



Olympic Peninsula and Seattle Trip Notes **August 18 – 27, 2016**

Overview

- Had a few days in Seattle with Dallas friend Sonya prior to the hike.
- One of my only domestic hikes with Country Walkers as I usually go international with them.
- Wonderful, educated, kind and efficient guides.
- Simple hiking, probably a little bit dumbed-down since many of us were either 'old' folks or with various maladies. Me included.
- Earlier in the week I'd fallen resulting in stitches over the eye, a huge shiner, bruises down the leg, and swelling at wrist and knee.
- Olympic Peninsula is a huge area quite by surprise with mountains taller than one can imagine – from sea level to 10,000'.



Panorama pictures of dinner and on top of Hurricane Ridge were taken by Guide Heather using her iPhone.

Health Update

My seemingly little fall with a few stitches above the brow, plus wrist, thigh and knee bruising and soreness, turned out to stay with me for a very long time. A small complication on the first day of the

hike (two weeks after the fall!) even made me contemplate dropping out of the hike. But, I love the saying that "most of the things we worry about never come to pass" was proven by the fact that I lived and I even finished the hike. Friend Maryanne, who was facing a shoulder replacement, sent these quotes which are even better:

"Let it be of good cheer, the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never come." - James Russell Lowell

- and -

"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows; it empties today of its strength." - Corrie Ten Boom

Notes home from trip

Seattle for three days

I am in Seattle because on Sunday I begin a hike in the Olympic Peninsula.

It is hard to count the number of times I have been to Seattle before, but there's so much to see! Tom and I spent time in Seattle before our bike trip to the San Juan Islands and also before a trip to the Northern Cascades. I was here for the floating bridge marathon and spent a few days, then during hurricane Irene I got stuck in Seattle for a week, and I've been here for business at various times. Twice I made trips to Mount Rainier for hiking and spent time in Seattle. I am sure there was more.

Seattle has had huge growth over the time I have visited and I do wonder if they currently have more cranes than even Shanghai.

The public transportation is all fairly new and well developed. A trip from the airport into center city cost one dollar for a senior and takes about 30 minutes. The free bus and trolleys center city is no longer free however. They are employing big Bertha to build more undergrounds and soon the overhead and darkening roadway along the waterfront will be torn down. (And they didn't even have an earthquake like San Francisco Embarcadero did to get rid of their overhead roadway.)

I am staying at what used to be the tallest building in Seattle, the Westin. It is a round building and I suspect from the 60s or 70s. It is not my favorite hotel but it is the meeting place for the hike. More hotels are needed in Seattle because those available are wildly priced and maybe even more than New York City prices.

With all the Amazons, Facebook's and Weyerhausers who are expanding and building more buildings and hiring more people, it is going to be hard to keep up with the very pricey real estate.

But I am just here as a tourist and those things are not my problem. This morning my friend Sonya from Dallas and I took an overview Tour. I have taken that same tour at least two times before but there were so many new buildings it was quite interesting. This afternoon late we took a foodie tour that was as much booze as food.

With www.SavorSeattleTours.com we went into five of Seattle's best restaurants and hotspots. They were appetizers, wine, cocktails, as well as Seattle's cocktail history and how taste have changed over the years. As the website says, we had 13 tastings and five cocktails, we visited a bar that was once a speakeasy and a brothel and we ate spring rolls, tacos, and drank martinis and more. Tomorrow we take the gourmet Seattle tour. More on that later. Does this sound like a lot of extra pounds? Surely it will be.

Pics include an Affiliation offered at Starbucks new ritzy roaster shop where coffees are more in the seven buck range than four bucks, a taco, and a very special spring roll. Plus a series of hemisphere buildings going up.



Seattle part 2

When I tell you what I did today, you will think that I do nothing in my travels but eat. And that does appear to be the case.

Remembering that I have been here many times before, it might make a little bit more sense that I chose food Tours. (Sonya got herself to Seattle Center and the space needle while I lounged, shopped and hung out at B&N).

Today was the gourmet Seattle tour which was said to be upscale comfort food and FLOSS (fresh, local, organic, seasonable, and sustainable). What a mouthful but what a good idea.

It was like a progressive dinner party and was said to be at some of Seattle's best restaurants and hotspots. We had appetizers, main courses and dessert and we went through Belltown, downtown Seattle and the Pike Place market once again.

There were over 18 tastings including four wines and cocktail pairings. There was cuisine from an iron chef and a James Beard award winner. We got to sit down at seven tasting locations which included five restaurants and even a truffle café. I will give you a few pictures which might include a truffle pizza, razor clam chowder which was fantastic, and the chocolates known as being Obama's favorite.

We started at Orfeo restaurant, ate at the chef's table back in the kitchen at serious pie, met the owners and marketer at Noi Thai Cuisine (where they also have a restaurant in Bend Oregon that I may see in two weeks), La Buona Tavola, steelhead diner, Von's Gustobistro once again but different food, and Fran's chocolates in Four Seasons Hotel.

Today was nothing as colorful as yesterday's booze and bites tour. I was reminded that across the street from my favorite stop was the Tabron with the bordello upstairs. Incidentally, did you know that marijuana is easily and legally purchased here?

So. My head is not totally well – smile – so I gave up the day early after joining Sonya for gelato. A little bit of shopping and I was in my room by 7 PM and should be ready to start my hike tomorrow.

Pics. The pasta with salmon was my favorite. The noodles are a specialty of the house and named a word like Escalier or stairway which long stairway with fountains is right out their door. This is the same place that offers pricey tastings and I saw one \$700 pour of 1 1/2 ounces being offered.

The Orfeo restaurant gave us the appetizer of polenta with a sausage type meat and tomato mixture on top. That was the favorite of Sonya.

Now to go backwards but still on the food subject, I'll add a picture of my first dinner at the seafood restaurant called Blue Acre.



And with all those calories in me, I should quit - but my next week will be filled full of big breakfasts, large gourmet lunches and huge dinners.

As Tom would say "somebody's got to do it."

PS - For those who knew about my little mishap two weeks ago, the update is that I look no better, the big bump remains on my eye and has turned even darker, and the yellow and green bruise coloring runs down the side of my face. The nerve endings are still inflamed and makes me think there are little critters running around inside and that it is continually dripping. Yet I'm obviously doing fine because I plan to go hiking for a week.

Interestingly - No one mentions my look. Do they think they dare not? Or are they just embarrassed for me? Fortunately I am pretty much over MY embarrassment.

On Olympic peninsula

This is the first day of the hike. We are picked up in Seattle at the Westin Hotel and are driven a couple of hours to the peninsula.

Now I remember even more times that Tom and I were in Seattle. Once before on way to Vancouver island. That was truly a lovely trip and we enjoyed Vancouver Island very much. In case you too don't recognize the difference, there is Vancouver Island, Vancouver Washington, and Vancouver Canada. (I had two trips to Vancouver Canada a couple years ago and we think it is a San Francisco type or Sidney type city of top-quality.)

Woke up today to an odd surprise. After two weeks, the wound opened just enough to run some old dark blood. Outside vs down the inside of my face. I had expected this huge bump to eventually run down the inside of my face and cause more black and blue. But when it opened and ran blood, I was really spooked and you might think this is TMI but I thought it was TMI and I would have called anybody I knew had they have been around. I was more than faint. Sonya had already left and I didn't know anybody on my upcoming tour. I think it was the stress, being very disconcerting, And I had a headache and felt really out of it all day. In fact, I did put a little bacitracin on it, closed it up with a Band-Aid, and life went on just fine. Amazing isn't it? Half if not most of what we worry about never comes to pass.

Life. Then the weather! So amazing that I had lived with three days of +90° weather and suddenly I begin my hike and it is 59°. On the way to the peninsula it rained and I was fairly certain that I had totally miss packed clothing. I had on slacks and two layers and a jacket all day.

I don't ride well, I had a major headache, I was worried about my open wound, I was worried about my headache, and life was not all that comfortable. Uck.

Lunch. We were told that we would stop at a local's home and have lunch. One does not stop without an invitation. They shoot at you if you come through their driveway.

The lady had been found by a bulletin board advert at a supermarket, she was raising nine children, and agreed to serve 16 of us luncheon in her lovely though eclectic Gardens. It was vegetarian style though all organic and healthy and somewhat gourmet. I would say that it was a very nice experience, especially the desert served and a half size canning jar full of fresh peaches and berries and topped like a cobbler. I would have taken a picture but I feel pretty rotten.

Our first hike was through the "mounds" that no scientist really understands why they exist. It looks like many Indian burial grounds covered across the prairies. Were they caused by some giant gophers, or some glacial activity or what? After lunch we walked through one of the very rare North American temperate rainforests. Had I not already hiked through the northern cascades and those huge and moss covered trees, I would have been amazed. It was a lovely hike and I'm glad that I finally got my blood moving enough to mostly get rid of the headache.

Our lodge is in the national Park and is at the Quinault Lake. Park lodges are not known to be luxurious but it is OK with a little sitting room area and best of all a balcony hanging over the lake with the sounds of the lake "surf" lapping at the edge.

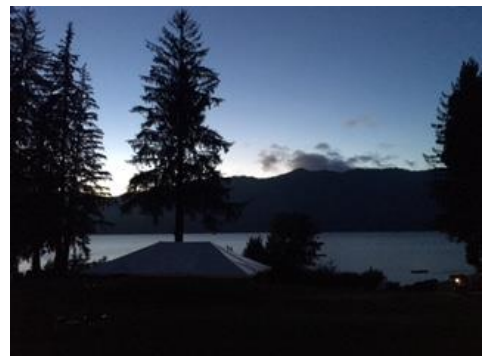
We have a good and harmonious group as proven by the fact that we have all committed to visiting a legal marijuana shop and indulging. Most of us for the first time. Honest.

Pics. A huge cypress tree and we will see some of the biggest in the country this week.



Our leaders pride themselves on their geology education and expertise and also their wine knowledge. They have purchased a number of noted wines and brought with them so that we could indulge.

This is the wild and fresh salmon and what we eat was caught that day or the evening before. We had a series of appetizers such as Moules and a special pizza, plus a salad, before our choices off the menu.



The lake at night is quite special. Good night.

Monday - leaving Lake Quinault in the morning

For those of you who have heard me whine about my headaches and ugly head injury, I should report that I felt very good today and am surely on the mend. I suspect that the golf ball sized bump will remain for a while though. I am probably no denser today than usual.

In fact we had a wonderful hike through the temperate rainforest. It was not quite as green as what Tom and I saw in the northern Cascades, but it was pretty full of Moss and huge old-growth trees. After about 7 miles and a lunch stop, we were offered an optional and additional hike with some pretty good elevation change. That added another 3 miles for four of us.

Our tour guides have been fairly unique with giving us extra education and entertainment. In the morning when lunch and snacks is being cleaned up, the second Guide will give us a reading from some park or local book.

We might stop on a bridge and check out the salmon runs, and get a lecture on the different types of salmon and some of the dams that has been removed in order to bring back the salmon. While on this stop today we watched a river otter play.

Along our hikes the botanist guide stops to show us unique plants which often have stories.

At meals we have very special wines, in part because Washington has a lot of wines, is in the same temperature zone as the famous French wines, and also because one of our guides has a family in the Napa area wine business. They brought the wines.

Between hiking and dinner today, they hired a medicine educated, medicine man/gal, Indian storyteller. Harvest Moon regaled us with stories that she tells across the country. There have been many different Indian tribes in the Pacific Northwest and they all thrived in part because of the good weather but also because of the abundance of fish and good growing region. I was mesmerized by the stories.

Our schedules are little bit tough on me because I'm used to being lazy. I get up at 6 AM, breakfast is at 7 AM, and we pack up and leave by 8:15 AM. We might only have 45 minutes to an hour between hike and dinner and damn but I am high maintenance. Plus I want to talk with Tom before and after dinner. So I will generally come in from a late dinner, try to settle down, have a shower, pack up, talk to Tom, read the news, and here I am. Maybe one of my books will get read, and maybe not. The light should go out by 11 PM but rarely does.

So since it is getting late I will sign off with a couple of pictures.



Pictures. The biggest Spruce in the world. And a pick-up with this sign RUST IN PEACE. Hikers are odd. These shoes were at the trailhead sign. Correct – they don't match.

Picture of Medicine lady Harvest Moon. She would walk with us the next day along with her dog called Luna.

Sorry. Ran out of room to show you the fried oysters or wines.

Tuesday on the coast

We moved out early. I don't much like getting up pre 6am but the earlier time is in part since I move so slow on the morning. We didn't leave until 8:30am after breakfast and lunch fixing.



Weather. Our ocean walk was all fogged in so obviously we never saw whales. It was mystical.

Tide. We had a lecture and learned about the rule of 12 i.e. 12 hours. Fortunately we didn't learn by being flooded out of our walk.

Break on the beach was our daily reading given us by the guides. Cutest was Ellen DeGeneres saying her 90 year old momma started walking at age 60 and now we don't know where she is. That's what I want to be.

Hoe National Park is a UNESCO site. The old forest trees remain with streams running through the park? Baby salmon, and thick mosses which gives a number of rare orchids also. We had to optional hikes and one would have continued on up to their highest peak to Mt Olympus. Of course we didn't, and due to all of the bugs and mosquitoes I took the short version. This put me back into the hotel with a bit more than the usual 50 minutes between hike and dinner.

On the subject of Mountain Heights, when you start at sea level and go up to about 10,000 feet it seems much more dramatic than even many of the 14or's that start at six or 8000 feet. I don't think any of us expected so many mountains and so high and some even still snow-covered.

I didn't do any notes or send out any pictures my last three days because we had either limited to no connectivity. I hate that.

Wednesday

We drove through Forks - home of the famous Twilight series books. It is also where three streams/rivers come together and that's the name forks. Forks has made a business out of offering walking tours about The Twilight Series, and pointing out anywhere that the characters resided, ate or even did their laundry.

We haven't had much or any internet or cell signal thus the silence.

Thursday

I like Visitor Centers yet this one was very small and we didn't have sufficient time to see the movie. The day included a picnic lunch prepared by our guides and a rather strenuous hike up to Hurricane Ridge where there was not only a 360° view, but a family of mountain goats, maybe a black bear, many birds and chipmunks, and the usual deer. The panoramic view included Mt Olympus at around 10,500 - from sea level.

One of the Park Rangers was just coming up as we were going down and she was preparing to shoot the mountain goats with pellets to scare them away.

The last two nights was at a much larger lake called Crescent Lake which gave beautiful sunrises and sunsets and the sound of lapping waters out our little back porch. Again, there was no TV and there was no phone and even more troubling there was no decent cell signal. Wi-Fi was almost available in the lobby but I say almost because it was spotty. I was miffed at AT&T because other services such as Verizon worked better. Fortunately one of the generous hikers loaned me her BlackBerry.

Friday

Our last day gave us an option of getting up well before breakfast and hiking to a waterfall. I don't do well without food, I dislike mornings, and I was one of only three or five who chose not to get up and go but rather to meet them for breakfast. 8 o'clock was plenty early for me.

Driving back to Seattle was broken by a stop at Guide Heather's home for a lunch and meeting her to rescued dogs. Her home was down a long dirt road and then back among a bunch of bushes as a person from Washington would appreciate and enjoy. She had built her own small house that was just perfect in my view. Other than the remoteness.

Part of the drive was familiar to me and we had a little more than an hour to stay in historic Port Townsend before going onto the ferry, over a floating bridge, and back into Seattle by 5 PM.

Saturday

I would never book a 6AM flight but the flight I did book had been moved up to 6AM so I kept it. That meant getting up at 2:45 for a 4AM shuttle to the airport. Ugh.

Marijuana is legal in Washington. You might have noticed that I had intended to go to one of the shops and maybe to indulge. I decided that I'd rather keep my record of never having indulged then to have a headline that I started and couldn't quit in my seventies.

So I shopped in Port Townsend instead and bought some artsy little earrings that are made from recycled Seattle's Boeing aircraft pieces. They were in the shape of a fish which is perfect for our good friend and pond babysitter.

Tourists in Seattle

Damn but I missed this in New York City and also in Seattle. I was in both places but the statues were taken down before I got to see them in real life.

Seattle among U.S. cities graced with naked Trump statues | The Seattle Times

<http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-among-nations-cities-graced-with-naked-trump-statues/>

Pictures from our Guides

This is the world's largest known Spruce Tree.



One of our leaders is a professional photographer. You can surely guess which pictures came from him. Eric A. Kessler, Photographer, P.O. Box 2822, Friday Harbor, WA 98250, 360.378.8866/Office and Mobile, www.ekessler.smugmug.com and Facebook: Eric Kessler Photographer. From Eric: Photography is a language, and light its vocabulary. A photographer's task is to interpret the world in symbols of light. By John P. Schafer



The sunset picture was taken with my iPhone, as well as the waterfall picture. Tom chose them from my collection.



Wine collection, as outlined by Guide Heather:

Here is the list of wines that we had. If you are interested in obtaining any of these wines, the best resource is either of the McCarthy and Schiering Wine Merchants stores in Seattle (we work with both). Just tell them you are with Country Walkers and that you want to get whatever wine you liked that you tried on the tour.

Website for both stores:

McCarthy & Schiering | Wine Merchants since 1980

Queen Anne Store: queenanne@mccarthyandschiering.com 206-282-8500

Ravenna Store: ravenna@mccarthyandschiering.com 206-524-9500

NIGHT 1, Lake Quinault Lodge: Red Mountain AVA

Mark Ryan—Viognier

McCarthy and Schiering—Cabernet Sauvignon

NIGHT 2, Lake Quinault: Columbia Valley AVA

Longshadows—"Poet's Leap" (Riesling)

Tranche—"Slice of Pape" red (Syrah, Grenache, Mourvedre)

NIGHT 3, Kalaloch Lodge: Horse Heaven Hills AVA (American Viticultural Area)

Chateau Ste. Michelle—Canoe Ridge Chardonnay

Quilceda Creek—CVR (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec), from Champoux, Palengat, Wallula Gap (Horse Heaven Hills) and Tapteil (Red Mountain) vineyards

NIGHT 4, Lake Crescent Lodge: Yakima AVA

Avennia—"Oliane" (Sauvignon Blanc)

Andrew Will—Two Blondes (Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon)

NIGHT 5, Lake Crescent Lodge: Walla Walla AVA

Woodward Canyon—Chardonnay

Reynvaan—Syrah

Itinerary

Thu Aug 18 - Diana

10:55am Depart Newark EWR via UA#1140
1:59pm Arrive Seattle SEA

Train into city

Hotel The Westin Seattle - 3 nights on own
1900 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101 Tele: 206 728 1000

-Sonya

5:15pm Depart Dallas Ft Worth via AA#1220
7:26pm Arrive Seattle SEA
Departing Seattle Sunday on AA#143 at 7:28am

Hotel Hotel Andra
2000 Fourth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121 Tele 206 801 0599

Sun Aug 21

8:30am Meet Country Walkers tour guide - Tour starts at The Westin Seattle

Description from www.CountryWalkers.com - This small-group Guided Walking Adventure offers an authentic travel experience, one that takes you away from the crowds and deep in to the fabric of local life. On it, you'll enjoy 24/7 expert guides, premium accommodations, delicious meals, effortless transportation, and local wine or beer with dinner. Rest assured that every trip detail has been anticipated so you're free to enjoy an adventure that exceeds your expectations.

Overview - It's not too farfetched to think that the gods of ancient Greece might have chosen this northwest corner of the United States as their home. Few other places exemplify so vividly the immense power and beauty of natural forces. Surrounded by dramatic coastline and carved by 60 active glaciers, the peninsula is replete with rainforests and bubbling hot springs. Rising majestically at its center are the massive Olympic Mountains, the source of one of the world's most unusual weather patterns.

British sea captain John Meares christened the range in 1788, when he first spotted the most massive of the mountain peaks, Mt. Olympus (7,965 feet). Nearby Ares, Hermes, and Athena Mountains form a divine pantheon. The mountains trap incoming clouds, creating a rainforest on their western side (with 145 inches of rain annually) and a "rain shadow" to the east, with near-desert dryness year-round. This trip takes you through the pristine and protected wilderness of Olympic National Park, from sandy beaches through old-growth forests and alpine meadows filled with wildflowers. You are soothed by healing mineral waters and rainforest dew and enjoy the pure, clean taste of local foods such as tiny strawberries, Walla Walla sweet onions and, of course, the salmon that return annually to their native freshwater streams from the mighty Pacific.

Sun Aug 21 - DAY 1 of hike

Transfer to Lake Quinault. Mima Mounds; 1.5 miles, easy. Optional afternoon walk to arrive at lodge on foot; 2.7 miles; easy

From the meeting point in Seattle, you begin a scenic drive, enjoying picturesque views of the Olympics, Mount Rainier, and Seattle's skyline. You soon travel into another landscape altogether; one with majestic forests of Douglas fir, western hemlock, and western red cedar. You stop en route

to enjoy a picnic lunch and warm-up walk around the Mima Mounds Natural Preserve, where you explore the enigmatic prairie of six-foot-high mounds that cover the region.

An optional second walk of the day allows you to arrive at the lodge on foot. This walk is your first encounter with the temperate rainforest, and provides an excellent orientation to some features of that habitat as explained by your guide. The destination and your home for the next two days is a stately lodge that has been a haven for hikers and fishermen since 1926. The lodge is surrounded by magnificent old-growth forest trails, should you decide to explore a bit before a welcome dinner in the hotel dining room.

Hotel Lake Quinault Lodge, Quinault – 1st of 2 nights
P.O. Box 7, South Shore Road, Quinault, Washington Tel 360.288.2900
Email info@visitlakequinault.com www.olympicnationalparks.com
Coffee yes; WiFi in public areas only

A rustic lakeside lodge offering comfortable, contemporary rooms in the heart of the Olympic National Forest.

Mon Aug 22 - DAY 2 of hike

Graves Creek to Pony Bridge and Quinault Valley; 5-8 miles, easy to moderate

Today's exploration of the temperate rainforest starts with a visit to the world's largest Sitka spruce tree. It has stood guard over the Quinault River for almost 1,000 years and is 58 feet in circumference. From here we drive along the river and past waterfalls and riparian glades until we reach the end of the road at the edge of the vast Olympic wilderness. Our walk is up either the Quinault's East or North Fork (depending on seasonal trail conditions), allowing you to pursue a glimpse of Roosevelt elk or migrating salmon. You ramble through a magnificent forest of giant firs and cedars, passing huckleberry bushes as well as queen's cup and bunchberry dogwood. As you approach Pony Bridge the river plunges through a narrow gorge walled by layers of slate and sandstone. Bring your camera, as you won't want to miss this quintessential rainforest view with its dramatic play of light and cascading water.

You enjoy lunch by the tranquil waters of the river, which are an icy blue from sediment of glacial silt. After lunch, those with more energy can continue farther along the Quinault Valley, marveling at the alder groves along the way.

This evening, before dinner, you meet Harvest Moon—a Quinault elder, story teller, and basket maker. She entralls us with legends and stories of her culture in front of the lodge's stately fireplace.

Hotel Lake Quinault Lodge, Quinault – 2nd night of 2 nights

Tue Aug 23 - DAY 3 of hike

Kalaloch to the Pacific Coast. Ruby Beach, 3-5 miles (tide dependent), easy; The Hoh Rainforest; 2-5 miles, easy

At Kalaloch, you delight in your first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean on a beach walk. The coast, part of the Olympic National Park, is pristine and virtually undisturbed by the forces of man. If tides allow, you explore the tidal pools teeming with starfish and countless other species of intertidal invertebrates and algae, and enjoy a picnic lunch on Ruby Beach. Fascinating sea-stack rock formations enhance the Pacific Ocean views. You may spot otters, eagles, seals, whales, and even follow deer tracks in the sand. This is also a prime spot for birding—keep an eye out for pelicans, cormorants, and

oystercatchers along the way. Here, too, you can appreciate the wonder of the tides, which dramatically change the landscape as they ebb and flow by as much as 15 feet.

This afternoon, the walk explores a gentle trail lined with massive trees, through one of the only coastal temperate rainforests in the world. Other temperate rainforests can be found in Tasmania, Scotland, Japan, and on the Kamchatka Peninsula of Russia. The Hoh Rainforest literally teems with life, even out of death; massive “nurse” logs of fallen trees serve as starting ground for new seedlings, nourishing them with nutrients and moisture as they decay. Moss drips from overhanging branches, and licorice ferns sprout from trees without ever reaching the ground.

Everything grows two to three times faster in the rainforest than on dry land; here, Sitka spruce grow to heights of 300 feet and as wide as 23 feet, and are considerably larger than in their namesake Alaskan home.

Tonight, you are warm and comfortable in newly refurbished log cabins with cozy wood stoves, overlooking the Pacific.

Hotel Kalaloch Lodge, Forks – 1 night only
157151 Highway 101, Forks, Washington Tel 360.962.2271
Email info@visitkalaloch.com www.thekalalochlodge.com
Hair dryers available. Coffee yes. WiFi unavailable but AT&T is available.

A comfortable National Park lodge offering cabin-style accommodations, situated on a high bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Rooms do not have televisions or telephones.

Wed Aug 24 - DAY 4 of hike

Sol Duc Valley and Lake Crescent; 5-9 miles, easy to moderate

After breakfast overlooking Kalaloch Creek and the beach, you set out on a two-hour scenic drive, passing through the logging town of Forks, recently made notable in the Twilight series of books and films. After following the Sol Duc River through a broad valley, you climb up into the mountains to road's end and begin your walk through giant Western hemlock trees to the iconic Sol Duc Falls.

From here you are offered two walking options. The easier option is an enchanted walk down the Lover's Lane Trail, which brings you to the quaint Sol Duc Hotspring resort. Here you have the opportunity to soak in the healing mineral springs, or enjoy a beverage at the outdoor café next to the Sol Duc River (this option is 4 miles in length). Those looking to challenge themselves with a 1,500-foot climb through changing forest zones, wetland orchids, and stunning views of cascading Canyon Creek will set out for Deer Lake. Upon arrival you take in the majestic beauty of this tranquil jewel nestled below subalpine meadows and high ridges. Afterward you move on to Lake Crescent, carved out of the mountains by glaciers. Eight and one-half miles long and over 600 feet deep, it is one of the largest lakes in the state. Here, you stay at a famous lodge whose past guests included Franklin Roosevelt. Appropriately, he stayed here prior to negotiations which led to the creation of Olympic National Park.

Hotel Lake Crescent Lodge, Port Angeles – 1st of 2 nights
416 Lake Crescent Road, Port Angeles, Washington Tel 360.928.3211
www.olympicnationalparks.com Wireless Internet and hair dryers available.

A historic National Park lodge offering cottage and motel units nestled among giant fir and hemlock, and overlooking stunning Lake Crescent. Rooms do not have televisions or telephones.

Thu Aug 25 - DAY 5 of hike

Hurricane Hill trail; 3 miles, easy; optional scenic raft trip on the Elwha River

After a brief visit to the National Park Service Visitor Center, you head for Hurricane Ridge for a walk on the Hurricane Hill trail. Here, you take in the sweeping grandeur of the Olympic Mountain Range to the south, with the San Juan Islands and Vancouver Island to the north. Massive peaks, one after another, form a striking skyline. According to Native American legends, these peaks were once a single, large mountain where the Thunderbird, creator of lightning and thunder, dwelled.

En route you stop for a picnic lunch surrounded by subalpine meadows. Because the Olympic Peninsula was isolated by glaciers 10,000 years ago, these meadows were also isolated—they now include endemic species of flora and fauna found nowhere else on earth, such as the Olympic Mountain daisy, Flett's violet, and the Olympic marmot.

This afternoon you proceed to the banks of the Elwha River, which is undergoing the largest dam removal project in U.S. history and is being restored to bring back one of the Northwest's most incredible salmon runs. Your guide, Eric Kessler, has been working on documenting this historic and fascinating project for almost 20 years, and shares how this came to be approved by Congress, as well as funded and implemented by federal, state, and tribal parties. You walk into the former Elwha Dam site, which is being reclaimed by nature and now regularly sees massive king salmon swimming by to their ancient reclaimed spawning grounds upriver. Located mainly in the heart of the Olympic National Park, the river's 45-mile course and 100 miles of tributaries are being revitalized by returning salmon migration, crucial to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and surrounding ecosystems. After this full day of walking, you begin the return trip to the lodge in anticipation of a hearty farewell meal.

Hotel Lake Crescent Lodge, Port Angeles – 2nd of 2 nights

Fri Aug 26 - DAY 6 of hike

Marymere Falls; 2 miles, easy to moderate. Departure from Seattle

From Lake Crescent, a final, brief walk to Marymere Falls is a breathtaking farewell. The dramatic 90-foot plunge is named for Mary Alice Barnes, sister of Charles Barnes, a cartographer who produced the first map of the interior of the Olympic Peninsula on the famous, perilous Seattle Press expedition of 1889.

You depart for Seattle via the Bainbridge Ferry, stopping en route to enjoy a special lunch provided by your guides. Return to Seattle Westin Hotel by 5:00pm – ask for the airport or train needed

Hotel Fairfield Inn at airport
19631 International Boulevard, Seattle, WA 98188 Tele 206 824 9909

Sat Aug 27

6:00am Depart Seattle SEA via UA#1929
2:18pm Arrive Newark EWR

Participants

Phillip Heilker and Jo Stutts, Beaufort, SC
Margaret Purcell, Frenchtown, NJ
Nancy Brunner, Frenchtown, NJ
Sheila and Kenneth (Ken) Arron, Irvine, CA
Amalia (Molly) Mendez de Leon, Los Angeles, CA
John and Melinda Tribem Merritt Is, FL

Georgia Malone, New York, NY
Evelyn Akers, Rensselaer, NY
David (Dave) Nichols, Richmond, VA
Earnghan Chan, Singapore
William (Willie) Miller and Terese (Terry) Ricca, Voorhees, NJ

Eric Kessler, one of CWs most veteran guides, has guided over 20 years with CW. After studying the natural history of the Olympic Peninsula in college and exploring its jagged peaks and forested valleys as a wilderness traveler, he went on to devote his career to sharing this remarkable national park with guests. Eric has guided worldwide and pursues his parallel photography career documenting the planet's native peoples and ecosystems. He is currently working on a writing/photo project on the Olympic Peninsula's Elwha River, which was part of the largest dam removals and watershed restoration projects in US history.

Heather Harding has been guiding for many years on both Washington's Olympic Peninsula, where she lives, and in the canyons and plateaus of the Southwest, where she earned college degrees in biology and Southwest Studies. Heather brings a world-wide background of whale research and Waldorf teaching to her guiding. Heather winters on Maui, where she runs her non-profit whale foundation, with her partner and frequent co-guide, Eric Kessler.

Overview

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME -

The Westin Seattle, Seattle; 8:30 a.m.

1900 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101 Tel direct 206.728.1000 Tel 800.228.3000

NIGHTS 1 & 2

Lake Quinault Lodge, Quinault, Washington Tel 360.288.2900

Email info@visitlakequinault.com www.olympicnationalparks.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHT 3

Kalaloch Lodge, Forks, Washington Tel 360.962.2271

Email info@visitkalaloch.com www.thekalalochlodge.com

Hair dryers available. Wireless Internet and laundry service unavailable.

NIGHTS 4 & 5

Lake Crescent Lodge, Port Angeles, Washington Tel 360.928.3211

www.olympicnationalparks.com Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME - The Westin Seattle, Seattle, 5:00 p.m.

EMERGENCY CONTACT - One Call International - Email mail@oncallinternational.com

If communicating from within the US - Text 603.838.3169 Tel 800.555.9095

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME - The Westin Seattle, Seattle; 8:30 a.m.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME - The Westin Seattle, Seattle, 5:00 p.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL - This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with 4-9 miles per day. This is one of our easier trips because there are few elevation gains, although two walking options with lovely views do have significant elevation gains (up to 1,550 feet). Some may find the longer options, even though on fairly flat terrain, a challenge due to the distance. We have designed shorter options for this purpose. Walks take place on wooded trails, rocky beaches, and dirt trails that may have loose rocks and exposed roots. Three distinct ecological zones—seacoast, rainforest, and mountains—present serene walks, stunning views, and rare wildlife.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME - The Westin Seattle, Seattle; 8:30 a.m., near the check-in area of the lobby. Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt. Please be dressed for walking.

Upon meeting we will drive to our first hotel, stopping for two walks along the way.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT - Seattle-Tacoma (Sea-Tac) International Airport (SEA), Seattle, WA portseattle.org/seatac/

GETTING TO THE MEETING POINT - The most efficient and inexpensive way to get to the Westin is via the new Link Light Rail Station from the Sea-Tac airport. Trains arrive and depart on the platform level of the station. The covered, level walkway to the Airport Terminal is one level down on the mezzanine. The well-lit walkway is separated from the main area of the garage and directional signs point the way to the Main Terminal skybridge. Take this train to the Westlake Station, which is two blocks from the Westin and costs approximately \$2.50 per person for the 35-minute transfer.

The Link Light train service runs from 5:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. on Monday through Saturday and 6:00 a.m. to midnight on Sundays. Trains arrive and depart every 7 - 15 minutes, depending on the time of day.

Taxis are readily available from the Sea-Tac airport. Fare is approximately \$45 to the Westin Seattle, depending on time of day and traffic.

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS - Country Walkers has negotiated a special rate for the night before each tour start and the night each tour finishes at the Westin Seattle, your meeting-point hotel. The Westin Seattle, 1900 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101 Tel direct 206.728.1000 Tel 800.228.3000

Rates: The rate starts at \$289 per night plus tax from June 25 – August 27, 2016 and \$249 from September 10 – 24, 2016. This rate does not include tax or breakfast.

To reserve: Please contact the hotel directly if you would like to make a reservation. Be sure to advise the hotel that you are reserving under the Country Walkers room block so that you benefit from our special rate. The hotel will request a credit card to guarantee the reservation. Please note that the hotel will hold our block until 30 days prior to the tour date. We suggest booking your pre-tour reservation as soon as possible. Seattle is a popular destination and there may not be rooms available within 60 days of your departure.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME - The Westin Seattle, Seattle, 5:00 p.m.

We will not be able to arrive in downtown Seattle before 5:00 p.m., as the return trip from Lake Crescent takes approximately 3½ hours.