

Information 2022: Three Valleys, Blue Mountains

Adventure Facts:

Dates:	18-22 March 2022
Start & Finish at:	Leura, NSW
Duration & distance:	51 km trekking over 4 days
Accommodation:	4 nights twin share
Meals provided:	Fully catered; 4 Breakfast; 4 Lunch; 4 Dinner
Group Size:	12- 16
Activity split:	1 travel day, 4 days hiking
Cost:	\$ 1,000 ex Leura per person
Single Supplement:	\$ 500 per person
Extra night:	\$ 250 per room (no meals)

Highlights:

- Trek four of the most iconic walks in the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains National Park with some of Australia's most experienced guides (Zac Zaharias, Matt Rogerson and Peter Lambert) providing expert leadership, high levels of safety and intimate knowledge of the Blue Mountains.
- Enjoy the comfort of the Old Leura Dairy, a charming four-star boutique accommodation in the heart of Leura. Relax with a warm shower, fireplace, hot tub, and a drink or two and at the end of each day.
- Fully catered with a delicious breakfast, two-course gourmet dinner and a packed lunch with snacks for the walk.
- Stunning audio-visual presentation by one of our guides as part of our evening program including a celebratory dinner at a local restaurant.
- Medical wilderness trained leader with 24hr phone access to advice from a Peak Learning Doctor.



The upper Grose valley looking towards Pierces Pass from Blackheath

Introduction

Peak Learning Adventures invites you to participate in the four-day, Three Valleys trek in the Blue Mountains National Park. Scattered over more than 260,000 hectares and part of the UNESCO-protected Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage area. The Blue Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in NSW and a favourite playground for Sydneysiders.

Renowned for the Three Sisters rock formation, the park incorporates many other spectacular landmarks and offers opportunities for exploration and immersion into nature. Explore exhilarating walks, discover Aboriginal history, hike to tumbling waterfalls and swims in refreshing rock pools, enjoy stunning, far-reaching vistas of ancient escarpments and forest-clad valleys.

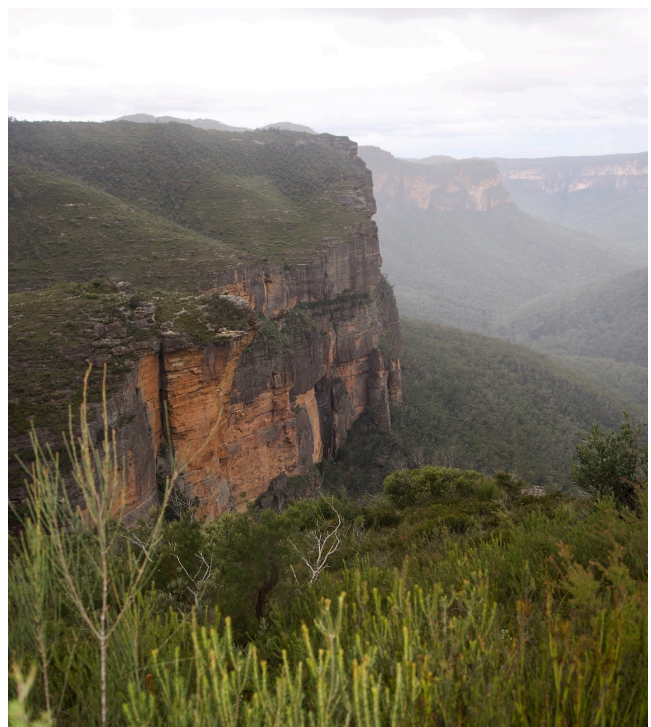
About Peak Learning Adventures

Peak Learning Adventures is a veteran owned and run small business focused on customised treks, tours and expeditions to the Himalayas, Papua New Guinea (PNG), South America, Africa and Australia. The Himalayas has been our adventure playground for nearly 40 years. PNG is at Australia's doorstep and offers genuine wilderness trekking in a landscape free from modern intrusions. Many of our PNG treks are battlefield study tours of the major campaigns during the Pacific War, including the world-famous Kokoda Track. Other PNG treks and battlefield study tours include Shaggy Ridge, Mt Giluwe, Mount Victoria and East New Britain. Director and Head Guide is Zac Zaharias, who served 46 years in the Australian Army including service as a UN Military Observer in Kashmir. He holds a Certificate 4 in Outdoor Recreation. He is a highly experienced Expedition Leader and a veteran of over 100 expeditions and adventures worldwide including 21 major expeditions to the Himalayas. Peak Learning Adventures has an impeccable record for quality, safety, fun, adventure and learning. We have some of Australia's most experienced high-altitude climbers, qualified guides and military historians.

The Three Valleys Program

The four-day, 'Three Valleys' trek involves walking four iconic walks in three major valleys of the Blue Mountains National Park: the Jamison, the Grose and the Megalong valleys. The Jamison valley forms part of the Coxs River canyon system and is clearly visible from Echo Point at Katoomba, overlooking the Three Sisters. The only mountain in the valley is Mount Solitary, which sprawls across the south of the valley from west to east. It is joined to Narrow Neck Plateau by a low ridge which is also the site of the Ruined Castle, a rock formation that is popular with bushwalkers. Immediately east of Mount Solitary is a property called Kedumba Farm, which is no longer worked as a farm. Mt Solitary is our objective on day 1 of our trek. We access the valley floor via the spectacular Scenic railway and return to Katoomba via the Golden Staircase at Narrow Neck.

Day 2 takes us into the Grose Valley. It lies at the heart of the Blue Mountains National Park, and the upper Grose is regarded as the cradle of conservation in NSW. At the centre of the valley lies the magnificent Blue Gum Forest, the site of which was the first major conservation battle in the state in 1931. Since then, almost the entire catchment has been reserved in the National Park. The main reason that the valley was able to escape development is the



massive cliffs on either side. There are only a handful of easy passes into or out of the valley, and development has been limited to the cliff tops. Much of the valley has recently been preserved as wilderness, further protection for the chasms, canyons and cliffs that make up this spectacular landscape. Our walk on Day 2 takes us right into the heart of the Grose valley. We take a minibus to Pierces Pass on the Bell Line of Road, then descend 600 metres to the valley floor. We walk eastwards towards the magnificent Blue Gum Forest where we enjoy a picnic lunch. We continue onto De Faur Head and the Lockley Pylon track, walking across open heathlands to our pickup point at the Pinnacles on the Mt Hay Road.

One of the Blue Mountains' best-kept secrets, getting to Megalong Valley is an adventure in itself, the winding road from [Blackheath](#) passing through temperate rainforest filled with soaring eucalypts and emerald tree ferns. The Megalong Valley is a rural paradise of verdant pastures and pristine forests, and home to gorgeous getaway cabins, a rustic tea room, wineries, horse riding establishments and the famous [Six Foot Track](#). Our walk on Day 3 starts at Katoomba end of the Six-Foot Track, the old bridle trail that led from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves. This loop walk descends the gully of Nellies Glen and returns via the Devils Hole; an impressive cleft topped by a massive boulder.

The final day takes us through a narrow slot canyon that is deep, dark and twisting. The spectacular Grand Canyon track follows an impressive halfway ledge above much of the canyon, before descending to the canyon floor lower down. It is one of the best walks in the upper Blue Mountains, and is good in summer, as much of the walk is in the shade, protected by the massive sandstone walls.

An outline of the four-day program is below, but note that we may amend this to take into account weather forecasts (e.g. we may change the trek order when poor weather is forecast).

Day	Event	Dist	Total climb	Remarks
0	Arrive Leura			Settle in the Old Leura Dairy, welcome drinks & brief
1	Jamison Valley. Katoomba to Mt Solitary and return via Ruined Castle	18 km	610 m	Drive to Katoomba – Scenic Railway to valley floor. Return via Golden staircase
2	Grose Valley. Pierces Pass to the Pinnacles via Blue Gum Forest and De Faur Head	17 km	650 m	Bus to Pierces Pass, bell Line of Road. Pick up at the Pinnacles on the Mt Hay Road near Leura.
3	Megalong Valley. Nellies Glen and Devils Hole	10 km	450 m	Drive to Katoomba
4	Grand Canyon	7 km	240 m	Drive to Evans Lookdown, Blackheath. This is the shortest day.
TOTAL		51 km	1,950 m	

Is this trek right for me?

The four-day, Three Valleys challenge comprises four iconic day walks, totalling 51 km in distance. The first two days are the longest and hardest, with the last day being the shortest. The walking is over formed tracks, and as all treks commence on the top of the Blue Mountains sandstone escarpment, every day begins with a descent and concludes with a strong up-hill element. The total vertical climb over the four days is 1,950 m. The trek is Graded as Moderate however to ensure maximum enjoyment, we recommend a reasonable level of fitness. For those familiar with the Ten Peaks Challenge in the Kosciuszko National Park, this walk is more moderate with shorter distances overall and around 20% less climbing. The Ten Peaks Challenge as a comparison is rated Moderate-Hard.

Please note that while we aim to complete all four walks, this is not an exercise in misery but a “Challenge by Choice”. If you are not feeling up any of the treks, there are opportunities to opt out at various times along the way. Please discuss any concerns and options you may like to take with the guide(s) at any time.

Evening Program

As the trekking program is very full, the evenings are spent relaxing and enjoying each other's company. On day three, there is plenty of time to relax around the fire or enjoy some of Leura's cafes and galleries.

On the last night we will be having a celebration dinner in one of the fabulous local restaurants. During the dinner, there will be two short audio-visual presentations: one from your experienced Mountain Guides. Zac Zaharias, CSM is one of Australia's most experienced and successful high-altitude mountaineers, cross-country ski instructor and Senior Guide with his own business, Peak Learning Adventures. Zac is a three-time Everest climber and he will provide a fascinating presentation on climbing or trekking in PNG, the Himalayas or Kilimanjaro. The second presentation by a AHF representative will cover the programs that the AHF is engaged in the Himalaya.

Accommodation and meals

Our accommodation in the Blue Mountains is [the Old Leura Dairy](#) located in Leura. It is a four-star luxury, boutique, eco accommodation offering a unique and exclusive travel experience in the beautiful World Heritage Blue Mountains. Nestled in the quaint village of Leura you are central to all the rugged beauty, attractions, dining experiences, pampering and shopping that the upper mountains have to offer. The eye of an artist appears throughout the wonderful, intimate and sensitive sanctuary. You will stay either in the Straw Bale House or the Worker's Cottage. All accommodation is twin share, however Single supplements are available.



A bedroom in the Straw Bale House



Lounge in the Worker's Cottage

Features include:

- King or twin beds with soft feather doonas
- Open and slow combustion fires
- Espresso machines or stove top Espresso makers
- Outdoor share hot tub
- Antique claw foot baths and fluffy bath sheets
- Landscaped native gardens
- Free Wi-fi

Your booking includes all meals (two course home cooked gourmet dinners by a local chef; a hot breakfast and a pack lunch with snacks to nibble on during the day). Our cook is also able to cater for all dietary requirements. We just require two weeks advance warning prior to the commencement of the trip.

A 10-minute walk will take you to the quaintest village in the mountains where you will enjoy the proliferation of cafes, galleries, and shops. If you like being pampered, there are several small local businesses that offer a therapeutic and relaxing massage after a long day's walk.

While we provide almost everything, there is a full range of shops and cafes in Leura. As there is no bar at our accommodation, you are advised that you bring your own alcoholic drinks that you require.

Extra Night

An extra night is optional and allows time to relax after the last day's walk and not rush off home, particularly if you have a long drive ahead of you. Please discuss your requirements with us. Meals are not normally included in the extra night but can be arranged. Alternatively, there are many fine restaurants and cafes in Leura to dine in.

What's included

The package is designed to minimise the purchase of the more expensive items of personal and group equipment and organisation required for participants. Your trek cost includes the following:

- Accommodation (twin-share) including linen, bathmat and towel
- All meals (including the celebration dinner on the last night at a local Restaurant)
- National Park capitation fees
- One Scenic Railway ride
- Full Guiding services (2-3 guides depending on group size)
- Satellite phone coverage and rescue
- Full public liability insurance
- Digital photographic record of the trek
- Three Valleys Achievement certificate

What's not included

- Travel to and from Leura
- Alcohol, eating out
- Personal clothing and equipment



Blue Gum Forest

Fundraising and Sponsorship

Since 2020 Soldier On members have enjoyed the popular Ten Peaks challenge in the Kosciuszko National Park as an annual fundraiser. The Three Valleys trek is a new fundraiser for Soldier On and provides an opportunity for members to enjoy the delights of the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains National Park, close to Sydney's doorstep. There are a number of approaches for seeking sponsorship from friends such as ascents per metres climbed e.g. \$ 1 for 10 metres = \$ 195 or perhaps even a set amount per valley, say \$1-\$100. We do ask that as a minimum goal you raise \$ 1,000. When you book the trek, we will pass your contact details to Soldier On and they will contact you to provide advice and support with your Fundraising efforts.

Booking Form

If you would like to Book for the Three Valleys trek, please register on line at

<https://www.marchonchallenge.org.au/register/mountain-challenge/threevalleysregistrationform>

Contact and Information

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The Grose Valley looking westwards from Mt Hay