



THE OLYMPIC PENINSULA

A good ferry system, a few artfully placed bridges and excellent roadways link Seattle to the nearby mountains, peninsulas and network of waterways that surround the city. Day trips can easily extend into longer excursions, as each point of interest leads to another. All roads – and ferries – lead in a scenic route back to Seattle.

The Olympic Peninsula lies directly west of Seattle, separated from the mainland by the Kitsap Peninsula.

Catch one of the frequent ferries from the waterfront terminal at the foot of Yesler Way to Winslow for a pleasant 35-minute ride across Puget Sound to **Bainbridge Island**. Infrequent buses run from the ferry dock here but you'll really need a car to do this route justice. Head about 15 miles north on Route 305 over the Agate Pass Bridge onto the **Kitsap Peninsula**, where a quick right on Suquamish Way leads to the grave of Chief Sealth, the Salish Indian chief for whom Seattle was named. Nearby is the **Suquamish Museum** with its excellent collection of Salish Indian artifacts.

Along route 104 is **Poulsbo**, a charming Scandinavian fishing village nicknamed "Little Norway" because of its fjord-like setting on Liberty Bay and the Nordic families who emigrated here a century ago. Famous throughout the state is Poulsbo Bread, baked fresh daily at Sluys Bakery. At certain times of the year Bainbridge Island is redolent with another aroma – that of the strawberries grown here, some of which go to flavor one of the products of the **Bainbridge Winery** just north of Winslow's ferry dock.

Before crossing the bridge over Hood Canal – a channel really – a worthwhile diversion is to **Port Gamble**, one of the last lumber towns to boast a fully operational mill, the oldest in North America. Built by the Pope and Talbot timber families, who arrived by clipper ship

from Maine in the 1850s, the town's original trading center serves today as **The Country Store**. Passing over the immense Hood Canal Floating Bridge puts travelers on the **Olympic Peninsula** and into **Port Ludlow**, another timber town which was transformed into a bustling recreation and retirement community in the 1960s: this is the Resort at Port Ludlow, on the site of the original mill, a 148-unit complex against a backdrop of the verdant Olympic Mountains.

To the Strait: Follow the signs north toward the Strait of Juan de Fuca, where picturesque towns dot the shoreline west to the Pacific Ocean. Paradise Bay Road leads to historic **Port Townsend**, Washington's "Victorian City," settled in 1850 and the main port of entry into Puget Sound until the town went bust in the 1890s. Filled with Victorian architecture, elegant inns and restored hotels, the charming shops that line historic Water Street and the Uptown Business District (originally built so that refined ladies did not have to go down to the rough waterfront) make for a delightful afternoon browse. This is a town with a few claims to fame: the Port Townsend Jazz Festival, which draws people from all over the country in July, nearby **Fort Worden State Park**, where *An Officer and a Gentleman* was filmed, and **Manresa Castle**, a 40-room medieval-style castle built by a Prussian baker for his young wife in 1872 from the proceeds of his business of supplying the outgoing ships with bread. Later it was to house Jesuit priests and is now an imposing inn with an excellent kitchen. A ferry service connects Port Townsend and Whidbey Island, making Port Townsend a convenient place from which to island-hop.

Follow Route 20 south to regain Highway 101 at **Discovery Bay**, then look for the giant wooden hamburger that sits in front of Fat Smitty's restaurant, a testament to the Pacific Northwest's penchant for chainsaw art. Grab one of Smitty's "obese burgers," then

Preceding pages: above Olympic's Anderson Glacier. **Left,** Hoh Valley Rain Forest, Olympic National Park.

head for sunny **Sequim** (pronounced *skwim*), famous for its peculiar name and because it sits in the middle of a rain shadow cast by the Olympic Mountains (which means that the sun actually shines here). Six miles northwest lies **Dungeness Spit**, the longest sand spit in the country and famous for its Dungeness Crab, a delicious hard-shell crab available in many of Washington State's restaurants. Stop at the **Olympic Game Farm**, where a few movie star animals now reside: Ben, from *Grizzly Adams*, Charlie, the lonesome cougar, and other animal matinee idols.

Continue on 101 to **Port Angeles**, the largest port city on the northern Olympic Peninsula and the spot either to hop a ferry to Vancouver Island or enter Olympic National Park. Port Angeles boasts a huge harbor and the Clallam County Historical Museum, housed in an historic Georgian-style courthouse; a spectacular view of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Victoria Island lies to the north, of the Olympic



Mountains to the south. To enter the park, take Race Street to the well-marked **Hurricane Ridge Road** to begin the steep 17-mile ascent to the Ridge, 5,200 feet above sea level.

From here is the best view of **Mount Olympus**, the glaciers and the high country, with the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Canada's Vancouver Island in the distance. No roads lead into Mount Olympus, only hiking trails; in winter months, Hurricane Ridge is the only place in the Olympics from which to cross-country and downhill ski. Mount Olympus towers 7,965 feet over the surrounding mountains.

Follow 101 for 5 miles beyond Port Angeles as it curves south around **Lake Crescent**, an immense cobalt-blue glacier lake surrounded by tall-timbered forest; Lake Crescent Lodge, on the southern shore, is where Franklin D. Roosevelt stayed in 1937, immediately before he signed the act to create the 922,000-acre **Olympic National Park**. Head west along 101 and south down Soleduck River Road to Sol Duc Hot Springs and resort where, for a minimal fee, the Olympic-size pool or hot (102–109° F) mineral pools are open to guests and non-guests. A lovely 1-mile hike through the rain forest leads to **Soleduck Falls** and another none-too-fancy geothermal spring, Olympic Hot Springs. Rocks dam up the waters to form soaking pools, many of which are so shallow a person must lie completely flat to benefit from the springs.

Neah Bay: Seventy-two miles west of Port Angeles along route 112 at the northernmost tip of the state lies the remote Indian fishing and whaling village of Neah Bay on the **Makah Indian Reservation**. Ivan Doig's *Winter Brothers*, the journal of a man who lived with the Makah Indians during the 1800s, offers modern readers fresh insight into the ancient Makah culture. Today sportsfishing for sturgeon and shark is a big attraction, while non-fishermen can enjoy whale-watching during the spring months. Nearby

Port Townsend was once wealthier than Seattle.

Tatoosh Island hosts elephant seals.

Neah Bay is renowned for its Makah Cultural and Research Center and the \$2 million museum filled with Northwest Indian artifacts, such as a replica of a longhouse that served as the hub of Makah village life and photomurals from turn-of-the-century pictures by Edward S. Curtis. Most of the Indian artifacts, more than 55,000, were discovered on the archaeological dig at nearby **Lake Ozette**. Considered one of the most important archaeological finds in North America, the original village was buried by a mudslide more than 500 years ago when the clay soil sealed the contents of the houses remarkably, preserving them for posterity. The dig has, sadly, been closed since 1981 because of a lack of funding.

Head south to regain 101, which ambles down the coast on the western edge of the Olympic National Park. Here a long lineup of beautiful rugged beaches and coastal resorts make easy jumping off points into the park. The only sizable

Victorians built the city to hold 20,000; it dwindled to 3,500.

community on this side of the peninsula is **Forks**, which lies at the midpoint of the Olympic Peninsula and boasts more rainfall than any other town in the United States, around 140-inches per year. Thirteen miles west of Forks lies **Rialto Beach**, a favorite spot for international fashion photographers to capture their lovely models trying not to shiver in the winter winds. Notable along this stretch of beach is **La Push**, a Quileute Indian village known for its jagged rock-lined beach, interesting offshore rock stacks and famous 16-mile beach walk, certainly one of the finest in the world. It is a favorite spot for those in search of Japanese glass floats (which come in with the tide!). Any of the resorts along this stretch make for an easy drive to the rain forests that line the Hoh, Bogachiel, Queets and in Quinalt rivers.

Only three rain forests exist in the world: in Chile, in New Zealand and on the western side of the Olympic Peninsula. The helpful **Hoh Rain Forest**

