



# Northwestern Washington & the San Juan Islands

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Pepper Sisters (p97)
- ➔ Mallard (p96)
- ➔ Adrift (p100)
- ➔ Duck Soup Inn (p112)
- ➔ Inn at Ship Bay (p116)

## Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Willows Inn (p99)
- ➔ Golden Tree Hostel (p113)
- ➔ Wild Iris Inn (p102)
- ➔ Olympic Lights B&B (p111)
- ➔ Hotel Bellwether (p96)

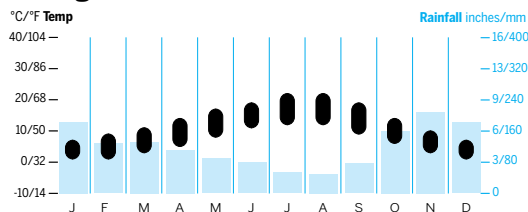
## Why Go?

Between Seattle, the Cascade Mountains and Canada lies Washington's most archetypal region, a 'greatest hits' of the Pacific Northwest with all the sights and sounds outsiders traditionally associate with the land of pure air and West Coast hedonism. There's the skyline-hogging volcano (Mt Baker); the wilderness-flecked natural parks (everywhere); the liberal, collegiate city (Bellingham); the antiresort ski 'resort' (Baker, again); innumerable islands (the San Juan archipelago); and even a stash of credible vineyards.

The Northwest's urban hub is laid-back Bellingham, while its rural highlight could be any one of the 200-plus islands that speckle the northern reaches of Puget Sound. Cultural life tends to be influenced by Vancouver and Seattle, ensuring that the music's electric, the microbreweries abundant and the coffee aromatic. And wherever you go you'll be sure to find an abundance of Northwestern cuisine featuring locally sourced ingredients, from wild-caught salmon to the world's sweetest blackberries.

## When to Go

### Bellingham



**Mar & Apr** Vibrant flower displays at the Skagit County Tulip Festival.

**Jun–Aug** Glorious weather and whales offshore.

**Sep & Oct** Avoid summer crowds and enjoy fall colors in the San Juan Islands.



## Northwestern Washington & the San Juan Islands Highlights

- 1 San Juan Islands** (p106)  
Propelling yourself around this low-key archipelago.
- 2 Chuckanut Drive** (p97)  
Taking the slow road, stopping at hiking trails and oyster bars.
- 3 Mallard Ice Cream** (p96)  
Browsing Bellingham's historic neighborhoods while licking a Mallard ice-cream cone.
- 4 Skagit County Tulip Festival** (p102)  
Staying in a La Conner B&B during this colorful event.
- 5 Lummi Island** (p99)  
Hiking lush Baker Mountain on this slender green finger of land.
- 6 Lime Kiln State Park** (p109)  
Whale-watching and enjoying exceptional views of Vancouver Island and the Olympic Mountains.
- 7 Mt Constitution** (p112)  
Taking in the view from the top of Mt Constitution on Orcas Island.