



PHOTO COURTESY OF RIVERHOUSE ON THE DESCHUTES

The Deschutes River runs hundreds of miles from the mountains near Bend to the Columbia River.

10 unique ways to get around the *Northwest* this summer

Summer in the Northwest welcomes some of life’s biggest joys; think sun-stroked days followed by deliciously crisp evenings. Mother Nature’s peaks and waterways show off in their summertime glory, while city scenes bustle with outdoor concerts and patios packed with happy revelers.

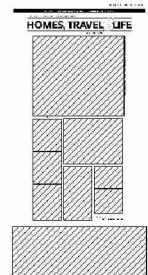
Of course, we anxiously await many of the season’s tried-and-true traditions, yet we’re also excited to experience the region in fresh, new ways. For example, try soaring high above Washington

in a hot air balloon or whooshing down a Whistler track on an Olympics-worthy bobsled.

Strap on your seat belts - and in several cases, helmets - with these exhilarating ways of sampling the region’s best of the best.

BLISSFUL CRUISES

As of this summer, there’s a sensational new ship slicing through the seas, and she certainly knows how to travel in style. After a June christening in Seattle, the Norwegian Bliss takes passengers to



Alaska (and the Caribbean too), featuring a revolutionary 180-degree Observation Lounge that lets guests soak in scenes of bald eagles soaring high above mighty glaciers.

Luxurious accommodations (with perks like private balconies) range from comfy, connecting staterooms for families to cozy studios ideal for solo adventurers. Onboard amenities include an Aqua Park, "the largest racetrack at sea," galactic laser tag and entertainment options from *Happy Hour Prohibition – The Musical* to the Tony Award-winning musical *Jersey Boys*.

CYCLING ADVENTURES

Just 45 minutes from Seattle, nestled in the shadow of Mt. Si, the friendly staff at Compass Outdoor Adventures gear up to show off their beautiful backyard playground. For example, join a guide for a downhill biking adventure that navigates the completely dark, 2.3-mile-long Snoqualmie Tunnel (bike lights provided), before continuing along the 23-mile John Wayne Trail.

Along this old rail line-turned-bike path, you'll cross giant railroad trestles and see sites from amazing waterfalls to Rattlesnake Lake. Afterward, grab a beer at the company's laid-back North Bend hub (complete with climbing wall), or pop over to nearby Salish Lodge for a meal overlooking Snoqualmie Falls.

RETRO ROAD TRIPS

Crank up the radio and hit the road with one of many regional rental companies like Peace Vans, whose vintage vehicles have been refurbished with modern-day amenities. Another outfitter, PacWesty, rents beautifully maintained Volkswagen Vanagons that help you explore the Northwest's rugged beauty in style.

Consider mixing adventure

with luxury by booking a van-to-glam PacWesty package, offered by downtown Seattle's Kimpton Vintage Hotel. To plot out your journey and connect with other wanderlusters while in town, peruse the guidebooks and trail maps at Ballard's Noble Fir pub or attend a Thursday night gathering (from inspiring, free travel talks to playful trivia face-offs) at SoDo's Adventure Hub & Winery.

ISLAND GETAWAYS BY FERRY

There's an incredibly speedy way to travel between downtown Seattle and downtown Victoria, the charming island capital of British Columbia. The Victoria Clipper V, a 170-foot high-speed catamaran that carries 440 passengers and travels at speeds of up to 36 knots.

The vessel also offers Clipper's first-ever business class, featuring a spacious private cabin area, complimentary snacks and refreshments as well as leather seats. Onboard you'll find a gift and duty-free shop showcasing locally-sourced goods, as well as a menu with regional food and drink choices.

RIDE-AND-SIP INDULGENCES

Gallop around Oregon wine country, thanks to the amiable folks at Equestrian Wine Tours. Saddle up on one of their well-trained Tennessee walking horses for a 2.5-hour wander through Dundee's breathtaking Red Hills. Weave between grape vines before hitching up and tasting award-winning varietals that put this region on the map.

RIVER REVELRY

Take advantage of Bend's Deschutes River, a beautiful stretch to run alongside, or an exciting course for finding that whitewater rush. Companies like Sun Country Tours get you moving with water rafting, floating and stand-up paddleboarding.

While here, consider making Riverhouse on the Deschutes your base; the re-imagined, 221-room hotel overlooks the picturesque Deschutes and is home to Currents, a culinary hub for innovative Pacific North-

west cuisine. The venue proves a great jumping-off point for all types of water-centric fun.

WALLA WALLA WINE TIME

Put someone else in charge as you board an all-inclusive, seven- or eight-night wine cruise that winds along the Columbia and Snake rivers. (Most depart from Portland.) For an alternate organized tour option, peruse InquisiTours itineraries that leave from Seattle or Portland and take you to both Leavenworth and Walla Walla, where small town charm complements a world-class wine scene that foodies flock to.

OFF-THE-GRID CANADIAN CLUBS

Guests first take a two-hour flight from Vancouver to Masset and then a 20-minute helicopter ride to Langara Island, a remote destination at the very top of Haida Gwaii that actually lands you closer to Alaska than the Canadian mainland. Finally, take a Boston whaler boat around the island for full-day fishing adventures before returning to the lodge for incredible dinners each evening.

Explore with ease thanks to Rad Power Bikes, available for rent at locations around the state. Riders power their own electric motor as much or as little as they want using an intelligent, five-level, pedal-assist (each pedal stroke gives more power) or a half-twist throttle (much like a moped).

PNW locations ideal for a two-wheeled adventure include Bainbridge Island via Bike Barn Rentals, Long Beach via Long Beach Electric Bikes and Bicycles, Seaside via Northwest E-bikes and around the Columbia River in Northern Oregon via Gorge Adventure & Supply. Seattle visitors also head to the Rad Power Bikes flagship storefront in Ballard for test rides and urban cruising.

HIKING ON HEALING LANDS

Ancestors of the Osoyoos Indian Band considered South Okanagan a special healing place, foraging its fertile land for natural medicines and taking the time to soak in the rejuvenating benefits of the exquisite environment. Visitors to this region, located just beyond the Canadian border, can capture that same sense of wellness.

For a taste of the region's magic, as-

cent naylintn (Ny-lin-tn), formerly known as McIntyre Bluff, a hiking trail that reaches 265 meters high and is rich in local First Nations history. The trip to the summit takes between two and four hours; in spring, wildflowers bloom alongside the path. Tours led by local Aboriginal guides are recommended for first-time visitors to learn about the area's history and culture.

To enhance your experience, book the comprehensive First Nations Package at Spirit Ridge, which includes a two-night stay at the resort, passes to the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre and a Land to Legacy Tour at Nk'Mip Cellars.

As far as we're concerned, that summer-time anticipation has never tasted so sweet.



PHOTO COURTESY OF COMPASS OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Compass Outdoor Adventures offers options like an intro to mountain biking and the "Snoqualmie Tunnel Adventure"

PHOTO COURTESY OF
PACWESTY/KIMPTON
VINTAGE HOTEL
PacWesty's beautifully maintained Volkswagen Vans come outfitted with everything from stoves and beach chairs to sleeping bags and French presses.





PHOTO COURTESY OF DREW MITCHUM

Enjoy the region's natural wonder aboard trains and boats where the wine flows freely.



PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES
Skaha Lake and McIntyre
Bluff from Okanagan Falls in
the Okanagan Valley, British
Columbia, Canada.