

Alaska
Beyond

Magazine
April
2016

Horizon Edition

Celebrating National Parks

TRI-CITIES TRAVEL: Wine, golf, water activities and more, *p. 15.*
AGRITOURISM: Growing popularity, *p. 36.* **BOISE:** Remarkable recreation destination, *p. 50.* **LESSONS LEARNED:** Golf tips from playing with the pros, *p. 62.*

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Cycling in scenic Boise, pg. 50.

FEATURES

- 18 PARADISES FOUND**
National Parks are treasured lands preserved by the National Park Service.
- 36 GROWING IN POPULARITY**
Enjoying agritourism experiences.
- 50 RECREATION DESTINATION**
Remarkable activities and attractions delight Boise residents and visitors.
- Golf 2016**
- 62 LESSONS LEARNED**
Golf tips from playing with the pros.
- 71 IRONING OUT THE DIFFERENCES**
A look at some of today's top golf irons.



Agritourism, pg. 36.

DEPARTMENTS

- 5 SPIRIT OF ALASKA**
A message from Chief Executive Officer Brad Tilden.
- 9 THE REGION**
- Upcycled Seats.
 - 'Homecoming' Exhibit.
 - Spring Wings.
 - News & Notes.
 - *Newsies* in the Northwest.
 - Fiddle Fests.
 - Talked About.
 - Sip and Savor, Tri-Cities.
- 76 CROSSWORD**
- 79 FLYER GUIDE**
Flight information, Mileage Plan frequent-flyer program, vacation packages, route maps and more.
- 88 AIR TIME**
How a skate mom got her wheels.

Cover: Delicate Arch, as photographed through Frame Arch, in Arches National Park, Utah. Photo by Josemaria Toscano / Shutterstock.com.



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Brad Tilden,
Chief Executive
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Trailblazer

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell is one of the Pacific Northwest's own who has "done good." Sally started as a petroleum engineer, moved into the world of banking, and then became COO, and later CEO, of REI, Seattle's

renowned retailer of outdoor gear. In 2013, President Barack Obama asked her to lead the Department of the Interior. Our magazine team recently interviewed Sally. Read the exclusive story in the April Alaska Airlines Edition of Alaska Beyond Magazine (alaskaairlinesmagazine.com), the sister publication of the one you're reading on this flight. And, in the spirit of Earth Month, I've asked our own Mark Eliassen, treasurer at Alaska Airlines and a dedicated outdoorsperson himself, to share a few of his thoughts on the environment. —Brad Tilden

five years running, according to The International Council on Clean Transportation. Next year, we are excited to fly our first Renton-built Boeing 737 MAX, which will reduce our fuel use by an additional 14 percent. We are partnering with Boeing, the Port of Seattle, Washington State University and others to make sustainable aviation biofuel viable for our aircraft. Alaska and Horizon's flight attendants last year recycled 1,800 tons of inflight items, and our customers pitch in to help collect and separate them. We're even composting material collected on flights and in many of our buildings.

Alaska and Horizon help our communities in many ways. One organization we support, which I am particularly proud of, is the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), a conservation and recreation grant program that provides matching funds to create new local and state parks, protect wildlife habitat and preserve small working farms. The WWRP has successfully leveraged over \$1.3 billion for more than 1,200 projects, creating not only parks and wildlife habitat, but also jobs, revenue and better quality of life throughout the state.

Since its creation 25 years ago, the WWRP has helped local communities in Washington create cycling, pedestrian, equestrian and cross-country ski trails, and create public access to numerous beaches, lakes and rivers for fishing, swimming and nonmotorized boating.

If you enjoy being outdoors like me, you've likely benefited from land protected by the WWRP. You can learn more about the program and the impact it has at wildliferecreation.org, and for more information about Alaska's own sustainability efforts, check out alaskaair.com/sustainability.

As we celebrate Earth Month and salute Sally Jewell, thank you for doing your part for the environment.

Bon voyage, and thank you for flying Alaska and Horizon today. —**Mark Eliassen**



Sally Jewell hikes with students as part of the Every Kid in a Park initiative.

Travel is a voyage of discovery. At Alaska and Horizon, we love to fly you to your destination and be part of your discovery. Many of us share your passion for the adventure of travel, and we hope you have a chance to get out and experience the natural beauty surrounding our home base here in the Pacific Northwest.

Have you tried exploring hard-to-reach beaches and coves in a sea kayak? You can launch a kayak almost anywhere you can get to the water. It's a fun way to see wildlife up close, since animals and birds don't seem to mind quiet, slow-moving boats. When out in the woods, good scouts minimize their impact on the environment and leave the campsite better than they found it.

We try to be good environmental stewards at Alaska, too. We have led the industry in fuel efficiency for

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Sonoma County Tourism
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Washington's National Park Fund
www.wnpf.org

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www.yellowstoneteton.org

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SEATTLE, WA, & PORTLAND, OR

Upcycled seats

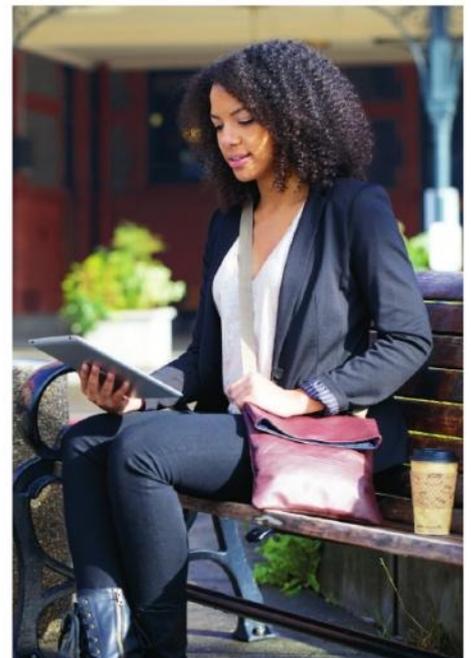
Now you can carry your airplane seat with you—in a manner of speaking. Alaska Airlines' sister carrier, Horizon Air, periodically replaces aircraft seats as part of routine maintenance, and the discarded quality-leather seat covers are going to a company that is **upcycling them into items such as carry-on messenger bags, totes, laptop sleeves and wallets.**

The airline is collaborating with Portland, Oregon-based Looptworks (looptworks.com), which produces limited-edition products using excess materials, as part of Looptworks' dedication to the motto: "Use less to make more."

Approximately 4,000 leather seat covers have already been kept out of the landfill as part of the ongoing project, according to Looptworks,

which adds that by avoiding the need to create new leather, each item crafted also saves an estimated 100 to 2,400 gallons of water, depending on product size. The **Alaska Airlines Carry-On Collection** features quality stitching and components, Looptworks says, and each piece is backed by a lifetime warranty.

"At Alaska and Horizon, we strive to integrate sustainability into all parts of the airlines," notes Jacqueline Drumheller, sustainability manager for Alaska Airlines and Horizon Air. "Horizon set the industry standard when a handful of enterprising employees would drive truckloads of inflight recyclable trash to sorting facilities more than 25 years ago. Our partnership with Looptworks is an example of how Horizon employees are taking inflight recycling to the next level."



Quality-leather seat covers from the Horizon Air fleet are being upcycled into items such as bags and wallets.



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MISSOULA, MT

'Homecoming' exhibit



Inspired by childhood memories—including growing up as the youngest of 10, in Missoula—artist **Holly Andres** creates photos designed to evoke still frames in a film. The photos, featuring theatrically posed figures, dramatic lighting and rich colors, typically tell a story—from discovering a caterpillar or playing dress-up to experiencing some of the accidents and disappointments typical of childhood. And in her **Sparrow Lane photo series**, Andres draws on the themes of Nancy Drew books and Alfred Hitchcock films, with girls looking for clues, as shown in the photo **The Lost Mitten**, above. Andres combines the ordinary with the unusual, endowing domestic scenes with drama that prompts viewers to reflect on their own childhood experiences and feelings.

Now based in Portland, Oregon, the internationally prominent artist—whose artfully choreographed work has been showcased in venues from Los Angeles to Istanbul, and in publications ranging from *Elle* to *The New Yorker*—brings her art back to her home state via the exhibit “**Holly Andres: The Homecoming**,” on view at the **Missoula Art Museum**, April 8–Aug. 20. On May 3, Andres will present a lecture about her work to museum visitors. Contact: 406-728-0447; missoulaartmuseum.org. —*Bridget Hill*



Upcoming events at **KeyArena at Seattle Center** include concerts by superstars **Rihanna**, April 24, and **Selena Gomez**, May 13. Alaska Airlines is a sponsor of KeyArena and Seattle Center (keyarena.com and seattlecenter.com).

The **Reno River Festival**, May 7–8, will feature top pro kayakers, plus live



music, yoga, a craft-beer village, kayaking and fishing clinics, and a fun 5-mile bike ride (renoriverfestival.com).

During **Spring Release Weekend**, May 6–8, in Eastern Washington's **Walla Walla Valley**, enjoy newly released wines, many avail-

able only by visiting the individual wineries (wallawallawine.com).

The Montana State University Billings Foundation presents its 2016 **Wine & Food Festival**, May 9–14, with Home Cooking School classes, beer and wine symposia, and tasting events (winefoodfestival.com).

▼ Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter **Jewel**, below, will be speaking and singing in a keynote address at the **Sun Valley Wellness Festival**, May 27–30. The festival will also include movement classes, workshops and a wellness expo (sunvalleywellness.org).



RENO, NV

Spring Wings

View American white pelicans, long-billed dowitchers, plovers and other birds—and learn more about them—during the **Spring Wings Festival**, May 20–21. The festival, taking place in and around the **Lahontan Valley Wetlands**, about



65 miles east of Reno, celebrates the spring migration of more than 200 species of birds journeying between wintering grounds in Mexico or South America and Arctic tundra nesting grounds in Alaska,

Canada or Siberia. Festival events include **guided tours** that explore the history, nature and wildlife of the Lahontan Valley's desert wetlands. The tours travel to Stillwater Marsh, and include a stop at Hidden Cave, featuring 6,000-year-old Paiute petroglyphs.

Family-friendly seminars and workshops will be offered, as well, on topics such as backyard beekeeping, birds of prey (falconry demo), decoy carving, and nature-related arts and crafts. Contact: 775-423-5128; springwings.org. —*Kevin Lee-Simion*

HOLLY ANDRES, THE LOST MITTEN, 48 X 30", C-PRINT MOUNTED ON SINTRA, 2008

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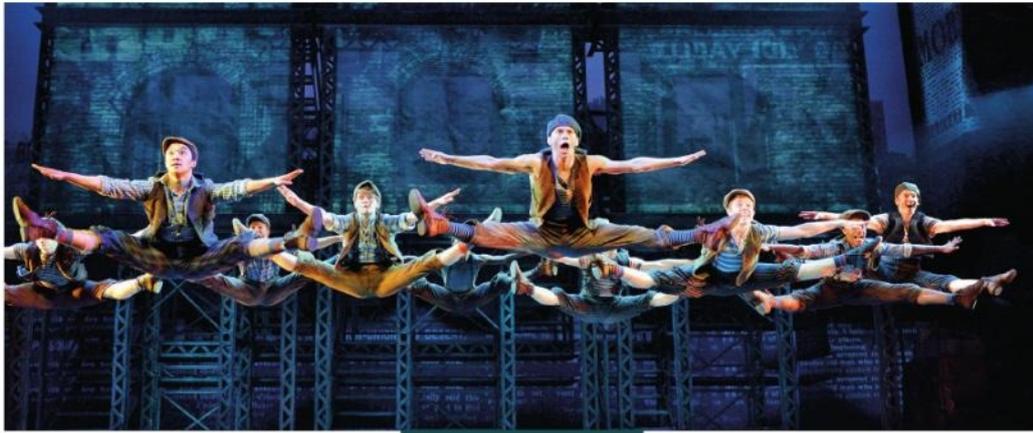
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SEATTLE & SPOKANE, WA, & PORTLAND, OR

Newsies in the Northwest



ORIGINAL COMPANY, NORTH AMERICAN TOUR OF DISNEY'S NEWSIES. © DISNEY. PHOTO BY DEEN VAN MEER

Composer Alan Menken's musical résumé includes movie blockbusters such as the Academy Award-winning *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast*. In 2012, Menken received his first Tony Award, with lyricist Jack Feldman, for best score, for the stage production of the Disney film *Newsies*.

After nearly 2.5 years on Broadway, the musical has been bringing its rousing numbers—with choreography that also won a 2012 Tony Award—to theaters around the country. The show, inspired

Did you know? The stage production of *Newsies* has a new character, Katherine Plumber, who is both a reporter and the love interest for lead newsie Jack Kelly.

by a New York newsboys strike in 1899, will be on stage in **Portland, Oregon, April 19–24, as part of the Broadway in Portland series** (broadwayinportland.com). It then travels to **Seattle for performances April 26–May 1, as part of the Broadway at The Paramount series** (stgpresents.org). Alaska Airlines is the official

airline sponsor of the Portland and Seattle series. Additional tour stops will include **Spokane, May 3–8**. For more information, including more tour dates, see newsiesthemusical.com. —M. Dill



CENTRAL OR

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission has designated the state's 14th Scenic Bikeway. The 160.9-mile **Painted Hills Scenic Bikeway** features paved roads connecting all three units of the colorful **John Day Fossil Beds National Monument** in Central Oregon (rideoregonride.com/road-routes/painted-hills-scenic-bikeway).

GUALALA, CA

Throughout April, the **Whale & Jazz Festival** combines whale talks, jazz-related films, poetry, music and a chowder challenge in Gualala, on the Sonoma-Mendocino coast (Santa Rosa air gateway; gualalaarts.org).

BREMERTON, WA

The New York Public Library has listed **Early Bird**, by Puget Sound-area writer Toni Yuly, as part of an "essential board book library" for toddlers. Board books have hard pages made of paperboard. Yuly's newest book, **Cat Nap**, was published in January (toniyuly.com).

talked about

BEND, OR

The renovated outdoor **Autzen Otter Exhibit at the High Desert Museum** in Bend is scheduled to reopen May 21. Northern river otters are found throughout Oregon's High Desert region (highdesertmuseum.org).



HAILEY & WEISER, ID

Fiddle fests

Last year, when he was 8 years old, **Logan Davis** (below) of Rigby, Idaho, lifted his bow and played two energetic hoedowns, two lilting waltzes and two lively tunes of his choice



BLISS BOOK PHOTOS

to win the Small Fry Division of the **Fiddlers of Idaho State Championship**. He went on to win the Small Fry Division of the **2015 National Old-time Fiddlers Contest & Festival**.

The youngster, who practices an hour every day, is expected to be among the competitors for the 2016 state championship, May 6–7, in the Sun Valley area. State winners will go on to the national contest, June 20–25 in Weiser, about 75 miles north of Boise.

The national competition, which has eight divisions, draws **more than 250 top fiddlers from across the country**. Contact: 208-934-4269, fiddlersofidaho.org; and 208-414-0255, fiddlecontest.org. —Anna Jacobson

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TRI-CITIES, WA

Sip and savor



In 1990, **Badger Mountain Vineyard**, in the Tri-Cities town of Kennewick, became the **first certified-organic winegrape vineyard in Washington state**. Today, the winery's tasting room on the southern slope of the mountain is a popular place to sip and savor varietals ranging from the NSA (no sulfites added) organic Riesling to the NSA organic Merlot.



Tri-Cities visitors enjoy wine touring at wineries such as Badger Mountain Vineyard, and bicycling scenic routes such as the Sacagawea Heritage Trail.

The Tri-Cities is an excellent base for wine touring, with around **200 wineries within a 50-mile radius**. Many of these wineries, including Badger Mountain, waive tasting fees for Alaska Airlines ticket holders who show a current boarding pass.

The tasting-fee waivers are part of the **Taste and Tote program**, which also lets travelers to the Tri-Cities region, Walla Walla Valley and Yakima Valley check their first case of wine free on Alaska Airlines flights from those regions. See tasteandtote.com for details. For more information on the Tri-Cities, see **Visit Tri-Cities** at visittri-cities.com.

Last year Washington State University dedicated the new **Ste. Michelle Wine Estates WSU Wine Science Center**—one of the world's most technologically advanced teaching and research facilities—on the school's Tri-Cities campus in Richland. Chateau Ste. Michelle has been a significant supporter of the center and of the university's wine-education program.

Also in the Tri-Cities

To learn more about the activities and attractions below, and many more, go to visittri-cities.com.

Golf: Year-round play can be enjoyed in the Tri-Cities area, which boasts 10 courses, including the highly rated, 7,026-yard Canyon Lakes Golf Course (right), known for its rolling terrain and large, fast greens, in addition to the name-sake lakes.



The Reach Museum, gateway to the Hanford Reach National Monument: Learn about the area's natural and human history, and take guided tours such as a Wallula Gap Hike, May 21, and a Jet Boat/Bus Tour of White Bluffs to West Bar, June 3 (advance registration required for tours).

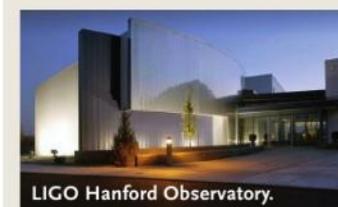


Water recreation: A location at the confluence of three rivers makes the Tri-Cities popular for activities such as kayaking, SUPing, fishing and houseboating.

LIGO Hanford Observatory: The observatory uses the world's largest gravitational wave detectors to measure faint ripples of gravitational waves from outer space. These indicators of major events in the distant universe are expected to help scientists unlock mysteries of the cosmos.

Hiking, biking, horseback riding: Explore a dramatic region sculpted by the Ice Age Floods. Of special interest is the Sacagawea Heritage Trail, a paved 23-mile trail that runs primarily along the Columbia River.

Public tours are offered the second Saturday and fourth Friday of each month.



LIGO Hanford Observatory.

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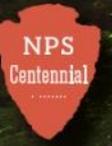
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NATIONAL PARKS have provided many memorable “firsts” in my life: My first geyser and wolf (Yellowstone); caribou and Dall sheep (Denali); grizzly bear (Glacier); marmot (Olympic); mile-deep chasm (Grand Canyon); giant tree (Sequoia); active, though currently at rest, volcano (Rainier); lava (Haleakalā); hoodoos (Bryce Canyon); and alpine lake (North Cascades).

These stunningly beautiful protected places have enlightened my mind and nourished my soul. They have helped me understand geological, atmospheric and evolutionary forces. They have helped me feel connected to nature. Their human histories have caused me to contemplate my species’ adventurousness, adaptability and resilience, and also my species’ effect on the planet.

Visiting national parks has been the most effective, and most enjoyable, way for me to learn more about the natural world ... and about myself.



When Congress established Yellowstone as the first national park in 1872, no one knew it was the beginning of something so big, it would spread across the earth, with more than 100 countries now cumulatively

protecting about 1,200 national parks or equivalent preserves, according to the National Park Service.

The Park Service itself was created on August 25, 1916, to manage the 35 national parks and monuments already being overseen by the Department of the Interior. In 1933, the Park Service also became responsible for 56 additional areas—national monuments and military sites—that had been under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service or the War Department.

Today, as the Park Service celebrates its centennial, it is conserving more than 400 areas, totaling more than 84 million acres. Imagine how much would have been lost if these places had not been set aside for public enjoyment and protection: If we could not explore Yellowstone to gasp at geysers and see bison saunter through grassy valleys. If we could not stand in wildflower meadows or see the glow of the setting sun on granite Half Dome in Yosemite, a place John

ABOVE: Grand Prismatic Spring in Yellowstone National Park.

LEFT: The park has helped to save American bison from extinction.



Double O Arch along the Devils Garden Primitive Loop in Arches National Park.

Muir described as “by far the grandest of all the special temples of Nature I was ever permitted to enter.”

Because these and other unique and glorious lands have been preserved, people from around the United States and across the globe—more than 307 million visitors last year alone—can see exotic wildlife and wondrous waterfalls; vast glaciers and otherworldly red rocks; majestic

mountains and craggy cliffs; Crater Lake and Crystal Cave. During these visits we are inspired and invigorated, entertained and educated, gaining greater appreciation for nature, a greater desire to protect it ... and memories to last a lifetime.

Below, writers from around the West share information and experiences related to some of their favorite national parks. You might also enjoy

the Imax film *National Parks Adventure*, narrated by Robert Redford and released in February, which is being screened at theaters throughout the world, including the Pacific Science Center in Seattle, the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland, the Yellowstone Giant Screen Theater in Montana, and numerous theaters in California (nationalparksadventure.com).

The centerpiece of the National Park Service centennial is a campaign to reintroduce parks and the Park Service to the public, and encourage people to discover, visit and find personal connections with national parks. For more information, including links to pages where you can search for parks and events, and share your own national-park experiences, visit nps.gov and findyourpark.com. —Michele Andrus Dill, Editor

Key Centennial Events

(Visit findyourpark.com/find#centennial events and individual park websites for more information and events.)

National Park Week, April 16–24:

Park admission fees waived; special events at various parks.

BioBlitz, May 20–21: Engaging event combining biodiversity discovery and cultural celebration in and around Washington, DC,

and at participating national parks.

Centennial celebration at Yellowstone National Park, Aug. 25:

Public programs, musical guests, and national and local dignitaries, at the historic Roosevelt Arch in the northern part of the park; free advance tickets required and will be released online starting in May; more information on ticketing to come at nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/evening-arch.htm.





Arches National Park

By Christy Karras

Established: 1971; nps.gov/arch

Air gateway: Salt Lake City, UT

Notable: Arches National Park, in southeast Utah, contains the world's densest concentration of natural rock arches—more than 2,000 inside the park's 76,519 acres. The park also has pinnacles, hoodoos, ridges and domes. These shapes have formed over thousands of years as water and ice have eroded layers of sandstone that built up above a thick but porous layer of salt left by ancient seas. The landscape of multicolored mounds and bumps creates an overall impression, in the words of National Park Service interpretive ranger Kait Thomas, of "an ice cream parlor for giants."

Interesting: Arches, one of five national parks in southern Utah, is about a 45-minute drive from Canyonlands National Park and two hours from Capitol Reef National Park. All three parks feature the region's leg-

endary sandstone, which ranges from white to yellow to deep red.

Memorable experience: It was sunset in early spring when my husband and I explored the Devils Garden Primitive Loop in Arches' northern section. The normally blue sky was uncharacteristically, but beautifully, cloudy. At approximately the midpoint of the 7.2-mile loop, we came to Dark Angel—not one of the park's namesake semicircles, but a 150-foot sandstone tower, contoured by minerals, water and time, standing alone like a stoic guardian over the surrounding landscape. Just as we reached the tower, the clouds parted, and a wide shaft of light poured onto us. A rainbow appeared, linking the brooding Dark Angel with the now-bright sky.

Even without rainbows, Devils Garden is unforgettable, showcasing eight arches visible from short spur trails along the route. They vary from doughnutlike younger arches to long thin spans that appear to defy the

laws of physics—including Landscape Arch, whose nearly 300-foot span is the park's longest.

The park's hiking routes range from short and easy to long and strenuous. Grab a hiking map and fill your water bottle—at least a gallon per person, per day, is recommended in this desert climate—at the park's visitor center before you go.

At the late-afternoon "magic hour," many of the sights in Arches are particularly striking. With the sun low in the west, the sandstone seems to glow. Delicate Arch—featured on many Utah license plates—is a photographer's delight at sunset. Bring a headlamp for the return hike (the park is open 24 hours a day). Arches' night skies, far from an urban center, are some of the nation's darkest. Ranger stargazing programs are offered on select nights in the summer.

Seattle-based freelancer Christy Karras is the co-author of books such as Motorcycle Touring in the Southwest, and she updated the travel guide Scenic Driving: Utah. Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) provides daily flights to Salt Lake City.

Breathtaking
Crater Lake
National Park.



Crater Lake National Park

By Lee Juillerat

Established: 1902; nps.gov/crla

Air gateway: Medford, OR

Notable: The pristine blue lake is the nation's deepest, at up to 1,943 feet, and resulted from rain and snow-melt filling the volcanic caldera created by the collapse of Mount Mazama approximately 7,700 years ago.

Interesting: Fishing, with artificial bait, is free in the lake, with no license required. That's because the lake was stocked with non-native fish between 1888 and 1941. Earlier this year the park signed a sister-park agreement with the Wuyishan National Scenic Area, a World Heritage Site in China.

Memorable Experience: I've taken two-hour boat tours—which can include a stopover at Wizard



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Island—many times on the lake, but the most phenomenal one had a particularly notable ranger—my daughter, Molly—providing commentary.

As the tour boat cruised past Lloa Rock and Devils Backbone, paused below the Rim Village complex located atop another cliff, circled Phantom Ship island and motored over the deepest part of the lake, Molly told us how the lake is known to have completely frozen only once, in 1949. She explained that because the lake has no inlet or outlet, all its water comes from rain and snow.

She shared what she admitted was a groaner of a pun: The way to remember that lichens are created via

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike.”

—John Muir

a symbiotic relationship between fungi and algae is that Freddy Fungus and Alice Algae took a lichen to each other. She kept the passengers focused and fascinated. Proud Pop? You bet.

When her workday was over, she and I hiked the steep 1.1-mile Cleetwood Cove Trail from the tour-boat dock to a parking lot, stopping frequently for lake views. Then, motoring in our car along Rim Drive, the 33-mile-long road that circles the lake, we stopped at overlooks and gawked from above at many of the sights we had seen from lake level. I highly recommend that other visitors also do both the Rim Drive and the boat tour, for the different perspectives.

Southern Oregon writer Lee Juillerat has authored several books about the Crater Lake area. Alaska Airlines



(800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) offers flights to Medford via Seattle, Portland and Los Angeles.

Mount Rainier National Park
By Terry W. Sheely
Established: 1899; nps.gov/mora
Air gateways: Seattle and Yakima, WA; Portland, OR.

Notable: Mount Rainier, elevation 14,410 feet, is the most glaciated mountain in the Lower 48 states. Twenty-five named glaciers ring the massive white summit visible from Seattle, about 90 miles to the north-

west. “The Mountain,” as it is locally called, looms above nearly 370 square miles of national parkland, 97 percent of which is congressionally designated roadless wilderness. Meltwater from Mount Rainier glaciers births six major rivers.

The volcano last erupted about 1,000 years ago.

Interesting: Each year, approximately 2 million visitors explore the park, including 10,000 to 11,000 climbers intent on reaching the icy summit. Roughly 50 percent succeed. About 700 visitors a year complete the full 22,000 feet of elevation changes on the park’s amazing 93-mile Wonderland Trail, one of the most diverse hikes in North America. The trail, which circumnavigates the mountain, rises from verdant lowland river bottoms to subalpine meadows thick with wildflower colors, and con-

ABOVE: Wildflowers in Mount Rainier National Park.

LEFT: Visitors enjoy exploring the park.



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tinues upward to close-up views of permanent ice fields cracked with crevasses.

Memorable experience: Crimson spears of light poked into the morning sky as I hiked west from the Sunrise Visitor Center to Mystic Lake. This leg of the Wonderland Trail roller-coasters along ridgelines for much of its 11 miles (each way), ascending and descending through some of the most dramatic high-mountain vistas on the entire 93-mile loop. About 3.5 miles from the visitor center, I shrugged off my daypack to lean against a flat rock and gaze at Winthrop Glacier. I looked down to see a little fur ball attempting to burglarize the pack.

The wannabe burglar was a pika, a guinea pig-like mountain recluse that lives year-round above the treeline. I'm mystified by what fur ball expects to find in my pack. Pikas are vegans. During the summer, they harvest wildflower stems and leaves, laying them out to sun dry as "hay." The dried greenery is tucked into hidey-holes, to feed the little mammal through the winter.

A cup of Thermos coffee warmed my fingers. The 3.5-mile swath of Winthrop Glacier gleamed in the sun. Even at a distance, the glacier looked magnificently immense. I could have detoured for a glacier walk, but I didn't have crampons, an ice ax or other equipment, so I contented myself with the view before trekking over 6,700-foot Skyscraper Pass and descending

Rialto Beach
in Olympic
National Park.

past patches of wildflowers to Granite Creek, followed by up-and-down terrain to Mystic Lake.

The lake is a crystalline bowl in a mountain meadow, surrounded by the dark shade of conifers. Its still-water surface mirrors the crown of Mount Rainier, and also reflects Old Desolate and Mineral mountains.

Access points for Wonderland Trail hikes are located at varying elevations, each leg crossing a different face of the park's diversity. Hikers should be sure to choose routes and distances that match physical conditioning. But wherever you hike on the Wonderland Trail, you may find that it is the most aptly named trail in North America.

Puget Sound-area writer Terry W. Sheely is the author of numerous fishing, adventure-recreation and travel guides. Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) has regular service to Seattle, Portland and Yakima. Also, visit Washington's National Park Fund (wnpf.org) for information on supporting Mount Rainier, North Cascades and Olympic national parks, such as purchasing a Washington State National Parks license plate.

Olympic National Park

By Michele Andrus Dill

Established: 1938; nps.gov/olymp

Air gateway: Seattle, WA

Notable: The park is a UNESCO-

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- Theodore Roosevelt

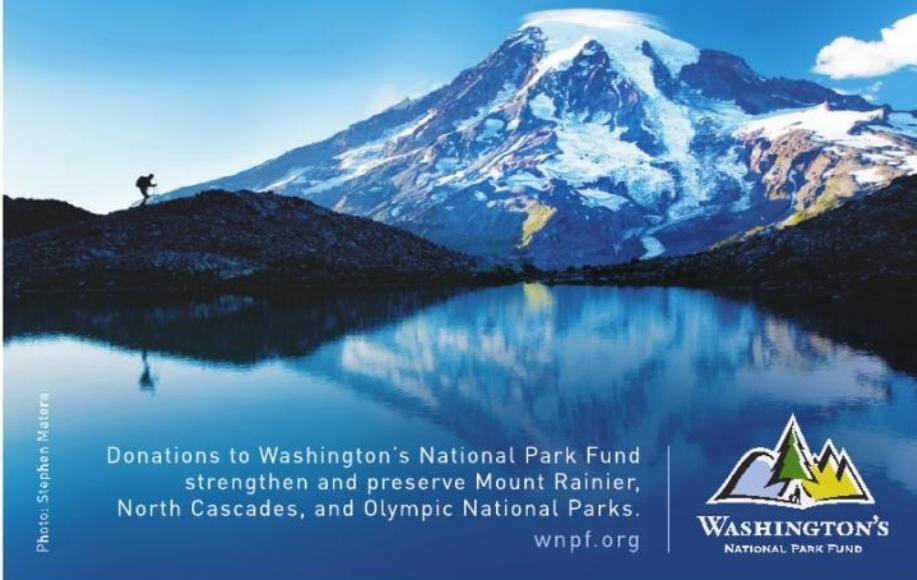


Photo: Stephen Maters

Donations to Washington's National Park Fund strengthen and preserve Mount Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic National Parks.

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designated international Biosphere Reserve and a World Heritage Site (a dual honor held by a small number of U.S. parks, including Yellowstone). Olympic National Park protects more than 70 miles of undeveloped Pacific Ocean coastline, as well as one of the largest tracts of old-growth forest remaining in the Lower 48 states. Removal of two Elwha River dams, completed in 2014, is leading to restoration of vegetation and wildlife in and around the river.

Interesting: The dainty purple Piper's bellflower grows only on the Olympic Peninsula, and three animal species—the Olympic marmot, the Olympic snow mole and the Olympic torrent salamander—are also found nowhere else on Earth.

Park attractions also include gorgeous lakes and ocean beaches; the Hoh Rain Forest; Hurricane Ridge, with its panoramic views; Sol Duc Falls; the pools at Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort; and 7,980-foot, glacier-draped Mount Olympus, so named by British Captain John Meares in 1788 because it looked like a place worthy of the gods.

Memorable experience: One of my best birthdays featured a visit to the park, thanks to a husband who knew exactly the right itinerary for a fantastic weekend. We rented a canoe at Lake Crescent Lodge and paddled the clear indigo waters of the glacially carved lake in morning sunshine (guided kayak tours are also available). For lunch, we refueled on seafood tacos and lavender-infused lemonade, with a lake view, in the 1915 lodge. Then we hiked a trail that ran along Barnes Creek and through old-growth forest to 90-foot Marymere Falls, whose lower section billowed like Cinderella's ball gown.

The next day, we traveled about 50 miles west and south—with a stop in the *Twilight*-famed town of Forks—to visit large, pebbly Rialto Beach (always check tide tables and weather before exploring beaches). Tumbles of giant driftwood logs decorated the shore, and we perched on one to eat our picnic lunch, admire sea stacks and watch waves thunder in. The experience was both exhilarating and peaceful.

I leaned left on our sun-bleached cedar

"Best of all was counting up the inches I'd lost."



Photo: Arlene Chambers Photography



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My eldest son had just moved away from home and my youngest was starting his senior year of high school. Having spent the past several years focused on everyone else's goals, I felt it was finally time for me. I wanted to sleep better, feel calmer and try to reach a new goal for myself.

At one time I had been an avid runner. I'd run a marathon and a few half marathons. After spending over six months undergoing physical therapy for bursitis, hip pain and a sprained ankle, I was ready to get back my workout mojo. But, to be honest, I was also a bit afraid of sustaining another injury. Although my pain had receded, my self esteem was low. I knew I needed help to get out the door again. My Best 10 was the solution.

I jumped into the program completely. I loved working with my trainer. I trusted her to get me back in shape and never skipped a workout, even when I went to China for 10 days in the middle of the program. In fact, it was the first long trip I'd ever had where I actually lost weight. During the program, my weight decreased and then crept back

up. I soon discovered why – I had lost fat and gained muscle mass. Best of all was counting up the inches I'd lost at the end of the program. I loved telling my friends about that!

I went from not being able to run for more than 10 minutes on the treadmill to running a peppy six miles after nearly a mile swim and a 25-mile bike ride during an Olympic distance triathlon. On my run, I blasted past 12 other triathletes, including a few men. In December, I went on to complete a Half Ironman!

During the program, I also had a few a-ha moments. One was when my comprehensive blood work flagged a key indicator of inflammation. I was referred to a rheumatologist and diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis. At first, this was crushing to me, but it explained my frequent battle with aches and injuries. I also loved working with my registered dietitian. She helped me identify the foods that triggered inflammation and I began to feel better within the first few weeks of changing my diet.

This past summer, our family vacationed in Hungary. We ran around Margaret Island just like the locals and, instead of taking the bus, we walked up the steep climb to the top of Castle Hill. Thanks to my core training, I easily kept up with my grown sons and athletic husband – with no backache!

My friends, my husband and I have a very exciting race year ahead of us including the Hot Chocolate 15K, the Seahawks 12th Man 12K, the Tour de Cure and the RSVP bike ride. I've also signed up for another Half Ironman. I can't wait!

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log to give my spouse a side hug and let him know: "This has been a very *happy* birthday."

Michele Andrus Dill is the editor. Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) flies daily to Seattle.

Yellowstone National Park

By Jean Arthur

Established: 1872; nps.gov/yell

Air gateways: Billings & Bozeman, MT

Notable: The world's first national park also has the world's largest collection of geysers—more than 300—among its 10,000 hydrothermal features. The park has the largest concentration of mammals in the Lower 48, as well, including an estimated grizzly bear population of up to 800 in the region.

Interesting: Yellowstone is the only place in the Lower 48 states where bison have lived continuously since prehistoric times. Like bison throughout the country, the area's bison population was once in danger of extinction. Only about two-dozen animals were left in the area by 1902; the population now numbers up to 5,000. The park's awe-inspiring landscape was formed in part by major volcanic eruptions, the most recent approximately 174,000 years ago. Magma is close to the surface in some areas—for instance, just 3 to 8 miles beneath the Sour Creek Dome in approximately the center of the park.

Memorable experience: Two draft horses trotted on a dirt road amid grass and brush, pulling us in a canvas-topped wagon from the corrals at Roosevelt Lodge to a site called Pleasant Valley in the northern part of the park.

We were experiencing the Old West Dinner Cookout adventure, which included steaks with all the fixin's, and fruit crisp, too, accompanied by the ambiance of a campfire. On our 45-minute ride, we watched bison graze as the wagon jostled past sagebrush. We spotted a bald eagle, and a mama moose with her gangly yearling.

We also learned that Pleasant Valley was once the site of the Pleasant Valley Hotel, developed by eccentric pioneer, gold prospector and Civil War veteran John Yancey,



ing. The Milky Way was formed by a grizzly bear that climbed into the sky to hunt, according to a legend attributed to the Shoshone people. Snow and ice clung to the bear's fur and dropped off as he crossed the sky, creating the Milky Way (www.edu/depts/skywise/legends.html).

Bozeman writer Jean Arthur is the author of Top Trails: Glacier National Park: Must-Do Hikes for Everyone. Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) provides regular service to Billings and Bozeman.

LYNNY / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Half Dome at sunset in Yosemite National Park.

who in the mid-1880s had built the hotel and outbuildings near our dinner site, and had sold provisions to stagecoach travelers. None of the historical buildings remain, but we gathered around picnic tables with guests who had chosen the horseback-ride option to dinner.

A guitar-playing wrangler entertained us with vintage cowboy songs, and with cowpoke jokes:

"Where do cowboys grill their steaks?"

"On the range!" answered the kids.

After dinner, stars unencumbered by artificial light begin their storytell-

Yosemite National Park

By Mark Grossi

Established: 1890; nps.gov/yose

Air gateways: Fresno (year-round) and Mammoth Lakes (seasonal), CA

Notable: Last year, Google Maps and Yosemite National Park made it possible to experience certain park sites

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from your laptop or mobile device. You can get "street views" of El Capitan, Mariposa Grove, Bridalveil Fall and other sites, likely inspiring visits to see them in person. Various other parks can also be viewed. Go to maps.google.com and type in the site you are interested in, such as El Capitan. When the screen comes up showing that site, look in the lower right corner for the yellow "pegman" figure, and drag it to the red Google place pin showing the location of the site you want to see (or drag the pegman to where blue lines are illuminated on the map).

Interesting: John Muir took various jobs that would allow him to stay in the extraordinary Yosemite region. In 1870, he was a shepherd, guiding a 2,000-sheep flock to Tuolumne Meadows, according to the park website. Approximately 20 years later, as part of Muir's efforts to get the country to create Yosemite National Park, he pointed out how sheep were damaging the land. Today, the meadow ecosystems are protected by the use of designated trails for visitors to enjoy.

Another popular Yosemite site is Glacier Point, at 7,214 feet, along the south wall of Yosemite Valley. You'll have a head-turning view of several iconic park sites, including waterfalls such as Yosemite Falls; Half Dome; the Clouds Rest formation; and other spires and domes in the soaring granite cliffs.

Memorable experience: My wife and I saw the best park-waterfall show of the decade in 1998 after an especially snowy winter. Melted snow roared over the ancient granite of Yosemite, Bridalveil, Horsetail, Vernal, Nevada, Ribbon and Illilouette falls. Standing just 40 yards from churning Yosemite Falls, we were soaked in a thrilling but chilling mist. Flowing from 2,425 feet above the valley floor, Yosemite Falls is North America's tallest cascade.

This year is expected to be better than recent drought years for viewing waterfalls. Bring a rain jacket or a poncho, and wear hiking boots. You can park and easily walk up to some falls, such as Bridalveil.

On our trip, we walked the Lower



Pictured with Jenna: Dr. Paul Carpenter, Blood and Marrow Transplant Physician;
Joan Suver, Pediatric Oncology Physician Assistant; Dr. Colleen Delaney, Cord Blood Transplant Program Director.

Together, we're making sure Jenna doesn't miss a beat.

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At Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, we treat cancer care differently. It's care that harnesses the powerful science and devoted collaboration of Fred Hutch, Seattle Children's and UW Medicine to give patients the best chance of getting better. For Jenna, that meant access to a lifesaving cord blood transplant when a bone marrow match wasn't available. It's one-of-a-kind care that moves patients, like Jenna, past boundaries and toward hope. Learn more about Jenna's story at SeattleCCA.org.

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Commemorative Coins

The U.S. Mint has released three National Park Service centennial commemorative coins (usmint.gov) this year. The \$5 gold coin features John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, Half Dome and the NPS logo. The \$1 silver coin features Old Faithful, a bison, a Latina folklórico dancer and the NPS logo. The clad half dollar (made of the same metals as a quarter) features a hiker discovering the majesty of wilderness, a child discovering a frog in ferns, and the NPS logo. Surcharges apply, and will go to the National Park Foundation for parks-related projects.



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Yosemite Fall Trail, which is a paved, one-mile roundtrip, with little elevation gain, to see the 320-foot drop of the lower fall. Next, we drove to Half Dome Village (formerly Curry Village) to access the Mist Trail near Happy Isles and walk up the slick rock steps to Vernal and Nevada falls. It's 2.4 miles roundtrip if you stop at the top of Vernal Fall, the lower of the two falls. You can look down the whole length of the 317-foot cataract.

If you go all the way to the top of Nevada Fall—as we did—it's 5.4 miles roundtrip, and you'll have additional steep climbing to see the impressive 594 feet of plunging water. Peak runoff for most major waterfalls usually occurs in May or June. ■

Fresno-area writer Mark Grossi is the author of Longstreet Highroad Guide to the California Sierra Nevada. Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) offers flights to Fresno and Mammoth Lakes, serving both the east and west Yosemite entrances.



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in Growing Popularity

Enjoying agritourism
experiences By Susan Goracke



Picking cherries, exploring “America’s Salad Bowl,” savoring shellfish and wine, and learning about sheep-herding are some of the many fun agricultural experiences people can enjoy.



As I stroll an interpretive trail through a beautiful cherry orchard, I find myself daydreaming about the sweet fresh-cherry tarts I could make this summer, and the accolades I might receive from appreciative family members.

My husband, Mark, and I are enjoying an agritourism-themed adventure in central Washington’s Yakima area, and we’d heard from friends that the **Washington Fruit Place at Barrett Orchards** (treeripened.com), about 10 minutes west of downtown Yakima, was the perfect spot to learn about cherries, share a picnic lunch under a shady tree, and look for gourmet gifts at the farm shop inside a picturesque red barn.

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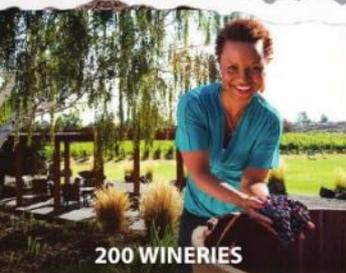


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COURTESY BARRETT ORCHARDS

ABOVE: The red barn at the Washington Fruit Place at Barrett Orchards in the Yakima, Washington, area.

BELOW: Yakima County is the top producer of apples and pears in Washington state.

The level, quarter-mile bark trail, created by orchard owners Mark and Cheryl Barrett, provides information on how cherries are grown, pollinated and harvested. One information station explains that the large bird I've noticed circling above is a kestrel, a small falcon that orchard owners attract with nesting boxes to help reduce a starling population that can rob growers of their fruit. Another station describes how the cherries are carefully harvested in clusters, by hand.

Following our walk, I visit with the orchardists inside the barn while my husband fills our shopping basket with jars of pickled and spicy-hot specialty foods made with fruits and vegetables grown by the Barretts and other local farmers. I discover that Cheryl's ancestors were among the pioneers who planted orchards along an area creek in the 1880s and that Mark's great-grandfather started an apple orchard in the Yakima Valley in 1908.

"Most people are amazed that everything in our orchards is hand-picked," says Mark, explaining that the couple now cultivates 80 acres, growing 12 varieties of cherries, along with numerous varieties of other fruits. The spring **Cherry Blossom Days** festival—April 15–22 this year—provides the opportunity to walk amid and photograph the orchards in beautiful bloom. Then in June and July, the plump red fruit is ready to harvest, with u-pick dates starting June 20 and running for two weeks, culminating with a cherry-harvest festival July 2–4.

U-pick is not offered for the Barretts' other crops, but they are available from the family's farmstand. Apricots are ready to pick about the same time as the cherries. Peaches and nectarines ripen July through September. Pears are picked between August and October, and the apple harvest runs from September through November. The Harvest Festival, October

8–9, 15–16, 22–23 and 29–30 this year, is especially fun for kids. It includes hayrides, a pumpkin patch, a toddler hay-bale maze and a fresh-apple-cider-making demonstration.

"Children are used to seeing fruit in grocery stores, but they don't realize where fruit comes from," Mark Barrett says. "We're trying to educate people, especially children, how things are grown."

After our morning at the orchards, I learn from a Washington State University Extension web page that Yakima County is the state's No. 1 producer of sweet cherries, apples, pears, melons, squash and peppers, with many acres of other crops, ranging from peaches and plums to asparagus and sweet corn, also grown.

A Yakima Valley Tourism website, visitfarm-freshfun.com, provides information on farms, farmers markets, events and u-pick opportunities. The site also links to information on wineries, including those that are dog-visitor friendly. **Bonair Winery** (bonairwine.com)—one of the 100-plus wineries in the Yakima Valley American Viticultural Area (yakimavalleywinecountry.com and wineyakimavalley.org)—even crafts a Bung Dog Red that honors the resident pooch. The label for this fruity full-bodied blend says, "My name is Bung II, and I approve this wine."

My husband and I knew the region—Washington state's first AVA—was famous for the number and variety of its wines, but until we planned this trip, we weren't aware that the Yakima Valley leads the country in production of commercial hops, with about 75 percent of U.S. hops grown here,



HYDRO AT THE HEART OF THE NORTHWEST'S BOUNTY



The Northwest produces a dazzling array of crops—from wheat to beef cattle, from wine grapes to salmon—under the nation's cleanest skies. Increasingly, the region is attracting food-conscious travelers who want to explore the farms, vineyards and ranches where Northwest cuisine begins.

Yet few visitors recognize the true source of this agricultural bounty, flowing in the background: **The Columbia and Snake River System**, which provides crucial irrigation and so many other benefits to the farmers, families and businesses of the Northwest. The landscape would look much different, and far less bountiful, without the irrigation and carbon-free renewable energy provided by Northwest rivers and dams.

The Columbia River—and its largest tributary, the Snake—have shaped the Northwest for millennia. From its headwaters in the Canadian Rockies, the Columbia flows south into Washington State, draining an area the size of France. From Wyoming, the Snake travels more than 1,000 miles to southern Washington, where it joins the Columbia and continues west to the Pacific Ocean.

Yet the rivers on their own weren't enough to make the land hospitable.

New settlers arriving in the mid-1800s needed help to transform arid and semi-arid land into productive farms that could support families and bring economic stability. They needed irrigated water, and irrigation required dams.

In 1902, Congress passed the **Reclamation Act**, which committed the federal government to construct and maintain dams, reservoirs and canals to irrigate land in 16 Western states, including **Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Montana**. It was the vision of Congress and President Theodore Roosevelt to see "the desert bloom"—and to provide electricity to heat and light the Northwest's most rural communities.



Dam operations have changed dramatically, to help speed young salmon to the ocean and make their journey through the dams safer.

In the 1930s, construction began on the largest of the dams, the massive **Grand Coulee** in northern Washington—which at 550 feet tall and nearly a mile wide has been called the "Eighth Wonder of the World." Today it remains one of the world's largest man-made structures.

Water pumped from Grand Coulee began reaching Columbia Basin lands in 1948 and today irrigates about 670,000 acres. In all, federal agencies have built 31 major

dams on the Columbia and its tributaries. Water stored behind many of these dams provides vital irrigation for farmers throughout the Northwest, who raise a wide assortment of crops: wheat, barley, potatoes, corn, peas, lentils, alfalfa, mint, apples, cherries, wine grapes and more.

The dams are also the Northwest's single biggest energy source—far bigger than coal, gas, wind or solar.

Hydropower from dams generates nearly 60 percent of the region's electricity without any carbon emissions, giving us cleaner skies and a carbon footprint half that of other parts of the country.

And because the water stored behind dams can be released at a moment's notice, hydropower is always available to back up intermittent energy sources that are not as constant, like wind and solar.

Beyond irrigation and low-cost renewable energy, the dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers include a world-class series of locks. The locks create an inland "river highway" for the barging of goods and products, which connects Northwest farmers to the world. Dams also provide flood control that protects towns and cities, and reservoirs for boating, fishing and other recreational pursuits.

This bounty, however, has come with costs. Most federal dams were built with fish ladders that allow the Northwest's iconic salmon to pass. But the construction of Grand Coulee and other large dams blocked river passage for some. Dam operations also can harm salmon, as well as the Native American



Northwest dams produce no CO₂ and river barging keeps 700,000 trucks off the road each year.



tribes and others who revere and rely on the fish. And yet, the region has made tremendous progress at better protecting the salmon, while also protecting the hydropower system that **provides 90 percent of our renewable energy**.

Today, the Northwest is home to the nation's largest salmon restoration program, with nearly \$16 billion spent so far to mitigate for the dams' impacts on salmon and wildlife. Over the past decade, salmon have made it back to their native Northwest rivers in the **highest numbers** seen since before the dams were built, thanks to these restoration efforts and good ocean conditions.

At Northwest RiverPartners, we welcome all visitors who, like the salmon, keep coming back. We hope you enjoy our region's bounty and beauty—and the rivers and dams that make it possible. **For the multiple benefits of the Snake and Columbia River Systems, visit CleanHydro.com.**



Terry Flores is executive director of Northwest RiverPartners, an alliance of river users that includes farmers, port managers, businesses and utilities that rely on the economic and environmental benefits of the Columbia and Snake rivers.

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COURTESY BALE BREAKER BREWING COMPANY XZ

according to the Yakima Valley–based Hop Growers of America (usahops.org).

Our trip would not be complete without a stop at a local brewery (spiritsandhopstrail.com), and we choose **Bale Breaker Brewing Company** (balebreaker.com), located about 5 miles southeast of downtown Yakima.

The brewery sits amid fields of leafy hop plants climbing row upon row of trellises, and in the company's gleaming modern taproom, we look through large windows to see huge, beer-filled stainless steel tanks in the adjacent brewery. Bale Breaker, which opened in 2013, is one of the area's newest craft breweries, but the owners—siblings Kevin Smith, Patrick Smith and Meghann Smith Quinn, and Meghann's husband, Kevin Quinn—are continuing a hops-related family legacy. The siblings' great-grandparents, B.T. and Leota Loftus, began planting hops in the Yakima Valley in 1932. Now in its fourth generation, the family's B.T. Loftus Ranches Inc. owns 1,000 acres of hop fields—including the field around the brewery and another one, just a mile down the road, that B.T. and Leota planted.

Mark and I sample a four-beer flight. My favorite is the complex, somewhat citrusy, flagship Topcutter IPA, listed last year by *Men's Journal* as one of the "101 Best Beers in America." Mark prefers the more intense, double-dry-hopped Bottomcutter Imperial IPA, a gold medal winner in last year's Washington Beer Awards. The IPAs are named for types of equipment used during the hop harvest.

We continue southeast about 50 miles to Prosser to taste the delicious products at **Chukar Cherries** (chukar.com). In the early 1980s, Seattle real estate marketing agent Pam Montgomery, seeking a slower, small-town pace for raising her children, purchased a 100-acre cherry orchard in this area. After noticing that the cherries missed during the harvest and left to dry naturally on the trees



ABOVE: The patio off the Taproom at Bale Breaker Brewing Company near Yakima. About 75 percent of U.S. hops are grown in the Yakima Valley.

BELOW: Dyson and Susan DeMara are the current owners of historic HillCrest Vineyard, whose founder planted the first known Pinot Noir vines in Oregon.



COURTESY HILLCREST WINERY AND DISTILLERY

were sweet and delicious, she began drying cherries herself on window screens. In 1988, she opened a more extensive production facility and retail store in Prosser, and now offers daily tastings.

Mark and I particularly like the Pinot Noir- and Cabernet-flavored dried cherries dipped in dark chocolate. Chukar also sells no-sugar-added options such as the Three Cherry Classic Tin with dried bing, Rainier and tart cherries, and multitreat options such as the Sumptuous Assortment box of chocolate-covered cherries, berries and nuts.

As we browse the shop, I'm delighted to realize that although we'll need to revisit Barrett Orchards this summer to fulfill my dream of making fresh-cherry tarts, I can meanwhile please my family with fresh-baked cherry pies, thanks to Chukar Cherries' flavorful pie filling.

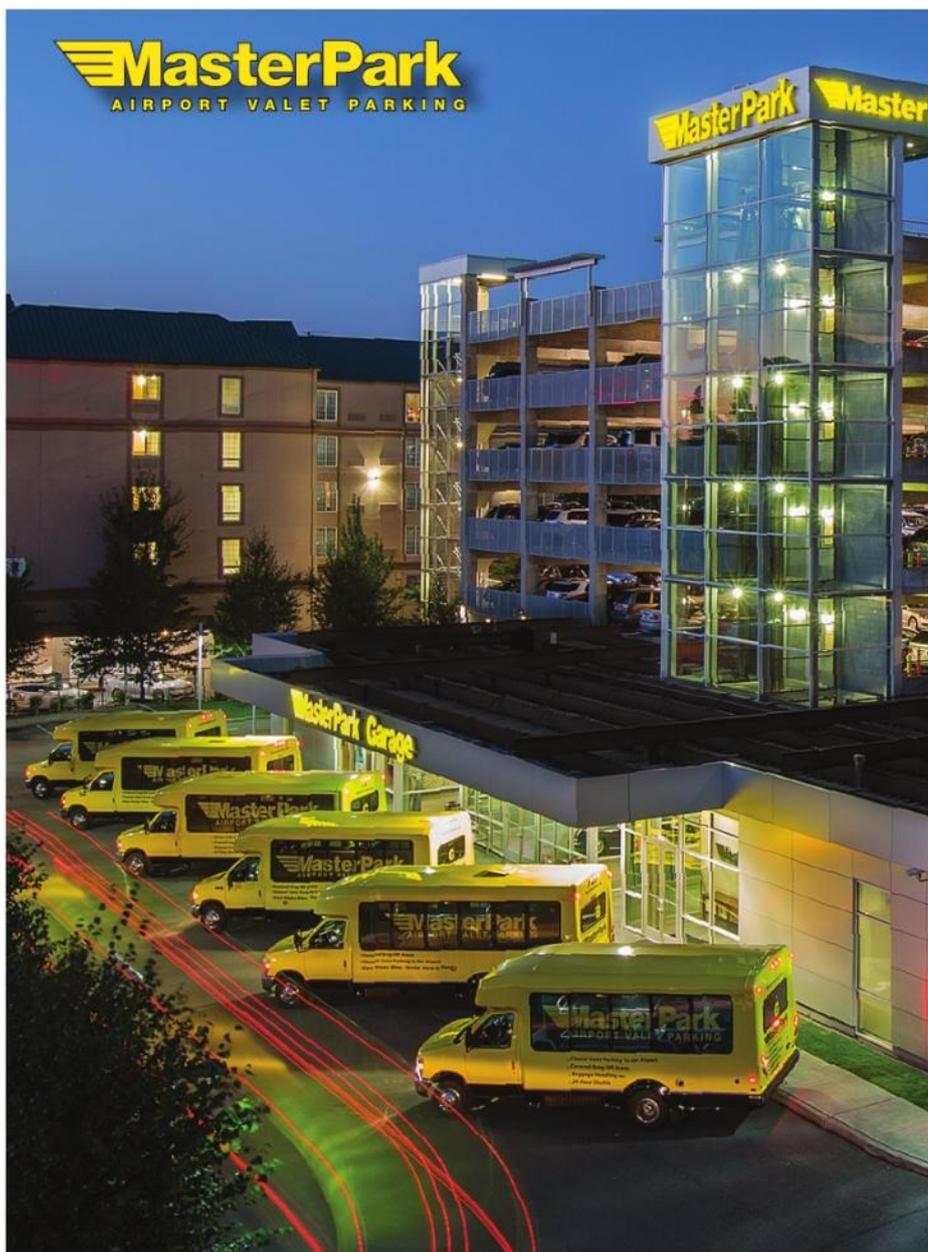
Another interesting attraction is the **Central Washington Agricultural Museum** (central-waagmuseum.org) in Union Gap, about 5 miles south of Yakima. The museum, open various days from April 1 through October 31, comprises 15 acres inside Fullbright Park. Displays range from vintage tools and horse-pulled equipment to replicas of local homesteads and a sawmill. The family-friendly museum also features a short, child-size train ride on an oval track that passes a farmstead complete with windmill, a corn crib and other artifacts of farm life.

The Yakima area is one of the dozen-plus agritourism

areas featured on the website washivore.org/savor-washington, which was created by two state agencies. Other states, as well as Canadian provinces, also have numerous agritourism opportunities. Below are a few more ideas:

Oregon

In 1961, Richard Sommer—often called the "father of Oregon wine"—moved from California to Southern Oregon's Umpqua Valley and planted the first known Pinot Noir vines in the state. Six years later, his HillCrest Vineyard released its first Pinot



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Noir—the beginning of the modern wine industry in Oregon, according to the Oregon Wine Board.

Today, Dyson DeMara and his family, who acquired the vineyard in 2003, operate **HillCrest Winery and Distillery** (hillcrestvineyard.com) on 50 idyllic hillside acres, 43 of them land that Sommer cultivated. The DeMaras still craft some Pinot Noir from the fruit of Sommer's vines, along with crafting many other red and white varietals. And several blends combine grapes grown on the Southern Oregon estate with grapes grown in vineyards the DeMaras operate with friends in Spain, France, Germany and Italy.

One of HillCrest's most prized wines is the 2011 Perfecti—a Syrah, Carignan and Grenache blend from old vines grown in a vineyard that HillCrest leases in Roussillon, France. It's the only vineyard HillCrest operates that is "farmed beyond organic, with horse and plow," says DeMara. The Perfecti, almost black in color, has a dense richness and strong minerality.

HillCrest, which has received international acclaim, is among the more than two-dozen wineries on the Umpqua Wine Tour; for more information about touring/tasting, visit Roseburg-based Umpqua Valley Winegrowers at umpquavalleywineries.org; also see visitroseburg.com/finewine.

Idaho

One of the West's most unusual and intriguing agricultural events is the **Trailing of the Sheep Festival** (trailingofthesheep.org), which is held each fall in the Idaho cities of Sun Valley, Ketchum and Hailey to celebrate and preserve the culture and traditions of sheepherding in the picturesque Wood River Valley. The festival coincides with the annual fall sheep migration. For more than 150 years, herders have guided their large flocks from summer high-mountain pastures to winter quarters in the lower elevations of the Snake River Plain in Southern Idaho.

"This is not a reenactment—it's Idaho's living history at its best," says festival



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MICHAEL EDMISTER

Montana

In Northwestern Montana, the Flathead Valley sweet-cherry season is officially celebrated in mid-July during the **Polson Main Street Flathead Cherry Festival** (flatheadcherryfestival.com). The scenic town lies at the southern end of Flathead Lake, about 55 miles south of Kalispell. This year's festival, July 16 and 17, will feature several contests—cherry-pie eating, cherry-pit spitting, stem tying, and cooking—as well as arts-and-crafts and food booths.

Cherry trees were first introduced to the Flathead Valley in the late 1800s, but it was not until 1929 that the first commercial cherry orchard was planted, on the western shore of Flathead Lake, according to *Flathead Lake, from Glaciers to Cherries*. The next year, additional orchards were planted, on the eastern shore. In 1935, Flathead Lake Cherry Growers Inc. was organized, and soon thereafter, cherries were being sent by rail throughout the country. Today, visitors can purchase cherries at farmstands along both shores of the lake, from Bigfork south to Polson, during a season that sometimes lasts to mid-August.

Popular orchards to visit include **Getmans' Cherry Red Orchard** (getmanorchard.com), about 10 miles

Executive Director Laura Musbach Drake.

The 20th-annual festival, Oct. 5–9, will include knitting, weaving and spinning workshops; seminars such as cooking with lamb; a farm-to-table dinner; championship sheepdog trials; and a folklife fair. The festival's signature event, the Trailing of the Sheep Parade, will take place on Oct. 9, when local ranching families help lead about 2,000 sheep down Ketchum's Main Street. This "wild and woolly" parade will also include the blessing of the flock by a local clergyman, plus Basque, Scottish, Polish and Peruvian dancers and musicians.

The Trailing of the Sheep Festival, in the Sun Valley, Idaho, area, celebrates the culture and tradition of sheepherding in the region.



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south of Bigfork. Owners Dan and Sheryl Getman expect to host cherry u-pickers from mid-July to mid-August this year, after the main harvest. In addition to sweet cherries, the Getmans grow u-pick tart cherries (for pies), raspberries, apricots, peaches, plums, pears, apples and organic vegetables (u-pick dates vary). Call ahead, 406-871-5499, to see what's available to pick or to order cherries and other fruits already picked.

California

The fertile Salinas Valley, in Monterey County, has been called "America's Salad Bowl" because so many of the salad greens consumed in the United States are grown here. So are many other crops, from strawberries to celery to artichokes. Nobel- and Pulitzer Prize-winning author John Steinbeck, who grew up in the valley, featured it in some of his popular stories—including *East of Eden* and *Of Mice and Men*. The National Steinbeck Center (steinbeck.org) provides insight into the author and his life.

Visit the **Monterey County Agriculture and Rural Life Museum** (mcarlm.org) at 200-acre San Lorenzo County Park, in the valley town of King City, to learn about the area's rich agricultural history from the late 19th century through World War II. Exhibits include

Cultivating Interest

Agritourism in the United States is expected to grow more than 20 percent between 2010 and 2020 as city dwellers revisit agricultural roots, educate their children about where their food comes from, and enjoy fun excursions to the country, according to nationally recognized agritourism marketing consultant Jane Eckert (at right).

Eckert is a sixth-generation farmer's daughter who helped turn her family's 100-year-old farm in the St. Louis area into one of the largest pick-your-own orchards in the country. The family eventually expanded its operation to include three farms, a 300-seat restaurant, a large country store and a farm market (eckerts.com).



Eckert is a popular keynote speaker at agricultural and tourism-industry events, and she has worked with more than 125 farm owners in North America to help them become

more successful direct marketers.

Not only do visitors enjoy agritourism, but it can also benefit agricultural enterprises, Eckert says, as farmers, ranchers, vinticulturists, hops growers and others add income by

building farmstands, gift shops, tasting rooms, restaurants and lodgings; providing tours; and hosting festivals.

"The public loves the farm experience, and farmers love the revenue growth," Eckert says. —S.G.

COURTESY JANE ECKERT



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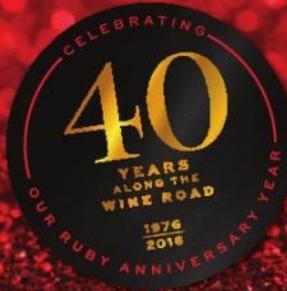
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historical buildings such as La Gloria School, circa 1887, and a home built in the 1890s by the Spreckels Sugar Company for the family of one of its employees. You also can tour the original King City Depot, built in 1903. On Aug. 27, the museum will sponsor the annual South County Ag Tour, with participants transported by bus to a variety of modern agricultural enterprises throughout the valley.

British Columbia

The **British Columbia Shellfish and Seafood Festival** (bcshellfishfestival.com) will celebrate its 10th anniversary June 9–19 in Comox by the Sea. The scenic Comox Valley, on Vancouver Island's east coast, is located about 140 miles north of Victoria, and produces more than 50 percent of British Columbia's cultured shellfish, as well as most of the oysters produced in Canada.

Festival activities include producer-related tours, seafood-cooking demonstrations and tastings, educational seminars, gala dinners, and competitions that celebrate British Columbia's aquaculture industry. Festival attendees can even test their own oyster-shucking skills against some of BC's fastest shuckers (preregistration required).

Ticket information for events will be posted on the website, and certain events often sell out, so plan ahead to attend the popular festival. To get to Comox, you can fly Alaska Airlines to Victoria and rent a car for the drive up the coast. ■

Susan Goracke lives in Portland, Oregon.

Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) provides service to Yakima, WA; Medford, OR; Sun Valley, ID; Kalispell, MT; Monterey, CA; Victoria, BC; and other cities that are gateways to agritourism experiences. Additional options include Walla Walla, WA; the Palouse in WA and ID; Willamette Valley, OR; Southeast MT; Sonoma County, CA; and the Okanagan region in BC. For more agritourism ideas, visit state and provincial tourism websites.

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By Greg Hahn

The Boise Foothills
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of trails.



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Foothills or river?

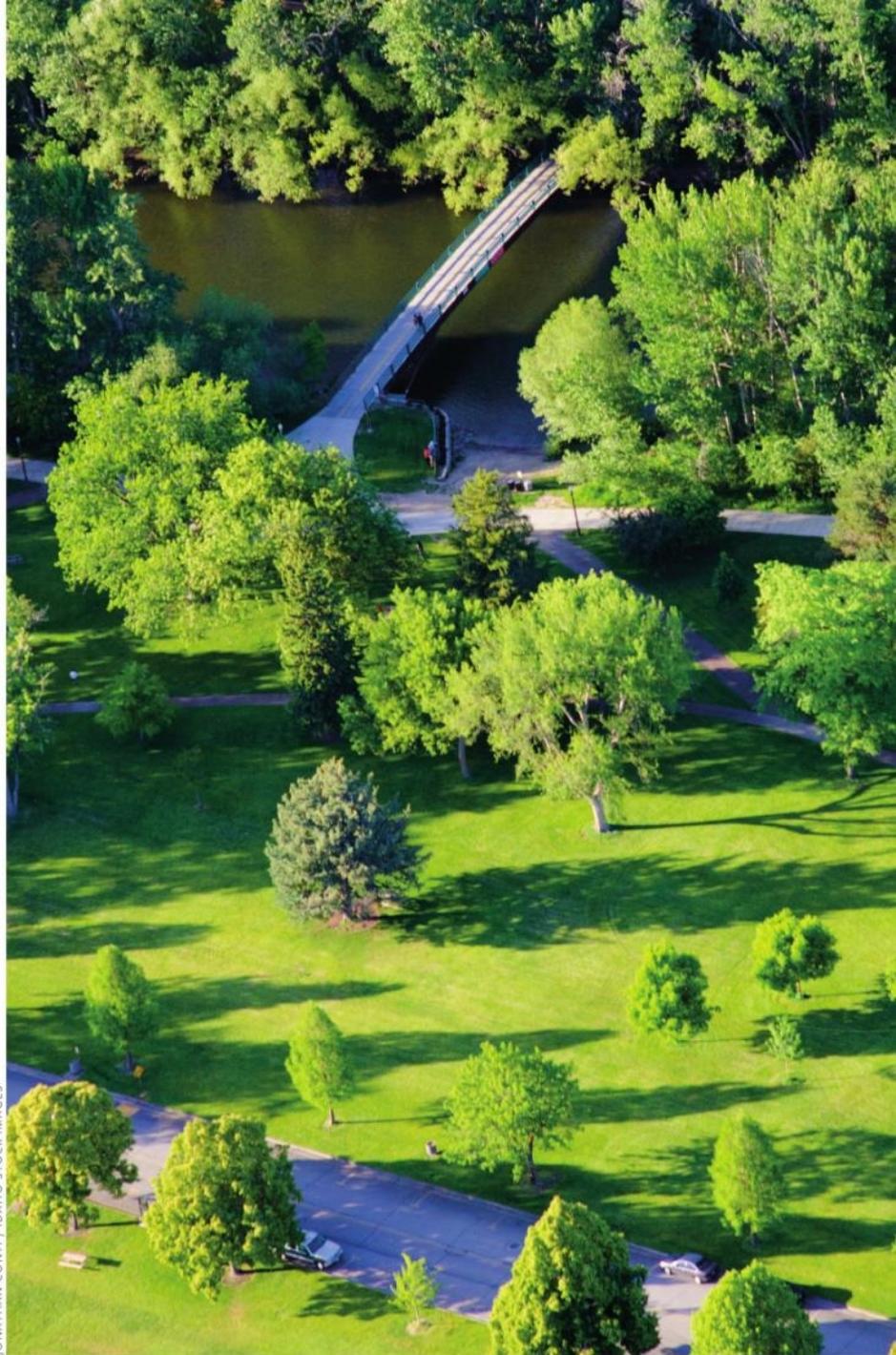
That is often the question when it comes to bicycling in Boise. ■ Both options offer outstanding scenery, but I almost always end up pointing my bike south toward the Boise River Greenbelt versus north toward the Rocky Mountain foothills. I'm just more of a river guy. At least, that's what I tell myself. But let's be honest: I'm avoiding the climbs.

The Boise Foothills trails—part of the 190 miles of maintained trails in the Ridge to Rivers system—are invigorating and, in some cases, challenging. They are among the sites where local cyclist Kristin Armstrong, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, trains. The Greenbelt path, on the other hand, is typically an easy, relaxing ride.

The Greenbelt runs about 25 miles along the river, with the north bank part of the trail entirely paved and open to bicyclists. All but 1.6 miles of the south bank part of the trail is also paved and open to bicyclists. A west-to-east route from the Willow Lane Park and Athletic Complex to the beach at Sandy Point, by Lucky Peak Dam, takes riders through an urban oasis of trees, and passes parks, ponds, fishing holes and even the public Warm Springs Golf Course.

Bike rentals are available from downtown businesses such as McU Sports, Pedego Boise, the Boise State University Cycle Learning Center and Idaho Mountain Touring, while Boise GreenBike is a bike-share/rental option provided by Valley Regional Transit.

During my rides, I've seen river rafters and fly-fishermen, bocce players and rock climbers, joggers and leisurely walkers. I've also pedaled past otters, bald eagles, great blue herons, foxes, deer, wild tur-



JONATHAN CONTI / IDAHO STOCK IMAGES



CHAD CASE / IDAHO STOCK IMAGES

keys, and more ducklings and goslings than could fill a children's book.

Activities and attractions such as the Greenbelt have helped to make the Boise area one of the country's top recreation destinations. Boise has been touted on lists ranging from Best

Travel-Worthy State Capitals and Best Under-the-Radar Destinations to Greenest Cities and Best Places to Live. And as the Boise Convention & (to pg. 56)

Above: Ann Morrison Park is one of the numerous green spaces along the Boise River Greenbelt.

Left: Boise River Park, with whitewater created by mechanical "wavershapers," is also along the Greenbelt.



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A few more Boise attractions

Craft Brews

The Boise area boasts more than 15 breweries, many demonstrating playfulness and a love of their home state. For instance, **Payette Brewing Company** beers include choices such as the North Fork Lager, featuring “a quick smooth run” like scenic sections of Idaho’s North Fork of the Payette River. **Sockeye Brewing** has a line with beers such as Galena Gold, whose “refreshing exuberance” evokes the exhilaration of enjoying the mountain view at Galena Summit between Sun Valley and Stanley.



JO NATHAN CONTI / IDAHO STOCK IMAGES

Among my favorite brews are **Woodland Empire Ale Craft’s** Old Boise Lager, characterized as a classic “American beer,” and the imperial stout, featuring a cherrywood-smoked malt, that Woodland has named “Beast Moans.”

Also noteworthy are **Cloud 9**, a certified organic brewery limiting each handcrafted batch to four barrels, and the up-and-coming **Boise Brewing**, whose Black Cliffs American Stout won silver at the 2015 Great American Beer Festival.

World-Class Wines

A short day trip west of town will take you to the **Sunnyslope Wine Trail** in the Snake River Valley American Viticultural Area,



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where you can enjoy high desert views while savoring wines from artisans such as **Zhoo Zhoo**, which is run by sisters who

grew up in the Idaho wine industry and who craft wines with names ranging from Redhead to Antoinette. Popular stops on the Sunnyslope Wine Trail also include the up-and-coming **Hat Ranch**, with options such as the three-grape-varieties blend called Hat Trick White, and **Ste. Chapelle**, the granddaddy of southwestern Idaho’s modern wine industry, and the host of a summer concert series.

In and around Boise and suburbs such as Garden City, the **Southwest Urban Wine District** includes about a dozen boutique wineries, such as the lauded **Cinder Wines**, **Coiled Wines** and **Telaya Wine Co.** The three wineries are within about 1.5 miles of each other and several other wineries.

Cultural Connection

One of Boise’s most unique attributes is the vibrant Basque community that has helped shape the look and feel of the city. The **Basque Block** downtown includes the **Basque Museum & Cultural Center**, with a nicely preserved 1910 boardinghouse that gives you a feel for what life was like here a century ago. At the nearby **Basque Center**



MIRK REOGH / IDAHO STOCK IMAGES

bar, try the Picon Punch, a stiff aperitif that is the quintessential Basque-American drink. Then select some *pintxos* (small bites) at **The Basque Market**, or order lamb stew, a chorizo sandwich or a *solomo* sandwich (marinated pork loin with pimientos) at the **Bar Gernika Pub & Eatery**.

Bogus Basin

Just 20 miles from downtown Boise, **Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area** offers easy and affordable adventures. Downhillers and snowboarders can access 53 alpine trails on seven lifts, and cross-country enthusiasts have access to 22

miles of maintained Nordic trails. In the summer, the fun shifts to mountain biking and hiking.

Flourishing Arts

You'll find evidence of the City of Trees' arts scene throughout town in numerous public-art installations, sculptures and murals, including pieces such as Ann LaRose's bronze *Keepsies* (below) and Patrick Zentz's *Homage to the Pedestrian*, which features four light fixtures that make instrument sounds, such as cymbals



MIKE LEEDS / IDAHO STOCK IMAGES

and chimes, when someone walks by.

The **Velma V. Morrison Center for the Performing Arts at Boise State University** hosts performers ranging from Ballet Idaho, Idaho Dance Theatre and the Boise Philharmonic to Celtic Woman and 2Cellos, as well as Broadway musicals such as *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

From late May to late September, the **Idaho Shakespeare Festival** entertains theatergoers in a beautiful outdoor setting by the river east of town.

JUMP

JUMP stands for **Jack's Urban Meeting Place** and is named for Idaho entrepreneur J.R. "Jack" Simplot (who was particularly famous for inventing commercially viable frozen french fries). Opening in stages, the nonprofit JUMP (depicted above right) is described as an interactive creative center and community gathering place.



MICHAEL MCCULLOUGH

Among other things, it will include a park with an amphitheater and a five-story spiral slide; a movement studio for dancers, choreographers and fitness enthusiasts; a kitchen studio where master and amateur chefs can try new recipes, collaborate and compete; a makers' studio where people can invent, build and test ideas; a multimedia studio for filmmakers, musicians and digital-media designers; and an inspiration studio where people can share their dreams, ideas and beliefs with others and work to make them a reality.

—G.H.



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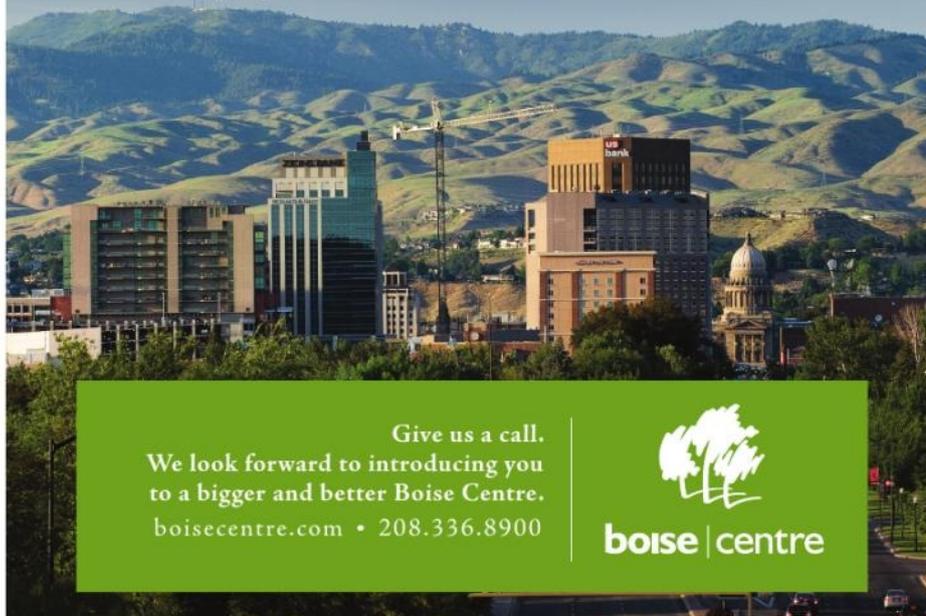


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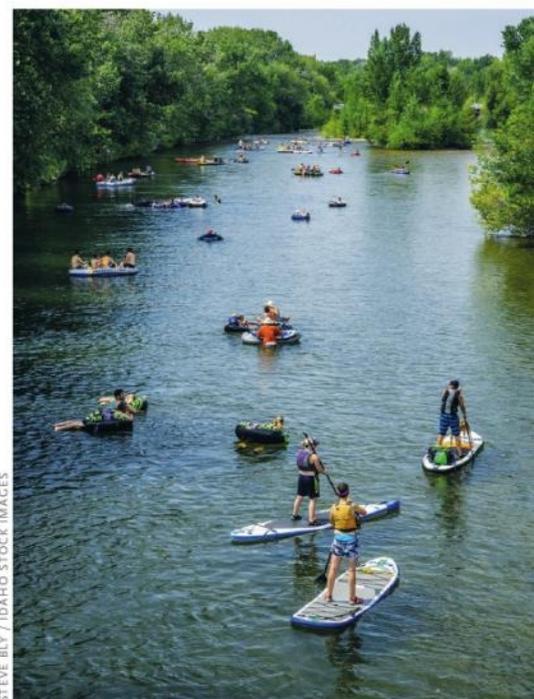
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Floating the Boise River is a popular activity on a sunny summer day.

(from pg. 53) Visitors Bureau points out, "Outdoor pursuits exist in perfect sync with city life." Activities such as biking, hiking, water sports and skiing can be enjoyed just a short distance from attractions such as wineries, breweries, restaurants, nightclubs, shops, museums and performing-arts productions.

One of the most popular outdoor attractions is Boise River Park, which features a human-made whitewater area that can be accessed from the Greenbelt. Surfers, kayakers and standup-paddleboarders relish the roiling section of river created by two mechanical "wavershapers."

I've never braved the waves myself, but I've spent some hot summer weekends entertained by surfers and kayakers taking turns on the turbulent water. A nearby green space includes 22-acre Quinn's Pond, which is conducive to family-friendly swimming and paddling. Idaho River Sports, near the pond, rents paddleboards, kayaks, canoes and other gear. (Construction of the new Esther Simplot Park is taking place in the area, so be sure

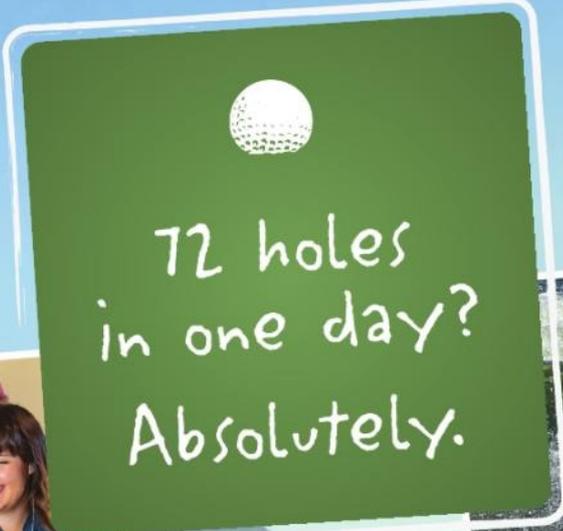


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A hiker enjoys the view from a canyon rim above the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.

to check locally for current access routes to Boise River Park and Quinn's Pond.) Another section of the Boise River, the 6 miles between Ada County's Barber Park and the City of Boise's Ann Morrison Park, offers an approximately two-hour float with occasional mild rapids. You can rent inflatable rafts or inner tubes from Boise River Raft & Tube at Barber Park, and after your float, a shuttle can take you back to your starting point.

Nature lovers also enjoy The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey, about 10 miles southwest of downtown Boise, and the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, about 20 miles south of the Peregrine Fund's facility.

At the World Center, you can see eagles and vultures from around the globe, including endangered California condors, and learn more about raptors from informational displays and live-bird presentations.

The Bureau of Land Management's 485,000-acre Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area is named after an Idaho icon who was a raptor expert and a leader in raptor conservation throughout the world. Nelson, who moved to Boise in the 1940s, worked on many wildlife films, including several for Disney, according to the BLM, and was instrumental in the establishment of the birds-of-prey conservation area.

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Guffey Bridge crosses the Snake River at Celebration Park in the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.

Around 360 wildlife species live in the conservation area, including 250 bird species. American kestrels (the smallest falcon in North America), golden eagles, northern harriers, red-tailed hawks, great-horned owls and western screech owls are among the raptors that live here year-round, with prairie falcons, Swainson's hawks and ferruginous hawks (the largest hawk in North America) among the migrating raptors that nest in the area, and bald eagles, peregrine falcons, merlins and sharp-shinned hawks among the raptors that move through the area at certain times of the year.

The Snake River Canyon, with craggy cliffs rising as much as 700 feet above the river, provides prime habitat for the birds of prey. Dedication Point, about 400 feet above the river, is a favorite public overlook. You might also see birds such as canyon wrens, Say's phoebes and rock doves in this area.

In addition, raptors might be visible on fence posts, telephone poles and volcanic-rock outcroppings during an approximately 56-mile-loop driving tour from the Kuna Visitor Center. Dedication Point is at about Mile 15.5, and another major stop, Celebration Park, is at Mile 39.

Celebration Park focuses on archaeological and cultural history. Activities include testing your atlatl skills to see how you would have fared as a Paleolithic hunter. I like to take a short hiking trail that leads to boulder petroglyphs and prompts me to ponder how other humans have responded to this serene but imposing landscape.

Celebration Park's Guffey Bridge—built in 1897—provides a rare chance to walk across the Snake River for a new perspective on the canyon, and to hike 15 miles of rugged trails on the south side of the river.

The last time a friend and I hiked in the conservation area, we saw more cottontails than humans, and this kind of proximity to wildlife is one of the things I like most about the Boise area. I'll happily stop my bike to let an extended family of quail putter across the path, or to allow a mama goose to guide her goslings to the river for a dip.

At the end of my favorite bike ride from downtown Boise to Sandy Point beach on the Greenbelt path, I often admire cormorants and mergansers fishing not far from swimmers and picnickers. As I watch the birds and the people, I wonder if we're all having the same thought: How fortunate we are to have found our way here. ■

Greg Hahn is a longtime resident of the City of Trees.

Alaska Airlines (800-ALASKAAIR; alaskaair.com) flies daily to Boise. For more information on visiting the area, see boise.org, visitswidaho.com and visitidaho.org.



New AVA

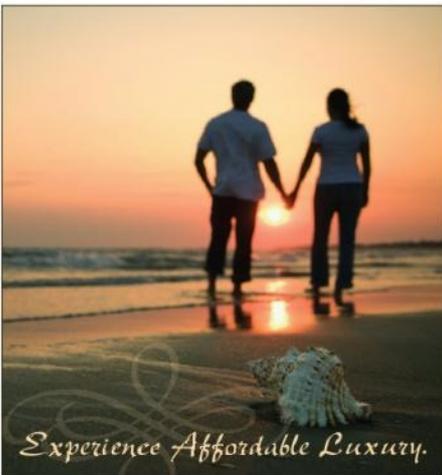
A wine-growing region about 15 miles north of Boise has been designated a new American Viticultural Area.

The **Eagle Foothills AVA**, designated late last year, is the first AVA to be located entirely within the state of Idaho, and is a sub-AVA of the Snake River Valley AVA that includes part of Eastern Oregon.

The new AVA comprises nearly 50,000 acres of land, at elevations ranging from 2,490 to 3,412 feet, on what was once the bank of ancient Lake Idaho north of the town of Eagle.

The Idaho Wine Commission explains that unique characteristics of the Eagle Foothills AVA include the following: south-facing slopes with hot afternoons and evening shade; proximity to the Snake River aquifer for an abundant water supply; and soils consisting of sand from volcanic ash, silt, granite pebbles and clay that are well drained and rich in mineral grains because of the sedimentary bedrock from ancient Lake Idaho and the nearby granitic mountains.

About 70 vineyard acres are currently planted in the new AVA, most of them cultivated by **3 Horse Ranch Vineyards**, and significant cultivation by 3 Horse and other viticulturists is expected in the future as a result of the new designation. Visit idahowines.org for more information.



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Lessons Learned

Golf tips from playing with the pros

BY KEN VAN VECHTEN

My buddy Tony and I have managed to center cut the fairway with a perfect pair of drives at the TPC Stadium Course at PGA West in La Quinta, California. Wedges in hand, we size up our approaches to the green, while three-time PGA Tour winner and all-time nice guy Aaron Baddeley is over in the cabbage.



"He's talking with his caddie about how to get up and down for birdie from that ugly lie," says Tony. "And I'm over here in the middle of the fairway thinking, 'Oh, please, let me get a bogey.'"

Fast forward a few minutes, and it is Baddeley -1, Tony +1. Confidence is as confidence says. Such is the plight of us recreational golfers in this game of the mind.

I am reminded of that fact repeatedly during my round with this group of three other work-for-a-living guys who were able to tee it up with Baddeley during the **Career-Builder Challenge Eisenhower Bob Hope Legacy Pro-Am**. The tournament is a chance to play the TPC Stadium Course with a touring professional and soak up a few tips. I've played in many pro-ams, across a number of tours, with both men and women professionals, and the takeaway from it all is that we average golfers can learn so

very much from the game's best. The advice includes how to think while playing, how to manage getting around a course and even how to hit a chip or aim a putt.

The following are a few of the lessons I've learned from playing with the pros.

They Miss ... Quite Often

The No. 1 takeaway from my experiences at pro-ams is that the PGA's marketing department is correct: "These guys are good." They also mess up. Golf broadcasts that quickly cut from player to player mask how

CHRISTIAN PETERSON / GETTY IMAGES X2



Aaron Baddeley, above and left, is a three-time PGA winner who shared some of his golf insights during a recent pro-am.

often each player misses shots, and it happens much more often than you might think.

Most of the time their blunders aren't as egregious or in the same multiples as those committed by us amateur golfers. However, rest assured, the pros also go yard, get

wet and even, dare I say, shank a shot or two.

Two-time PGA Tour winner **Kevin Streelman**, whom I first met quite a few years ago during the Barracuda Championship Coors Light Pro-Am in Reno, says he hits the shot he wants to hit only 20 percent to 30

percent of the time.

Of course, his "misses" are a whole lot different from my misses. Most of the time, the pros are talking about a shot that leaves them with a long putt or on the wrong side of the fairway. The stats don't show it, but the shot went awry.



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"Golf is a game of misses," Strelman explains. "Even during great rounds, you miss, but you miss in the right spot where you can save a nice par or even get a birdie. Managing your misses is critical to playing the game."

By my count, Baddeley missed three fairways at the Stadium Course and rinsed one on Alcatraz—the Stadium Course's famous par-3 17th—for a double bogey. He also chunked an approach shot. But Badds finished well under par on his own ball, with one birdie coming from the deep stuff, as my pal had predicted.

Reality Check

I was facing a 240-yard second shot to the green on Stadium's par-5 eighth. I hit a 9-iron and sand wedge. On the green Baddeley asks what I was thinking, and I say in so many words: I do enough dumb stuff out here as it is, but I could hit my best approach and not reach, and then I'm facing an awkward short pitch. That's the best thing that could have happened. So, I lay up far enough back that I could use a full swing to reach the green.

I didn't always get this, but now I do. I'm far less bad with full swings using shorter clubs. Baddeley smiles and nods.

"I see it often, a recreational player trying the miracle shot," he told me later. "He looks at a shot, and says to himself, 'I remember back in 1995, when I hit this one 3-wood 240 ... or that one time I hit my pitching wedge 140 stiff,' and it just doesn't work out. Don't try something you can pull off one out of five times. Select a club that allows you to make a smooth, confident swing. If you play a left-to-right game, don't try to hit it right-to-left out on the course; do what you know you can do. If hitting a 3-wood isn't your game, lay up and then hit a 9-iron on the green. Be smart, play for par or bogey, not seven or eight."

It's also important to go with your strengths. At the 2013 Players Championship, Strelman decided at the start of the week to putt from closely mown areas around the greens.

At one point commentator Johnny Miller opined that Strelman would have a better chance holing out if he'd chip onto the green with a different club. Despite the criti-



MICHAEL COHEN / GETTY IMAGES

Two-time PGA Tour winner Kevin Strelman, shown above, says golf is a game of misses. Strelman estimates he hits the shot he is trying to make only about 20 percent to 30 percent of the time.

Return Engagement

Sahalee Country Club to host the Women's PGA Championship

It's been a long time coming. Seventy years after legend-in-the-making **Patty Berg** won the first U.S. Women's Open at Spokane Country Club, women's major championship golf returns to Washington state with the KPMG Women's PGA Championship, to be played at Sahalee Country Club, near Seattle, June 9–12.

The tournament, which is renowned for having one of the longest pedigrees in the game, also marks the second time the PGA of America has joined with the LPGA Tour to produce the event. In the future, it is expected that the tournament will move about the country to other major championship-caliber venues.

Sahalee may not be very well-known outside the Northwest, but its history is impressive. Sahalee was the site of the 1998 PGA Championship, which was won by Vijay Singh. It also hosted the 2002 World Golf Championship–NEC Invitational, and each year it has been the site of the Sahalee Players Championship, one of the nation's top amateur competitions.

"I played Sahalee a lot in college, including practice rounds and home events," says LPGA veteran and Golf Channel analyst Paige Mackenzie, who was a star for the University of Washington women's golf team until her graduation in 2006. "I knew then that the course would be just right for an LPGA event. It is challenging, it rewards great shots, and you have to be absolutely precise in ball striking, and the subtleties of the greens are perfect for championship golf."

Unlike the treeless links-style layout at Chambers Bay Golf Club, which hosted the 2015 U.S. Open, Sahalee is considered a quintessential Pacific Northwest course, with the track carved out of a towering forest. Scotsman and Ryder Cup stalwart Colin Montgomerie is said to have once quipped that, if viewed from on high, Sahalee would look to be passable only in sin-



Patty Berg.

BETTMANN / GETTY IMAGES

gle file, with its sinuous and claustrophobic fairways hemmed in by Douglas fir and cedar.

Expect the course to play in the 6,600-yard range, at a par 71, owing to the par-5 18th being set up as a monster uphill par 4.

Sahalee, which boasts 27 holes of golf, will use a combination of holes from its three sets of nines to complete the championship track for this tournament.

The PGA of America is anticipating strong support for the event. From ticket sales and volunteer perspectives, the initial responses have been "unbelievable," says Sean Riley, the director of the event. "It all comes down to the outdoor mentality of the Pacific Northwest," Riley says. "What we have are people who want to be outside. They are golf nuts, one of the most avid core groups of golfers in the nation. It's not just golf, they're avid sports fans."

This event will give attendees a chance to see the world's best up close and personal. A hallmark of the women's game is how accessible the players are on the LPGA Tour, and the KPMG Women's PGA Championship is no different.

In recent years, Inbee Park has dominated

the event, winning the last three tournaments in a row. In 2015, the 26-year-old South Korean finished 19 under par at the Westchester Country Club in Rye, New York, to win by five strokes over compatriot Sei Young Kim. Other top players to watch include South Korean Ha Na Jang, New Zealand's Lydia Ko, and Americans Stacie Lewis and Lexi Thompson.

However, Golf Channel's Mackenzie says she thinks tour veteran Morgan Pressel will be the player to watch. "It's Morgan's time," Mackenzie says. "As soon as the venue was named, she was the first person who came to my mind. She's incredibly accurate and plays so well in majors. I think Sahalee is tailor-made for her."

—K.V.V.



KEVIN C. COX / GETTY IMAGES

Morgan Pressel.

cism, Strelman thought to himself, "No, I'm sticking with my original plan." He played to one of his strengths. It was a strategy that he was comfortable with doing, and it worked out well.

Emotional Rescue

One of the hallmarks of the best players in the sport is their ability to overlook, ignore and rationalize the inevitable hiccups within a round. This is a skill all amateurs would do well to copy.

"The pros can push off bad breaks or bad shots on something else, and just ingrain the positive," Strelman says. "It was a spike mark, a wind gust, whatever, it wasn't the player. Certain golfers on tour can seem really negative toward the game or their caddie or the conditions, and it doesn't come across very well sometimes. But that's a self-preservation mechanism so that they can step up

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the next time they're facing a tough downhill putt or a demanding drive and pull it off."

As golfers, we all know how easy it is to get down on ourselves; it's par for the course. Whatever our skill sets, we're perfectionists, we want to excel; we want to be better than our aversion to practice allows.

We may have had 15 or 16 great holes and only a couple of unmentionables in a recent round, but it's just human nature to focus on those bad holes. Strelman says we've got it all wrong. We need to focus on the positive. Forget the negative.

"Don't ruin the mental enjoyment of what should be a celebration," Strelman advises. Whatever your handicap, play like the pros—focus on the good shots, and when a bad shot does interrupt your happy karma, blame it on the weather, the course or that chili dog at the turn ... just not you.

Four for Us

OK, it's a hard game; we're not very good at it; and the best way to cope is with a good cloak of deniability, apparently. What truly sets the best players apart from us are coordination, mental fortitude, course management, and the fact they can hit the ball 9 miles and find it.

But don't despair. There are simple steps that amateurs can take to improve their scores. Here are four ideas that will translate to more magic with that club in your hands.

Ratchet Up: Baddeley sounds like every pro I've played with when he advises me to grab more stick. "We don't always hit it on the screws, and we overswing. Take more club and swing smoothly," he says. "This is something I will do when I play. Nine times out of 10, I will take more club and swing smoothly rather than swing out of my shoes. A smooth swing promotes solid contact."

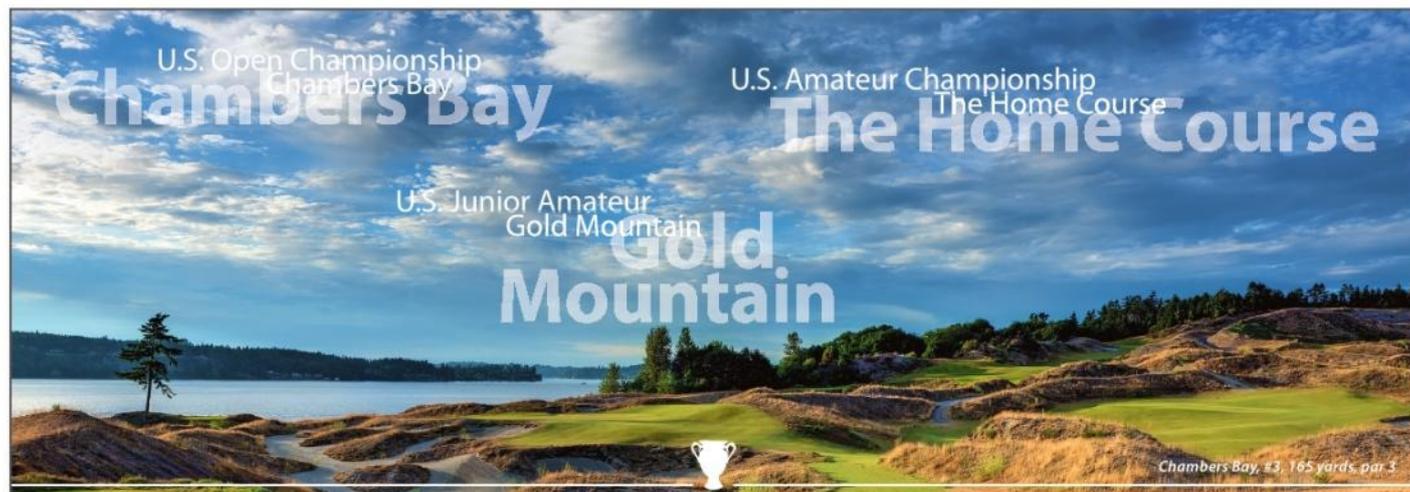


KEN VAN VECHTEN

On the fourth hole at the TPC Stadium Course, Baddeley's caddie suggested I skip my usual 8-iron and pull out a 7. I piped it 15 feet behind the hole, and backspin brought it back to 3 feet from the cup.

Pick Your Spot: Don't always default to the driver. These pros hit a lot of fairway clubs, hybrids or irons on "driver" holes, and so should you. Strelman suggests finding the fat part of the fairway and figuring out what club gets you there. If that's a

PGA professional Aaron Baddeley, at center, poses with his CareerBuilder Challenge Pro-Am team of amateurs on the 17th tee at the TPC Stadium Course at PGA West. They are, from left, Scott White, Ken Van Vechten, Richard Harper and Tony Kutch.



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driver, OK. If it's not a driver, then use whatever is the right club. Get the ball in play with the club you hit more accurately, to reduce the likelihood of a dreaded "other number." The idea is to score, not go all vanity.

Chip It Close: The short game doesn't get much love, but it is one of the easiest ways there is to cut strokes and clean up that scorecard.

The first rule in chipping around the green is simple: If you can, putt instead. The second rule in chipping around the green: If you can't use a putter, you might try chipping with your hybrid. Honestly. For shots a little farther away from the short grass, Strelman advises taking whatever club is necessary—be it a 6-iron or a lob wedge—to carry the ball to the putting surface, and then let it roll out from there.

Set up with 60 percent of your weight on the front or lead side, and keep it there through the shot. Swing the club back and then slightly turn through, with no leg drive. Turn back and turn through while keeping a stable lower body. Let the loft of the club do the work; don't try to manipulate it. Easy.

Most importantly, as Strelman reminds us: "Never attempt a shot you haven't practiced before. Keep practicing!"

Aim High: Show me a golfer, and I'll show you a person with a mess of putting tips rattling around in the gray matter. Hit delete; install this bit of Strelman software: Miss every breaking putt on the high side. The idea, of course, is to get it in the hole, but if your orientation is to identify the break and aim the putt a little to the high side, more putts will start to fall, and the comebacks won't be as knee knocking. This method will help you get a better sense of the speed, not white-knuckling over what line to navigate.

This stuff must make sense, as the boys and I carried Badds to a low gross winning score of 63 at the CareerBuilder. Sorry, Streels, we only helped you to second at the Barracuda Championship. ■

Ken Van Vechten writes about golf from the Central California coast.

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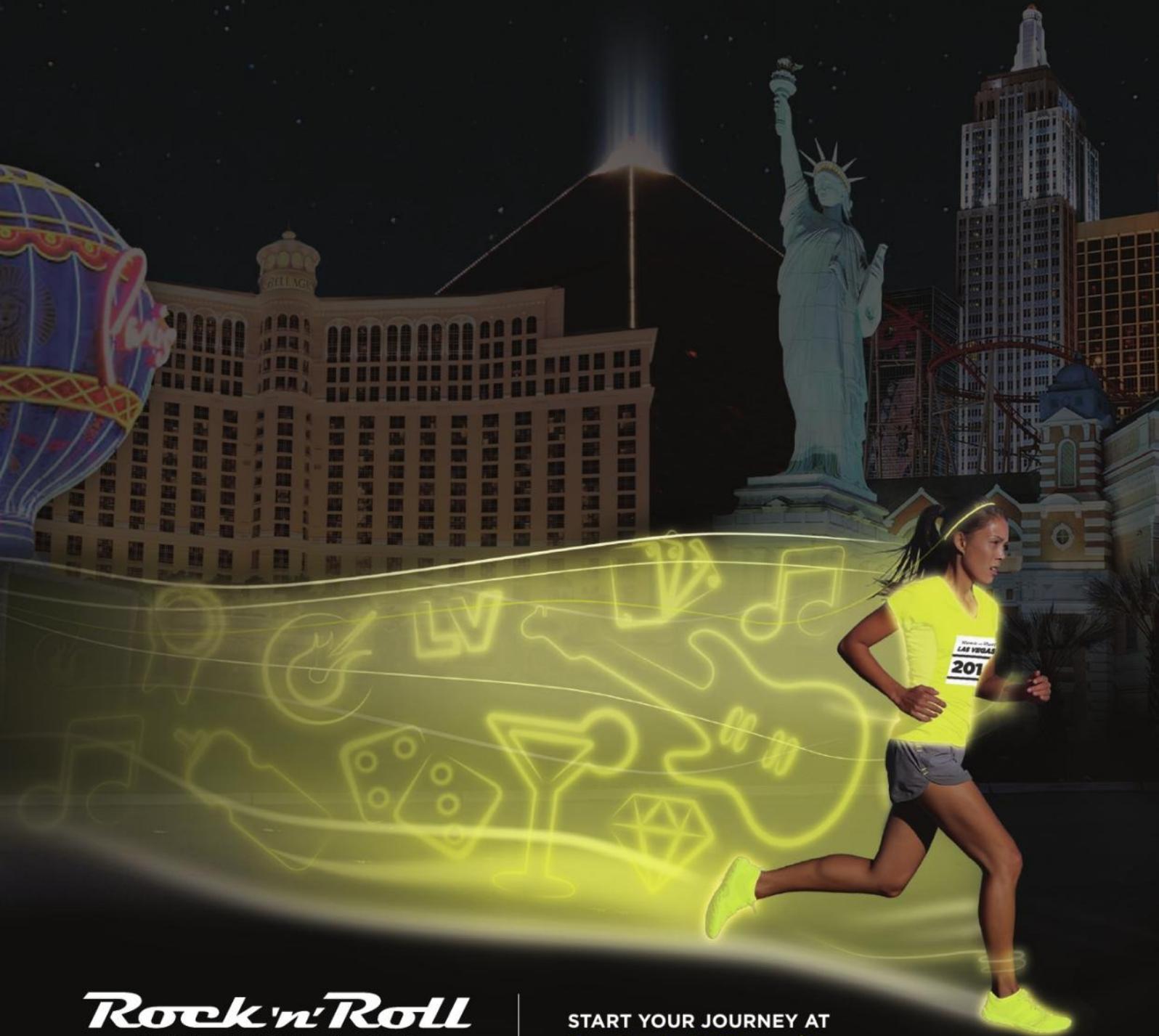


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Ironing Out the Differences

A look at some of today's top golf irons BY KEN VAN VECHTEN

Clubs. We've been swinging 'em around for eons—first for pursuing dinner and keeping the riffraff out of the family cave and now for recreation, such as playing golf.

While it's questionable how much we may have advanced since our caveman days, there's no doubt that golf clubs continue to get a whole lot better. Drivers are sexy and get all the chatter, but irons haven't been left in the Stone Age, either. And seriously, if you had to fend off a saber-toothed cat, wouldn't you really prefer a good, stout 3-iron to a puffy-headed driver?

Today's highly advanced irons are indicative of a rapidly evolving dual trend that offers intricacy in design with versatility in use. Forget the debate about cast (where a molten metal is poured into a mold) versus forged (where a clubhead is hammered into shape) and blade versus cavity-back; the latest lines of top clubs are a combination of new technology and special materials that create a different kind of club. The following are examples of the latest breakthroughs in iron design.

Titleist's AP Irons

"The casting and forging processes continue to get more sophisticated, which puts more power into the hands of club designers," says Steve

Pelisek, general manager of Titleist's golf clubs division. "It gives designers more flexibility to pursue physical properties in clubs they couldn't have reached even a generation ago. We incorporate new processes and materials to design and create a better product with better performance in basically every generation."

Titleist's 2016 lineup boasts two particular types of irons that will end up in a lot of golf bags. **The 716 AP2** can be called the flagship offering, a multimaterial "player" design that combines a cavity-forged head with high-density tungsten inserts fused into the heel and toe, pushing the center of gravity lower—for better launch—and increasing the resistance to twisting, which improves distance and accuracy on off-center strikes. For those needing more help, the cast **716 AP1** has a full undercut (the cavity is extended in the sole of the clubhead) and a high-speed face, with tungsten added at the toe to help square the club at impact.

I had the chance to hit the new lineup prior to release, and two things jumped out from the previous iterations. Titleist is conscientious about the appearance of its clubs. The longer-hitting, more forgiving AP1 is the result. It has little extraneous material visible in the back of the club and a stylish thin top line.

Though immensely popular on the PGA Tour, the similarly handsome

AP2 is now more playable and forgiving for everyday players. While in the past I would've opted for the AP1, I can comfortably play the AP2.

Callaway Reaches the Apex

Several years ago Callaway purchased the iconic Ben Hogan brand, which included the Apex line of clubs.

While Callaway later sold the Hogan brand, it kept Apex. For 2016, the Apex name adorns two forged, multi-material irons that play across a broad expanse of the handicap-index landscape. The **Apex CF 16** features a hollow-forged body to which is affixed a thin, highly responsive stainless steel face with different

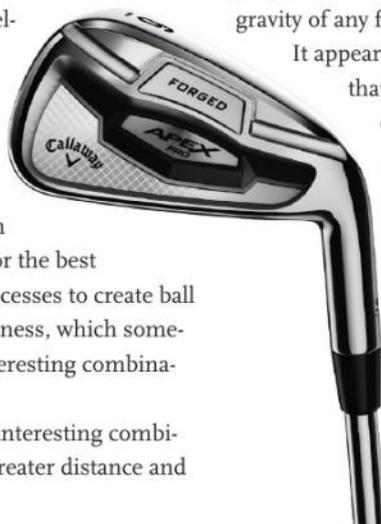
The Titleist 716 AP1 and 716 AP2 irons are designed to improve accuracy and distance.



specifications for the longer versus shorter irons. Thermoplastic urethane is used in the cavity for sound and feel enhancement. The fully forged Apex Pro 16 has tungsten (and more offset) in the long irons and has variable centers of gravity.

“We are at the leading edge of combining forged and nonforged materials with the Apex irons,” says Scott Manwaring, research and development director of irons, hybrids and wedges for the Callaway Golf Company. “We evaluate each design, looking for the best materials and processes to create ball speed and forgiveness, which sometimes leads to interesting combinations.”

For me, those interesting combinations include greater distance and



control. The clubs produce a high, but penetrating, ball flight, and I can work them both directions. They are also silky smooth on the hands.

Bridgestone Hybrids

Known primarily as a better-player brand, Bridgestone Golf is going after the larger market with its new **JGR Hybrid Forged Irons**, which the company claims has the lowest center of gravity of any forging out there.

It appears a true departure in that market segment, as it clearly is intended for game improvement, with an immense sole and a low and deep center of gravity.

“Bridgestone is the leader in terms of multimaterial club design when it comes to rubber,” says Josh

Kinchen, Bridgestone Golf’s club and accessories marketing manager.

Kinchen says the new design reduces vibration to improve feel. It also makes the club lighter and redistributes the weight, promoting more forgiveness.

While I haven’t had the opportunity to play with the JGRs, I spent some time last year playing the similar **J15 Dual Pocket Forged Irons**.

A forging with the proprietary “Turbo Rubber” layer down low in the cavity, the J15 Dual Pocket Forged irons are dampened—not dead—and forgiving on mishits and close to perfect on direct strikes.



At left: The Callaway Apex Pro 16 Irons offer high, but penetrating, ball flight.

Above: The Bridgestone JGR Hybrid Forged Irons are light and forgiving.



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Keep in Mind ...

There are a few things to keep in mind if you are feeling the bug to replace those old irons. The first is playability—or maybe a better description is suitability. Through better metalcraft, weight distribution and the addition of different materials, a greater number of the new clubs on the market are versatile enough for both professionals and average golfers to use. In other words, forging isn't just a hero's club, and casting isn't relegated to C-flight players. For example, my favorite iron among Ping's recent models is the compact **S Series Blade**, a workable, forgiving, multimaterial so-called "player's club" that just happens to be cast.

The second matter is feel. Today, all clubs feel good. All the technology and new manufacturing techniques have helped narrow the gap between what we sense and what is real. Blind-

Building a Better Golf Ball

Here are a few of this season's best offerings

We all play golf with 14 clubs, but only one ball. Sure, we may buy balls by the gross and lose them by the ton, but there is an argument to be made that the golf ball just may be the most important piece of equipment in your bag.

What's cool about today's golf balls is that it is hard to find a bad one. As Bridgestone Golf's Adam Rehberg says, "The balls out in the market now are fantastic. What we say is, dial it in, get fit to the right ball that fits your game."

Not sure if the same old pill is still doing the trick? Go visit your pro shop or retailer, and pack out six or seven sleeves of different balls. You could play all tour-grade offerings or



so-called value balls. However, I'd mix it up. If you think you don't have game for a top-line ball, think again. The modern golf ball may be the best do-all hybrid in the game.

With a variety of balls in hand, head over to the course and start putting and chipping,

getting a sense for the feel of the balls and how they behave when hit with a wedge or putter. If your club doesn't have a dedicated short-game practice area, go play a couple of holes when the crowds are

down, pitching from varying distances, out to about 100 yards; find a bunker; try some lobs. You're now seeing how the balls react across the majority of the shots made during a round. With such practice you likely can winnow your options down a bit. All balls are long these days, but spin rates vary, so when you start hitting shots off the tee—the final tire kick—it will be pretty obvious which brands are best.

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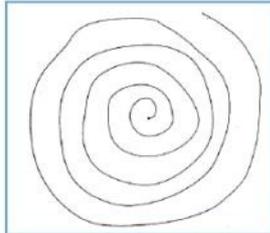
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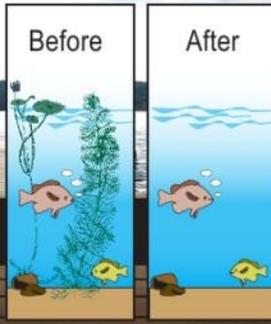


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Puzzle on page 76.

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>>> recommendation from your course professional, from manufacturers' websites and at demo events, and those who make clubs and balls provide suggestions during club-fitting sessions.

Here are some new-for-2016 options of note:

Bridgestone: Four years of R&D brings new cores and covers to the company's top-tier series. The Tour B330RX and RXS are for players with sub-105 mph swing speeds—that's most of us—with cores designed to maximize distance at lower speeds. The Tour B330 and B330S are tuned to high-speed swingers, and as such, have relatively firmer compositions than the B330RX and RXS line of the balls. All get the patented SlipRes cover for more green-approach spin, lower driver spin and greater durability.

Callaway: As with all tour-level balls, Callaway's new Chrome Soft four-piece ball has been reformulated to maximize driver launch conditions—in the simplest terms, lower spin results in longer drives. However, the same ball offers increasing spin and control as the clubs get shorter. It is available in white, yellow and a wild color configuration that looks like a red-and-white soccer ball; good luck losing that one. SuperHot 55 is an uber-soft recreational/value ball with good green-side control.

Titleist: The most popular golf ball in the game saw a recharge for its franchise Pro V1 and Pro V1x balls in 2015. The Titleist "performance line" also got a makeover for 2016, headed by the NXT line for aspirational players who are seeking performance at something below tour-model prices. In a nutshell, the NXT Tour picks up a bit of distance, and the NXT Tour S comes with softer feel than previous iterations. The Velocity line of golf balls offers more distance, while the value-oriented DT TruSoft line of balls offers enhanced feel. —K.V.V.

fold us and put clubs in our hands and sure, we'll have preferences. However, as often as not, we won't know the difference between a forged club and a cast club.

Most importantly, don't be seduced by the Sirens' call of more distance. Indeed, clubs are able to hit the ball farther today at yesterday's lofts; that's a function of all this technology, face flex and directional-stability stuff, and modern golf balls.

Don't get all machismo when you hit your 9-iron 150 yards; all that means is that you need a lot more wedges below that club. You're not better; the clubs are better. You still need to have the right clubs to be properly spaced through the set.

No doubt, advancement is a good thing. Now, can someone, anyone, please do something about my handicap! ■

Ken Van Vechten writes about golf from the Central California coast.

Boeing Takes Flight

Wanna fly? Call the Boeing Company. That's what Callaway did for an assist on the design of its new XR 16 driver.

It takes a lot of math and wind tunnel testing and whatnot to pull this off, but the idea is simple: Make the driver move through the air more efficiently and you increase the speed of the club, and speed in golf means distance. Speed also can mean errant shots. So with the aerodynamic tweaks suggested by Boeing, Callaway was able to make the driver wider on profile, and that equates to greater stability and forgiveness.

Deep and straight is hard to resist.

—K.V.V.



Callaway XR 16 Driver.

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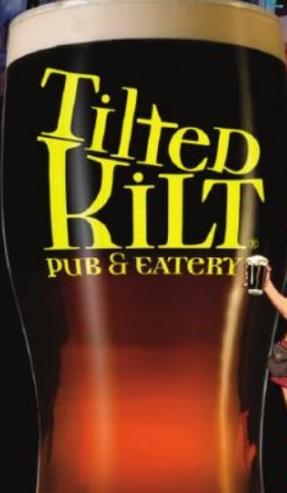


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- 19 Avian appendages
- 20 Flooring material, in London
- 21 Iguana's kin
- 22 Mountain nymph
- 23 Crafty
- 25 Unfettered
- 27 Lao-tzu's way
- 28 Child's prop
- 29 Excited
- 30 Makes up
- 31 Litigated
- 32 Movie excerpts
- 33 More than
- 34 Lace tips
- 37 Yours, once
- 38 Shawm, updated
- 39 Mock
- 42 Strand
- 43 Glacier breakaway
- 44 Claim
- 45 Languish
- 46 Ernie's roommate
- 47 Clear
- 50 Make eyes at
- 51 Summer mo.
- 52 Scorches
- 53 Brooks
- 54 Additional
- 55 Relieved
- 57 Runs ragged
- 58 Garrulous
- 59 Extant
- 60 Telescope user
- 61 Persona non _____
- 62 Bagel option
- 64 Element 5
- 65 Ecological no-no
- 68 Halcyon
- 69 Acrylic fabric
- 70 "The Zoo Story" author
- 72 Bewail
- 73 Polo grounds?
- 74 Touchable
- 76 Experimental results
- 77 Foul callers
- 78 Dog's dogs
- 79 Tendency
- 80 Domestic
- 81 Compass pt.
- 82 Captures
- 83 Shirt fasteners
- 85 Doesn't know how to
- 86 Lavish affection
- 87 Sierra _____
- 88 Feast
- 89 However
- 92 Family subdivision
- 93 Pub unit
- 94 The chosen
- 97 Impudent
- 99 Refurbished
- 101 Fitter

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13		14	15	16	17	18			
19					20					21						22							
23				24						25						26							
27				28					29						30								
			31						32						33								
34	35	36							37						38				39	40	41		
42									43						44					45			
46									47						48	49					50		
51									52						53						54		
55										56						57					58		
			59							60						61							
62	63									64						65					66	67	
68										69						70	71				72		
73										74						75					76		
77										78						79					80		
81										82						83	84				85		
89	90	91								92						93					94	95	96
97										98						99					100		
101										102						103					104		
105										106						107					108		

- 102 Tangle or disentangle
- 103 Shoppe adjective
- 104 A bit brown
- 105 Lambaste
- 106 Well-rounded?
- 107 Suds
- 108 Oft-misused pronoun

DOWN

- 1 Biblical verb
- 2 Scat queen
- 3 Deli spread
- 4 It may be split
- 5 Toils
- 6 Married
- 7 Momentarily
- 8 Candy quantity
- 9 Arctic explorer
- 10 Green
- 11 Frequent visitors
- 12 High spirits
- 13 Supporting vote
- 14 Abbreviated beard
- 15 Place for grapes

- 16 Check
- 17 Unadorned
- 18 Chances
- 24 Cardinal point
- 26 Relish
- 29 Set straight
- 31 Faction
- 32 Singer Isaak
- 33 Minds
- 34 Fatah honcho
- 35 Command to a horse
- 36 Actually
- 37 Come apart at the seams
- 38 Racetracks
- 39 Satisfactory
- 40 Entrance
- 41 Noah or Wallace
- 43 Dashing young fellow
- 44 Freud colleague
- 45 Couch occupant?
- 47 Annoyance
- 48 Four Corners state
- 49 She's tempting
- 52 Like raw okra

- 54 Midwestern hub
- 56 Woolly Peruvians
- 57 Seer's card
- 58 Stream
- 60 Hits the links
- 61 Butler's man?
- 62 300 spoiler
- 63 Alleviates
- 64 Foreheads
- 66 Best
- 67 Slightest
- 69 Kansas river
- 70 In reserve
- 71 Tops
- 75 Wows
- 76 Hamlet, famously
- 78 Ways
- 80 Big ray
- 82 Bacall's spouse
- 83 Perceives
- 84 Muss
- 85 Hot coal
- 86 Guys
- 87 Go away
- 88 Electron tube

- 89 Stowe tow
- 90 Road's scholar?
- 91 Widemouthed jar
- 92 Clutch
- 93 Flag flier
- 94 Foot part
- 95 Stout's Wolfe
- 96 Had fun in the water
- 98 Sib, maybe
- 99 Tar
- 100 Needle some

Solution on page 74.



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& Restaurant
Skillet Diner- Ballard
Skillet Diner- Capitol Hill
Spice Route
Stanford's Restaurant
& Bar- Northgate
Stanford's Restaurant
& Bar- Southcenter
Staple and Fancy
Stoneburner
Stumbling Goat Bistro
Sushi Kappo Tamura
Tallulah's
Tavolata
Ten Mercer
The Carlile Room
The Commons
The Dining Room at Salish
Lodge & Spa
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The Gerald
The Harvest Vine
The Olive and Grape
The Rhododendron Café
The Tin Table
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Flyer guide

Your overview of the Alaska experience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- A2** Beverages
 - Regional wines and microbrews
 - Our fleet
 - Feedback
- A3** Your safety and comfort
 - Discover Alaska Airlines
- A4** Where we fly
 - 100+ destinations and counting
- A6** Where we fly
 - Alaska, where it all started
- A7** Airport terminal maps



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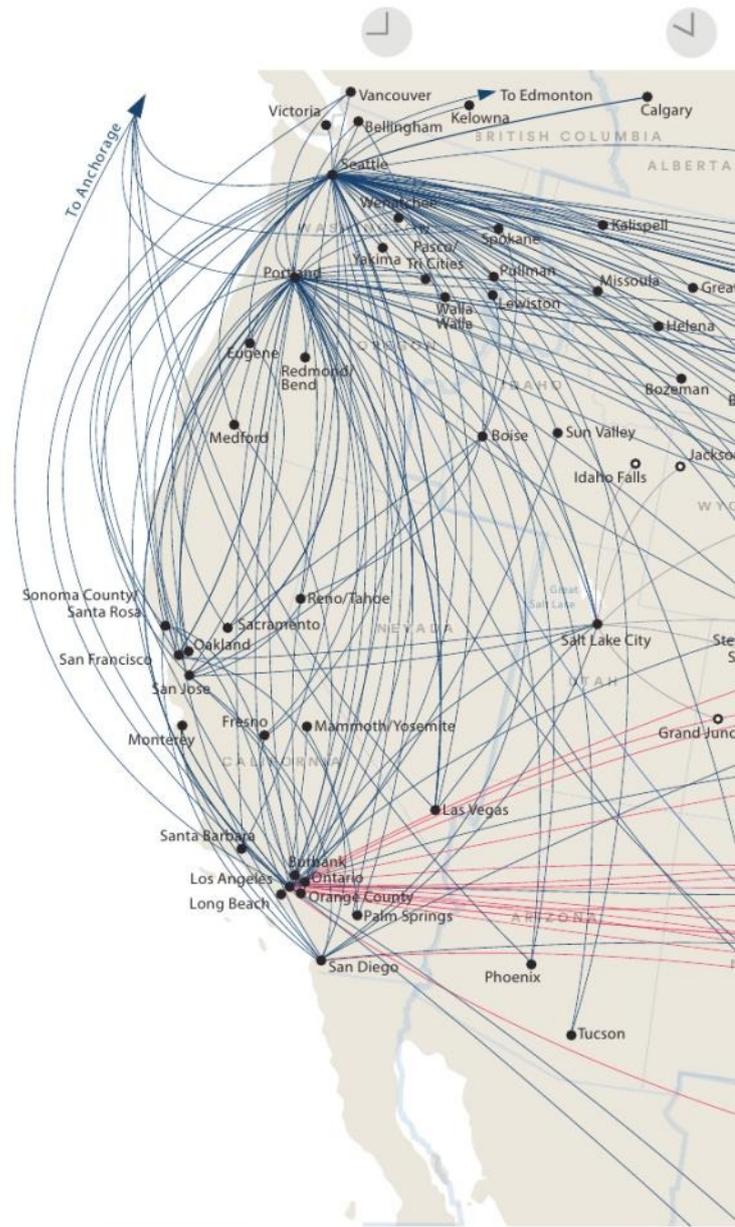
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*Seasonal service through August 27, 2016



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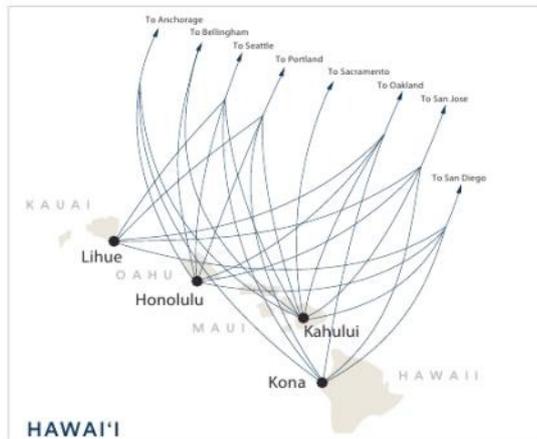
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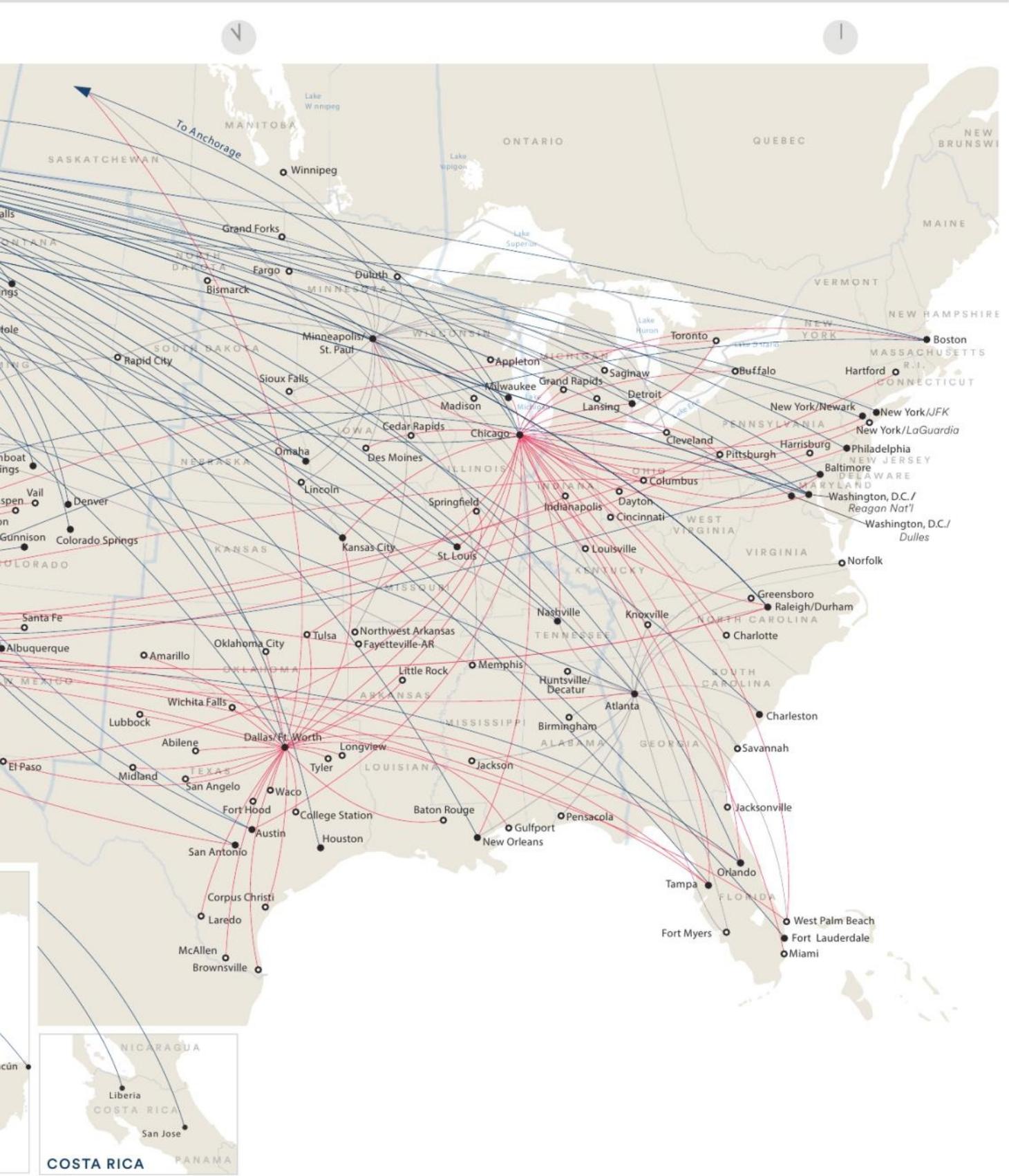
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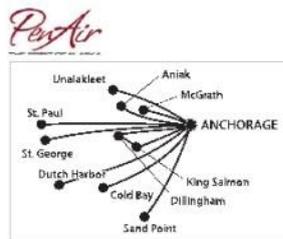


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† Dutch Harbor–Anchorage service operated by PenAir.



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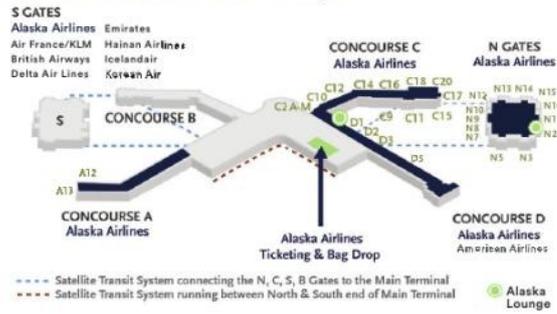
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SAN

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Skate Mom

How I got my wheels | BY KIM COOPER FINDLING

Just before my 44th birthday, I took up skateboarding. Somehow, this seemed like a good idea. I was entering my 10th year of motherhood, and had reached the point at which my children were accomplishing things I'd never even attempted. In just the last few years, I'd watched my two daughters scale rock-climbing walls, sing solos on stage and do back handsprings as if they were born for it. I'm afraid of heights, have never sung outside of my car, and couldn't pull off a back handspring if a year's salary depended on it. But skateboarding was something I'd always wanted to do.

When I was a preteen, I'd hopped naively on my friend Jennifer's board, only to have the thing fly out from under me like a rocket and zoom into the curb, nearly throwing me to the pavement. Clearly harder than it looked, I thought, dumbfounded. I was the kind of child who didn't ever want to look silly. I never tried again.

But in my 40s, I didn't care about looking silly. Well, let's be honest—I did. A little. But now I had an adult perspective: Skateboarding wasn't nearly as important as successful parenting or professional achievement—who cared if I was terrible at it?

My two daughters, Libby and Maris, had recently been gifted skateboards and Rollerblades, so there were plenty of wheels to go around. The first time I tentatively put foot to board on the sidewalk in front of our house, 7-year-old Maris appeared alarmed. "Mom, be careful," she said. "We don't want to end up in the ER." (This being something I'd said to her many times over the years.)

On my second attempt, a month later, I was determined. The three of us set out for the park down the street on a sunny, breezy, beautiful day. At first, the board shot out from under me. Just like it had decades before. This time, I got back on. Soon, I started to get the hang of the balance, the kick, staying with the ride.

"Good job, Mom!" said Maris. "Here's a tip—put your feet more like here." She wobbled by on pink roller skates, pointing at the center of the board. She was right; my balance immediately improved.

"Keep your eyes on what's ahead," chimed in 9-year-old Libby.

"Not at your feet." That, too, proved to be sound advice.

We found smoother pavement; I got braver. We took turns lapping a tree on a modest hill. A woman in a zip sweatshirt and sneakers walked by and gave me a big smile. "You go, girl!" she said. After a while, I saw an acquaintance approaching, and waited for a greeting. It never came; apparently he didn't recognize me when I was wearing a helmet and Libby's butterfly sunglasses.

Then a guy appeared on a board with an outrageous paint job and serious wheels. He breezed by us and lifted from the ground in a little hop, without even removing his hands from his hoodie's kangaroo pocket—a vast contrast to my arms, which had been windmilling for an hour. "Wow, he's a lot better than me," I said, sort of to myself,

sort of to my kids and sort of to another gentleman passing by. "You're doing OK," the gentleman replied, grinning.

I was grinning, too. Skateboarding was fun—even awkwardly, even utterly without skill. The short glides I made across the pavement felt like freedom, felt like being a kid again. Plus, I was with my own kids, the three of us sharing time together in a totally new way.

On my third lesson a few days before my birthday, I got dissed by the ice cream-truck guy. The vehicle came up behind me, and the driver hollered over his tinkling music, "Don't hurt yourself!"

The directive took the wind out of my sails, and my girls could tell. "Mom," said

Libby, "I think you're way better than lots of moms on that thing."

"Just remember," added Maris, "we're all beginners here."

We skated around the park for an hour, each of us getting more confident. I didn't fall once, though the green skateboard did become a rocket several times. Finally it was time to head back to homework, baths and dinner. We (bravely, I believe) took the route that passes a hip sidewalk bar, where 20-somethings banter and sip brews in the late-afternoon sun. A young man approaching on a bike paused as he saw us coming, and I braced for his reaction. A slow smile spread on his face. "Hey, nice skate family," he said.

A skate family! The kids' faces lit up, and I couldn't suppress my happiness, either. For my 44th birthday, we'd become a skate family. Best gift ever.

Kim Cooper Findling skates in the Northwest.



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