



SAN JUAN ISLANDS

## San Juan Islands

*The San Juan Islands Scenic Byway is Washington's newest byway and the first route in the lower 48 states to include a marine highway—a historic canoe route originally traveled by the Coast Salish people.*

Today, Washington State ferries ply these waters, laden with locals and visitors traveling by car, by bike or on foot. Occasionally someone even walks onto a ferry hand-carrying a kayak to launch at his or her destination.

The recreational appeal of these islands is undeniable. Winding roads with light traffic beckon cyclists. Rocky coves captivate paddlers. Artistic communities, eclectic shops and water views everywhere charm everyone who visits the San Juans.

### Friday Harbor on San Juan Island

The historic seaport Friday Harbor greets the ferry with water-view restaurants, boutiques, bookstores, galleries, and museums. Relax at the waterfront park between the “Portals of Welcome” (Coast Salish house posts) and watch ferries, seaplanes and boats enter the harbor, take a whale-watching

cruise, or rent a moped for a self-guided island tour. A farmers’ market is located in a historic brickworks building for a taste of island-grown fare.

Take a self-guided walking tour of the downtown historic district and browse the Whale Museum or the San Juan Historical Museum.

### Head over to Roche Harbor

Begin your tour by driving west on Roche Harbor Road. Three miles out of town, swing into a wine-tasting room housed in a historic schoolhouse. Nearing Roche Harbor, tour the San Juan Islands Museum of Art’s Sculpture Park, which boasts over 100 sculptures placed in a 19-acre natural setting.

Continue to Roche Harbor Resort, where you’ll find the Hotel de Haro, which was built in 1886 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Several types of lodging, restaurants,

shops, gardens and a marina make Roche Harbor a great stop for a meal and historic walking tour. Guided kayak and whale watching tours are available and provide a great way to get a better sense of the place.

### Lime Kiln Point State Park

Lime Kiln Point State Park, a.k.a. Whale Watch Park, is a kayaker’s paradise and the only park in the world dedicated to shore-based orca whale watching. This day-use park has a picturesque working lighthouse, trails, and an interpretive center. Late spring through fall are the best whale-spotting months.

Follow West Side Road to Wold Road, where you’ll find a 25-acre lavender farm that produces over 250 lines of lavender-based products. The San Juan Island Lavender Festival is held here the third weekend in July each year.

### Orcas Island

The byway continues with a 40-minute ferry ride from Friday Harbor to Orcas Island, the largest of the San Juans. The ferry lands at Orcas Village, with its distinctive general store built on pilings above the shore and the 1904 Orcas Hotel.

Head out on Orcas Road and turn west onto Deer Harbor Road to the quiet hamlet of Deer Harbor. Here you can rent a boat or a bike, take a kayak or whale watching tour, or just buy a coffee from a store on a dock and enjoy the view.

### Pottery cooperatives

Orcas—or “the rock,” as locals call it—is known for its pottery. Ask the locals where you can find potters spin clay into art at any one of the local historic studios.

### Bustling Eastsound

Continue to Eastsound, the commercial hub of Orcas Island. Here

you’ll find shops, galleries, restaurants and lodging. The Orcas Island Historical Museum, located in the center of the village, has exhibits housed in six original 1800s homestead cabins.

### Historic Rosario Resort

Heading south on Olga Road brings travelers to the historic Moran Mansion at Rosario Resort. Robert Moran, a shipbuilder and former mayor of Seattle, built the mansion in 1909, and today it’s the centerpiece of this popular resort and marina. The mansion houses photographs from the 1900s, arts-and-crafts furniture and a music room featuring Tiffany chandeliers, a Steinway grand piano and a renowned Aeolian pipe organ.

### Moran State Park

Continue south to Moran State Park, Washington’s fourth-largest state

park. Enjoy campsites, five freshwater lakes and over 38 miles of hiking trails. The park’s Mount Constitution is the highest point in the San Juans at 2,409 feet and boasts panoramic views of islands and the Cascade Mountains—a must-do side trip.

### Last Stops: Olga and Doe Bay

Come back down the mountain and continue south to the hamlet of Olga for shopping and a meal at the Orcas Island Artworks cooperative, housed in a 1936 strawberry-packing plant. The last stop along the byway is Doe Bay, where you’ll find a rustic resort. This Northwest icon offers yurts near the beach, soaking tubs and a truly laid-back island experience.

Retrace your route back to Orcas Village, catch an Anacortes-bound ferry and savor the return cruise through the scenic San Juan Islands.



### PLANNING TIPS

**GETTING THERE:** Take a Washington State ferry from Anacortes to Friday Harbor on San Juan Island to begin your journey. Be sure to arrive at the ferry terminal early, especially during peak summer and weekend travel.

Once you’ve explored San Juan Island, take an inter-island ferry to Orcas Island. Keep an eye out for resident orca pods. Foot passenger service is also available seasonally from Bellingham, Seattle and Port Townsend.

**GAS, FOOD AND LODGING:** There are plenty of accommodations on both islands, although reservations are recommended, especially in summer months. Local groceries, restaurants and resorts provide food for all tastes. Gas can be found in Friday Harbor and Roche Harbor on San Juan Island, and in Eastsound on Orcas Island.

**CONNECTED OR NEARBY SCENIC BYWAYS:** Whidbey Island Scenic Isle Way, Cascade Loop, Chuckanut Drive

**LOCAL RESOURCE:** San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau [www.visitsanjuans.com/visitors/scenic-byway](http://www.visitsanjuans.com/visitors/scenic-byway)

<b>DRIVING DISTANCE</b>	120 MILES*
<b>DRIVE TIME</b>	2.5 HOURS
<b>PLAN TO SPEND</b>	2 OR MORE DAYS
<b>BEST SEASONS*</b>	YEAR ROUND**
<b>TOP ADVENTURES</b>	

\*This byway has three segments: a 30-mile ferry ride, a 46-mile loop on San Juan Island and a 44-mile (one-way) road tour on Orcas Island.

\*\*Shoulder seasons are best for avoiding crowds. Check for updated Washington State Ferries information at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries).

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