



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



papalars

National Park and Wilderness Tour

Seattle, Port Angeles, 4 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Take a tour of the most spectacular parks and wilderness area* on the continent! There are four main options for getting a chance to see the beautiful mountains, rivers and forests in the Northwest and you should decide based on what interests you most and how hard you want to work to get there. If you love beaches and forests, the Pacific Coast and the Olympic National Park are your best bet. If you pine for jagged peaks and alpine lakes, Mt. Rainier or the Alpine Lakes Wilderness are spectacular. If you're most interested in volcanic geology then you should drive down to Mt. St. Helens. All of these options require a car rental unless you want to sit on a crowded bus for a guided tour. You should allow two days for each destination as the drive time is lengthy and you'll want to have a chance to really enjoy each place. If you're backpacking, plan for three days minimum so you can have a day of decompression and gourmet food in Seattle before you head back to your daily grind (see 7 days in Seattle). Be sure to pick up some local gourmet snacks at Pike Place Market. If you need any camping gear Northface, Feathered Friends and REI are all downtown.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Port Angeles, Seattle

DAY NOTE: To get to the Olympic Rain Forest you take the ferry from Seattle to Bainbridge and head north to Port Townsend. Drive along Highway 1 around the northern tip of the Peninsula, through Forks to the west coast. You'll hit the Hoh Rainforest and the Queets River both of which have extraordinarily lush emerald green rain forests and pristine rivers teeming with salmon. You can get a permit from the Tribal office if you want to check out the Sea Stacks on the beaches near the Queets, but if you drive south you get to the coastal section of the Olympic National Forest. Third Beach is a mile hike from the road and offers secluded primitive campsites and spectacular views. If you're not interested in camping there are cabins for rent along the beach and motels in Forks but you may need to call ahead during the summer months. It's also entirely possible to rent a beach house for larger groups, some of which have hot tubs and saunas. The restaurants aren't the best so you may want to pack some fruit, baguettes, cheese and cured meats from Pike Place Market for the trip. When you eat out, the fish of the day or crab is always the best option.



Port Angeles, Washington

Small town in lovely setting



Hood Canal Ranger District

The Hood Canal District is sandwiched between the Olympic National Park to the west and Hood Canal to the east and reaches from the Buckhorn Wilderness to the areas south of Lake Cushman.



Sol Duc

This site lies in the upper Sol Duc River valley. It provides access to hiking, fishing, backpacking and horseback riding.



Olympic Rain Forest Scenic Drive

For those who prefer to experience the beauty of the Olympic Rain Forest from their automobile, the following route allows you to see a wide variety of features within a short period of time.



Olympic National Park

This site lies between the northern park boundary and Port Angeles. It is the main information center for Olympic National Park.



Queets

This facility consists of 20 tent sites in the temperate rain forest of the Queets River valley. It is open during periods of high visitor use.



North Fork

This site lies at the end of North Shore Road in the North Fork Quinault River valley. It supports seven tent sites.



Hoh Visitor Center

This site contains exhibits on the plant and animal communities of the Hoh rain forest. It is staffed by park employees during the summer months.



Hoh

This facility lies in the Hoh temperate rain forest in the upper Hoh River valley. It is open year round on a first come, first served basis.



Hoh Rain Forest

Hall of Mosses

Day 2 - Seattle

DAY NOTE: To get to Mt. Rainier takes four hours so plan to get up early. Drive south on I 5 and exit at Puyallup then follow the signs east to the park. You'll notice the change in the forests as soon as you enter the park since all the forests around it have been cut in the last 100 years. This park is one of the crown jewels of the National Park System. Towering Douglas fir and Cedar trees dapple the twisting road in sunlight and as you wind your way up to the various visitors' centers; the forest you're driving through is hundreds of years old. Stop at Long Fellow for a short hike around the lake, rinse your face in the mineral spring for good health and then continue up to the aptly named Paradise Visitors' Center where you can get an ice cream cone before you hike up into breathtaking alpine meadows. You'll need to make reservations if you want to camp in the park during the summer months, otherwise there are plenty of cabins and lodges just outside the park. The restaurants aren't the best so you may want to pack some fruit, baguettes, cheese and cured meats from Pike Place Market.



White River

This campground lies on the eastern flanks of Mt. Rainier at an elevation of 4,400 feet. It provides access to hiking, fishing and backpacking.



White River Ranger District

The White River Ranger District, located in the southern portion of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest offers numerous recreational activities, spectacular views and scenic drives.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 3

DAY NOTE: Mt. St. Helens erupted on May 18th 1980. Shaken by an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale, the north face of this tall symmetrical mountain collapsed in a massive rock debris avalanche. Nearly 230 square miles of forest was blown down or buried beneath volcanic deposits. The eruption lasted 9 hours, but Mount St. Helens and the surrounding landscape were dramatically changed within moments. The landscape has been slowly recovering from a barren moonscape ever since. The chance to witness first hand the devastating effects of a catastrophic volcanic eruption is a once in a lifetime experience so if you have time you should definitely take the trip. It's a 4.5 hour drive so plan to wake up early. Head south on I 5 until you see the signs, then head east to the park entrance. Once you get there you will stop at Johnston Ridge Observatory and continue up to the Mt. St. Helens Visitors' Center. You can hike around both visitor's centers but the best vantage points are from trails leading from the main visitors' center. Knee high 20 year old saplings grow along the trails on the ridgeline are mostly accompanied by plants that have specific adaptations to deal with dry, nutrient poor environments since it is still essentially pure mineral matter. Some of the first animal pioneers that returned to Mt. St. Helens were elk who left droppings behind including the requisite seeds and nutrients that enabled the first colonizers of the barren landscape to survive. You'll see plenty of wildlife while you are there. If you have time, the south side of the park features the Ape Caves which were formed when underground corridors of lava rivers were left hollow after the eruption, they're perfect for spelunking so don't forget your flashlight. This is a truly educational experience, but lodging and food options are limited so be sure to book in advance and pack snacks for the road because the restaurants along the way leave much to be desired. Rose Tree Restaurant, El Compadre Restaurant and Gary's Original are fine. You can book a night in Hotel Blake or the Georgian Hotel if you don't plan to camp in the park. Campgrounds tend to fill up fast, but there are plenty of primitive campsites along the trail system. You will need reservations if you want a drive-in site but you may be able to negotiate with the Park Ranger in a pinch since there are so many late cancellations.

Day 4 - Seattle

DAY NOTE: Alpine Lakes Wilderness isn't for the faint of heart. If you don't have the gear you can rent it at REI. The hike in is 7-15 miles depending on which lake you are heading to. The views are absolutely spectacular so it's well worth the climb but be sure to pack accordingly. Even during the summer months you'll at least need a 0 degree bag at this elevation because it's a bit windy and there's nothing worse than a cold night's sleep after hiking all day. There are a few things you can pack to make

the hike so much easier and that's really all you should pack, carry a little with you as possible because by the 7th mile the extra pair of pants seems much heavier. Take a shell, a fleece, long underwear, shorts, quick dry pants and extra smart wool socks. You can do the hike in cross trainers but there is an easy stream crossing so bring some sandals. There is water so if you want to save some weight you can pack a water purifier and save yourself room for a nice single malt scotch or a bottle of wine from the Tasting Room or Delaurenti (don't forget your bottle opener). The best way to watch Aurora Borealis is with a perfect Barolo or Laphroaig. You'll need a tent and a sleeping pad because this is alpine terrain and it's exposed and even though the mossy meadows are relatively soft there are informal prime flat spots which due to use aren't quite as cushy but to limit damage to the area it is considered environmental etiquette to either stray far from the trail or confine your impact. Be sure to bring a bear bag and a rope to hang your food from a tree away from camp. The easiest way to make dinner is to infuse olive oil with chopped garlic, chili flakes black pepper and fresh basil and use that as the base for everything you make. If you bring a collapsible fishing pole you can probably catch trout but bring plenty of pasta just in case. Prosciutto and fresh sage is a nice addition especially if you don't catch any fish because you'll have quite an appetite. Pack a couple of baguettes (you can hang them off the side of your pack), specialty cheeses and a stick of salami for lunch. Cucumbers and carrots are easy to pack but tomatoes always perish. Give up on gourmet coffee, it's too much work. Nescafe with hot chocolate makes a pretty darn good mocha and a gourmet black or green tea always tastes wonderful at that elevation. Breakfast oatmeal with freshly picked huckleberries from around the campsite is so delicious (I know it's prohibited to remove anything from the park but they're so good and there are so many of them). Remember to pack a map, compass, first aid kit, flashlight, iodine, extra energy bars, space blanket, a few lighters and a fully charged cell phone but turn it off to save the battery and prevent any interruptions. Enjoy!!!!



North Bend Ranger District

The North Bend Ranger District, located in the south-central portion of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest offers numerous recreational activities, spectacular views and scenic drives.



Denny Creek Campground

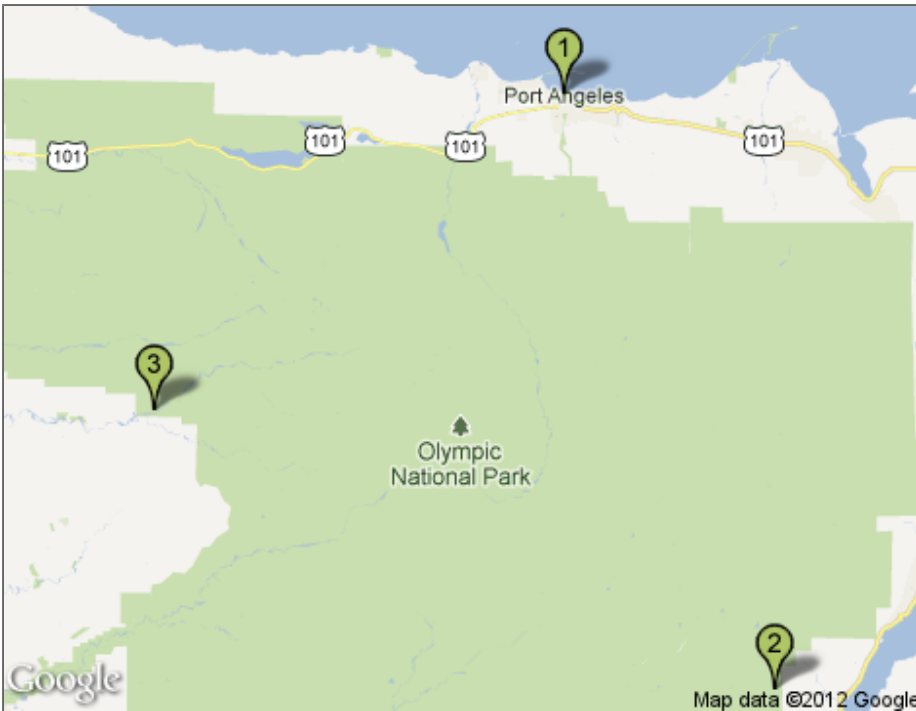
Denny Creek Campground, located along the Snoqualmie River, features 33 RV/Tent handicapped accessible sites.



Alpine Lakes Wilderness

Alpine Lakes Wilderness encompasses approximately 394,000 acres and is accessed by 47 trailheads and 615 miles of trails.

Day 1 - Port Angeles, Seattle



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: To get to the Olympic Rain Forest you take the ferry from Seattle to Bainbridge and head north to Port Townsend. Drive along Highway 1 around the northern tip of the Peninsula, through Forks to the west coast. You'll hit the Hoh Rainforest and the Queets River both of which have extraordinarily lush emerald green rain forests and pristine rivers teeming with salmon. You can get a permit from the Tribal office if you want to check out the Sea Stacks on the beaches near the Queets, but if you drive south you get to the coastal section of the Olympic National Forest. Third Beach is a mile hike from the road and offers secluded primitive campsites and spectacular views. If you're not interested in camping there are cabins for rent along the beach and motels in Forks but you may need to call ahead during the summer months. It's also entirely possible to rent a beach house for larger groups, some of which have hot tubs and saunas. The restaurants aren't the best so you may want to pack some fruit, baguettes, cheese and cured meats from Pike Place Market for the trip. When you eat out, the fish of the day or crab is always the best option.

contact:

tel: +1 360 452 2363 / +1
877 456 8372 (Port Angeles
Chamber of Commerce)
fax: +1 360 457 5380
<http://www.portangeles.org/>

location:

121 East Railroad Avenue
(Port Angeles Chamber of
Commerce)
Port Angeles WA 98362

1 Port Angeles, Washington

DESCRIPTION: Often a stopping point for ferry travelers bound for Victoria, BC, this small city is a worthwhile destination in its own right. For lodgings, try Domaine Madeleine Bed and Breakfast, and enjoy fine French dining at C'est Si Bon. Easy access to several spots in Olympic National Park makes this town a great starting point for outdoor adventures, with nearby Lake Crescent and Hurricane Ridge being especially popular. There's a small farmer's market every weekend, and plenty of concerts, theatrical events and shopping to keep you busy. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:
tel: 360-877-5254

location:
150 N. Lake Cushman Rd.
Hoodsport WA 98548

2 Hood Canal Ranger District

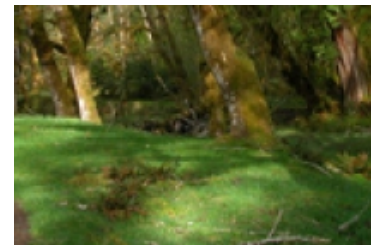
DESCRIPTION: The Hood Canal Ranger District abounds with recreational opportunities. From wilderness hiking through the enchanting Olympic Rain Forests, to mountain climbing, trail riding, and water sports, this district has it all. There are also a number of great extended hikes which access the scenic Olympic National Park. The Duckabush and Hamma Hamma Recreation Areas are two of the "hot spots" in the district and are both rich in recreational activities. From wilderness hiking through the enchanting Olympic Rain Forests, to mountain climbing, trail riding, and water sports, this district offers a wide range of recreational opportunities for enthusiasts of varied ages and abilities. The Hood Canal Ranger District encompasses the eastern stretch of the Olympic National Forest and includes the areas formerly administered by the Quilcene and Hoodsport Ranger Districts. This district is sandwiched between the Olympic National Park to the west and Hood Canal to the east and reaches from the Buckhorn Wilderness to the areas south of Lake Cushman. U.S. Highway 101 travels its length from north to south.

contact:
tel: 360-452-4501
www.nps.gov/olym/

location:
WA

Sol Duc

DESCRIPTION: The Sol Duc Campground lies 12 miles east of Highway 101 along the Sol Duc River Road. The facility lies within the montane forest community at an elevation of 1,680 feet. It consists of 82 individual and group sites available during periods of high visitation. The individual camping sites are available on a first come, first served basis, and the group sites are available by reservation. Amenities at this facility include drinking water, wheelchair accessible toilets, garbage removal and an RV dumping station. Each campsite consists of a picnic table, fire pit and grate.



Backpacker in the Hoh Rainforest

contact:
tel: 360-288-2525

location:
WA

Olympic Rain Forest Scenic Drive

DESCRIPTION: There are many ways to explore and enjoy the unique beauty of the Olympic Rain Forest. For those who prefer to experience the rain forest from their automobile, the following route provides excellent opportunities to see a wide variety of features within a relatively short period of time. Allow approximately one and a half hours to complete this 31 mile loop around Quinault Lake. You can begin your tour from any spot along the loop, however, the following description starts at the Forest Service Quinault Ranger Station on the South Shore of Quinault Lake. From the ranger station, drive northeast on the South Shore Road. Watch for open vistas of Quinault Lake as you travel past Falls Creek Campground (.1 mile), several recreational residences, and Gatton Creek Campground (.5 mile). The Gatton Creek site provides excellent opportunities to access the water's edge and has picnic facilities and toilets. Beyond the Forest boundary, the road continues through mixed ownership private lands. The Colonel Bob Trailhead (3.8 miles) is the major portal for hiking into the Colonel Bob Wilderness. Watch for Merriman Falls (4.4 miles) on the right side of the road. The road parallels the Quinault River for several miles, providing views of an ever-changing stream. Notice the wide river bed and large gravel bars. Near the Olympic National Park boundary (9.8 miles) there is a small but spectacular waterfall at Bunch Creek that can be seen from the road. Turn left at the next road junction (10.8 miles) and cross the Quinault River. Across the bridge the road forks again. Turn left and begin your tour along the North Shore. Look for Roosevelt Elk and other wildlife in the open fields. The Olympic National Park's Quinault River Ranger Station and a small Visitor Center (19.6 miles) provide a good opportunity to stretch. If time allows, walk the short half mile self-guided Maple Grove Nature Trail which begins near the Visitor Center. July Creek Campground (22 miles) is a walk-in campground. The route leaves the Park (25.3 miles) and intersects with Highway 101 (25.5 miles). Turn left onto Highway 101 and drive 2 miles to a road junction just across the Quinault River. Turn left after crossing the bridge. In a short mile, the road junctions with the South Shore Road. Turn left and drive to the Quinault Rain Forest Nature Trail (29.1 miles). This trailhead has a large parking lot and restrooms. The loop trail

offers an excellent opportunity to hike through lush understory, hanging mosses, and giant conifers. Small signs interpret the features of the rain forest. From the trailhead, the road continues northeast to Willaby Campground (29.4 miles). This popular site has a boat ramp and picnic facilities. The Lake Quinault Lodge (31.3 miles) is near the end of the loop. This rustic lodge has a gift shop and bar and provides meals and rooms with spectacular views. There is a gas station and small mercantile across from the lodge. A return to the Quinault Ranger Station completes the loop. NOTE: This route is mostly a two-lane paved surface road. However, there is a short, narrow, one lane section of gravel road north of the Park's Ranger Station on the North Shore. This section is not recommended for wide vehicles or trailers over 19 feet.

contact:
tel: 360-452-4501
www.nps.gov/olym/

Olympic National Park

DESCRIPTION: At Olympic National Park, you can reach nearly a mile in elevation with a trip to Hurricane Ridge, where you'll find a visitor center and nature trails. Beginning early in the morning will increase your chances of seeing wildlife and help avoid the larger number of visitors later in the day. From Hurricane Ridge, a three-hour drive to the west will bring you to the Hoh Rain Forest. A visitor center, picnic area and short nature trails can enhance your rain forest visit. After leaving the Hoh, an hour and a half drive toward the northwest will bring you to Rialto Beach on the Pacific Ocean in time for sunset. Grocery stores, restaurants and other amenities are available in the towns of Port Angeles, Forks and at other locations along Highway 101 and the park access roads.



photo courtesy of ((brian))

contact:
tel: 360-452-4501
www.nps.gov/olym/

location:
WA

Queets

DESCRIPTION: The Queets Campground lies along Queets River Road at an elevation of 290 feet, 13.5 miles northeast of the Olympic Highway. The temperate rain forest of the leeward Olympic Peninsula surrounds the campground. This campground consists of 20 sites that accommodate tents. There is no potable water available on site and all water obtained from the Queets River should be treated before consumption. This site provides access to the Queets River Trail for hiking, backpacking and stock packing. Permits, and information, are available at the Queets Ranger Station.



photo courtesy of Queets

contact:
tel: 360-452-4501
www.nps.gov/olym/

location:
WA

North Fork

DESCRIPTION: The North Fork Campground lies at the end of North Shore Road at an elevation of 520 feet. It consists of 7 individual camping sites that can accommodate tents. There is no drinking water provided at North Fork Campground. Each site includes a picnic table, fire pit and grate. Visitors to this site can enjoy hiking and backpacking in the Quinault River valley. Permits and information can be obtained at the North Fork Ranger Station located next to the campground.



Photo courtesy of North Fork

contact:
tel: 360-452-4501
www.nps.gov/olymp/

Hoh Visitor Center

DESCRIPTION: This visitor center focuses mainly on the temperate rain forest in the Hoh River valley. The site contains interpretive exhibits and informative literature on the park and its plant and animal communities. Also on site are three nature trails. Park Service staff is on hand at this site during the summer months to provide interpretive programs. The facility is usually not staffed during the winter months.

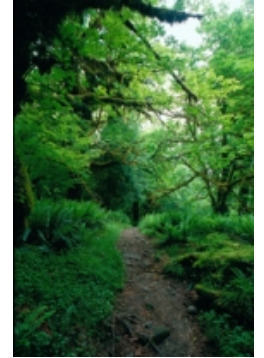


Photo courtesy of Hoh Visitor Center

contact:
tel: 360-452-4501
www.nps.gov/olymp/

Hoh

DESCRIPTION: This facility lies within the Hoh Rain Forest at an elevation of 578 feet. It provides access to trails within the Hoh River valley. Other facilities accessible from this campground include the Hoh Ranger Station, Picnic Area and Nature Trail. The ranger station provides naturalist programs during the summer months, open to all visitors. This site is open year round on a first come, first served basis. It consists of 88 sites some of which can accommodate trailers up to 21 feet in length. Campground amenities include drinking water, garbage collection, wheelchair accessible toilets and an RV dumping station. Each campsite consists of a picnic table, fire pit and grate.



A trail in the Hoh Rain Forest

location:
WA

contact:
tel: +1 360 374 6925 (Hoh Ranger Station)/ +1 360 452 4501 (Park Headquarters)
<http://www.northolympic.com/onp/hohforest.html>

3 Hoh Rain Forest

DESCRIPTION: With an average annual rainfall of 150 inches, this lush temperate rain forest requires waterproof shoes. Trees soar more than 300 feet into the sky, while mosses, lichens and mushrooms cover the ground. Three nature walks, including the trek through the Hall of Mosses, are easy enough for the entire family, while more adventurous hikers can load up the gear and spend the weekend along the Hoh River or on the slopes of Mount Olympus. The folks at the ranger station happily provide suggestions and maps to various points of interest. No matter which path you take, chances are you'll spot some wildlife: Raccoons, hares, elk and cougar all make their homes here. Nature lovers staying overnight will appreciate nearby Kalaloch Lodge, the only hotel in the vicinity. Overnight camping spots are available in the forest on a first-come, first-served basis, for \$10 per night. © wcities.com

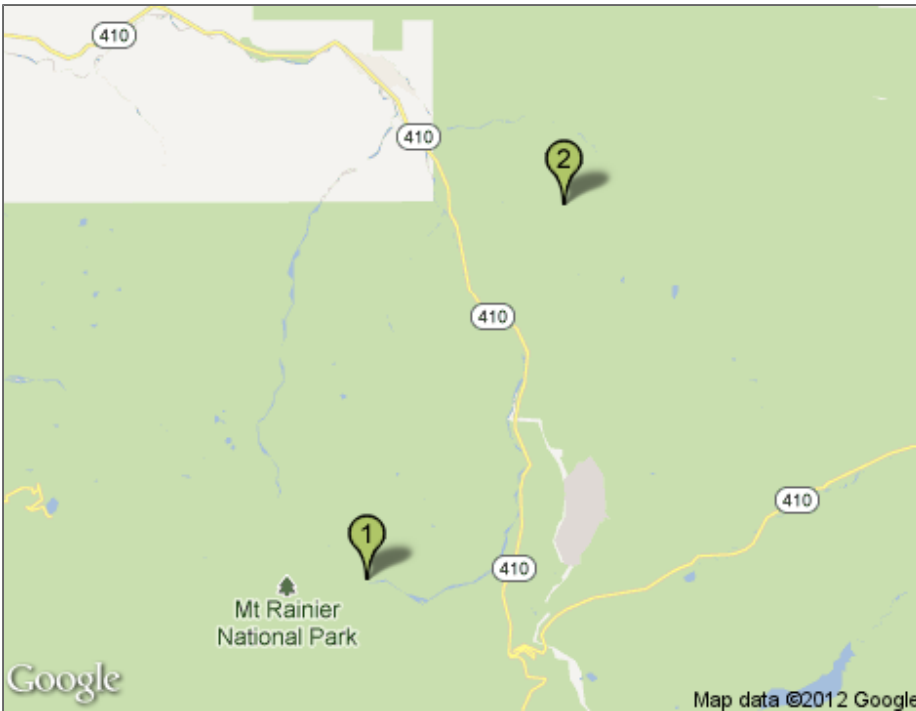


Hoh Rain Forest

location:
18 miles east of US Highway 101
Forks WA 98831

hours:
Call for details

Day 2 - Seattle



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: To get to Mt. Rainier takes four hours so plan to get up early. Drive south on I 5 and exit at Puyallup then follow the signs east to the park. You'll notice the change in the forests as soon as you enter the park since all the forests around it have been cut in the last 100 years. This park is one of the crown jewels of the National Park System. Towering Douglas fir and Cedar trees dapple the twisting road in sunlight and as you wind your way up to the various visitors' centers; the forest you're driving through is hundreds of years old. Stop at Long Fellow for a short hike around the lake, rinse your face in the mineral spring for good health and then continue up to the aptly named Paradise Visitors' Center where you can get an ice cream cone before you hike up into breathtaking alpine meadows. You'll need to make reservations if you want to camp in the park during the summer months, otherwise there are plenty of cabins and lodges just outside the park. The restaurants aren't the best so you may want to pack some fruit, baguettes, cheese and cured meats from Pike Place Market.

contact:
tel: 360-569-2211
www.nps.gov/mora/

location:
WA 98323

1 White River

DESCRIPTION: The White River Campground lies in the northeastern corner of the park at an elevation of 4,400 feet. The facility consists of 112 individual campsites available on a first come, first served basis from late June to September. Facilities at the White River Campground include water, flush-type toilets, a trailer dump station, garbage collection and a recycling service. Each site includes a picnic table and fire grate. Park visitors using this site will enjoy miles of hiking trails and close-up views of Emmons Glacier.



White River

contact:
tel: 360-825-6585

location:
450 Roosevelt Ave. East
Enumclaw WA 98022

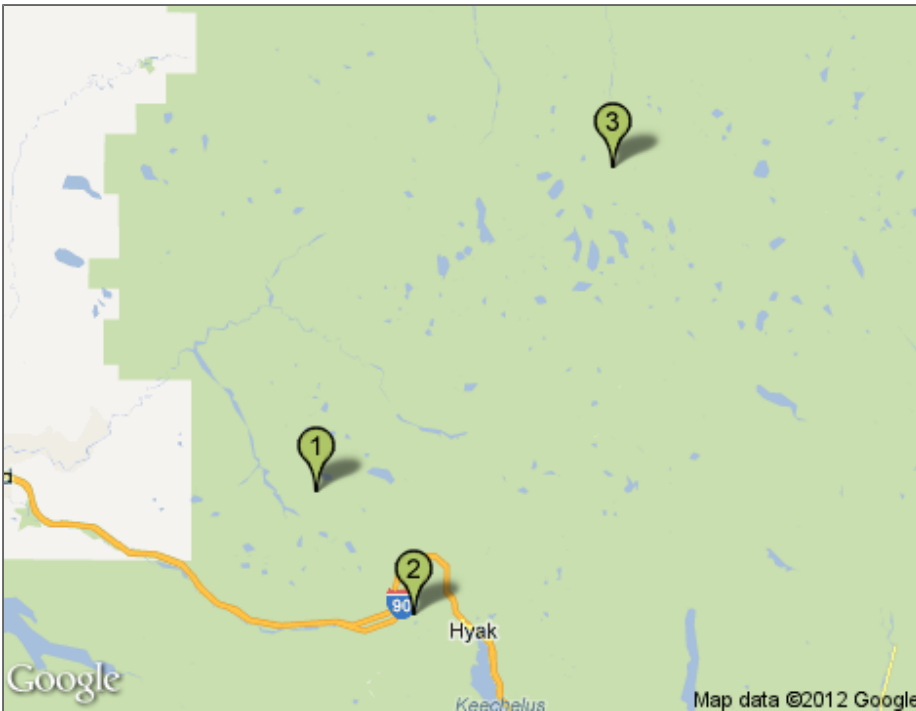
2 White River Ranger District

DESCRIPTION: The White River Ranger District is a picturesque area featuring glacier-cut valleys, snow capped peaks, forested ridges, scenic hiking trails and campgrounds. Bordered on the south by Mt. Rainier National Park, Clearwater Wilderness comprises 14,600 acres and affords many outstanding views. Norse Peak Wilderness is found in the eastern portion of the District and encompasses 51,000 acres. Some of the popular hiking trails are found within the wildernesses. A few of the trails within the Clearwater Wilderness include the Summit Lake Trail, Frog Mountain Trail, Clearwater Trail, and the Carbon Trail. The Norse Peak Wilderness hosts Arch Rock Trail, Lost Lake Trail, Noble Knob Trail as well as a popular section of the Pacific Crest Trail. The Dalles Campground is found along Hwy. 410. Plenty of recreational opportunities can be found in the White River Ranger District. Hiking, backpacking, mountain climbing, horseback riding, picnicking, viewing scenery and wildlife as well as alpine skiing and snowshoeing in the winter are just a few of the activities available to visitors. The White River Ranger District is located in northwestern Washington within the southern portion of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The District is bordered by the North Bend Ranger District to the north, the Wenatchee National Forest to the east, and the Mt. Rainier National Park to the south. The District can be accessed from Seattle via I-5 southbound and then east on State Hwy. 410 towards Mt. Rainier National Park.

Day 3

DAY NOTE: Mt. St. Helens erupted on May 18th 1980. Shaken by an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale, the north face of this tall symmetrical mountain collapsed in a massive rock debris avalanche. Nearly 230 square miles of forest was blown down or buried beneath volcanic deposits. The eruption lasted 9 hours, but Mount St. Helens and the surrounding landscape were dramatically changed within moments. The landscape has been slowly recovering from a barren moonscape ever since. The chance to witness first hand the devastating effects of a catastrophic volcanic eruption is a once in a lifetime experience so if you have time you should definitely take the trip. It's a 4.5 hour drive so plan to wake up early. Head south on I 5 until you see the signs, then head east to the park entrance. Once you get there you will stop at Johnston Ridge Observatory and continue up to the Mt. St. Helens Visitors' Center. You can hike around both visitor's centers but the best vantage points are from trails leading from the main visitors' center. Knee high 20 year old saplings grow along the trails on the ridgeline are mostly accompanied by plants that have specific adaptations to deal with dry, nutrient poor environments since it is still essentially pure mineral matter. Some of the first animal pioneers that returned to Mt. St. Helens were elk who left droppings behind including the requisite seeds and nutrients that enabled the first colonizers of the barren landscape to survive. You'll see plenty of wildlife while you are there. If you have time, the south side of the park features the Ape Caves which were formed when underground corridors of lava rivers were left hollow after the eruption, they're perfect for spelunking so don't forget your flashlight. This is a truly educational experience, but lodging and food options are limited so be sure to book in advance and pack snacks for the road because the restaurants along the way leave much to be desired. Rose Tree Restaurant, El Compadre Restaurant and Gary's Original are fine. You can book a night in Hotel Blake or the Georgian Hotel if you don't plan to camp in the park. Campgrounds tend to fill up fast, but there are plenty of primitive campsites along the trail system. You will need reservations if you want a drive-in site but you may be able to negotiate with the Park Ranger in a pinch since there are so many late cancellations.

Day 4 - Seattle



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Alpine Lakes Wilderness isn't for the faint of heart. If you don't have the gear you can rent it at REI. The hike in is 7-15 miles depending on which lake you are heading to. The views are absolutely spectacular so it's well worth the climb but be sure to pack accordingly. Even during the summer months you'll at least need a 0 degree bag at this elevation because it's a bit windy and there's nothing worse than a cold night's sleep after hiking all day. There are a few things you can pack to make the hike so much easier and that's really all you should pack, carry as little with you as possible because by the 7th mile the extra pair of pants seems much heavier. Take a shell, a fleece, long underwear, shorts, quick dry pants and extra smart wool socks. You can do the hike in cross trainers but there is an easy stream crossing so bring some sandals. There is water so if you want to save some weight you can pack a water purifier and save yourself room for a nice single malt scotch or a bottle of wine from the Tasting Room or Delaurenti (don't forget your bottle opener). The best way to watch Aurora Borealis is with a perfect Barolo or Laphroaig. You'll need a tent and a sleeping pad because this is alpine terrain and it's exposed and even though the mossy meadows are relatively soft there are informal prime flat spots which due to use aren't quite as cushy but to limit damage to the area it is considered environmental etiquette to either stray far from the trail or confine your impact. Be sure to bring a bear bag and a rope to hang your food from a tree away from camp. The easiest way to make dinner is to infuse olive oil with chopped garlic, chili flakes black pepper and fresh basil and use that as the base for everything you make. If you bring a collapsible fishing pole you can probably catch trout but bring plenty of pasta just in case. Prosciutto and fresh sage is a nice addition especially if you don't catch any fish because you'll have quite an appetite. Pack a couple of baguettes (you can hang them off the side of your pack), specialty cheeses and a stick of salami for lunch. Cucumbers and carrots are easy to pack but tomatoes always perish. Give up on gourmet coffee, it's too much work. Nescafe with hot chocolate makes a pretty darn good mocha and a gourmet black or green tea always tastes wonderful at that elevation. Breakfast oatmeal with freshly picked huckleberries from around the campsite is so delicious (I know it's prohibited to remove anything from the park but they're so good and there are so many of them). Remember to pack a map, compass, first aid kit, flashlight, iodine, extra energy bars, space blanket, a few lighters and a fully charged cell phone but turn it off to save the battery and prevent any interruptions. Enjoy!!!!

contact:
tel: 425-888-1421

location:
42404 SE North Bend Way
North Bend WA 98045

1 North Bend Ranger District

DESCRIPTION: The North Bend Ranger District is a picturesque area featuring glacier-cut valleys, snow capped peaks, forested ridges, scenic hiking trails and campgrounds. Alpine Lakes Wilderness encompasses approximately 394,000 acres and is accessed by 47 trailheads and 615 miles of trails. The name Alpine Lakes takes its origin from the nearly 700 small mountain lakes nestled like jewels among the high rock peaks and timbered valleys of the region. There are two developed campgrounds found within the District. Denny Creek Campground and Tinkham Campground are found just off of I-90 near Snoqualmie Pass. Plenty of recreational opportunities can be found in the North Bend Ranger District. Hiking, backpacking, mountain climbing, horseback riding, picnicking, viewing scenery and wildlife as well as alpine skiing and snowshoeing in the winter are just a few of the activities available to visitors. The North Bend Ranger District is located in northwestern Washington within the central portion of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The District is bordered by the Skykomish Ranger District to the north, the Wenatchee National Forest to the east, and the White River Ranger District to the south. The District can be accessed from Seattle via I-90 eastbound.

contact:
tel: 425-888-1421

location:
WA 98068

2 Denny Creek Campground

DESCRIPTION: Denny Creek Campground, located along the Snoqualmie River, features 33 RV/ Tent handicapped accessible sites, potable water, toilets, campfire pits, picnic tables, and garbage facilities.

contact:
tel: 425-775-9702

location:
WA 98288

3 Alpine Lakes Wilderness

DESCRIPTION: The name Alpine Lakes takes its origin from the nearly 700 small mountain lakes nestled like jewels among the high rock peaks and timbered valleys of the region. With nearly 150,000 visitors each year, many with little understanding of wilderness ethics, the Alpine Lakes is hard to manage under the guidelines of the 1964 Wilderness Act. In order to preserve the integrity of the Wilderness it has become necessary to impose restrictions in many areas. The recreational opportunities are plentiful within the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. Hiking, backpacking, dispersed camping, fishing, horseback riding, and mountain climbing activities are numerous. The Alpine Lakes Wilderness is located in the rugged Central Cascades region of Washington state and is jointly administered by the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Wenatchee National Forest. The Wilderness is primarily located within the Skykomish and North Bend Ranger Districts. The Wilderness can be accessed from the north via U.S. Hwy. 2 off of Forest Roads #6410, #68, #6830, and #6095 and from the south via I-90 off of Forest Roads #0606, #9030 and #144.

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location:

WA

1 Staircase

DESCRIPTION: This site lies at the end of Jorsted Creek Road in the southeastern corner of Olympic National Park. It provides access to the trails within the North Fork Skokomish River valley. The facility consists of 59 individual campsites available during high visitation periods on a first come, first served basis. Amenities at the Staircase Campground include drinking water, garbage collection and wheelchair accessible toilets. Each site consists of a picnic table, fire pit and grate. The Staircase Ranger Station lies near the campground and provides trail information and backcountry permits.



Photo courtesy of Staircase

Seattle Snapshot

Local Info

If all you know about Seattle is rainy days and the Space Needle, come take a closer look. Seattle (which, incidentally, gets less rainfall per year than New York City) is divided into several neighborhoods, each with their own main strips, nightlife, parks and exciting points of interest. Pick a zone, any zone, and spend the day getting to know the real Seattle.

Ballard

One of the most popular neighborhoods for those not willing to live "in" the city, Ballard has a personality all its own. Golden Gardens Park is a great place for a walk or bike ride, and there's plenty of drinks and seafood available at restaurants like Bad Albert's Tap & Grill and Ray's Boathouse.

Capitol Hill

A political-sounding name for what is unmistakably a liberal, life-loving neighborhood. If you've only got a few days in Seattle, you could easily spend an entire day just in Capitol Hill, checking out the Seattle Asian Art Museum, grabbing a latte at one of dozens of cafes, or browsing for books at the Elliot Bay Bookstore's new location.

Fremont

"Welcome to the Center of the Universe"; this is the sign that greets you in Fremont, and it only gets quirkiest from there. There's the famous Fremont Troll hiding under the Aurora Bridge, as well as a statue of none other than Lenin in the center of the neighborhood. This is the place for the Fremont Oktoberfest (for beer lovers) and Fremont Fair and Solstice Parade (for those who can't get enough of the naked body-paint bike parade). Of course, there's shops, cafes and restaurants galore, each with its own flavor and personality.

Madison Park

Looking for a relaxing day to take a stroll, see a few sights and find a nice cafe to chat over a cup of coffee? Madison Park has all this and more, with the Madison Park & Beach offering gorgeous views, and the bistro-style menu at Madison Park Café offering classic French food and wine, the perfect end to the day.

International District

If dim sum, sushi, or bibimbap is what you're craving, head to the International District, east of downtown Seattle. In addition to a selection of various Asian restaurants, take some great family photos under the pagoda at Hing Hay Park, or visit the Wing Luke, a small museum that offers a big peek into the art and culture of Japan and China.

Kirkland

Kirkland, in a word, is classy. A quick drive across the lake brings you to a selection of trendy cafes, fabulous art galleries, and world class restaurants like Trellis, which features a menu of seasonal, "farm-to-table" meals. Wine enthusiasts will appreciate not only the many wineries, but also Kirkland Uncorked, the neighborhood's annual "Wine, Dine and Design" festival.

Pike Place Market

The market on any given weekend is buzzing with tourists and locals alike, sampling fresh local produce, checking out the catch of the day, or shopping for the perfect souvenir. Pike Place is the United States' oldest farmer's market, and in addition to groceries boasts a huge variety of restaurants, including the original Starbucks. Piroshky Piroshky is an iconic stop, where visitors line up to purchase delicious sweet and savory Russian piroshkys, and a hot bread bowl of seafood bisque or one of several chowders at Pike Place Chowder is the perfect meal on a chilly, gray day.

Pioneer Square

As the historic area of Seattle, Pioneer Square is one of the biggest tourist attractions in the city. History lovers will adore the Underground Tour, which leads you beneath the city to the original Seattle. This is also a popular area for nightlife, with options like a drink at Central Saloon or an evening belting out your favorite tunes at 88 Keys Dueling Piano Bar.

Queen Anne Hill

This is what suburbs are meant to be; at least, for those who don't want to give up the convenience and quirk of the city. Queen Anne manages to be both trendy and understated, from indie bookshops like Queen Anne Books to the hip martini stop Tini Bigs.

Redmond

Its country location doesn't hide the fact that Redmond is home to huge corporations, including Microsoft and Nintendo, which make this one of the more affluent neighborhoods. Both Marymoor Park and the Lake Sammamish State Park are on the list for cyclists and walkers, and for those more interested in shopping, check out Redmond Town Center.

Seattle Center

So much more than just the Space Needle; if you're looking for a place to take the kids on a nice day, Seattle Center is the place to be. In addition to famous Seattle events like Bumbershoot and The Bite of Seattle, the center has plenty of restaurants, rides and arcade games for the kids, as well as the Pacific Science Center, Seattle Opera, and Intiman Theater. Museum lovers can't miss Seattle's famous Experience Music Project/Science Fiction Museum & Hall of Fame, which is also the end of the Monorail (which goes straight to Westlake Center).

University District

That's a mouthful; locals call it "U-Dub," the neighborhood known for fantastic restaurants, bars, shops, and the beautiful campus of the University of Washington. This is a hip, energetic neighborhood with everything from clubs to farmer's markets, as well as the fabulous University Bookstore. For Apple geeks, University Village houses the only full Apple Store in Seattle.

Waterfront

Get your quintessential West Coast fix with a stroll along Seattle's Waterfront, with an endless supply of picturesque scenes perfect for capturing a great family photo. In addition to the ferry terminal, where you can head off to Bainbridge or Bremerton Islands, you can also catch a fun water taxi over to West Seattle (much more fun than the long bus ride). Some of Seattle's most well-known restaurants are on the waterfront, including Elliott's Oyster House and Ivar's, and kids and adults alike will have a blast at the Seattle Aquarium.

West Seattle

Five minutes strolling down the street, sand and ocean on one side and bungalow-

Seattle Snapshot continued

style houses, burger joints and cafes on the other, you'll swear you were in California instead of Washington. The West Seattle

vibe is laid back and a popular place for water sports as well as bikers and joggers. Don't miss Alki Beach, Seattle's most famous beach, where you can lay in the

sun with a view of downtown on the other side of the bay.

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