



FOUR SEASONS

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SEATTLE NORTHCOUNTRY A DESTINATION FOR ALL SEASONS

(EVERETT, Wash.) — Stretching from the shores of the Salish Sea to the volcanic peaks of the Cascade Range, incorporating both urban and rural charms, Seattle NorthCountry is a true four-season destination that is almost limitless in what it can offer. But from whale watching to skiing, and from hiking to berry picking, the experience in Seattle NorthCountry changes with the seasons.

The region is characterized by a temperate sea-level climate in the west, where temperatures reach an average of 75 degrees in July and 33 degrees in December, to a more rugged and extreme climate at elevations that stretch to more than 10,000 feet in the east. Such diversity in microclimates is bound to present specific season opportunities not as easily found at other times of the year.

So while it is true that spotting a “sunder” —the region’s famed gray whales that venture into the Salish Sea each spring—or hiking through a spectacular canvas of fall colors can’t be experienced in any season, each season ultimately presents its own rewards.

When is the best time to come to Seattle NorthCountry? The answer to that question depends on the seasonal attractions you might enjoy best:

SPRING

Heading into spring, winter’s precipitation turns Seattle NorthCountry a breathtaking shade of emerald green. At sea level, high temperatures average in the 60s, while at higher elevations it is not uncommon to still see occasional snowfall. Spring is a time for once-a-year occurrences. While orcas are year-round residents of the Salish Sea, gray whales, or “sunders,” visit only in March and April on their annual migration to Alaska. Humpback whale populations are again thriving after a “humpback comeback,” and now visit each year during their spring and fall migrations. For bird-watchers, spring offers hundreds of bird species, many migrating to Canada or the Arctic.

With spring comes beauty. Unique events such as the [Swamp Lantern Festival](#) in Everett, a monthlong exploration of the native Western Skunk Cabbage, offer colorful celebrations of the season. Snowsports season extends through April in the Cascade Range, but hikers and bikers might want to stick to lower elevations in early spring. Lord Hill Regional Park, for instance, has numerous trails to explore within the

confines of its 1,463-acre nature preserve. As spring goes on, the region's [waterfalls](#) are typically at their most spectacular. Wallace Falls and Bridal Veil Falls are two of the region's favorites. Wildflowers, including bleeding heart, trillium, and many others, come into bloom and can be spotted on spring hikes along the Boulder River trail and the North Fork Sauk River trail.

SUMMER

Characterized by sunny skies and average high temperatures that peak in the mid-70s at the lower elevations, Snohomish County is a great bet to beat the summer heat. Summer is also a delicious and healthy time of year, with inviting farmers markets throughout the county—including in Arlington, Bothell, Edmonds, Everett, Marysville, Monroe, Snohomish, and Stanwood—offering fresh, homegrown, and homemade fare. Summer is also berry-picking season at the region's many [u-pick farms](#). Strawberries ripen first, then raspberries, and by August blueberries are in season.

With such nice weather, getting out on the water is always popular. Kayaking, standup paddleboarding, boating, river rafting, water skiing, windsurfing, jet skiing, swimming, scuba diving, crabbing, and fly, lake, and deep-sea fishing are all in a day's play in Seattle NorthCountry. And from open water on Puget Sound to wild mountain streams, kayakers and river rafters of all skill levels have much to choose from.

With [hundreds of miles](#) of winding country roads and numerous paved trails, exploring the region on two wheels is also part of the draw. Some of the best mountain biking in the region can be found on singletrack at [Japanese Gulch](#), Whitehorse Trail, North Mountain Bike Trail, Gold Mountain and many more. Hikers and backpackers can explore deeper into the wilderness in summer than in any other time of year. Japanese Gulch, Lord Hill, Tonga Ridge, Green Mountain, and Mount Dickerman are among the [top summer hikes](#).

Summer is also teeming with [annual festivals](#), from music festivals in Darrington, to the Evergreen State Fair, to the Lake Stevens Aquafest, to name a few.

FALL

With weather that is typically mild in September and October, the fall is a favorite time for locals. The autumn colors in the Cascades are among Western Washington's finest, and even in Seattle NorthCountry's urban basecamp, [leafy hikes](#) are easy to find. Those include Lowell Riverfront Trail in Everett, Centennial Trail in Snohomish, Al Borlin Park in Monroe, and Bothell Landing.

Fall is also harvest season, and the farm-to-table fare of Seattle NorthCountry's culinary scene is at its freshest. Families can lose themselves for hours in a corn maze or browse through a pumpkin patch. In fall, humpback whales return to the Salish Sea on their southward migration.

By November, average high temperatures cool to below 50, and rain becomes just a bit more frequent. But [rainy-day hikes](#) such as the North Creek Trail, McCollum Park Forest Loop, and Narbeck Wetland Sanctuary are part of the adventure of Seattle NorthCountry.

WINTER

Nearest the Salish Sea, the winter brings cool rain to the lower elevations of Snohomish County. Meanwhile, the eastern reaches of Seattle NorthCountry transform into a winter wonderland. Nearby Stevens Pass is one of the largest ski resorts in the Cascade Range with more than 1,100 acres of skiable terrain. Stevens Pass is also home to a family-friendly tubing park and nordic center. In addition, the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is home to a vast 119-mile network of cross-country ski trails – perfect for Nordic skiing and snowshoeing.

The region's urban basecamp and Salish Sea communities feature a more [hygge vibe](#), perfect for cozying up by a fire. Finding an incredible cup of coffee on a cool, rainy day is the quintessential Pacific Northwest experience. Seattle NorthCountry is home to more than 100 coffeehouses and coffee stands, and with 30 breweries, 13 wineries, five distilleries, and one meadery, keeping warm in the winter is part of the fun.

Snohomish County lights up during the holidays, too. The [Lights of Christmas](#) in Stanwood features more than 1 million lights in a truly incredible sight. One of the largest holiday festivals in the Pacific Northwest, it lasts more than 21 nights through the end of December. Other holiday celebrations can be found throughout Seattle NorthCountry, too.

To learn more about Seattle NorthCountry, including events, attractions, and activities, visit SeattleNorthCountry.com.

ABOUT SEATTLE NORTHCOUNTRY:

Located just 15 miles north of Seattle, and stretching from the shores of the Salish Sea to the peaks of the Cascade Range, Seattle NorthCountry is characterized by its abundance and variety of outdoor recreation, urbanscapes, and rural vistas befitting its *True PNW* designation. Seattle NorthCountry comprises four primary regions of Snohomish County: Urban Basecamp, Salish Sea Coastal Communities, Skykomish & Snohomish River Valleys, and Stillaguamish & Sauk River Valleys. An unofficial fifth region, the Paine Field Aviation District, pays tribute to the aviation industry's profound impact on Snohomish County. Under the direction of Snohomish County Parks Recreation & Tourism, and in conjunction with the Snohomish County Destination Alliance, Seattle NorthCountry develops, curates, and delivers a year-round visitor experience that appeals to leisure, business, and group travelers, while working closely with our Native American tribal partners to preserve, protect, and be sound stewards of the ancestral homeland of the Coast Salish people. For more information visit www.seattlenorthcountry.com.

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