park, and the Dial Range, or east for the new George Town Mountain Bike Trails, set to open from October 2021.

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WEST COAST MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

The climate, geology and elevation of the trails in this remote region offer thrilling experiences, though fitness and self-sufficiency is required. The **Mount Owen network** is the latest addition, comprising 35 kilometres of trail on the rocky slopes above Queenstown. Book a shuttle to the top of Mount Owen, 1146 metres above sea level, to experience the Upper Mountain trails or pedal the unique landscapes of the Lower Mountain to earn your views. For a truly alpine experience, ride across the Chamouni Traverse and climb North Owen Peak. Other trails accessible from the nearby towns of Zeehan and Rosebery include Oonah Hill Trail, the first purpose-built mountain bike trail in the region, and Sterling Valley Trail, a challenging ride through myrtle rainforest. As new trails are developed, this region is set to be the next big thing in Tasmanian mountain biking.

Travelling to ride

GETTING HERE

Many riders prefer to travel with their own bikes. Check specific airline baggage allowances; most carriers allow 30 kilograms for bikes. Bikes can be transported aboard the Spirit of Tasmania.

SEASON

There's year-round mountain biking in Tasmania, although there may be some trail closures during the wetter winter months.

GETTING AROUND

Car hire companies offer a range of vehicles for mountain bikers, including cars with bike racks and utes with soft tail pads. Airport-to-trail transfers can be arranged with companies including Up Down and Around, Premium MTB Transfers and Maydena Express. Drive Ride Explore specialises in self-drive mountain bike adventures; Tailored Trails offers private transfers and bespoke multi-day experiences; and White Knuckle Mountain Bike has a custom-built campervan for hire, with safe bike storage.

Competitive landscape

Key domestic and international mountain biking destinations include Mount Buller, Falls Creek, Bright and Warburton in Victoria, Atherton and Cairns in Queensland, Rotorua and Queenstown in New Zealand, and the Canadian resort town of Whistler, which is considered the world leader. With the exception of Whistler, the Tasmanian mountain bike experience has a competitive advantage over each of these destinations, with highly differentiated product quality and access.

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