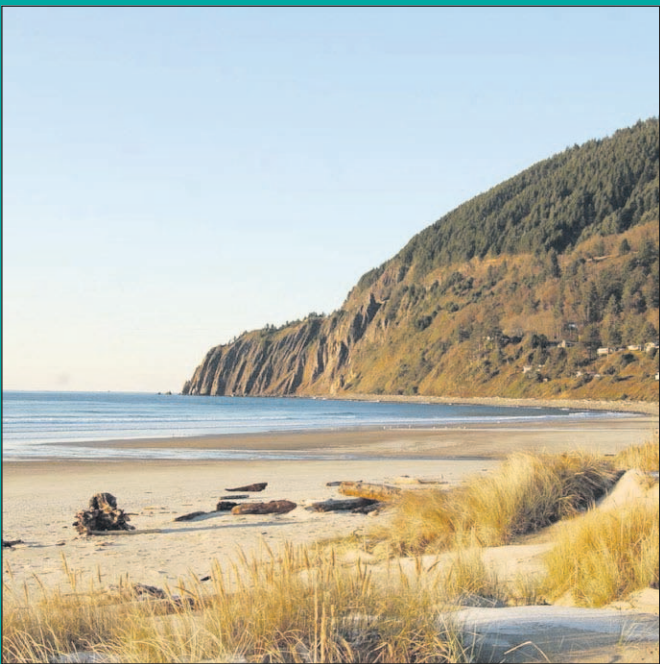


FAVORITE WALKS

Coast Weekend contributors put their feet to pavement (or sand), sharing their prized picks for the best places around to stroll, wander and walk



Submitted photo courtesy Walt Covert

Manzanita's beach stretches 7 glorious miles from the base of Neahkahnie Mountain at the north end to the Nehalem jetty at the south.

Manzanita Beach

By DAN HAAG

A lot has been written over the years about the benefits of walking Oregon's beaches. It's a subject that begs to be described in the most poetic terms possible. How can one set foot on the soft sands of Oregon's beaches and not feel some cosmic connection to a force greater than themselves?

No greater case can be made for the existence of a higher power than walking the beach at Manzanita.

Manzanita's beach stretches 7 glorious miles from the base of Neahkahnie Mountain at the north end to the Nehalem jetty at the south.

In between lies a flat expanse of beach bordered by dunes that's willing to mold to the moods of its visitors; serene and peaceful, blustery and breezy, somber and contemplative, joyous and exuberant. A walk from end to end can take a few hours or a whole day, depending on your state of mind or level of enthusiasm.

Summer is, of course, the most popular time to walk here, but it also offers sharp contrasts. Early morning is cool and monastery-quiet, and the sand sparkles like a wet constellation. You can often walk the length of the beach and never see another soul. Dogs often outnumber people up and down the stretch before 9 a.m. If you let your mind wander a little far afield, you can picture the wreck of the Glenesslin being battered against the unforgiving base of the mountain in 1913.

A summer afternoon is a different matter, as crowds descend on the beach to splash in the waves, fly kites or build sandcastles.

Winter is for the hearty adventurer. Walking the beach bent forward while agitated surf crashes and foam licks at your feet is a cleansing experience.

There is no right or wrong time of day or year to walk Manzanita beach. Just let down your hair and put one foot in front of the other. The beach is not there to judge you.

Port of Ilwaco, Washington

By LYNETTE RAE MCADAMS

It's a pleasant stroll most any time of year, but here at the height of summer, this working port is at its best.

Start at Jessie's Ilwaco Fish Co. and head east, following the curve of the marina out and around to the breakwater that shoulders the boat launch. It's roughly a mile, there and back, and under clear skies there's a bonus view of Saddle Mountain and the city of Astoria. Shops and galleries line Waterfront Way, mixing with the maritime businesses that remain the heart of this sleepy fishing village — but the main allure is always the boats.

A floating catalogue of dreams and desires, held fast in tidy rows: Here, a stout and scaly fishing boat, forever working for its living; there, a sleek pleasure craft, glistening with leisure. It's a diverse world, where rusty hulls and peeling varnish mix equally with shipshape brightwork, and the diminutive Coho Sally shares a watery dance with the buxom and beautiful Anita D.

Meander the docks and take in their collective reminder: It's one thing to gaze out and dream about that endless horizon, but it's something else entirely to take to the sea and chase it down.

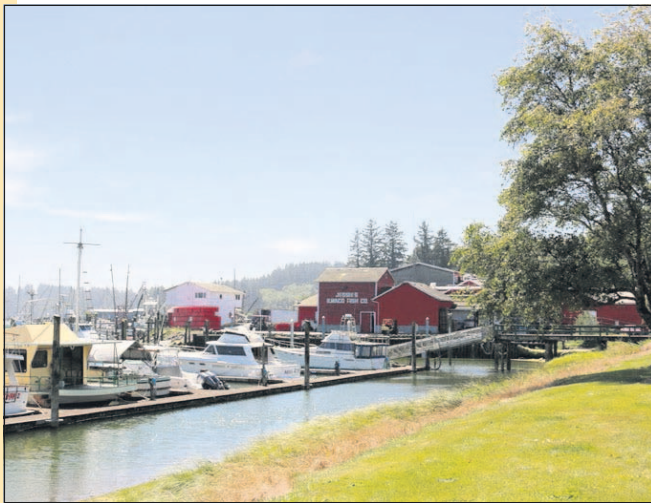


Photo by Lynette Rae McAdams

A view of the Port of Ilwaco, Washington, from Waterfront Way.

Seaside's Prom: the jewel of the city

By MARILYN GILBAUGH

Seaside's main street, Broadway, culminates at the landmark Turnaround. Lewis and Clark were here in 1805-06 taking in the sights. So too are thousands of sightseers who continue to use the same area. Today we call it the Prom. At the Turnaround, look south for three-quarters of a mile. That's where the Prom ends (or begins) at Avenue U. Look north an equal distance to where it ends (or begins) at 12th Avenue.



Photo by Joshua Bessex

On sunny days, the Prom in Seaside can be filled with people enjoying views of the beach.

The 15-foot-wide Prom was constructed in 1920 to replace wooden planks. The walkway — with a low balustrade, ample benches and several easy-to-use beach entries and street accesses for close-up park-

ing — boarders the Pacific's sandy shore, framed by Tillamook Head.

Families, dogs, friends, lovers, people of all ages and languages both foreign and familiar use the Prom. On foot, wheelchairs, bikes, strollers, scooters and skateboards they appreciate all that it offers throughout the year. Whatever the weather or time of day, the Prom has something interesting to see, photograph, overhear and/or contemplate.

An evening walk is lit by Prom lights that mirror gas lamps of yesteryear. With a background of twinkling lights from downtown Seaside, a clear moonlit night sky, the stars and shimmering white-capped waves, well, it just can't get any better.

Astoria's 11th Street Stairs

By RYAN HUME

One of the magical things I like about walking Astoria is the number of stairwells that vein the hillside neighborhoods cocked above the river and bay.

Probably the Mount Everest of these public Astoria stairwells is the lark of 11th Street, where the road terminates at Irving Avenue. It looks pretty daunting from the Riverwalk, if you cast an eye up 11th to where the hill snaps vertical and the stairs ascend, squeezed by those manicured, symmetrical shrubs; the first time I saw it from afar I saw my own Exorcist-style ending in the future.

On closer inspection, this is one of Astoria's greatest mirages: It is not a stairwell at all, but a paved path, upset by little berms about a plank's length apart, slimmer than an adult human's natural gait. I've read that this kind of illusory stairing might be referred to as "pigeon steps," but it could just as well be called "No skateboards ever."

When you top out on Jerome Avenue, you may wonder, "Why did I do that?" Turn around. No matter the weather, it's a view that will crush any selfie.



Photo by Ryan Hume

The view down 11th Street from the top of the stairs is worth the climb up.

Short Sand Beach Trail

By DWIGHT CASWELL

Ten miles south of Cannon Beach is the parking lot for Short Sand Beach Trail. A sloping half-mile path leads through mature forest to a picnic area that overlooks Short Sand Beach, over half a mile of sand along Smuggler Cove. There's a waterfall at the north end of the beach, and mist from breakers drifts past volcanic basalt and sandstone cliffs.

Arrive early on summer days; crowds can make parking difficult by noon. Short Sand is a Mecca for those with surfboards, paddleboards, kayaks and fishing rods.

One of the advantages of Short Sand Beach is the moderate gradient. As the tide goes out there are pools and shallows far enough back from the waves to be perfect for small children who want to build sandcastles and splash in the water. And there's plenty of driftwood just waiting to be turned into forts.

Side trails take you through dense old-growth forest, and a trail of slightly more than two miles takes you to Cape Falcon. A half-mile walk takes you to a monument that memorializes Matt Kramer, the journalist who was instrumental in preserving Oregon beaches. It has a beautiful view of Short Sand Beach.



Photos by Dwight Caswell

Walking Short Sand Beach in Oswald West State Park



You'll find surfers and fishermen at Short Sand Beach.

The South Jetty

By MATT LOVE

Whenever the world feels heavy upon my shoulders, such as reading about an American dentist beheading an African lion to decorate his soulless man cave, I head to the South Jetty at Fort Stevens State Park and take a walk. If I didn't have this walk at my daily disposal, I just might go insane.

There, a few minutes along the sandy path that begins the Oregon Coast Trail, with Saddle Mountain looming in the distance, all the weight starts to lift off like the way barn swallows fly in the early morning. My rallying has commenced.

I used to take my husky with me, but she's too old these days, so it's just me and my thoughts.

My walk parallels the might jetty until it breaks off into the dunes and then down to the beach and then as far as I want to go south. Along the way, I might encounter deer, coyote, bald eagles, fishermen, crabbers, pelicans, gulls, surfers, elk, driftwood forts, rock hounds, joggers, dreamers.

And of course, I always encounter the ocean on my right, washing ashore at so many angles and in so many different colors. At the South Jetty, the ocean teaches the wonderful variety in life. This is perhaps the most important lesson in life. Sometimes you have to walk to learn it.



Photos by Matt Love

Walking by the South Jetty in Fort Stevens State Park can lift the world's worries from your shoulders.

I've taken my South Jetty walk close to 200 times since moving to Astoria in 2013. During all those times, I think I've said two dozen words to human beings.

Matt Love lives in Astoria and is the author/editor of 14 books about Oregon, including *A Nice Piece of Astoria: A Narrative Guide* and *The Great Birthright: An Oregon Novel*. They are available at coastal bookstores and through www.nestuccaspitpress.com.