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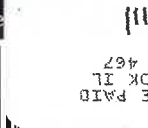
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# 39 WA's Original Scenic Byway *Chuckanut Drive*

BY MARGUERITE CLEVELAND

Where the Cascades touch the Salish Sea in Northwest Washington, you'll find Chuckanut Drive clinging to the mountainsides. It is one of the most scenic drives in Washington. Begin your trip at I-5 exit 231 in Burlington where you will drive through the bucolic farmlands of Skagit County on Highway 11 (Chuckanut Drive) until you reach Bow which is little more than a crossroads. Your first stop is the Farm to Market Bakery to pick up dessert or a snack for later. It is known for its Lime-Soaked Polenta Cakes which are a combination of pound cake and polenta soaked with sweet lime sauce. You want to get here early because by afternoon they are sold out of most items.

For lunch take a detour into Edison (it's left at the crossroads), a tiny historic town, to eat at the Old Edison which has been around since 1901 at various locations in town. It is known for its oysters; the fried oysters are pan fried instead of deep fried for a unique dish known as an Oyster Scatter that is served with house made sauces. The owners are passionate about sourcing locally with cheese from the Golden Glen Creamery, rolls from the Bread Farm and beef from Northwest Homegrown Ranch Meats. After lunch take some time to stroll the art galleries and shops.

The scenery begins to dramatically change as you depart Edison and Bow. Cross the Colony Creek bridge and begin to

see the mountains and the Salish Sea that makes this such a scenic drive. The road becomes very windy and narrow, and the elevation increases, providing gorgeous views. Keep your eye out for Taylor Shellfish Farms after you pass the Oyster Bar. It has a challenging entrance across a one lane bridge. Follow the road and cross the railroad tracks for this unique experience. Visit the Samish Oyster Bar and Shellfish Market and check out the activities involved with farming underwater.

Stop at the next two viewpoints which have signage about the history of the area and Chuckanut Drive. This is the place to get those Instagram worthy photos. Next continue to Larrabee State Park, the first state park in Washington. On your right you can stop at the Lost Lake trailhead and hike up into the mountains, or on your left at the state park entrance you can climb down to a beach overlooking a beautiful cove.

Highway 11 is only 21 miles long, so you have plenty of time to explore this scenic byway at a leisurely pace. Chuckanut Drive ends in historic Fairhaven, once an independent town and now part of Bellingham. In Fairhaven, you can stay the night or easily access Interstate 5 to head back home.

Learn more about Bow-Edison at [visitskagitvalley.com/about-us/regions/bow-edison](https://visitskagitvalley.com/about-us/regions/bow-edison) and about Fairhaven at [bellingham.org/communities/fairhaven](https://bellingham.org/communities/fairhaven). 🍷

