

Suggested Whidbey Activities

Hiking/walking. There is a wonderful (2-5 mile) loop from the house which takes you through both old growth forests and sandy beaches. Hike south ½ mile from our beach to the wooden staircase at S. Whidbey State Park. Go up the stairs. Toward the top, either turn right onto the Nature Discovery Trail (slightly longer)- or go straight which leads to the parking lot. If you take the Nature Discovery Trail, you'll end up coming out onto another trail (unmarked). You can either take a left to return back to the State Park entrance, or take a right which eventually dead-ends. Cross Smugglers Cove Road at the crosswalk for even better trails. At the Y, go right for a longer loop, or left for a shorter loop which parallels the road. Both trails are beautiful forest trails well worth the effort. When you come out of the forest onto Smugglers Cove Road, continue north on the road for ½ mile and go back down the driveway at Smugglers Lagoon Lane. Be sure not to miss the huge 600 year old "Ancient" cedar tree, the largest of many old growth firs and cedars visible in the north part of the trail.

Ebey's Landing in the Coupeville area, offers a 2-3 mile hike that is just stunning. From the Ebey's Landing parking lot, traverse the hillside and return along the beach. Much of this area was recently acquired by the Nature Conservancy.

Beachcombing. You can go north or south on the sandy beach at almost any tide. There is a tide calendar in the kitchen. At low tides, we have seen some people digging giant horse clams (good for chowder) and geoducks (pronounced gooeyducks). There are also crabs in the eelgrass. Try looking for beachglass.

Bird watching. We have binoculars for your use in the beach cabin and main house. Our library contains bird guidebooks as well. Watch for eagles and osprey in the morning. Red-winged blackbirds, goldfinches, hummingbirds, great horned owls, have been recently seen.

Biking. Whidbey Island has some of the best biking roads in Washington State. As zealous riders ourselves, the property's location providing great riding both north and south of the house was one of the attractions for us. There is a great bike shop in Bayview Corner. You'll find bike maps in the welcome binder.

Art walks. Langley is a must for art-lovers. Wonderful galleries, especially Museo, and several antique shops. About a 20 minute drive from the house.

Driving Tours. Ebey's Landing: much of this area was recently acquired by a consortium including the Nature Conservancy. This is truly one of the most beautiful areas in the country. Rolling meadows, beautiful farmlands, and great trails along the bluff. Deception Pass: a world class destination- if you are visiting for a week, make sure to plan a drive to the north end of Whidbey. Continue north to Deception Pass, truly an area of world-class beauty!

Tour Port Townsend. Park the car at the Keystone ferry landing, walk on, and take a 35 minute ferry ride to Port Townsend. Pt. Townsend is an historic Washington town with old Victorian gingerbread houses, great shopping, good pubs, and nice restaurants, all within easy walking distance from the ferry dock. There is a ferry schedule in the welcome binder.

Weekend Farmers Markets. Starting late spring, there are 2 wonderful outdoor farmers markets in Bayview on **Saturday mornings** starting at 10am, about a 15 minute drive. The Bayview Market at Bayview Corner is the largest- offering locally grown produce, fresh baked pies and homebaked goodies, art and crafts. Going south on the main highway, turn left at the Whidbey phone company (landmark: big US flag) and turn right into the Bayview nursery parking lot. Similar offerings are at the Organic Farmers Market, but focusing more on organic produce, plant starts, soaps, etc. Last year, there were two Llamas- and there is an art area and lots of grass for the kids to play in. On **Sunday mornings** April-October from 11-1, try the farmers market and art show at the Greenbank Farm. The Greenbank farm was purchased by the local community instead of being developed into high density housing.

Greenbank Farm and Winery Hopping. Nearly Greenbank Farm is also a one stop shop for local wineries and offers daily wine tasting. The 522 acre farm includes and duck pond and art galleries, cheese shop, and café that specializes in pies. There are now 8 wineries on Whidbey Island, including these which also have their own tasting rooms: Whidbey Island Vineyards and Winery Langley 360 221-2040, Holmes Harbor Cellars 360 331 3544, Greenbank Cellars 360 678-3964, Swede Hill Cellars 206200 1728.

Garden touring. If you are a gardener, and especially a rhododendron lover, don't miss Meerkerk Gardens, just 10 minutes away on Resort Road, just off the main highway. Go ½ mile on Resort Road to Meerkerk Lane. The gardens are open 7 days a week 9am to 4pm. Admission is \$3 per person.

Kayaking. Whidbey Island Kayaking Company (www.whidbeyislandkayaking.com or 360 321 4683) runs 2 hour guided tours daily from Freeland and other locations around Whidbey, with all equipment supplied. You can also talk with them regarding renting kayaks to keep down at our beach during your stay.

Golf. There are several courses on Whidbey. Holmes Harbor Golf is an 18 hole golf course is open year round to the public, located at 5023 Harbor Hills Drive in Freeland. Call 1-(360)-331-2363. Useless Bay Country Club is an 18-hole private golf course is at 5725 S. Country club Drive in Langley. Call 1 (360)321-5960

Shopping in Coupeville. Coupeville is a quaint seaside town just 20 minutes away. Don't miss the bakery goods at the Knead and Feed, mussels at Toby's, and my favorite women's clothing boutique at the north end of the village.

Kid Stuff. There is a cute library in Freeland- good for a rainy day activity. Don't miss the incredible wooden playground structure at the Community Park on Maxwellton Road, just beyond the High School. There is also a smaller playground on Holmes Harbor in Freeland. Fly one of our kites in the beach cabin basement if it's windy. Play badminton or volleyball if it's not. Try Bocce ball or croquet on the lawn. There are lots of lawn toys in the cabin basement. Please put them away clean when finished.

Services

Groceries. The Payless grocery store in Freeland is one of the best on the Island, and is just 10 minutes away. Take Smugglers Cove Road south back to the main highway, take

a right onto the highway, and a left at the next light (Fish Road). You'll see it on your left in a large shopping complex which also includes an Ace Hardware, a wonderful kids toy/gift shop/drugstore, a fabric store, a florist and a good sandwich/coffee shop. The Star Store in Langley is also good, though smaller and more expensive. There is also a Star Store in Bayview, with a great fish shop (excellent crab cakes).

Videos. There is a video store about 2 blocks past the Payless, on the same side of the street. The Payless also has videos to rent in a convenient jukebox- and only \$1 per movie overnight.

Hospital. The nearest hospital is in Coupeville, about a 15-20 minute drive.

Restaurants. For fine dining, the Oystercatcher in **Coupeville** is our favorite- superb food rivaling many great Seattle restaurants- not cheap but worth every penny. Reservations required 360 678-0683. Also try Toby's, a pub in Coupeville reputed for its Penn Cove Mussels. The Knead and Feed has killer cinnamon rolls and lovely soups. Coupeville is a 15-20 min drive to the north. In **Freeland**, the selection is less impressive: there is the Freeland Café- so so American food in a casual country diner atmosphere and a Creperie that is also so-so. Bush Pt Restaurant has American food (surf&turf) in a lovely beachfront setting (you can see their blue building from the deck). The best bet in Freeland is China City (great Chinese food) and the Beach House for take out gourmet food across the street from Payless. In **Langley**, there are many good restaurants- the Prima Bistro 360 221 4060 and Café Langley are favorites, the sushi place, Edgecliff for fine dining 866 825 3640 , and a couple great bakeries. Also in Langley, some say Café Langley is the best restaurant on Whidbey. It's certainly the most expensive and is difficult to get a reservation- I've tried but haven't yet dined there.

Ferries. Driving times to the Clinton ferry are 22-25 minutes, and to the Pt. Townsend ferry 15-20 Minutes. Ferry schedules are in the welcome binder.

You'll find phone books in the shelf under the breakfast counter to locate other services or to find phone numbers.

A Little History

While looking for a little beach cabin on a great piece of property, Nancy and Al found and purchased the property in December 1998. The lower cabin was perfect for our small family of 3. The upper house was remodeled extensively in the 80's. The lower cabin had a former life as a boathouse and was remodeled to its current state in the same timeframe. The pool dates from 1960. We installed a solar panel pool heater in 2001 on top of the beach cabin roof and redid the pool plumbing in 2008. We began renting the main house out in 2002 and the other cabins in 2004, and have gradually upgraded their amenities. Virtually all of our rental income has gone back into improvements for everyone to enjoy thus far, with the balance donated to environmental charities. See the list below to see how busy we have been! Now that we are a family of 5 (twins born 3/02), we spend more time in the main house, and enjoy its beautiful views along with a bit more space. We have an increasing number of repeat guests and really do enjoy sharing this beautiful piece of the world with you.

2001 Interior remodel of beach cabin to create the bedroom area. Interior wall with recycled windows and door added. Installed Bosch dishwasher, new stainless sink, and solid surface countertop.

2002 Upgraded septic system- installed 3 stage sand filter system located under the large lawn at the beach and pumped to the elevated garden area to north of the lower wood shed. System services all 3 structures. Installed lawn and planted gardens. Installed granite tile counters in main house, new sink and faucet.

2003 New refrigerator, washer, dryer, and new Toto toilets in every bathroom. Teak dining table and bench for main house.

2004 New Hotspring hot tub, Satellite TV, 2 new gas fireplaces, bedrooms upgraded with goose-down comforters, Egyptian cotton sheets, new duvets, new towels, new lighting.

2005 New concrete stairs and handrails to beach. Oak card table and chairs in atrium. Huge invasive ivy removal project and new plantings. New Adirondack chairs at beach.

2007 Bulkhead replacement- we lost the old creosote pilings in the Superbowl storm Feb '06, and replaced it with a low concrete seawall.

2007-8 Major remodel of main house. The entire lower level was removed down to dirt. We then excavated 3-4 feet and poured a new foundation underneath, so that there is a "new house" underneath the upper section. Upstairs full bath was reduced to a powder room, with former shower now a kitchen pantry. New roof deck, stainless barbeque, outdoor furniture, 46" surround sound HDTV theatre. All new utilities and electrical/plumbing in preparation for kitchen remodel in 2009.