

Taking the road less traveled to Bellingham — spots to check out along the way

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Spots to check out on the way to Bellingham

As the saying goes, the journey is just as important as the destination. The same goes for a good road trip. In this case, our adventure took us north from Seattle to Bellingham. Instead of taking I-5, we took Chuckanut Drive. Locals will tell you that while this 20-mile drive is a bit off the beaten path, it's totally worth it.

This iconic Washington State scenic route was completed back in 1896, as a way to connect the southern parts of Puget Sound with Whatcom County. Before that, the only way to get up north was by train or boat!

You'll find Chuckanut Drive off I-5, at exit 231 in Burlington. Starting in Skagit Valley, through rolling hills and farm land, expanding into majestic mountain tops, then winds its way into the tall, secluded forests of Whatcom county, and the coastline of Samish Bay.

If you're looking for a great escape, without heading too far from home, Bellingham via Chuckanut Drive is definitely a trip worth taking. Check out the video for more on part one of our journey!

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If you're not pressed for time, make a point to make some stops on the way, not only to enjoy the scenic views of Samish Bay, but also for a delicious bite to eat! (And who doesn't love a stop on a road trip for amazing food?!)

Our rumbling tummies were grateful to find The Farm to Market Bakery, in Bow, Washington. You'll find something for everyone at this small, sweet-smelling bakery. Cinnamon rolls and lime-soaked polenta cakes are some of the featured delights, but there are cookies, biscuits and even savory sandwiches on fresh bread.

"We are sourcing as much local food as possible," said Jim Kowalski, who owns the bakery, and The Rhododendron Café next door, with his wife, Lisa Cooney. "We are growing as much food as possible, We have two orchards and a half-acre farm at our house."

And it was definitely worth the stop. Watch part 2 of our road trip series to see how good everything looks!

Once you've taken your last bite of cinnamon roll, get back on the road and stop at Larabee State Park, Washington State's very first state park. It's just a few miles outside of Bellingham, and perfect for camping, relaxing or hiking. The park even opens up to over 8,100 feet of saltwater shoreline on Samish Bay.

Once you leave Larabee Park, you're mere minutes to Bellingham's historic Fairhaven District, which has really maintained a quaint, Victorian feel, in a friendly, welcoming neighborhood. It's perfect for a bit of local shopping or a relaxing bite to eat. This is where your road trip to Bellingham ends, but your exploration of this beautiful city is just beginning!