

ROAD TRIPS

PLACES TO GO

# SHORT HOPS, BIG MEMORIES

These six adventures pack lot into a little. Splash around the Pacific Northwest or hike in New Mexico. Soak in Colorado’s hot springs or relax amid the oranges in Ojai.



STEVE MCALISTER Getty Images

**VISITORS** flock to Multnomah Falls, just outside of Portland, Ore., so get an early start.

## EMBRACING MT. HOOD

BY ALEX PULASKI

**The route:** From Portland, Ore., drive east on Interstate 84, cross the Bridge of the Gods toll bridge to Washington 14 east to Bingen, Wash. Then head south over the Hood River Bridge (toll) and Oregon 35 through Hood River to Mt. Hood. To return to Portland, head west on U.S. 26 from Government Camp.

**Miles:** About 170 miles round trip from Portland; add 45 miles for a side trip to the Dalles.

**Best time:** Summer and fall for prime weather and farm-fresh produce.

**Why:** The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area is a wonderland of hiking trails and incredible views. It contains a big chunk of the Mt. Hood Scenic Byway, which can be enjoyed by adventurers in search of world-class wind surfing on the Columbia, white-water rafting on the White Salmon River or snow skiing at Mt. Hood Meadows. Or you can take it slowly and enjoy Hood River County’s fresh fruit, craft



beer, cider and spectacular views of Mt. Hood to the south and Mt. Adams to the north.

**Highlights:** Multnomah Falls draws more than 2 million visitors annually for the views and hikes, so try to arrive before 11 a.m. to get parking. Spend a morning or afternoon on a white-water rafting trip, where near-nonstop rapids left us soaked and giggling. The city of Hood River is a magnet for an afternoon stroll through the vibrant downtown, with shops peddling books, outdoor gear, spirits, wine and art.

**Memorable stay:** The comfortable Best Western Plus Hood River Inn is perched on the

Columbia River. Take in views from your balcony or from the on-site Riverside restaurant, where the breakfast (think a tostada with house-made chorizo and roasted poblano peppers) is exceptional.

**Memorable meals:** Craft breweries in Hood River are outstanding for food and drink, notably Ferment Brewing Co. for a warm hummus and flatbread platter and a complex, herbal Bière de Garde; pFriem Family Brewers for a kale salad, crispy Brussels sprouts and a smooth pilsner; and Double Mountain Brewery for a mushroom and mozzarella pizza, live music and a crisp Kölsch.

**Tourist trap or treat:** It requires a 25-minute drive east from Hood River to the Dalles, but the National Neon Sign Museum is well worth it. The streetscape upstairs left me feeling as though I had stumbled onto Main Street USA, circa 1950.

**Plan to spend:** This loop can easily be done in a day, but plan to spend the night to enjoy the outdoors and urban experience.

## GLIDE ALONG THREE SCENIC OREGON CAPES

BY ALEX PULASKI

**The route:** Oregon 131 from Tillamook to Cape Meares through Netarts and Oceanside, then backtrack south on Oregon 131 and Whiskey Creek Road past Cape Lookout, following Cape Lookout Road and Sandlake Road south to Cape Kiwanda and Pacific City. Plentiful signs mark the Three Capes Scenic Loop route.

**Miles:** About 75 miles round trip from Tillamook, or 275 miles round trip from Portland.

**Best time:** Late spring, summer or fall for best weather and to avoid muddy trails, but we got lucky on a sunny weekend in early March.

**Why:** Oregon’s coast is magnificent, and this popular threesome of capes — Meares, Lookout and Kiwanda — and environs offer breathtaking views, hikes, beaches, ice cream, beer and adventure. Pastoral Tillamook County’s dairies give way to winding roads, tiny towns and the rapidly evolving destination of Pacific City.

**Highlights:** Start at the Tillamook Creamery, then add a stop (or two or three) along the North Coast Food Trail, perhaps at the gift shop and production facility for Jacobsen Salt Co., the first Pacific Northwest concern to harvest ocean salt since Lewis and Clark in 1805. Hiking opportunities are abundant, starting with a short hike at Cape Meares to the lighthouse, which is open May-September. Trails at Cape Lookout are shady; after about half a mile the trees thin, revealing a stunning shoreline view to the south. Hike Cape Kiwanda, paddle the nearby Nestucca River and watch the sun go down at Pelican Brewing Co.

**Memorable stay:** Since opening in early 2018, Pacific City’s Headlands Coastal Lodge & Spa has aimed high and hit the mark with sumptuous surroundings and

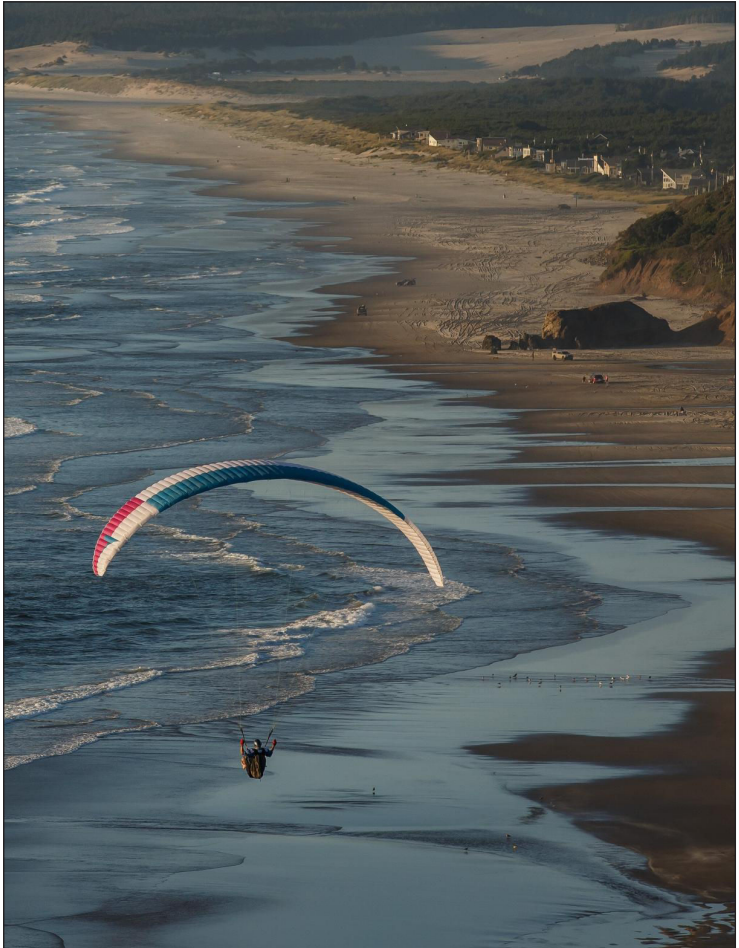


ocean views. A flair for adventure runs throughout the property. Note the in-room hooks to hang bikes and surfboards.

**Memorable meal:** “Everybody must get sconded,” proclaim the tie-dyed T-shirts at the Grateful Bread Bakery in Pacific City. One bite of a warm blueberry white chocolate scone will demonstrate why locals and visitors have kept this breakfast joint humming since 1991.

**Tourist trap or treat:** A tasty treat all the way, the Tillamook Creamery visitor center has drawn fans since 1949, and the opening of a new facility in June 2018 has improved the experience mightily. The new center is modern and airy and allows for better viewing of the cheese-making process. Be prepared for summer weekend crowds waiting to dig into cheddar cheese curds or Malted Moo Shake ice cream.

**Plan to spend:** This trip can be done in a day, even from Portland, but an overnight stay is recommended to enjoy the views and hikes.



MARCUS YAM Los Angeles Times

**A PARAGLIDER** floats at Cape Kiwanda near Pacific City, Ore. Visit the city’s Grateful Bread Bakery for a scone.