

## Nearby sites of interest for out-of-area visitors

Here are some places that island hosts have taken guests, or can direct them to for a day on their own:

### Sites of interest nearby:

- **Deception Pass Park** is a great place to investigate sea life (tide pools, shorelines) and picnic for an afternoon. There are many hiking trails.
- **Port Townsend** is an old seaport village with interesting shops on the main street - easily accessible without a car, if you walk aboard the Port Townsend Ferry at Keystone. Takes about 1.5 hrs to drive to Keystone terminal from here.
- Drive up to **Little Mountain Park in Mount Vernon**. There is a 180-degree view of the entire Skagit Valley from the north lookout and the south lookout. A nice thing to do before or after lunch on a clear day. Bring camera. Small amt walking.
- Visit **Friday Harbor (San Juan Islands)**. Shopping is right there near the ferry dock, so you don't need a car, but the views of the water, sometimes whales and dolphins are worth the price of the ticket. **Orcas Island** is also wonderful, but you'll need to take a car on the ferry to explore as things are more spread out (hike up Turtleneck and of course taking in the most breathtaking view from **Mt. Constitution**).
- **Vancouver** is really amazingly close the neighborhoods are like being in Europe, Kinsale and Kerrisdale for great cafes and shops. Stanley park is also a must....
- **Mount Erie** for panoramic views of the islands and valley.
- **Chuckanut Drive** – visit Taylor Shellfish Farm, Play at Larrabee State Park, park and hike down to Clayton Beach, stop at the turnouts and enjoy the beautiful water views, ride the bike trail east of the road from Clayton Beach to Bellingham (park at the Clayton Beach parking area and ride from there).

### Outdoor activities:

- **Great skiing (downhill and cross-country) at Mount Baker** (November to March)
- **April is Tulip Festival month around La Conner** and biking is a great way to see the fields. I'm sure you could borrow bikes for the journey from islanders.
- **Bike the flatlands** from the island to Edison for looking at art, eating lunch, or getting bread at the Bread Farm (Euro bakery) and wine & goodies at Slough Foods
- **Walk the Taylor Street Dock along the Bellingham Waterfront** or **the Trail along the north waterfront** from Bellwether Hotel to Zuanich Point to enjoy the boats, water, park activities, and get exercise. The east waterfront boardwalk and trail along the water go through gorgeous parks...a cafe on the water at sells coffee has a fireplace and great view as well, especially sunset time. North waterfront has many good restaurants to try.

- **Camp Kirby at the end of Samish Island allows island residents to walk on their trails** if no camp is in session. Red flag at their drive means camp is in session, green flag means ok to walk. A trail map is available for island residents.
- **Walk the eastern loop of Samish Island**, through the church camp, down to the beach, see Harry Samish's grave site, down around the lagoon, to the Fish Point, and by the community hall. Its about 2-3 mile walk.
- **Sauk Mountain hike**. Up the valley beyond Sedro Woolley.
- **Raft down the Skagit River** to see the eagles in January or February. There are several tour companies that provide rafts and transportation.
- **Deception Pass Park** has lots of hiking trails to explore.
- **Bike around the island, exploring every road**. Look for birds and wildlife, find all the ways water finds its way to the bays, look for wild berries and greens in the summer.
- **[Take a Whale-Watch Tour](#)** out of Bellingham. Orca Watch is the one many like best... boat is larger, snacks best, etc.

**Good boutique shopping: LaConner, Anacortes**

**Mall shopping: Burlington and Mount Vernon**

**Good Northwest Art: La Conner, Anacortes, Edison, Bellingham.**

La Conner - The Museum of Northwest Art in LaConner

Anacortes - Scott Milo Gallery, Insights Gallery and Ann Martin McCool Gallery

Edison - Edison Eye, Smith Vallee Gallery, Shop Curator

Bellingham - Lucia Douglas Gallery in Bellingham, Art shops in Fairhaven area of Bellingham, Outdoor sculpture at WWU (self-tour), Big Rock Garden (2900 Sylvan Street) has paths through the 2.5 acres of Big Rock Garden Park, where nature and art complement each other, hours: Dawn to Dusk year round. The annual International Sculpture Exhibit runs May through September.

**History of the area: Skagit Historical Museum in LaConner**

**Good food:**

**Bow Edison restaurants:** Rhodendron Cafe in Bow, Chuckanut Manor (food is good and views are better), Oyster Bar (pricey but elegant), Edison café has good breakfasts and lunches. Two taverns in Edison pub food and local brews.

**Bow Edison delis:** Slough Foods has interesting wines, cheeses, and goodies, Bread Farm has great Euro breads, Rosabellas Garden Bakery has farm produce in season, ice cream, lunch place, and little gifts.

**Bellingham:** Hearthfire Grill in Bellingham at the Marina, La Fiamma Pizza in Bellingham (wood fired, interesting choices), Skylarks Hidden Cafe in Fairhaven for sipping wine by the fire on a chilly day,

**La Conner:** Nell Thorn's, Kirsten's (upstairs deck on a sunny day), Palmers, Calico Cupboard

**Deming:** Northfork Brewery Marriage Shrine – great food in an 80-yr old building, great fresh brews and great owners.

**Three Farmer's Markets during the summer months** on Saturdays: Mount Vernon on the revetment near the river, Anacortes, Bellingham.

**Wednesday markets in Fairhaven** (afternoon) and Mount Vernon at the Skagit Valley Hospital

**Also:**

Be sure to pick up the monthly publication **Entertainment Northwest** to see what's happening during the month in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. The guide is available at local groceries, the two coops in Mount Vernon and Bellingham, theaters, bookstores, art venues, and selected restaurants.

There may be a **community potluck** in January, May or September, which is a good chance to meet other islanders if visitors are of a social nature. People you sit with can tell you their ideas of where to go, what to do.

Check the **Shore Lines Newsletter** online for dates, times of other island activities.