

# Welcome to the Pacific Northwest

*Lush forests, a pristine coastline,  
awesome food, frothy microbrews,  
and music and art galore – Pacific  
Northwesterners have it good and they  
don't mind sharing.*

## Outdoor Adventures

You can't escape nature here. Even the big cities are punctuated by looming, snowy peaks: Seattle's Mt Rainier, Portland's Mt Hood and Vancouver's North Shore Mountains. Not to mention the raging rivers, rolling deserts, dense old-growth forests and glorious public beaches that are never far from any urban landscape.

The region offers endless outdoor opportunities: camping, hiking, cycling, skiing and mountaineering. And all that rain translates into a perfect storm of water sports; raft white water, kayak lake and sea, and kiteboard through ripping winds.

## Foodies & Locavores

Seattle, Portland and Vancouver are all rich in gourmet restaurants, as well as a wide range of ethnic foods. Seattle boasts a long-established history of Northwest cuisine, while Portland's affordability has made it a relatively recent magnet for hot chefs. Vancouver offers some of the best Chinese food outside, well, China.

There's an abundance of locally grown food, from berries and hazelnuts to wild mushrooms, seafood, cheese and grass-fed beef. Locavores abound, getting their fix in the many specialty groceries, farmers markets and community gardens.

## Beer, Wine & Coffee

In these parts, beverages are big. The nation's gourmet-coffee scene may have started in Seattle, but dozens of artisan microroasters across the Northwest now produce some of the best espresso in the world. In some coffee shops, pouring a latte is practically an art form.

Microbrewing also became famous here, within a stone's throw of the nation's highest concentration of hop farms. Today, craft brewers pump out fragrant India Pale Ales (IPAs) and more. Grapevines cover many hills, producing a harvest of intriguing reds and whites.

## Art & Culture

There's no shortage of urban entertainment and culture: indie garage bands, world-class symphonies, jazz bars and an abundance of public art. Offbeat film houses and art galleries are tucked into even the smallest towns.

Seattle, Portland and Vancouver all support symphonies, operas, dance troupes and theater companies. Galleries and museums display pieces by Native American artists, ceramicists and painters, and glassmakers inspired by Tacoma's Dale Chihuly. You'll always have more than enough to appreciate in this highly creative part of the world.



## Why I Love the Pacific Northwest

By Sandra Bao, Author

Even after a decade of living in the Pacific Northwest, I'm still in awe of its vibrant beauty and uniqueness. Verdant forests cover every mountain, gorgeous snowcapped volcanoes dot the Cascades and the coastline is simply spectacular. The big cities offer everything that any visitor could want: cutting-edge museums, fine entertainment and some of the best food (and drink) in the world. People are pretty friendly, fiercely opinionated and ultimately very proud to belong to this amazing region – as I am.

**For more about our authors, see page 488**