

cruising with marinalife



Cruising the San Juan Islands in the Pacific Northwest

Splendor not to be missed in the Pacific Northwest.

Paradise in the Pacific Northwest is known as the San Juan Islands. Consisting of 172 named islands, the area is home to spectacular boating views, whale watching, historic restaurants and spas. The three main islands include San Juan Island, Orcas Island and Lopez Island. Expand your horizons and boating adventure and include the San Juan Islands as a cruising destination not to be missed!

San Juan Island

San Juan Island is the most diverse of the three main islands, combining rocky shores and sandy beaches, prairie and pastureland, lakes and forest.

Friday Harbor

On the east side of San Juan Island is the town of Friday Harbor, a quaint seaport of parks, restaurants, shops and galleries. Nestled between Seattle, Victoria and Vancouver, this historic seaport in the Salish Sea is preserved by its maritime history. There are no stoplights but the *New York Times* is flown in daily. Friday Harbor enjoys an average of 247 days of sunshine a year and half the rain of the Seattle. Approximately 90 Orca whales make their home in the San Juans typically from late April through the end of September - sometimes longer. The Orca whales are the Washington state marine mammal and also on the Endangered Species List. They can be seen from the west side of the island at Lime Kiln Point State Park, also known as "Whale Watch Park" or from the water.

The town of Friday Harbor also greets visitors by ferry and seaplane. Enjoy a walking tour and visit the plethora of art galleries, boutiques and water-view restaurants.

Where to Dock: The Port of Friday Harbor Marina is located in the center of the San Juan Islands in northwest

Washington State. The 500 slip marina provides access to the Town of Friday Harbor, where one can find complete services for boaters. There is space available for 150 visiting boats ranging in size from dinghies to 150 foot yachts. Southern breakwaters are reserved for vessels over 45 feet in length. (tel: 360.378.2688)

Where to Eat: The Duck Soup Inn is a comfortable country restaurant serving fresh, sophisticated Northwest cuisine. The seasonal menus are based on fresh Pacific seafood, island produce, homegrown herbs, and the best quality meats and poultry. Applewood-smoked Westcott Bay oysters are a house specialty.

What to Do: The Whale Museum is a great place to learn more about Orca whales and other whale species along with porpoise, sea lions seals, river otters, and over 250 species of birds including bald eagles and other raptors.

Roche Harbor

On the north end of San Juan Island is another port of entry known as Roche Harbor Village. Listed on the National Register of Historical Sites, it is approximately ten miles from Friday Harbor. This Village will take you back in time to a quiet, relaxed pace as you stroll through the beautiful Victorian gardens and enjoy the ambiance of the historical buildings while watching some of the most spectacular sunsets in the Pacific Northwest. Roche Harbor is also a US Customs Port of Entry for those wanting to sail to and from Canada which is only 15 miles away. Roche Harbor has an airstrip, marina, lodging, grocery store, restaurants, sculpture park, shopping and activities.

Where to Dock: Roche Harbor Marina has been a popular boating destination for many years and accommodates vessels up to 160 feet. With 377 Slips it is a favorite location of many

traveling dignitaries and has been featured in many movies and travel shows. The marina features the full service Afterglow Spa offering treatments soothing to the soul, and body. Relax with massage, or indulge in one of their signature body treatments. (248 Reuben Memorial Drive, tel: 800.586.3590)

Where to Go: Listed on the National Register of Historical Sites the old Hotel de Haro, built in 1886, has many rooms appointed with original antique pieces and offers the traveler an opportunity to step back in time and enjoy country ambiance of Old World charm. One of President Theodore Roosevelt's favorite vacation spots, Roche Harbor continues to welcome visitors with its charm and sense of history.

Where to Eat: The historical village offers several dining options including McMillin's Dining Room for fine dining at its best, overlooking the beautiful harbor and sunsets. You can enjoy colorful cuisine at the Madrona Grill in the gazebo and on the famous waterfront deck, and listen to live music on weekend afternoons during the summer. Live music for dancing is available on weekends. If you are looking for more family-oriented dining, Lime Kiln Cafe will serve you up a hearty breakfast and numerous lunch options.

Orcas Island

Orcas Island is considered to be the most spectacular of the San Juan Islands and with over 36,000 acres it is also the largest. The horseshoe-shaped island is a magical mix of lush forest, farm valleys, placid lakes and stunning mountains, all wrapped around a beautiful fjord. A favorite for generations of visitors from all over the world. The population is widely spread out, adding to its feeling of peaceful, tranquil privacy.

Where to Dock: Deer Harbor Marina is a charming marina located in the heart of the wonderful San Juan Islands cruising grounds. Only 75 miles north of Seattle, this facility offers numerous amenities and attractions that make it a major boating destination for vessels both large and small. (Deer Harbor Road, tel: 360.376.3037)

Rosario Harbor, the San Juans' largest resort and spa, is located in the Rosario area on beautiful Cascade Bay halfway up East Sound's eastern shore. This historic resort and marina was originally Robert Moran's estate and offers over 30 slips and mooring buoys. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the resort features the 54 room Moran Mansion, museum, and restaurants. Original decorations and period construction including Tiffany accents contribute to its elegant ambience. (1400 Rosario Road, tel: 360.376.2222 or 800.562.8820 ext.700)

Where to Eat: Dinner at the Deer Harbor Inn has been an island tradition since the 1920's. Begin your dining experience with homemade bread and soup or a salad with the special house dressing. Entrée selections include fresh local Salmon or Halibut, shellfish specialties, choice steaks and chops or vegetarian specialties. The Inn offers a variety of homemade deserts to finish the evening. Enjoy the deck dining area in the summer.

What to Do: Moran State Park on Orcas Island is a 5,252-acre camping park with five freshwater lakes and over 30 miles of hiking trails. Atop the 2,409-foot-high Mt. Constitution, the highest point on the San Juan Islands, there stands a stone observation tower built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936. The tower offers panoramic views of the surrounding islands, the Cascade Mountains and a variety of Canadian and American cities.

Lopez Island

Lopez is the most rural and according to local legend the most friendly of the three major islands, covering 29.5 square miles. The landscape blends woods with rolling farmlands and open spaces with shimmering vistas. Watch for bald eagles, seals, otters and the occasional Orca whale. Don't forget to wave at the passing motorists - a local custom for many years! There's a genuine spirit of community here and a special feeling for life that pervades the population of 2,200.

Where to Dock: The Lopez Islander is located on serene Fisherman Bay on Lopez Island's west side. The 60 slip marina has everything you need for a great stay on Lopez Island. (2864 Fisherman Bay Road, tel: 360.468.2233). [ml](#)

