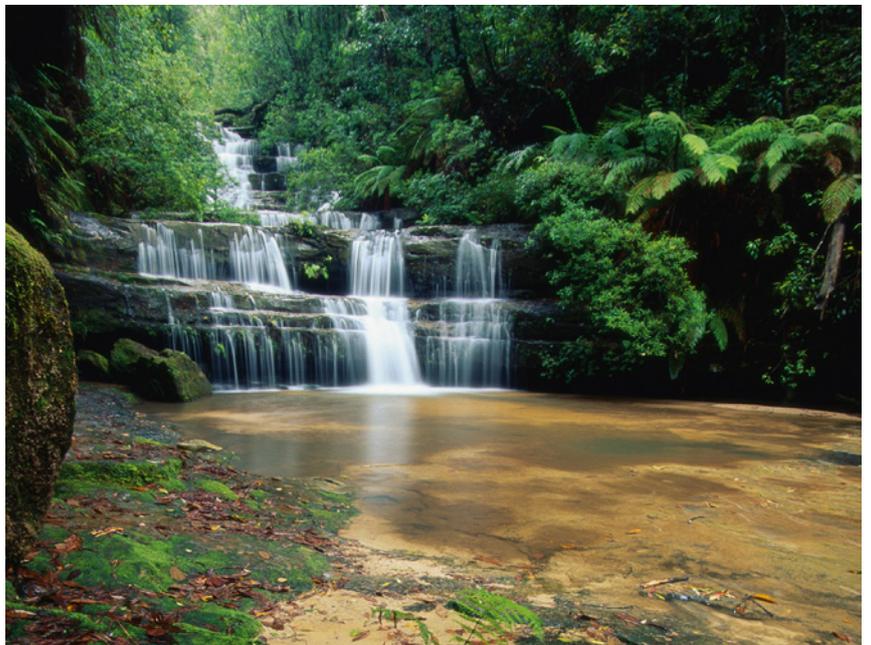


SIX FOOT TRACK

New South Wales – Blue Mountains

Katoomba – Megalong Valley – Cox's River – Jenolan Caves

Take in breathtaking Blue Mountains scenery and 200 years of history on this original 1884 horse track from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves. Suitable for walkers of average fitness, the 45km (28 miles) route can be broken into day walks or conquered comfortably in three days. True athletes can sign up for the tough and iconic Six Foot Marathon, but walking is the best way to absorb the scenery. Wind through fragrant bushland, past cliffs, caves and waterfalls. Spot kangaroos, wallaroos, echidnas, wombats, butterflies and many of the 150 bird species that live along the track. Camp along the way at three campgrounds, two with basic facilities, or pitch your tent in the tranquil bushland. The best time to walk is during spring and autumn, when you can avoid the summer heat and cold winter nights.



DAY ONE

KATOOMBA TO MEGALONG VALLEY

Start at the heritage-listed Explorer's Tree, where explorers Gregory Blaxland, William Wentworth and William Lawson carved their initials in 1813. The track meanders past peppermint and grand mountain ash trees before dropping sharply through the steep cliff walls of Nellie's Glen. Named after the daughter of an early Katoomba businessman, this cool, moist rainforest is home to coachwood, black wattle, cedar wattle, king fern and many rarer shrubs and ferns. Walk past tranquil Bonnie Doon Falls and through the rainforest and Sydney blue gums of magical Megalong – an Aboriginal name thought to mean 'valley beneath the cliffs'. The Gundungurra and Gandangara speaking Aboriginal people moved nomadically between Megalong and other valleys along Dreaming pathways. See the site of the last recorded Gundungurra corroboree and the cricket ground where Aboriginal teams played the Megalong settlers in the 1890s. A sign marks the abandoned shale mining village, where up to 40 settler families lived between 1885 and 1904.

AT A GLANCE



- Katoomba – Megalong Valley 13 km (8 mile)
- Megalong Valley – Cox's River 7.5 km (4.6 mile)
- Cox's River – Jenolan Caves 29 km (18 mile)

DAYS TWO AND THREE

**MEGALONG VALLEY TO
COX'S RIVER**

Continue across the rolling green hills of Megalong Valley, past stands of scribbly gum. The strange markings on the trunks are caused by insect larvae feeding under the bark. The track winds along the steep-sided sandy banks of Cox's River – a great place to revive on a hot summer day. Afterwards you can picnic in the shade of river oak and forest red gums, listening to the warble of bellbirds, cockatoos and lyrebirds. You'll need to relax before attempting the Bowtells Swing Bridge. Built by engineers from the Holsworthy army base in 1992, it can be crossed by only one person at a time so tread carefully. On the other side you can collapse in the dedicated campsite or in bunk-style lodges by the river.

COX'S RIVER TO JENOLAN CAVES

Prepare for a challenging climb over the Mini Mini Saddle to the track's highest point on the Black Range. Grab your breath and some gorgeous views before the level walk along the ridgeline. You'll pass Little River, a tributary of the Cox's River, and then the Alum Creek campsite. Wind close to Jenolan Road, past trees of grey gum, stringybark and the blackwood after which the Black Range was probably named. Your final descent is to the labyrinth-like Jenolan Caves – one of the largest underground cave systems in the world. Tour Lucas and Imperial caves and marvel at the delicate crystalline decorations of Orient Cave. Step over underground rivers and past prehistoric formations. Get goosebumps on a ghost tour or enjoy a monthly cave concert with natural acoustics and fairytale ambience. After two nights sleeping rough, you can reward yourself with a night in a grand hotel or comfortable bed and breakfast.



USEFUL LINKS

Prepare for this walk
http://www.lpmoa.nsw.gov.au/about_recreation/walking_tracks/six_foot_track