

Wilsons Promontory, or simply *The Prom* as nicknamed by visitors, is one of the most beloved Victorian National Parks and is the state's largest coastal wilderness area. The rugged peninsula is home to granite mountain peaks and stunning sandy beaches, plus Victoria's largest Marine National Park. Diverse vegetation and wildlife can be enjoyed throughout the expansive wetland systems, and whether you love to camp, hike, surf, fish, bird watch, or simply appreciate the natural environment, The Prom has something for everyone. Known as *Yiruk* or *Wamoon* and rich in Dreamtime story, Wilsons Promontory has been recognised as a national park since 1898 and is the traditional country of the Brataualung people – one of the five clans of the Gunaikurnai people, with the Boon Wurrung Foundation representing the traditional custodians of the lands and seas.



The road towards Tidal River in Wilsons Promontory National Park.

How to get there

Located in the South Gippsland area, the main entrance of the national park is around a 2 hour and 40 minute (196km) drive from Melbourne. From the entrance, the sealed road continues a further 30 minutes (30km) south to reach the Tidal River.

Where to stay

Tidal River is home to the visitor's information centre and accommodation hub for The Prom with a range of options available. The campground offers 20 powered campsites and 455 unpowered campsites and is incredibly popular during the summer months. Book ahead and consider going mid-week to avoid the crowds.

To best manage peak periods like summer holidays, Melbourne Cup, Labour Day and Easter long weekends, Tidal River operates on a ballot draw system rather than a 'first in first booked' system like usual. If you're interested in staying at The Prom during these peak times, keep an eye on the Parks ballot page for opening dates to get your entry in.



Camping with my Marmot Fortress 3P at Tidal River Campground.

Weekend camping

Norman Beach

Once set up at the Tidal River Campground, one of the first spots to visit is only a short stroll from the campsites. Norman Beach offers expansive views of the offshore islands to the west and the towering sight of Mt Oberon to the southeast.

The surfers will be out catching some waves and can enjoy an easy stroll along the water's edge while the hooded plover birds dart about the sand looking for a meal.

Norman Beach is a tranquil spot to just kick back and take in the scenery. The walk continues on to Tidal River itself where, depending on tides, the water can be a wide flowing river or a collection of clear peaceful waterholes.



At 558m high, the summit of Mt Oberon offers spectacular 360-degree views over Wilsons Prom.

Mt Oberon

If you're eager to stretch your legs but not wishing to undertake anything too extreme, the Mt Oberon Summit Walk is a Grade 3 hike that's approximately a 2-hour return and offers expansive 360-degree views from the rugged peak.

During the week, visitors can drive to Telegraph Saddle car park to begin the walk from the trailhead. However, on weekends from November through to April and other peak periods throughout the year, the narrow access road to the saddle is closed and instead, a free shuttle bus is provided to transport visitors to the car park.

From the trailhead at the Telegraph Saddle carpark, the 6.8km return walk follows a smooth and wide management vehicle track up the mountain. Once at the communications towers, the track switches gear to steep, narrow steps for the final ascent of the large granite tor. The views are sensational when you reach the top, sweeping out over the ocean and surrounding area, plus down to Tidal River and further afield to the other western beaches. On a clear day, look to the northern end of the park and see if you can spot a massive inland sand dune system, known as the Big Drift. The summit is exposed and can be windy, so packing a windproof jacket is handy but those uninterrupted panoramic views are worth it.



The rounded grains of white quartz sand give Squeaky Beach its name.

Squeaky Beach

Certainly one of The Prom's iconic destinations, the rounded grains of white quartz sand makes a 'squeaky' sound underfoot when walking along the beach. Access is either a short 300m walk from the Squeaky Beach carpark or a more leisurely 2km walk from the Tidal River Campground and across the headland.

With plenty of space to relax and unwind, the remote beach offers a peaceful escape from the sometimes busy campground. Take a dip in the clear turquoise waters, explore the large granite boulders of the northern end of the beach or just kick back on the powdery white sand.



The Loo-Errn Track follows the Tidal River and is mostly along a boardwalk to protect the wetlands.

Exploring further

Stroll along the Loo-Errn Track right near the campground and enjoy the wetland wildlife or go exploring the more remote pockets of the park. If you have a few extra days it's worth perusing the map or chatting with the friendly rangers at the Tidal River visitor's centre who have plenty of ideas on what to see and do.

For some truly unforgettable hike-in camping options, The Prom's Southern Circuit offers

several overnight experiences. Trek down to South Point, the southernmost tip of mainland Australia, or perhaps continue to the Wilson's Promontory Lightstation and stay in one of the historic cottages of the former lighthouse keepers.

Visitor numbers are monitored in this isolated section of the park and all campsites or cottage accommodation must be booked before departure. Hikers must carry a 'walking' permit at all times and bookings should be made well in advance.

Watching the sunset over Norman Beach is not to be missed.

There are so many secluded beaches to visit throughout this area and dozens of walking trails to cater for all fitness levels. It's worthwhile taking an extra day or two to explore and be sure to have a yarn with your campsite neighbours - they might just share a hidden gem with you, like watching the sunset over at Norman Beach!

What's your favourite part of The Prom?