

Top Three Hiking Treks on Planet Earth

*You set the mountains in place by your strength, showing your mighty power,
You calm the roar of the seas and the noise of the waves...
The whole world stands in awe of the great things you have done...
You show care for the land by sending rain; you make it rich and fertile.
You fill the streams with water...
The pastures are filled with flocks; the hillsides are full of joy...
Everything shouts and sings for joy (Psalm 65:6-13 Good News Bible).*

Trek 1: Himalayan Trek

This Himalayan trek is a classic for good reason: It encapsulates the best of Nepal, wrapping around the stunning Annapurna range to put you in the shadow of peaks that pierce 7925 metres. Yak herds, eagle-like Himalayan griffons, blue sheep, (so called because of the blue-grey hue their coat turns in winter), fluttering Buddhist prayer flags, and hot springs dot this central Nepal route, which starts in lush green foothills and climbs into high-altitude desert typical of the Tibetan plateau. The beautiful lakeside town of Pokhara offers plentiful opportunities for comfortable accommodation and inexpensive dining.

Trek 2: Tasmanian Wilderness

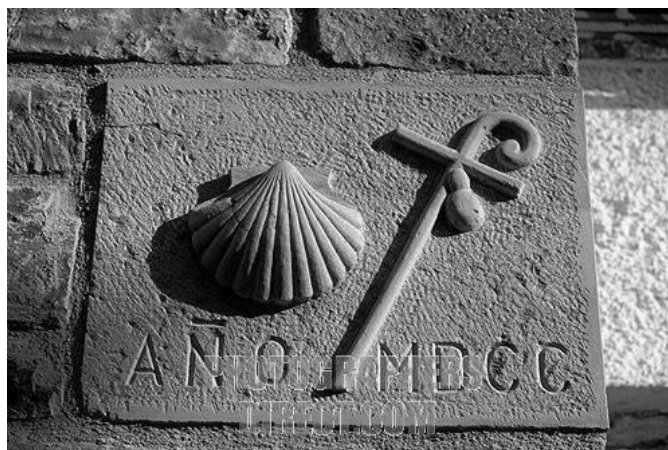
It's a six-day walk, travelling 65 kilometres through the heart of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The Overland Track from Cradle Mountain to Lake St. Clair is a true wilderness walk which travels through spectacular dolerite mountains, near beautiful waterfalls, through a variety of fascinating ecosystems and close to Tasmania's highest mountain, before finishing at Australia's deepest lake, Lake St Clair. The stunning scenery and the physical challenges of this mountain walk have ensured that the Overland Track has built an international reputation as one of the great wilderness treks.

Trek 3: The Way of St. James

The Way of St. James has existed for over a thousand years. It was one of the most important Christian pilgrimages during medieval times; Legend holds that the brother of Jesus, St. James' body was carried by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain where he was buried on the site of what is now the city of Santiago de Compostela. The route is named one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. There are many starting points but the most popular are Paris, Vézelay, Le Puy and Arles. The trek travels through splendid small villages and countryside and special hostels for pilgrims are spaced along the journey.

Activity questions

1. In what country does each walk occur?
2. Which would be the easiest walk physically?
3. Which would take the longest time?
4. Work out an equipment list for the first two treks.
5. If you took 5 photographs for a web site on one of the treks, what would these key photos show?
6. Why do people of your age and even retirees take on such arduous tourist activities instead of sitting about a hotel pool or golf course?
7. What negative impact do tourists have on the three sites?
8. What are the positive impact points? What might a Christian tourist add?
9. There are books and web sites that list "10 treks that you must do before you die." Create a list of 10 places that you want to visit on the planet before you die. Be ready to justify your choice for the top 3.
10. Produce an A4 brochure to promote one of these treks or another of your choice e.g. Kokoda Trail, Inca Trail, Mt. Kilimanjaro, and Torres Del Paine.
11. Your brochure should include a map, web sites for reference and details of the main attractions.
12. Why is this shell so important to one of the treks?
13. MDCC are Latin numerals for which year?



14. Can you see the cradle beyond the lake? What kind of climatic zone does this reflect?



15. There is a famous city where the body of St. Mark is supposed to be buried. Which city has claim to his remains? (Hint: it is in northern Italy and the streets are made of water).
16. Life is a trek, Jesus says, "I am the way"and *Pilgrim's Progress* is a famous story of such a trek that is life-changing (Jn 14:6). Write a paragraph explaining the link between Jn 14:6 and the story of *Pilgrim's Progress*.
17. "Take nothing for the journey except a staff - no bread, no bag, no money in your belts" (Mk 6:8). This sounds like a recipe for disaster. Write a paragraph explaining how you think the ambassadors of Jesus could exist or even merely survive with such trekking orders.

References:

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