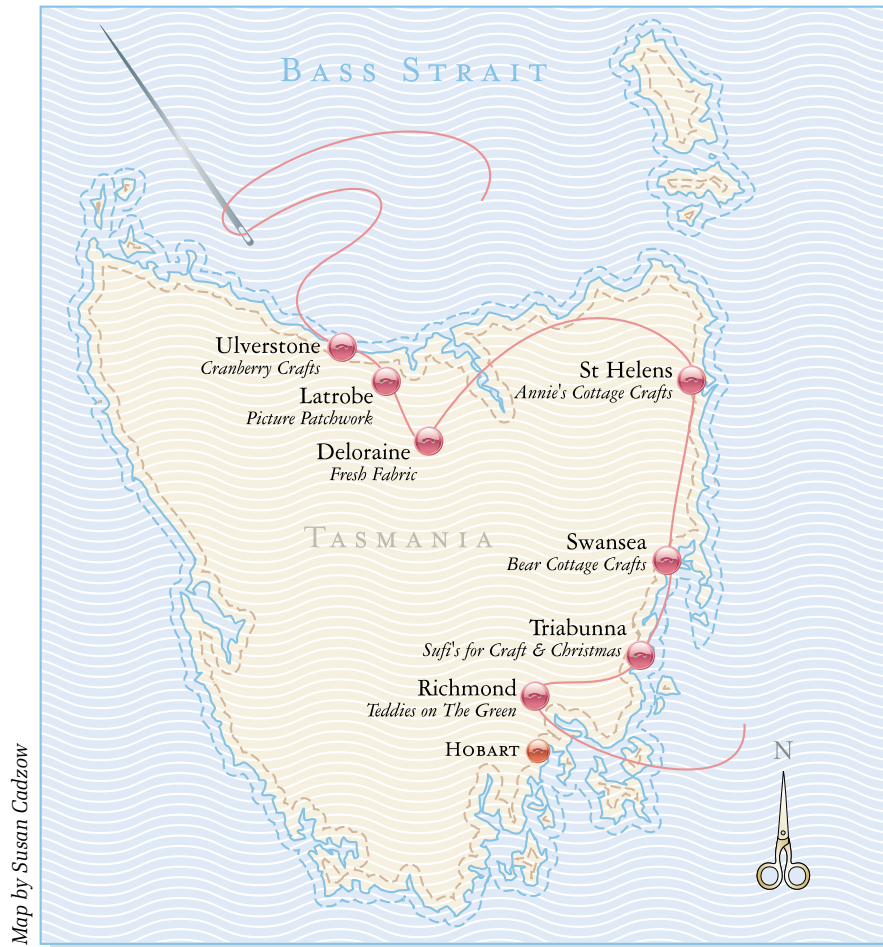


# Tantalising Tasmania

By Jeannette Vermeulen



Follow the needle and thread, button by button, as we make our way around Tasmania.

If you're looking for an amazing experience in a unique landscape, Tasmania is the place for you. With its relatively unspoiled natural environment and breathtaking scenery, the "island of inspiration" is a little slice of paradise just begging to be explored.

Tasmania is home to many unique species of birds and amphibians, with over a third of the island classed as nature reserves, national parks and world-heritage sites. The pristine landscape of mountains, crystal-clear lakes and rolling forests has much to offer nature lovers and thrill seekers alike. It is also home to a vibrant craft scene, and what better way to get a feel for the state than by visiting its beautiful craft shops?

We start our tour in the state's capital, Hobart, taking in its interesting mix of historic and contemporary arts and culture. We then head on to Richmond, home of our first Tassie craft shop, Teddis on The Green. The charming shop is a great place to start exploring this 19th century Gregorian village.

Our next stop is in Triabunna at Sufi's for Craft & Christmas, a shop famous for its year-round selection of Christmas decorations. After visiting this stitchers' haven, you can enjoy a coastal bushwalk.

We head along the coast, famous for its white sandy beaches and coastal vineyards, to Bear Cottage Crafts in Swansea. The town overlooks Freycinet National Park, home to quolls, wallabies, possums and Tasmanian devils.

From there, it's a beautiful coastal drive to St Helens, where we visit the delightful Annie's Cottage Crafts. After catching up with owner Annie and stocking up on a stunning variety of goodies, it's time to head inland.

We drive through impressive scenery of green fields and majestic blue mountains on the way to the charming rural town of Deloraine, home of the Yarns Artwork in Silk, which depicts the area's history and landscape in four, vast panels. Here we visit Fresh Fabric, an inviting shop filled with funky fabrics. Owner Selina is always happy to help. Next we call in to visit her other slice of patchwork paradise, Picture Patchwork, in the laid-back town of Latrobe.

Our Tassie trek comes to an end in the coastal town of Ulverstone, home to Cranberry Crafts. This delightful shop has a wide variety of scrumptious stock to explore and is the perfect place to wind down after our crafting adventure.

## Teddies on The Green

Richmond

**T**his enchanting shop first opened its doors 15 years ago, under the care of Irelene and John Pockett, who had a passion for handmade bears. That passion still continues today with new owner, Toni Alomes.

You won't be able to stop smiling when you step inside the quaint cottage the shop calls home. With its warm, friendly atmosphere and wonderful product selection, you could happily while away hours exploring every nook and cranny. "It's a very happy place to be and work, although it doesn't feel like work," Toni says.

Teddies on The Green specialises in Tasmanian handmade bears, as well as raggedies and other handcrafts. There's also a unique selection of local, handmade, wooden rocking horses, and a rocking plane, available.



All your bear-making needs are well catered for and the shop offers great discounts on German mohair supplied by Teddy's Bits. Also stocked are huggables like Korimco, Gund, Teddy and Friends, Elka, Beatrix Potter, Charlie Bears and more. Take a look at some of the beautiful handmades on offer by visiting the shop's website. Phone orders are welcome and the shop is open seven days a week, so drop in and say hello.

**Local knowledge**

Historic Richmond is located on the convict trail towards Port Arthur. Teddies on The Green is housed in "Millers Cottage" built in 1837, and can be found in the middle of The Village Green.

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Richmond Tas 7025

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## Sufi's for Craft &amp; Christmas

Triabunna

**P**at Bell is truly living the dream with her store in Triabunna. For the past 16 years, she has been looking after the crafters of the busy fishing port as a retirement occupation. "I always



intended to have a craft shop for my retirement," Pat says. "I have loved craft and sewing since I was at school."

The shop is known throughout Tasmania for its fabulous year-round range of Christmas decorations, and a remarkable selection of more than 1000 bolts of patchwork fabric. The combination gets quite a response from visitors to the store. "The most common reaction is 'Wow' because the Christmas decorations are one side of the door and the patchwork fabric on the other," Pat says. With four rooms of decorations, a fabric room, and a craft room, "wow"

is perhaps the best way to describe this charming shop.

Pat truly enjoys her craft and it shows in the store's attention to detail. On the last Saturday of the month, from March to October, a sewing day is held at which a small project can be completed with help from experienced quilters. Sufi's is open seven days a week, from 10am to 4pm.

**Local knowledge**

Triabunna is an historic fishing village, first settled in the early 1800s as a whaling station. In keeping with that, Sufi's for Craft & Christmas calls an 1870s cottage home, the residence still largely in its original condition.

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## Bear Cottage Crafts

Swansea

**L**ike many great ideas, Bear Cottage Crafts began in an airport. While waiting for a delayed flight 10 years ago, owner Vivianne Lewis picked up a country-home magazine and found herself captivated by the possibilities. Since then, the store has moved on to a more French Provincial style, but it's still filled with fabulous teddies. From the chandelier that greets you when you first enter to the variety of sophisticated handiworks on offer, the shop has all the understated elegance of a French chateau.

There is a well-stocked variety of products on offer including jewellery, homewares, a lovely range of fabrics, embroidery floss, and an impressive range of Vandoros ribbons, or, as Vivianne puts it, "The most amazing ribbons you have ever seen." If you want to add a truly magical touch to that



perfect gift, you simply cannot go past one of Vivianne's cards. "I have to admit, cards are my thing," Vivianne says. "They need a good message or a very cute theme." She also specialises in gift wrapping so you can be sure your gift will be the picture of sophistication.

**Local knowledge**

Swansea is located in what used to be known as the Glamorgan municipality, the oldest rural municipality in the southern hemisphere. "It's a very

historic town with some lovely old buildings and wonderful history," says Vivianne. That history is also celebrated in May every two years with the "From France to Freycinet" festival.

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Swansea Tas 7190

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**Website:** [www.bearcottagecrafts.com.au](http://www.bearcottagecrafts.com.au)

## Annie's Cottage Crafts

St Helens

**I**n one of the fastest growing regions in Tasmania, the crafters of the St Helens area have diverse interests. Luckily, Annie's Cottage Crafts "endeavours to accommodate as many people as possible with our stock lines," according to owner Annie Maney.

In a renovated cottage that's more than 100 years old, Annie has been operating her store for 13 years and provides her clients with patchwork and quilting materials, embroidery threads and kits, beading, scrapbooking and art supplies, as well as a large range of giftware and teddies.

You'll discover a number of BOM quilts specialising in McKenna Ryan designs,

kits and fabrics, which are all available through their secure mail-order service. With approximately 1000 different



*Something Fishy is the latest gorgeous design by McKenna Ryan. The completed quilt measures 42 x 44in. Contact the shop for more details.*

patchwork fabrics to choose from, as well as a fabulous selection of books and patterns on hand, this lovely shop will provide you with lots of inspiration.

Annie's Cottage Crafts runs regular classes and acts as a popular meeting place for various patchwork and embroidery groups who gather here to share stories and swap ideas.

**Local knowledge**

St Helens is known as the game-fishing capital of Tasmania. Each March, the St Helens Game Fishing Classic draws an impressive crowd of locals and an increasing number of interstate visitors.

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## Fresh Fabric

*Deloraine*

This fantastic little craft shop in breathtaking Deloraine stocks all things chic, and with its clean-cut white interior and brilliant lighting, you wouldn't expect anything less.

A modern stitcher's dream, the shop has been the go-to place for all the latest and greatest in the world of fabric for the last two years, specifically for designer names such as Amy Butler, Kaffe Fassett, Heather Bailey and Make It Perfect. The shop now also has its own delightful range of patterns called "Sew Selly", which showcases the staff's various creative talents.

Owner Selina Stredwick credits passion for the craft as the reason she has not one, but two sensational shops to her name. "Picture Patchwork has been open in Latrobe for 12 years now and Fresh Fabric was a way of bringing all that is fresh and funky to the modern sewer in one location," Selina says.



*The chic JJ's Satchel is one of the shop's original Sew Selly patterns.*

Fresh Fabric can be found at craft fairs around Australia, as Selina and her team strive to get Fresh products out to everyone. Keep an eye out for their beautiful stall; at this year's Launceston Fair it took home the award for Best Small Exhibitor.

### Local knowledge

Deloraine is home to the Tasmanian Craft Fair, the largest working display of arts and craft in Australia. Held in November each year, the event attracts

both international and national stall holders and guest exhibitors. Visit [www.tascraftfair.com.au](http://www.tascraftfair.com.au) for more information.

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## Cranberry Crafts

*Ulverstone*

Located four hours from Hobart, this specialty needlecraft store is a real treasure trove of both supplies and helpful advice.

You will find a variety of fabrics, linens, unusual threads and craft supplies at this great patchwork store that even offers a fantastic mail-order service for those who can't drop by. This

year, Cranberry Crafts has expanded to include wool and yarn for knitting and crochet, including gorgeous pure wools, 2-ply hand dyes and 10-ply aran, perfect for the rugged Tassie winter.

Store owner Lynne Morrison has a background in teaching patchwork and other fabric-related handcrafts and the quality of classes offered in store is a reflection of this.

"We have a number of workshops and tutors, with short two-hour

technique workshops or longer ones running over three to six weeks," says Lynne. "Our classes change for variety and we like to have teachers from other areas to bring new ideas to the coast." Classes are available in stitching and embroidery, machine-piecing patchwork methods, machine quilting, and learning to knit and crochet.

Lynne's expertise on all the specialty needlecraft and patchwork supplies means you always get quality advice and assistance.

### Local knowledge

Cranberry Crafts has a wonderful mission to help others and produces some amazing fundraising efforts each year for a variety of different causes.

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