



Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge Story Ideas

Savor the Local Food and Flavors of the Columbia River Gorge

There is an exciting foodie scene burgeoning in the Columbia River Gorge, connecting people to the orchards, farms, and sustainable food experiences that showcase the region's diverse bounty. Visitors can follow the Hood River Fruit Loop or East Gorge Food Trail on an epic culinary journey for a taste of locally sourced food, cider, beer and wine. Stops along the West Gorge Food Trail include the town of Troutdale for a nostalgic taste of updated classic Americana cuisine in a renovated 1920s gas station. Cascade Locks is home to vibrant community of indigenous tribe members who proudly continue centuries-old fishing traditions. Visit their Native-owned fish market for sockeye, steelhead, or sturgeon and see how they are working to keep their heritage alive. The East Gorge has become a food and wine destination in its own with more than 30 wineries and numerous cideries using fruit from local orchards. Visit a winery where the varietals are paired to taste biodiverse food that was raised, grown or foraged on the property. The craft beer scene is thriving in Hood River, a culinary hot spot with a laid-back vibe where you can get anything from Scandinavian food to sushi. For a culinary tour of the region right in your own home, download a copy of *Tastebound*, a free cookbook featuring 15 recipes from local chefs that highlight some of the region's local ingredients.

Winter Adventures Big and Small on Mt. Hood

Mt. Hood is a winter haven for skiers and snowboarders, averaging more than 400 inches of snowfall on three unique ski resorts. Timberline Lodge and Ski Area is the only ski-in, ski-out lodge in the state, and features the Pacific Northwest's largest inbounds vertical drop of 4,540 feet (2,166 feet of vertical drop are lift served throughout winter). Mt. Hood Skibowl boasts the most black diamond runs in Oregon and offers the largest night skiing terrain in the United States with 36 fully lit runs. With panoramic views and wide-open terrain, Mt. Hood Meadows provides more than 2,150 acres of skiing on 87 trails. If you love a winter wonderland adventure but aren't into hitting the slopes, Mt. Hood caters to all types of travelers with plenty of other activities such as sledding, tubing, cross country skiing or snowshoeing the through the snow blanketed forest. In the heart of the mountain, guests can enjoy Cosmic Tubing under more than 600,000 twinkling lights, music and warm drinks. For those who prefer indoor activities, chill out with a cold brew in the pubs and bars in the quaint ski village of Government Camp or keep cozy in front of a fire at Timberline Lodge. For visitors interested in history, Mt. Hood Cultural Center & Museum tells the mountain's story, from its role in the evolution of skiing to natural history and showcases a gallery of work by local artists.

Outdoors Pursuits Around Mt. Hood and The Columbia River Gorge

Surrounded by an abundance of rivers, lakes, and mountain streams, the Columbia River Gorge is a designated National Scenic Area with no shortage of fun things to do in the great outdoors. For starters, there's standup paddle boarding, rafting, kayaking or ziplining. If you prefer to venture out on two wheels, you can peddle your way on biking routes with sweeping views, or check out Mt. Hood's lift-serviced trails. Both the Gorge (as it's known to locals) and Mt. Hood

offer scores of hiking trails from short day trips to ambitious treks traversing majestic mountain ridges or to plunging waterfalls. The Dalles is known for sunny weather and here you can cast your line on one of the many rivers for Cohoe and Chinook salmon, or walleye. Try kiteboarding or windsurfing on the mighty Columbia River, accessible from Hood River's incredible Waterfront Park, with a local guide. Summer in the 1-million acre Mt. Hood National Forest offers myriad of adventures, from swimming in Trillium Lake to tracing the steps of the pioneers on a Barlow Road hike. Backpacking options in the region include the Timber Trail, a 40-mile loop around Mt. Hood. Those who enjoy adventuring far from civilization can backpacker the legendary Pacific Crest Trail.

Sustainable Travel to the Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge

Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge are some of the most scenic destinations in the country and a place people visit because of the ecology, from its of plunging waterfalls, fields of wildflowers to its jaw dropping river views and snowcapped mountain peaks. So it's only natural to want to lower your carbon footprint to help preserve the beauty of this special place for generations to come. Car free options to see the see this beautiful destination include Columbia Gorge Express, Gray Line Tours, and America's Hub World Tours offers a guided Mt. Hood loop tour, half- or full-day gorge tour and a special wine-lovers gorge tour. Cycling enthusiasts will enjoy the riding the 100-year-old Historic Columbia River Highway. Voluntourism opportunities include native shrub planting with Friends of the Columbia River Gorge or trail clearing with Pacific Crest Trail Association. An emerging trend has travelers seeking green accommodations, and Mt. Hood Tiny House Village offers a variety of sustainable structures with all the amenities of modern living designed to be a tiny footprint that's as adorable as it is easily moved. The growers and winemakers this bountiful region are committed to sustainable practices and supporting the local community and you can find organic and biodynamic vineyards set amongst the pear and cherry trees.

History and Culture in the Columbia River Gorge

The Columbia Gorge is a place steeped in history. Its beginning started with massive flows of lava millions of years ago which were cut and shaped by the flow of the Columbia River and most recently during the Missoula Floods which cut the steep cliffs during the last ice age. Humans have inhabited the area for at least 13,000 years and Native Americans settled near the Salmon fisheries approximately 10,000 years ago. Explorers Lewis and Clark visited the Columbia Gorge during their historic expedition in the early 1800s, and the Oregon Trail pioneers followed in 1830s until the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869. More than 400,000 pioneers are estimated to have traveled along the trail en route to Oregon City and the Willamette Valley. Today, visitors can enjoy those same sweeping views driving along the preserved portions of the Historic Columbia River Highway – the country's first scenic highway – which is part of the Historic Columbia River Highway Scenic Byway. The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail provides walking and biking access parallel to much of the original roadway's 73 miles. The Barlow Road was the last section of the Oregon Trail and goes up and over Mt. Hood. There are a number of sites along the original trail where visitors can explore including a replica of the Barlow Toll Gate where they collected tax to pass as well as Phillip Foster Farm which was one of the original homesteads. Near the Bridge of the Gods (named for a Native American myth and geologic event) in the small town of Cascade Locks, visitors can support the native tribe members by shopping at their markets as they pay homage to the centuries-old techniques of their fishing communities. Guests can visit feathered friends who call the Raptor Center home,

and can also learn about the region's history at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and Museum in The Dalles, near the end of the Oregon Trail.

Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge for Art Lovers

In a region with a blossoming art scene, Mt. Hood and the Gorge can fill an Instagram page with colorful snaps every aesthete will love. Stop by the Troutdale Art Center, where artists of varying mediums work in their studios and you can find treasures of sculpture and photography, paint and upcycled art, ceramics and jewelry. Down the road, artist Rip Caswell's bronze statues brings the human form and animals to life through his one-of-a-kind pieces. In Hood River, you can find Columbia Center for the Arts, which is dedicated to offering a wide range of opportunities for community of students, artists, and audiences to engage with the arts and the local community, as well as a fine art and a craft gallery. Also check out the town's 4.5 mile walking tour of public art in Hood River, which includes a including map and audio tour. In the Dalles, downtown buildings are the canvas for vibrant murals that showcase the history of the area. On Mt. Hood, take a self-guided tour of the art of Timberline Lodge, or visit Summit Arts Center, which offers a variety of classes to make art in this idyllic setting deep in the Cascadian forest.

Nature-Based Wellness in Mt Hood and the Columbia River Gorge

Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge boast a wealth of natural beauty riches – it's a place so special that it feels as if Mother Nature herself reminds you to slow down and unwind. In the Hood River Valley, you can travel down old country roads to encounter regenerative farms, fields of flowers, and U-Pick orchards where you can pluck juicy apples, pears and other fruit right off the trees. Rejuvenate yourself by indulging in forest bathing, make self-care a priority with yoga class, spend time in nature enjoying awe-inspiring scenery on the many hiking trails or stroll through a local farmer's market that allows you to really get into the heart of the destination. The Gorge astounds with its natural beauty, from the Columbia River to the many hidden waterfalls of the less traveled The Dalles region and offers a perfect escape from big city life. Visitors to Mt. Hood can spend the night in a yurt or a relaxing in a cabin, turn off all devices, and do nothing but gaze up at the starry skies while stress melts away with a vacation designed to nourish the mind, body and soul.

Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge: A Playground for Families

Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge offers vacationing families a new world of exploration where they can connect through fun activities such as hiking, biking, adventure parks, and an abundance of hands-on museums and even the family-friendly Mt. Hood Railroad. Family members big and small can enjoy true quality time while watching salmon swim up a fish ladder at one of the world's largest hydroelectric systems, the Bonneville Dam. Learn to ski or snowboard together or enjoy the adventure park at Mt. Hood, Visit Phillip Foster Farm on the Oregon trail, learn about the raptors at Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and Museum, or take a guided white water rafting trip. Families come in all shapes and sizes, and so does a vacation to the region. For families who love culinary adventures, there's a variety of family-friendly wineries that offer activities including bocce ball, farm animals and playgrounds, while some might choose to travel the Fruit Loop to stop by the U-pick farms. From waterfall chasers to history buffs, this special time of togetherness in Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge will be remembered for a lifetime.