

And thanks to Alexandre Baretich, the Cascadia bioregion has a flag. Baretich says he designed the flag during the academic year of 1994-95 while a grad student in Eastern Europe, homesick for the Willamette Valley where he grew up. Known as the **Doug Flag** for the lone Douglas fir tree in its midst, the flag has a bar of blue at the top to represent the sky as well as the Pacific Ocean, Salish Sea and inland waters. The white middle bar is the snow and clouds, and the green is forests and fields of the Pacific Northwest.

The flag grew out of Baretich's need for an icon — the word meme wasn't getting used yet — to help shift people's conscious-

ness from a human-centered approach to the environment, which leads to development harming nature, to a life-centered approach in which humans are part of nature. "It's a landscape painting on fabric," he says, "an abstract landscape painting with a realistic silhouette."

The flag, which Baretich put into the creative commons for free use, has taken off. It can be seen flying at Portland Timbers soccer games and, weirdly enough, can be purchased as a sticker from Walmart. Baretich put two key restrictions on its use: It cannot be used for hate or for exploitation. For more on Cascadia and the flag, go to freecascadia.org. — *Camilla Mortensen*

BEST EUGENE DRIVE THAT SHOWS OFF OREGON IN A WEEKEND

Drive out to John Day, camp in the Cascades, drive to the coast.

When rainy season hits Oregon, I lose all possibility of getting my mainly Florida-based family to come for a visit. Why hang out in dreary Oregon when they can lure me to the Sunshine State's sandy beaches? But I have found one road and hiking trip that does the trick, although it is best to do it when it's not dumping rain. My usual prescription is to start early and load up on road snacks, grab the dogs and whatever family member or friend I'm trying to persuade to see me more often, and then head out Highway 126.

First stops are Sahalie and Koosah falls and Tamolitch Pool. The first offers spectacular falls with zero effort beyond getting out of the car; the second is a generally easy hike with a spectacular blue pool as its highlight (Blue Pool is also a commonly used name for Tamolitch). For the hotel-oriented, you can grab a room in Bend or Sisters, but I usually camp somewhere just over the Cascades. My friends and relations not used to the great outdoors prefer that I take them to a spot with a potty, such as Indian Ford Campground, just outside Sisters.

Grab breakfast in Sisters, then head out Route 26 for the two-hour drive to the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument where the glorious colors of the Painted Hills Unit never fail to induce awe. Since I'm trying to pack everything into a weekend, after hanging out a couple hours, I drag my visitors back into the car and head back to the Cascades. In the summer when Hwy. 242 is open, we take the scenic route back. At Lava Lake campground you can do a couple-hour loop hike that takes you out to, and a short ways down, the Pacific Crest Trail (a bucket list hike for my parents). You can either camp at Lava Lake or head back onto Hwy. 126 and stop in at Belknap Hot Springs for a hot soak in their pools and either a super-easy camp spot or a hotel room (they have dog-friendly rooms).

Get up in the morning, and start driving. (Did I mention this is a road trip? The truly fit and intrepid could probably bike it.) Take 126 back into Eugene-Springfield, stop for lunch downtown, and then head out through the Coast Range to Oregon's colder than Florida but oh so glorious sandy, mountainous coast. There you can stay the night at one of the many campgrounds or hotels, or drive back into Eugene for dinner in the Whit.

The vistas that Oregon has to offer are amazing, but somehow the juxtaposition of the dry eastside, the green mountains and the grey and often stormy coast all in one weekend heightens all of the beauty. My parents still only visit about once a year, but this weekend of outdoor beauty got at least one Florida friend to move to the Pacific Northwest. — *Camilla Mortensen*

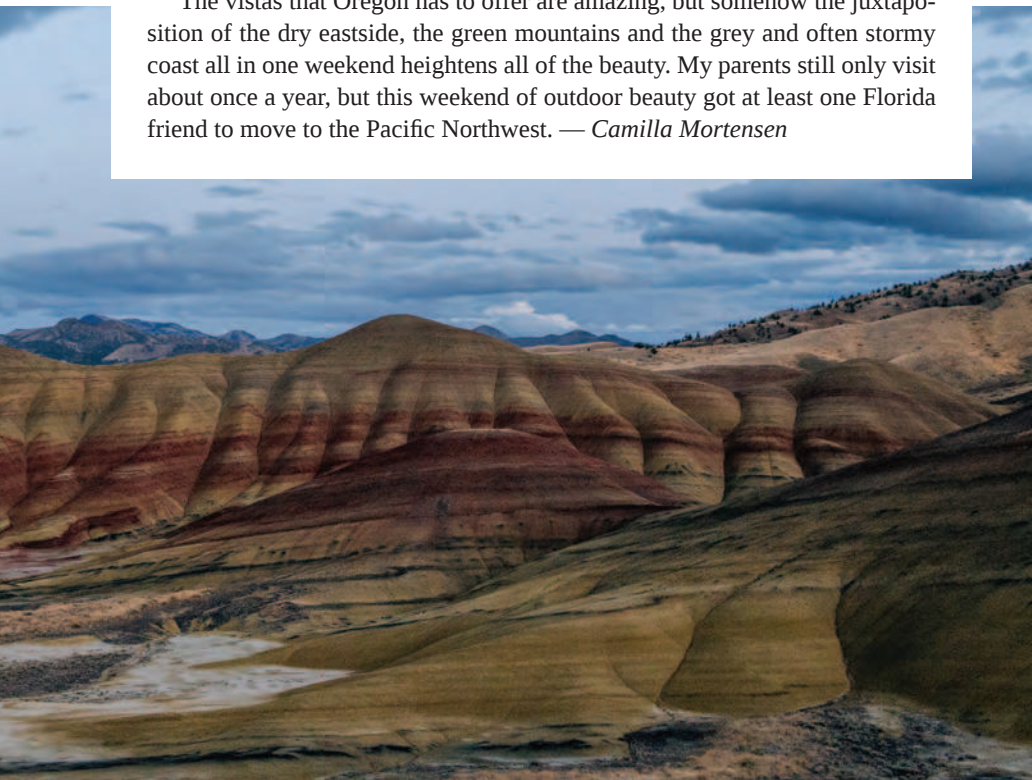


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