

BEST CHEAP DATE



Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce

A couple enjoys a sunny day at Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach.

# THE BEACH

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ

**Runner-up:** Columbian Theatre, Astoria

**Honorable mention:** Astoria Sunday Market

A cheap date doesn't have to be ... you know ... cheap.

What is simpler or brings more delight than a day at the beach? You just show up with some food and a blanket on a nice day and the date unfolds in front of you. Stay late enough and it comes ready-made with a sunset. If you want to get really fancy, maybe you bring a kite — or a puppy.

If you're looking for

a range of options when it comes to a beach date, the South County beaches have you covered. Cannon Beach and Seaside offer an array of activities and terrain whether you prefer hiking, shopping, walking or lounging.

The good news is these beaches can still be an option for people who rely on wheelchairs to get around or who might need the extra help navigating the uneven sand. Seaside, Cannon Beach and Manzanita (just over the county line in Tillamook County) all offer beach wheelchairs for free. Seaside of course features a famous paved

promenade with plenty of spots to stop and enjoy the view.

If you are able to tackle more rugged terrain, take a hike in Ecola State Park beforehand. Lazy time on the beach afterwards will be even sweeter. **CW**

BEST FESTIVAL

# WASHINGTON STATE INTERNATIONAL KITE FESTIVAL

LONG BEACH, WASH.

By BRENNNA VISSER

**Runner-up:** Astoria Pride

**Honorable mention:** Astoria-Warrenton Crab, Seafood & Wine Festival

The Washington State International Kite Festival was given the title of Best Festival by this year's readers. The festival, now in its 39th year, is a weeklong kite celebration and competition held annually in Long Beach, Wash., in August.

Jane Holeman, the event committee's chairperson, is "thrilled and surprised" by the honor. "That's really a feather in our cap," she said.



Robert Hilson

Thousands of spectators are greeted by a torrent of kites and gorgeous weather at the Washington State International Kite Festival.

Like many events in the area, the kite festival is entirely volunteer-run. It feels good to have everyone's hard work recognized, she said.

Holeman attributes the festival's success to the fact it is generally free, family-friendly fun.

"It's very relaxing. It's really hard to put enough emphasis on the family draw," she said. "We're seven days long, so you don't have use up your whole weekend. You can just pick a day that works for you."

This year's festival will be held Aug. 19 through 25. **CW**

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