

Spencer Butte

Spencer Butte, a 15-minute drive from the University, becomes rocky and increasingly difficult after several minutes of hiking.

Tim Kupsick Freelance Photographer

Simply Butteiful

By Aron Glatzer | Freelance Reporter

Spencer Butte: An oasis for Eugeneans

Spring in Eugene means the retreat of winter rain and the emergence of springtime sun. As outdoor activities become more accessible, a day-trip destination for outdoor enthusiasts is Spencer Butte, which is a 15-minute drive from the University.

"Spencer's Butte is where I would go to leave the stresses of everyday life; to think, eat some spinach and exercise," University alumnus Will Acosta said. "The view is breathtaking and can be shared with your closest friends or even alone."

Upon reaching the base of the mountain, stretching is recommended to loosen the body and prevent soreness.

"A limber body is a limber mind," junior Mark Sheppard said. "There is nothing worse than straining your gluts."

Whether the trip is intended for relaxation or a fast-paced jog, Spencer Butte is a workout for all, Acosta said.

Initially, the terrain of the hike consists of a dirt trail surrounded by trees. Although sticky during the winter, the mud transitions into a soft pillow of dirt in the spring. Within 10 minutes of starting hiking, a meadow emerges on the right

side of the trail. Continuing onward, several lakes and reservoirs come into view below.

Following 15 minutes of easy climbing, the trail becomes progressively rockier, more steep and more difficult.

"Pushing yourself to the top is worth it for the gorgeous view," sophomore Courtney Tim said. "Soon enough you are looking down from heaven."

Rocks act as seats at the peak of Spencer Butte, and the view is absolutely breathtaking, Acosta said. Picnics and sunbathing are some of the common activities at the apex, Acosta said.

"I am usually afraid of heights, but for some reason I always love feeling high as a kite on top of Spencer's Butte," he said.

Water or other beverages are recommended for refreshment before starting the trek back, Tim said.

A panoramic view of Eugene can be seen crystal-clearly on a sunny day, including campus and Autzen Stadium from one direction and countryside from another. The trip down can be as much as 10 minutes faster than the hike up. This is perfect if somebody is in a hurry to get back to reality after lounging at

the top for too long, Acosta said.

An hour of exercise for one person can be a planned day-long adventure for others looking for new experiences, Tim said.

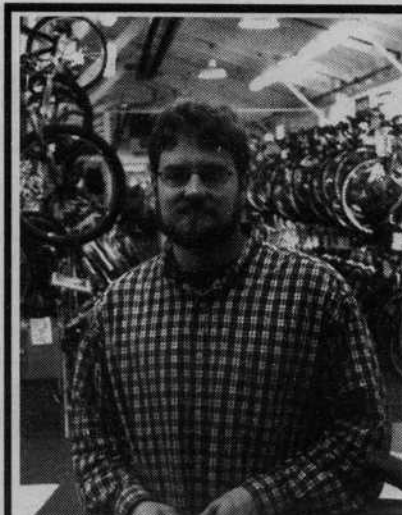
Sophomore Lucas Posada said the features of Spencer Butte attract different visitors.

"The identity and the connections people have made with Spencer's Butte have made it anchor the very fabric of Eugene as a town," Posada said. "It is more than a butte — it's a butte with its own identity and personality that people really respond to."

Aron Glatzer is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

Spencer Butte

Take Willamette Street west for about five minutes. When Willamette becomes a T-section, veer right, but stay in the middle lane. Follow Willamette from this inside lane, and do not drive into the hills. Go straight for five to 10 minutes until there is a Spencer Butte sign on the left side of the road.



Riley Holmes, Manager

You might think that all this experience would cost you extra

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A day at the beach

The Oregon Coast is ideal for those seeking fun close to home

By Sheldon Traver
Freelance Reporter

"We are in view of the ocean, this great Pacific Ocean, which we have been so long anxious to see, and the roaring or noise made by the waves breaking on the rocky shores ... may be heard distinctly,"

— William Clark, in a November 6, 1805 journal entry

Stretching some 300 miles, the Oregon coast is considered to be one of the most beautiful and accessible coastlines in America. All beaches are public property, and the many scenic vistas that scatter the Coast Highway offer incredible views of jagged rocks, dunes and sandy beaches.

Only 60 miles from Eugene, the Central Oregon Coast offers a quick chance to enjoy scenic wonders or lounge on a warm beach. April and May are ideal months to make the drive. The flowers are in full bloom, and many broadleaf trees have their new leaves. Highway 126 West winds through farmland and the coast range, eventually ending in Florence.

Old town Florence has many art galleries and specialty shops to peruse. A leisurely stroll to the docks reveals restored antique sailboats and pleasure boats. It is not uncommon to see couples strolling hand-in-hand down the street. The residents are also proud of their most popular attraction, the Sea Lion Caves.

"We are proud to say that we are in the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest sea caves in the world, and the sea lions are pretty cool, too," Sea Lion Caves General Manager Hod Johnson said.

The Sea Lion Caves is located 11 miles north of Florence, and it is home to more than 200 wild Stellar Sea Lions, the only ones of their kind on the North American coast. Entry costs \$7.50 but offers the chance to view the sea lions in their natural environment.

Thirteen miles north of Florence is the Heceta Head Lighthouse. The parking lot is at Devils Elbow State Park, located next to a small beach and tidepools. After exploring the pools, it is an easy hike through part of a coastal old growth forest that

leads to the lighthouse. There are benches along the trail to look over the vast Pacific.

Volunteers give guided tours through the lighthouse and keeper's quarters. It is said that Rue, the spirit who haunts the keeper's house, can often be heard stepping through the attic or turning the lights on and off. The grassy yard of the house overlooking the ocean is a scenic place for lunch or a mid-afternoon nap before continuing the drive north.

The highest overlook on the Oregon coast is located at Cape Perpetua, five miles north of Heceta Head Lighthouse. The interpretive center is open until 5 p.m. and has a large display of Native American artifacts and antique logging equipment. A small theater features shows throughout the day about Oregon coast history and wildlife.

Binoculars are available to view California gray whales migrating north in April and May. Traveling two to three miles off the coast, the whales are easily seen as they "spout," sending a burst of water eight feet into the air.

"Right now were seeing them travel in groups of four or five," said Don Burnett, a volunteer at Cape Perpetua. "We also have resident whales that stay here year-round and can put on quite a show at times."

"I was up here last year and saw a group of porpoises traveling with a mother whale and her calf," said Laurie Emmerson of Yreka, Calif. "It was just the most amazing thing I've seen up here."

Cape Perpetua has 24 miles of trails that wind through virgin old-growth forest.

"There are trees 24 feet around," Burnett said.

Guided hikes are offered at various times with explanations of local ecology and history.

Fifty miles north of Florence is Newport, formerly home to the late Keiko the killer whale of "Free Willy" fame. The Oregon Coast Aquarium

Turn to **COAST**, page 8B

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