

# Visiting the Olympic Peninsula, Washington

3-Night Sample Itinerary Starting in Portland, OR

Total Miles: 647

## DAY 1

**Portland to Lake Quinault** (Drive Time: 3.5 hours)

Start by traveling north in I-5 and west towards Aberdeen. **Lake Quinault** is located an hour north of **Aberdeen** tucked into the southwest corner of Olympic National Park in the Quinault Valley.

### Lake Quinault Area

The hamlet community around **Lake Quinault** offers several lodging including the **Lake Quinault Lodge** and its Roosevelt dining room. Plan to spend some time in this unique area of the peninsula. Several short hikes reward the hiker with views of waterfalls and the area's famous record-setting giant trees. Stay to kayak the lake or take the 3-hour rain forest van tour into Olympic's **Quinault Rain Forest**. For a longer backpacking trip, trek into the **Enchanted Valley**, also known as the Valley of 10,000 Waterfalls.



💡 **Smart Travel Tip:** Daylight varies between the seasons at this latitude. Sunset is at 4:20PM in December and at 9:20PM in June. Plan accordingly, especially if hiking.

## Day 2

**Lake Quinault to Ruby Beach & Hoh Rain Forest** (Drive Time: 1.5 hours)

Get an early start on this second day of the trip that will cover 170 miles of diverse, pristine landscape. Continue west on Hwy 101 to get to **Ruby Beach**, one of Olympic National Park's most iconic destinations. Named for its subtly colored red rocks, this beach is a must-see on any trip around Hwy 101. View sea stacks and large driftwood logs, worn by the elements. At low tide, explore the tidepools for glimpses of starfish and anemones. Continue on 101 and then east on Upper Hoh Road into the quietest place on earth – the **Hoh Rain Forest** in Olympic National Park. A National Park Pass is required and can be purchased at the gate if needed. Once at the Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center, learn all about Washington's temperate rain forest and stroll around the Hall of Mosses trail for some amazing photo ops.



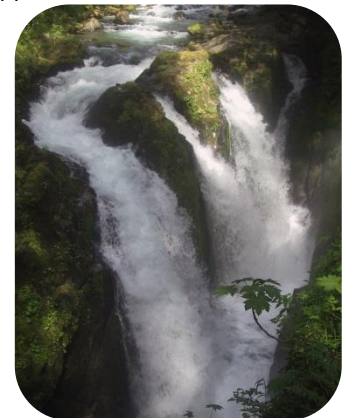
💡 **Smart Travel Tip:** Tide times change every day. Be aware of tides when visiting any beach, especially if hiking or camping near the water. Use caution and watch the waves when swimming or wading on ocean beaches.

**Hoh Rain Forest to Forks** (Drive Time: 1 hour)

Drive back to Hwy 101 and continue north towards the town of **Forks**, famous for Stephenie Meyer's "Twilight" book series, the towns of Forks and neighboring **La Push** attract thousands of Twilight fans each year to pay homage to the town that inspired the stories. Visit the Forks Visitor Center on the way into town for more Twilight memorabilia and more information on the area. Stop for lunch at one of the friendly local restaurants and be sure to visit Forks Outfitters to stock up on supplies.

**Forks to Sol Duc Hot Springs** (Drive Time: 1 hour)

One of the lesser-well-known gems of the Olympic Peninsula, **Sol Duc Hot Springs** is just an hour away from Forks. Take Hwy 101 out of Forks for 27 miles and turn right and up Sol Duc Hot Springs Road. A National Park Pass is required and can be purchased at the gate if needed. **Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort** (Open April – October) owns and operates natural mineral hot pools as well as a cold-pool, a restaurant, gift shop, and cabins. Tent and RV sites are also nearby. After a day of driving there is no better way to relax than a soak in the pools or perhaps a hike to one of the most beautiful waterfalls on the peninsula, **Sol Duc Falls**. Plan on staying here for the night or at another lodging option close by such as historic **Lake Crescent Lodge** (Open May – New Year's Day) and **Log Cabin Resort** (Open May – September). Both located on the shores of Lake Crescent.



💡 **Smart Travel Tip:** Book ahead whenever possible. Lodgings and campsites on the peninsula fill up fast in the summer and during large events. Fall through spring offer fewer crowds and more vacancies.

## Day 3

### Sol Duc to Marymere Falls (Drive Time: 37 minutes)

Make time on this morning to squeeze in a short hike with a big payoff. **Marymere Falls** trailhead is located down Lake Crescent Road on **Lake Crescent**. The mile-long trail is moderate with steps and the end to a view of a tall horsetail waterfall.

### Marymere Falls to Port Angeles (Drive Time: 30 minutes)

Continue east on Hwy 101 as it curves around the southern shore of turquoise Lake Crescent to reach the largest town on the Olympic Peninsula, **Port Angeles**. Port Angeles and the surrounding area offer many different lodging options including camping and RV sites, affordable hotels and motels, and bed & breakfasts – all within a short distance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Olympic Mountains. Many visitors stay in Port Angeles multiple nights to take day trips into Olympic or the Coho ferry over to **Victoria, B.C.** (a 90-minute sailing). This is also the perfect place to stop for lunch or even pack a picnic for the next destination!



### Port Angeles to Hurricane Ridge (Drive Time: 45 minutes)

On a clear day, the snow-capped peaks of the Olympic Mountains are visible and beckoning for a visit. Be sure to stop at the **Olympic National Park Visitor Center** located on the way to **Hurricane Ridge** just south of Port Angeles. The visitor center offers park passes (required to visit Hurricane Ridge), maps, and back-country wilderness permits. From the visitor center, travel up Hurricane Ridge Road for 18 miles to reach Hurricane Ridge at an elevation of 5,242 feet.

📌 **Smart Travel Tip:** Note that the road to Hurricane Ridge is not open every day in the winter and snow falls autumn through spring. Vehicles are required to carry chains in winter. For travel conditions, call the Hurricane Ridge hotline at 360-565-3131.

### Hurricane Ridge to Port Ludlow (Drive Time: 1 hour 40 minutes)

After an afternoon spent among mountain peaks, head back down to Port Angeles and continue east on Hwy 101 towards **Sequim**, famous for its lavender which is celebrated annually during Sequim Lavender Weekend the third weekend in July. Nature lovers won't want to miss the **Dungeness Spit**, a 5.5-mile natural sand spit and wildlife refuge located north of Sequim. Just outside of Sequim, Hwy 101 winds through the little town of **Blyn**, home of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and the beautiful hand-carved totem poles that greet its visitors. Continue on to the east side of the peninsula and the marina town of **Port Ludlow** and the **Resort at Port Ludlow** (Open year round) famous for a world-class golf course and Fireside Restaurant. Stay here or at another nearby lodging, such as a seaside vacation rental for the third night.



## Day 4

### Port Ludlow down the Hood Canal

On this last day, watch the sunrise spread over the Puget Sound and pack up for the drive south down the **Hood Canal**. Known for its abundance of shellfish, the communities along Hwy 101 pride themselves on offering fresh catches from their own beaches. **Hama-Hama Oyster Bar** is a must-stop for any oyster-lover. The town of **Brinnon** celebrates its annual Shrimp Festival each May. Boating, kayaking, fishing, and diving are all popular recreations in this area as well as camping and RVing. The Hood Canal area is also the gateway to the **eastern side of Olympic National Park and Forest** with miles of exciting trails and several large waterfalls to view. Not to miss – Rocky Brook and Murhut Falls.



### Return to Portland

Continue south down to I-5 and back over the Columbia River toward Portland. On the way, take your time and stop in **Olympia** for dinner in the state's beautiful capital city before returning.

**Extend the trip** by visiting Seattle or exploring the Mount Rainier National Park southeast of Seattle.

*Note that all times and distances are approximate. Unforeseen circumstances such as traffic, ferry delays, inclement weather, road construction and bridge closures can affect travel. Be prepared for possible traffic/ferry delays especially during summer. For information on current road conditions visit [wsdot.com](http://wsdot.com).*

