



Olympic Peninsula
Tourism Commission
2024 Media Kit



Located in Washington's northwest corner, the Olympic Peninsula is a land like no other. It is both environmentally and culturally rich. From the jigsaw coastlines, temperate rain forests, and glacial-capped peaks of Olympic National Park to the organic farms and wineries of the Dungeness and Chimacum Valleys; from the cultural centers of native tribes dotting the Highway 101 Pacific Coast Scenic Byway to the maritime history of its port towns, there's an adventure for every age and spirit here.

Olympic

PENINSULA



*Holiday Lights
Blyn, WA*



Hurricane Ridge, Olympic National Park

Olympic National Park

A Modern-day Eden

The Olympic Peninsula is home to the 1,400 - square - mile [Olympic National Park](#). A designated UNESCO World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve, the park has three distinctly different ecosystems; the Pacific coastline, the Olympic Mountains and the primeval rain forests. In 1976, Olympic became an International Biosphere Reserve; and in 1981, it was designated a World Heritage Site. These diverse ecosystems are still largely pristine due to its wilderness designations.

The wild and rugged coastline along the Pacific Ocean stretches over 70 miles and is the longest undeveloped coast in the contiguous United States. The extensive alpine forests are home to some of the world's largest conifers, towering 300 feet tall and measuring 25 feet around. Among the ancient forests of old-growth trees exists the largest temperate rain forest on the earth. Found on the Pacific Coast of North America, stretching from Oregon to Alaska.

The rugged Olympic Mountains, home to Mount Olympus and over 60 glaciers, are thought to be beautiful enough for the gods to dwell.

Pick Your Adventure

Where else can someone kayak in the surf in the morning and cross-country ski in the afternoon?

Travelers to the peninsula can choose from kayaking, rafting, canoeing, scuba diving, or stand-up paddle boarding in the lakes, rivers and ocean. The peninsula is also home to some of the Pacific Northwest's most-fertile fishing grounds. Fly fishing in the Sol Duc River's perfect, pristine environment grants a special year-round pleasure for fishermen of all levels. On land, visitors can explore the fresh and saltwater shorelines, try a guided hike through the Hoh and Quinault rain forests, bike along the [Olympic Discovery Trail](#), snowshoe atop Hurricane Ridge, hunt for waterfalls, look for whales, or relax in [Sol Duc Hot Springs](#).



*Hurricane Ridge,
Olympic National Park*



*Sol Duc Falls,
Olympic National Park*

Olympic Discovery Trail



The [Olympic Discovery Trail](#) (ODT), begun as a rails-to-trails project, is located along the northern coast of the Olympic Peninsula. When complete, it will traverse over 135 miles of lowlands between the Olympic Mountains and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Running through many different types of terrain, several towns, two counties, Olympic National Park, and Native American tribal jurisdictions. The trail is the western terminus of [The Great American Rail](#) Trail and is shared by bicycles, through-riders, equestrians, walkers, runners and various types of pet-walkers. Many sections of the trail are complete with a wide, paved pathway and when it is finished, it will connect Port Townsend to La Push on the Pacific Ocean.

Another feature of the trail is the [Adventure Route](#). The ODT and Adventure Route are being built by the volunteers of the Peninsula Trails Coalition.



*Cyclist
Spruce Railroad Trail/ODT*

The Towns

Port Angeles

Known as the town “where the mountains meet the sea” this gateway to Hurricane Ridge is popular with outdoor enthusiasts. The [MV Coho](#) sails from this central port to Victoria, B.C., Canada multiple times a day. Population: 20,000

Forks

Most famous as the backdrop of the Twilight book saga, this friendly logging town is nestled between the Hoh Rain Forest and the wild Olympic Coast. Population: 3,400

Clallam Bay & Sekiu

This picturesque coastal area along the Highway 112 Scenic Byway is a favorite with fishermen and birders alike. Population: 750

Neah Bay

Home of the Makah Tribe, the most northwestern point in the contiguous U.S. is the starting point for the picturesque hikes to Cape Flattery and Shi Shi Beach. Population: 1,100

Lake Quinault

The Quinault Valley is home to some of the largest trees in the U.S. and is the gateway to the Quinault Rain Forest in Olympic National Park. Population: 950



The Towns

Sequim

Pronounced “skwim,” this arid community and the surrounding Dungeness Valley benefits from its location in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains. Visitors flock every summer to view its lush lavender fields. Population: 8,200

Port Townsend

This Victorian sea port is known for its maritime heritage and eclectic art and music scene. Fort Worden Historical State Park, located just outside of town, hosts many events throughout the year. Population: 10,300

Chimacum Valley and Port Ludlow

With a stunning golf course, resort and marina, Port Ludlow offers visitors relaxation and leisure. The nearby Chimacum Valley is famous for its rich agriculture. Population: 4,700

North Hood Canal Communities

Dotting the Hood Canal along Highway 101, small hamlet towns attract hikers, shellfish-lovers, and water sports enthusiasts. Population: 3,300

Shelton and South Puget Sound

The forestry heritage of this town is evident in its turn-of-the-century architecture. A variety of attractions, including skydiving, railroad riding and motocross feed those craving adventure. Population: 10,700



Port Townsend, WA



Sequim, WA

Native Cultures



The Olympic Peninsula was an Eden for its early inhabitants and today, Native Americans still have a strong presence in their communities. The Hoh, Makah, Quileute, Quinault, Skokomish, Squaxin and two of the three S'Klallam tribes live on the peninsula where they have maintained their rich culture among abundant natural resources.

The world-famous [Makah Cultural and Research Center](#) in Neah Bay, opened in 1975, is the nation's finest tribal museum. It contains 500-year-old artifacts as well as a full-size long house.

Visitors can view artifacts and learn about the Lower Elwha Klallam tribe and other tribes on the Olympic Peninsula at the [Elwha Klallam Museum at the Carnegie](#) in Port Angeles.

The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe has been carving totem poles for over 25 years. More than 35 totems grace their tribal campus in Blyn, just east of Sequim.

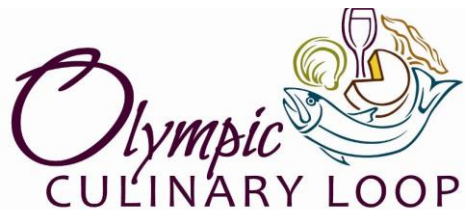
Totem, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

Be a Culinary Explorer

The [Olympic Culinary Loop](#) is a group of local farmers, artisans and restaurateurs who grow, harvest, bottle and ultimately serve the bounty that is Olympic Coast cuisine. There is something magical about smelling the earth on a farm tour, petting the soft velvety nose of a Jersey cow, or literally eating one's way through a farmers market with music filling the bright day.

Chefs around the Olympic Culinary Loop are creating dining experiences that are quintessentially "Northwest." From the raw ingredients to the methods of preparation, some following traditional native culture preparation, eating and drinking around the loop will be a memorable and tasty experience.

There are several uniquely culinary events throughout the year that highlight the region's bounty including the [Dungeness Crab & Seafood Festival](#), [Olympic Peninsula Fungi Festival](#) and [OysterFest](#) all happening in October, and the [Red Wine & Chocolate Festival](#) in February.



*Paella
Dungeness Crab & Seafood Festival*



*Local Cider
Port Townsend Farmers Market*

Wildlife and the Whale Trail

The Olympic Peninsula offers outstanding opportunities to view wildlife. Due to the geological separation of the Olympic Peninsula from other regions by water and lowlands, Olympic National Park provides habitats to more than eight plant and 18 animal species that cannot be found anywhere else in the world!

Along the Highway 112 Scenic Byway, visitors can find locations designated as viewpoint for [the Whale Trail](#), opened in 2010. The Whale Trail aims to educate travelers with 20 marked sites optimal for viewing both resident and transient whale pods and other marine mammals. The trail traverses from Puget Sound to Kalaloch. A sign designates each official site and displays additional information.



Orca breaching
Photo courtesy of NOAA, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary



Elwha Dam Removal and River Restoration

The largest dam removal in U.S. history began in September 2011. By 2014, the last blast was done at Glines Canyon Dam, allowing the river to run free for the first time in a century. Salmon and other migratory fish returned within months to 70 miles of spawning habitat, bringing with them the promise of a restored ecosystem and renewed cultural tradition for the Elwha Klallam Tribe.

The Elwha Dam Interpretive Kiosk on Highway 112 near the site of the former Lake Aldwell tells the story of building the dams, deconstruction and final valley restoration.



Spawning Sockeye Salmon, Elwha River



Elwha Dam Interpretive Kiosk

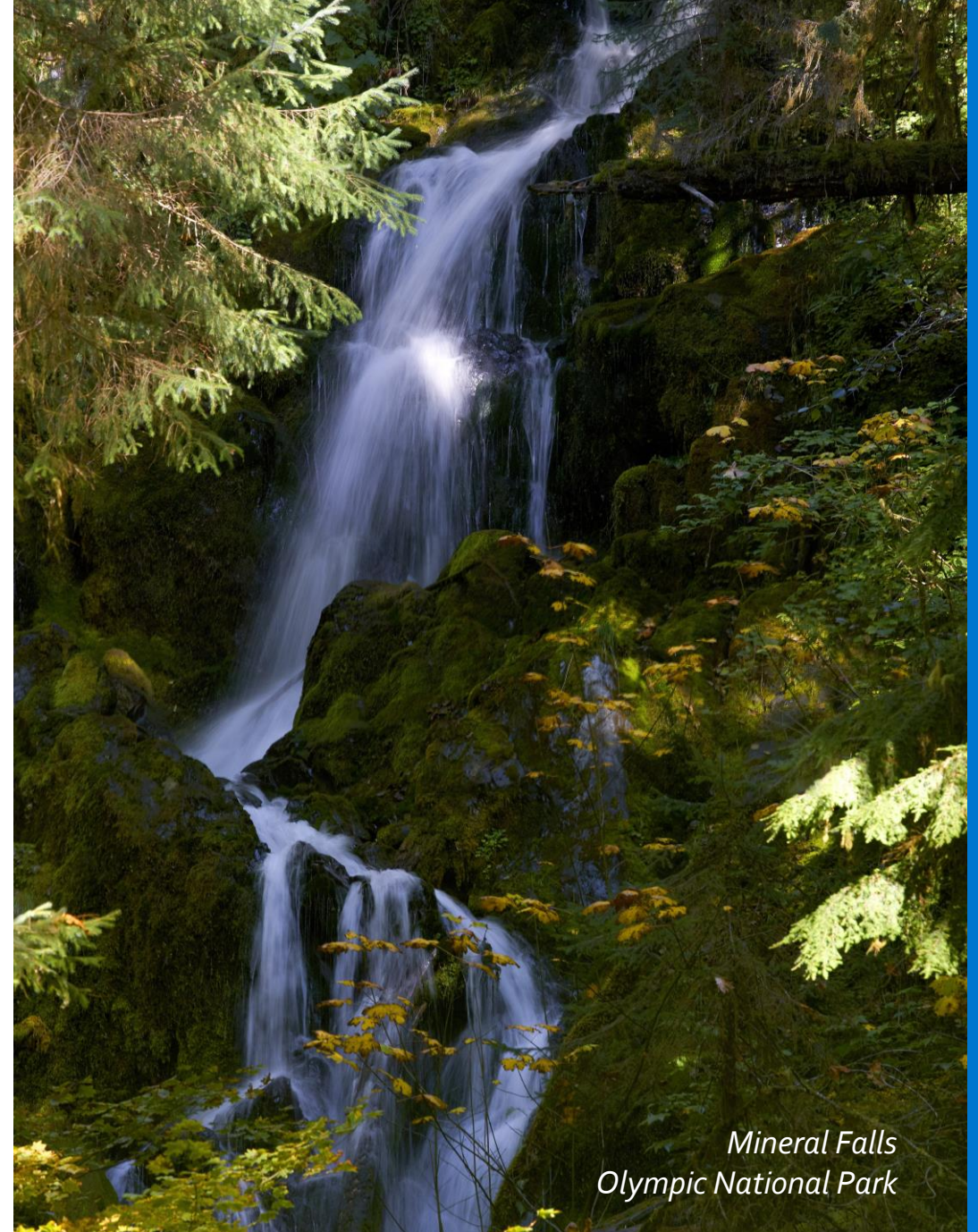


A Magical Misty Tour: Olympic Peninsula Waterfall Trail

The [Olympic Peninsula Waterfall Trail](#) is a wonderful way to enjoy some of the best of the Olympic Peninsula's natural wonders. It is a self-guided tour featuring over two dozen waterfalls. One waterfall is located at the end of a wheelchair accessible path, while others require backcountry hiking. Some can be seen from a car. A few are only viewed from the water via a boat or raft.

Some are in the temperate rain forests while some are along the eastern slopes of the Olympic Mountains in the [Olympic National Forest](#).

There is a special waterfall for every visitor to claim as their favorite. This year-round tour will inspire excitement for viewing waterfalls as well as a great sense of adventure in finding them. Not to mention all the photo ops!



*Mineral Falls
Olympic National Park*



The Land of Twilight

It's [Forever Twilight in Forks](#) where the lives of American literature's beloved *Twilight* characters come to life. Fans take an organized Twilight tour or pick up a self-guided tour map at the Forks Visitor Information Center. While there, they can pose with Bella's red truck parked right outside. And the tour is not complete without a stop at the [Forever Twilight in Forks Collection](#) that houses the world's largest collection of the Twilight movie saga screen-worn costumes and props.

Just west of Forks is the Quileute tribal town of La Push and its beautiful First Beach where the story's characters strolled on the sand. Fans can't miss the opportunity to try the delicious mushroom ravioli while in Port Angeles' Bella Italia restaurant.

The magic of the Olympic Peninsula that inspired Stephenie Meyer's series continues to dazzle visitors to this day. Celebrated each September, the Forever Twilight in Forks event brings the "Twihards" flocking for exclusive experiences that even include surprise celebrity appearances.

forever
twilight
in Forks 

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*Ruby Beach
Olympic National Park*

