



Western Australia's South West is such an incredible place to explore with its stunning and breathtaking coastline, gorgeous forests, and wineries that are world renowned for their excellence. The South West is also one of the world's 34 unique biodiversity hotspots and in spring, this area just comes to life with the colour of wildflowers.

The Cape to Cape Track gives you a chance to experience all this and so much more. You'll explore nearly 130km of coastline, starting your journey at either end as the track runs between the two Capes (hence the name), Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin.



The Cape to Cape is a unique hiking trail located in Western Australia.

What you will experience on this track

While you hike, you'll experience spectacular rugged coastal terrain, white sandy beaches, plenty of coastal heathlands that just burst with blooms in spring. Then the contrast of the ocean is the beauty of the Karri trees when you enter the Boranup Forest.

If you are hiking in the months of May and September, you will have the chance to see the migrating whales of the southern right and the humpback. There are also plenty of dolphins that love to share the waves with the local surfers in the water. I find it just a glorious thing to look over the ocean while sitting on one of the many bench seats perched on the cliffs along the track. The sunsets are like no other as it slowly sets over the ocean with the glow of reds and oranges. At times it's so intense, it can resemble a painting.

In May/April of every year, there is the famous Salmon Run as they head north. This is so spectacular to witness as the beaches become alive with excited fishermen and women. Then you have the wildlife on the land - the kangaroos, wallabies, possums, quendas, and the countless birds of all kinds.



You can expect some spectacular views as you walk along this track.

How long does it take to walk?

This is a track that you can experience in sections from day walks to walking the full track over a period of a week. I have now walked this track myself 5 times, 3 sectionals and 2 full end-to-end trips, and I personally feel this track is worthy of your time.

To be able to spend a moment sitting up high on the cliff-side while staring down into the ocean below is something we never do in our hectic day-to-day lives. Playing in the rock pools along some of the beaches will bring you back to being a carefree child and taking the time to smell the wildflowers is a saying that's not to be ignored.

This track has so much to share and should be explored in an enjoyable way that isn't rushed. With the total km just shy of 130, and campsites and towns along the way, you can tailor your walk to suit you.



Take your time to hike this track, so you can enjoy it to its fullest.



Campsites along the way

There are four Cape to Cape campsites and three National Park sites, plus there are a few caravan park sites along the way. You will find that there is a water tank at most the campsites along with picnic tables plus drop toilets.

If you're planning to hike the track during peak season, it is recommended to pre-book the National Park's campsites, which costs a small fee to stay there. On the other hand, the four Cape to Cape sites are free but there is no booking system, so first come first served. As this track runs through National Park, there is no wild camping available.



During the busy season, book ahead to secure your campsite.

Other accommodation options along the Cape to Cape

If camping is not your thing, then that's alright, as there are a lot of accommodation options in the South West. There are also many tour companies who will organise you a place to sleep each night and give you a drop-off and pick up service for the track.

Local visitor centres at Dunsborough, Margaret River and Augusta can help you out with this. There is also information on these services with the Friends of the Cape to Cape here.



If you don't want to camp, you can organise other accommodation for this trail.

Trail markers

Wooden posts with a metal Cape to Cape symbol attached can be found along the way. Occasionally you find wooden signs with the words 'Cape to Cape Track' written on it and the symbol is also attached to some of the rocks along the beach areas.



The trail will have markers that will keep you on the right path.

Gear to take

- Backpack (*I carry the Osprey Xena 70L*)
- Map and compass
- Guidebook (*'The Capes' by Walkingtwobytwo, because I wrote it*)
- PLB
- Change of clothes and socks (*in a compression bag to save room*)
- Headwear - Buff, warm hat and a sun hat
- Wet weather gear including a lightweight windproof jacket (*a must for the coast*)
- Hiking poles
- Tent, (*mine is the Sea to Summit Specialist Duo*)



- Sleeping bag with a silk liner (*mine Sea to Summit Spark 3*)
- Sleeping mat (*Sea to Summit mats are my all-time favourite*)
- Stove, waterproof matches and lighter
- Cup and knife/fork/spoon set
- First aid kit and snake bite kit
- Hydration system
- Water Purification - Treatment tablets or filter system
- LifeStraw (*for emergencies*)
- Battery charger
- Head torch
- Pocket knife
- Insect repellent (*a must for this track*)
- Mosquito net (*can be handy even when the March flies are out*)
- Disposable hand warmers (*get the biodegradable ones*)
- Sit-a-pon (*waterproof mat to sit on*)
- Sandals for camp
- Sarong (*this is my multipurpose must-have item*)



My Sea to Summit Specialist Duo tent set up on the track.

Water along the way

The campsites have rainwater tanks, however, do be aware they can run dry especially in the warmer seasons. So, be sure to stock up on your water supply in each town and carry enough for each day. Water from the tanks is advised to be treated.

I always carry a 3-litre capacity hydration system, a LifeStraw, (for emergencies), and my Katadyn Micropur Forte Tablets to treat the water.



Stay hydrated along the trail by filling up on water in each town you come across.

Food along the way

When I am camping, I always dehydrate my own meals at home before I leave but if you don't have the time or own a dehydrator then you can always find some other choices like the Back Country Cuisine or Radix Nutrition range. Or, there is the option to check out the local supermarket for some easy lightweight meals.

You will enter into a few towns which is a great time to get re-stocked and have a yummy meal. However, be aware the supply is limited. And, always check the hours these places are open as you may be excited for a burger only to find the shop closed when you arrive, and



you are left hungry - this is what happened to me!

Cooking on the trail

As you are walking through a National Park, open campfires are **not permitted**, so you will want to carry a fuel stove. I carry my MiniMo Jetboil and the gas cylinders are easy enough to get at the local stores. Keep in mind that if you're travelling from interstate or overseas that gas cylinders are not allowed on planes.



There will be opportunities to eat meals in the towns, but you will need to bring some of your own food.

What fitness level do I need?

For anyone wanting to walk the Cape to Cape, I'd recommend you're relatively fit as this track can be demanding at times. I will not lie, this trail can be a challenge for your legs. You'll be walking through a fair amount of soft sand, climbing up and down soft sand dunes, over large rocks and rocky paths as well as along 4WD tracks and narrow paths. You will have a few ascents and descents though nothing too high.



Expect to hike on sand, so ensure your body is up to the challenge.

What's the best time of the year to hike the Cape to Cape track?

I have walked this track all times of the year and it certainly gives you something different every time. My favourite time is certainly springtime. Not just because of the wildflowers, but because spring in Western Australia is the perfect hiking season.

The weather on the coast is a lot friendlier with mild days. Winter can get really wild and woolly as well as being very wet and cold, and it can also get a little dangerous along some of the beach passes.

Late autumn is great as the weather cools off whereas early autumn it can still be a little too hot. Summer is great to visit the South West but not necessarily to hike the track as it is just too hot. Also, there's a high risk of fires and a lack of water.

To stay up to date with the weather on the track, check either BOM or Weatherzone. And, for alerts, check here.



Spring is a great time to hike this track, as you'll have relatively clear skies and mild conditions.

Maps and Guidebooks

You should always carry up-to-date maps and guidebooks when hiking and the Cape to Cape is no exception. Whatever your preference for navigation is, I highly recommend you carry more than one option for your safety.



Maps are available from most hiking/camping stores and visitor centres in WA and online from friends of the Cape to Cape.

For guidebooks there are two available, 'The Capes' guidebook which has just been released and is a small pocket-sized hiker friendly book. This is available from [here](#) as well as various visitor centres throughout the South West. The other is 'The Cape to Cape Guidebook' also available from this [site](#) and various visitor centres throughout the South West.

If you are into [apps](#), there are a few for this trail available. I can recommend the [Guthook app](#) as this has had great reviews.



You'll need a guidebook and a map to hike this trail.

Safety on the track

Always remember your safety is your responsibility. It is extremely important for you to take the appropriate measures to ensure your [safety whilst hiking](#). This is so you can have an experience you want to remember, not regret. Also along the way, you'll find phone reception but more on the northern end than the southern, so it's best not to rely on it.

Communication

- Always tell people of your whereabouts and intended return. Give them your itinerary and contact them when you return home.
- Carry some form of [PLB](#) with you.



When hiking, I always recommend some type of personal locator beacon.

Personal safety

- Always stay up-to-date with weather alerts and track conditions.
- Be aware that the Cape to Cape has many 4WD tracks and users. Be alert whilst on these tracks as the drivers may not see you.
- Stay safe while walking along rocks and cliff edges. There's always the risk of king waves even in mild conditions, which can sweep you off your feet and out to sea.
- Carry a first aid kit.
- Carry a snake bite kit.
- Always carry enough water.
- Be prepared for your hiking adventure with the appropriate clothing and equipment.
- If you go swimming, be aware these beaches along the Cape to Cape are **NOT** patrolled and do have a high risk of strong undercurrents and rips. Swim where safe and do so at your own risk.
- In case of a wildfire, stay calm and alert authorities of your whereabouts. Try to head to



the beach or a large open area.



Keep in mind that the beaches are not patrolled in the area so it can be a risk to swim.

Navigation

- Have up-to-date maps of the hike you intend to take.
- Any river crossing should be taken with great care. If unsure, seek an alternative route.
- There are many beach walking sections along this track. Keep up-to-date on the extreme weather conditions and don't attempt any beach section that may be risky.
- If you become lost, then **STAY** on the trail! Don't walk into bushland as it is harder to find you. Stay in an open area to be seen and don't wander aimlessly.
- Use your common sense.

Useful information

- Emergency Number - 000.
- DFES emergency information - 13 3337.
- Fire management of Parks and Wildfires managed lands - (08) 9219 8000.
- Dunsborough Police - (08) 9781 3030.
- Augusta Police - (08) 9758 3900.
- Marine emergencies - (08) 9474 9055.
- Wildlife watch (reporting illegal wildlife activities) - 1800 449 453.



Just one of the beautiful views you can experience on this trail.

How do I get to the Cape to Cape Track?

To travel down to the South West from Perth, as well as between the towns of Dunsborough, Margaret River and Augusta, you can go to South West Coachlines [here](#) or [TransWA](#). There is no direct public transport to and from the track at either end. There are a few privately owned companies that will transport you to and from the track or you can organise a taxi. This can get pricey, so I suggest contacting the visitor centres for more information on this.

I hope this guide was helpful for anyone who is planning their trip, or who is just curious about what you will experience when walking the Cape to Cape. Happy hiking everyone!

Have you explored the rugged and beautiful coastlines of WA? If so, what was the best part for you?