

## Arts & Culture

### Best Springtime Destinations Near Seattle

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Spring time in the Seattle area and Western Washington offer many opportunities to explore the beautiful landscape in the region. With the spring flowers and leaves coming out to spring storms on the Pacific, there is plenty to experience. The Cascade Mountain Range to the east contributes to larger waterfalls through spring run-off, and the lower elevations fill with flowers. This is a great way to celebrate the Spring Equinox on March 20, and ring in another new spring.

#### Snoqualmie Falls

Spring is a wonderful time to venture out to Snoqualmie Falls. The trees are beginning to get their coat of green leaves, and the falls flow with a greater amount of water. The snow melt in the Cascade Mountains feed the water flow, and the falls are larger. The trail to the bottom of the falls is open throughout the year, except during floods. Visitors walk switch-backs to the bottom of the steep hillside, and can view the falls from a viewing area. The park at the top of the falls offers breath-taking views of the falls, and offers free parking for visitors. The Salish Lodge is just east of the park, and is a 4 star hotel. The falls are located just outside of the town of Snoqualmie and east of Fall City.



The Salish Lodge sits on the edge of Snoqualmie Falls. Photo by Karen Ulvestad.

#### Skagit Delta (Flats)

Spring is for flowers, and the Skagit Delta is known for its daffodils, tulips, and snow geese. Flocks of geese gather in the tens of thousands in the fields outside of Conway, which is just off I-5. It is amazing to view these immense flocks of birds, and their calls are constant at this time of year. They are preparing to leave the flats for Wrangle Island in Russia for breeding and raising their young. The flower fields are further north, and closer to Mount Vernon. The fields lie between Highway 20, Best Road and the Skagit River. Each year, the fields are different colors, and located in different areas.



The Skagit flats are known for fields of daffodils in March and tulips in April. Photo by Karen Ulvestad.

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## Ocean Shores

Ocean Shores sits on a peninsula at the mouth of Gray's Harbor on the Pacific Ocean. The area is known for its sandy beaches, and friendly community. In the spring, large flocks of migratory birds feed, rest, and pass through the area. Sandpipers come through by the thousands. This area is an important stop on the Pacific migratory route. Each spring, the area hosts an annual shorebird festival the first part of May.

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## Olympic National Park

Olympic National Park includes the Olympic Mountain Range and parts of the Pacific Ocean coastline. The higher elevations will have snow in March and April. The lower elevations offer many beautiful places to explore. To the west is the Hoh Rainforest. This is an area of true temperate rainforest. The trees are hundreds of years old, and moss hangs from their limbs. The short informational trails through the forest are worth experiencing. Visitors may see wildlife in these areas. On the coast, visitors experience the rugged coastline of the northern Washington Pacific coast. Ruby Beach is a short walk from the parking lot to the beach. This is a great place to experience sea stacks. A little further south is Kalaloch Beach and Lodge. The lodge and cabins are rustic. There are no telephones or televisions in any of the units or cabins. The lodging offers visitors magnificent views of the Pacific Ocean.



Kalaloch Lodge is within the boundaries of Olympic National Park on the edge of the Pacific Ocean. Photo by Karen Ulvestad.

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## Vancouver, British Columbia

Vancouver British Columbia is about 2.5 to 3 hours north of Seattle in Canada. Stanley Park is a great place to visit, as the trees and flowers welcome spring. The park offers great views of Vancouver, and is home to a small zoo. There are many walking paths through the park, places for a picnic, and historical totem poles. The surrounding area is noted for its migratory birds, including bald eagles, various species of hawks, owls, and shorebirds. Visiting Vancouver will require a border crossing into Canada. Visitors will need either a passport or other appropriate identification. *Related:* [Best Day Trips From Seattle](#)

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