

YATRA AUSTRALIA

TASMANIA YATRA



Blue Tier
North-East Tasmania
19 - 28 February
2027

YATRA

A 'yatra' is a contemplative pilgrimage through Australia's pristine natural landscapes that offers an integrative exploration of human experience. Participants engage in physical hiking alongside emotional, intellectual, and spiritual inquiry to examine their relationship to self, others, and the natural environment, thereby deepening their sense of interconnection.

Grounded in Buddhist mindfulness practice, the yatra incorporates complementary approaches from yoga, science, deep ecology, and tribal traditions. The program structure includes extended periods of silent walking complemented by daily practices in yoga, meditation, dharma instruction, group dialogue, artistic expression, and personal time for reflection or nature-based engagement.

OUR JOURNEY

This years yatra route takes us to North-East Tasmania, following sections in and around the North East Highland Trail in the Blue Tier region. The area includes ancient forest, tall wet eucalyptus forest and sub alpine areas. The Blue Tier itself is home to a wonderful variety of plant and wildlife including quolls, wombats, echidnas, eastern barred bandicoots and the Tasmanian devil.

The daily walking distance varies with the longest walk being approximately 18km. The route utilises old forestry roads, dirt roads, formal walking tracks and off-track walking, leading us through myrtle forests, up and over sub-alpine boulder landscapes, past waterfalls, gigantic trees and historic sites, requiring a sound level of fitness and balance. The weather in the area could vary between hot and dry days to continuous days of rain or wind. You will need to ensure that you are prepared for all weather, have all the required equipment and the required fitness levels. The yatra is an all weather event.

The yatra will be based on the spirit of simplicity in that we let go of the usual luxuries of life. We will be accommodated each night in our personal tents. An accompanying support team will provide hearty vegetarian meals, transport our luggage and take care of logistics. At times help will be required with food preparation, clean-up, and setting up/packing down our camp.



FACILITATION

The yatra will be conducted under the shelter of Buddhist ethics which create a safe, caring and conscious environment for spiritual practice. On retreat, ethical conduct invites us to restrain from harmful speech and actions, sexual expression and intoxicants; and invites us to cultivate mindfulness, non violence, generosity, kindness and renunciation.

A substantial part of our retreat program will be supported by noble silence. The meditation instructions are primarily grounded in the Insight Meditation method. The yoga and movement exercises are suitable for all levels and are designed to nourish our physical condition and assist our mindfulness practice.



Ronny Hickel has studied, practised and taught in various traditions of yoga and buddhist dharma for the last 30 years. He is a yoga and tai-chi instructor, a qualified outdoor recreation guide and has trained in Hakomi Mindful Somatic Psychotherapy. Originally from Austria, Ronny moved to Australia in 2000 after living in India and South East Asia for numerous years. His approach is shaped by his love and passion for the wilderness, Buddhist dharma, nature reconnection, deep ecology and the rich indigenous traditions of the world. He resides between the Northern Rivers & Tasmania where he works in human development and outdoor recreation, facilitating the dharma, nature connection and men's work.



Robyn Gibson has been practising and studying meditation for 35 years, mainly in the Burmese insight meditation lineage of Mahāsi Sayadaw, and was authorised to teach in the Insight Meditation tradition in 2015. Her principal teachers have been Patrick Kearney and Carol Perry. Robyn is interested in how the Buddha's teachings allow us to enquire into living a wise and ethical human life on this earth, facing the challenges of our times with compassion and integrity. Her teaching explores the 'two wings of awakening', serenity and insight, and the importance of both in practice. She is also informed by her long-term practice as an artist/printmaker, and experience of yoga and deep ecology (and other nature-based practices).

WHAT TO BRING

- ☐ tent (3+ season, no pop ups) & groundsheet
- ☐ very warm sleeping bag
- ☐ camping mat (eg. thermarest)
- ☐ sun hat, beanie & gloves
- ☐ gore tex quality rain coat & waterproof pants
- ☐ appropriate clothing for hot, cold & wet weather, including thermal underwear
- ☐ good hiking shoes (walked in, not causing blisters)
- ☐ backpack for walking and pack cover (recommended)
- ☐ water bottles, 2L minimum (3L recommended)
- ☐ lunch box, cup, bowl, plate, cutlery
- ☐ meditation cushion or stool & blanket/shawl
- ☐ sun screen, insect repellent
- ☐ torch and spare batteries
- ☐ toiletries, towel, swim wear
- ☐ blister plasters
- ☐ any personal medication or supplements if required
- ☐ journal (optional)

Our journeys are based on the spirit of simplicity! Be prepared, but pack lightly and tightly! The entire luggage and equipment must be transported in our support vehicles. Please keep your main luggage confined to one or two bags maximum.

A yatra is a phone/tech free event – let family and friends know that you're on retreat so that you can embrace this precious time. Also note, due to the remote nature of the yatra we cannot provide for the charging of any electronic devices during the yatra.



The rugged country and unpredictable climate in Tasmania can potentially provide challenging conditions. Average day temperatures for February are 10-20 degrees, but could reach into the high 20s. Nights can be very cold and could drop below zero. Weather in the sub-alpine area could expose us to freezing conditions with strong winds, rain and although unlikely, even snow. Our longest hike will be approximately 18km, and due especially to the off-track nature of some parts of our walks, you will require a sound level of fitness and balance.

ARRIVAL

The Yatra begins on **Friday 19th February** at the Pyengana Recreation Grounds. We will provide transport from Launceston, about 2.5 hours drive away. Our yatra bus will leave from Launceston CBD at 12.30pm and Launceston airport at 1:15pm. *If you fly into Launceston on the day please arrange your flight to arrive by 12.30pm.*

If you plan to self-drive, there is the option to park at the Pyengana Recreation Area for the duration of the yatra. Self Drivers need to arrive between 3:00 - 4:00pm. We will provide transport back to your vehicles at the end of the yatra.

There will be a Ride Share form for people to organise car pooling. Ride Share supports community and reduces our carbon footprint.

DEPARTURE

The Yatra will end on **Sunday 28th February** in Weldborough. There will be transport provided back to the Launceston airport by 2pm and Launceston CBD by 2.30pm. For those flying out *please arrange your flights from 3pm onwards.*

RETREAT COST

\$890 Base Fee plus Dana

The Base Fee covers meals and catering, support vehicles and equipment, accommodation, administration costs and some travel expenses of the team.

The base fee does not include any payment for the facilitators or organisers.

Dana means generosity and forms a substantial aspect of providing this yatra. Following an old Buddhist tradition the facilitators & organisers of this yatra do not charge a fixed fee for their contributions, but offer their services as a gift. At the end of the yatra there will be an opportunity to offer dana in the form of a monetary gift in return. Dana supports the livelihood of yatra facilitators & organisers, keeps the dharma accessible and affordable, and cultivates a spirit of generosity.



HOW TO APPLY

A sound level of fitness and hiking experience is necessary for this yatra.

1. **READ:** Read this Information Document thoroughly.
2. **APPLICATION:** Submit your **APPLICATION FORM**. *Applications are now open.* Be aware that the number of applications are limited and can fill quickly.
3. **APPROVAL:** We will contact you via email if your application is successful or if you have been placed on a waiting list (please check your junk mail if you haven't heard from us). Initial Applicants will be contacted by the 9th October. Later Applicants will be contacted within 7 days of their application. *Please do not make a payment or any travel arrangements unless you have been offered a place on the yatra.*
4. **PAYMENT:** If your application has been accepted you will have 3 days to secure your place by making your payment. You will receive a confirmation email to confirm your booking once your funds have arrived.
 - Please contact us if you wish to arrange an alternative payment plan.
 - Limited sponsorships are available for those experiencing financial difficulty.

OUR CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations before 22nd January 2027 will receive a refund minus a \$100 administration fee. Unfortunately we are not able to offer refunds for cancellations received after this date. If you need to cancel, ensure you inform us in time so your place can be offered to someone else.

FOR MORE INFO

Contact **Amalia**
yatracontact@gmail.com
0434 297 999

