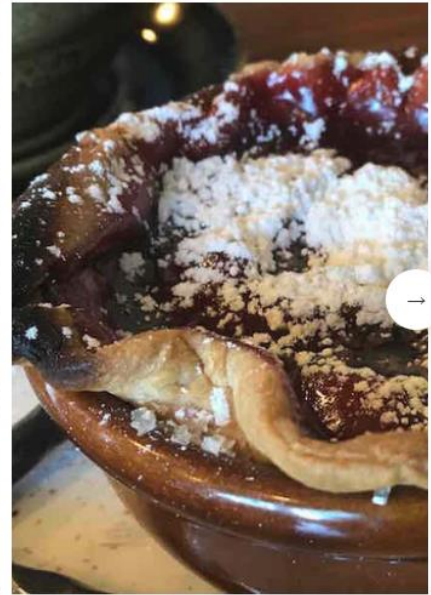
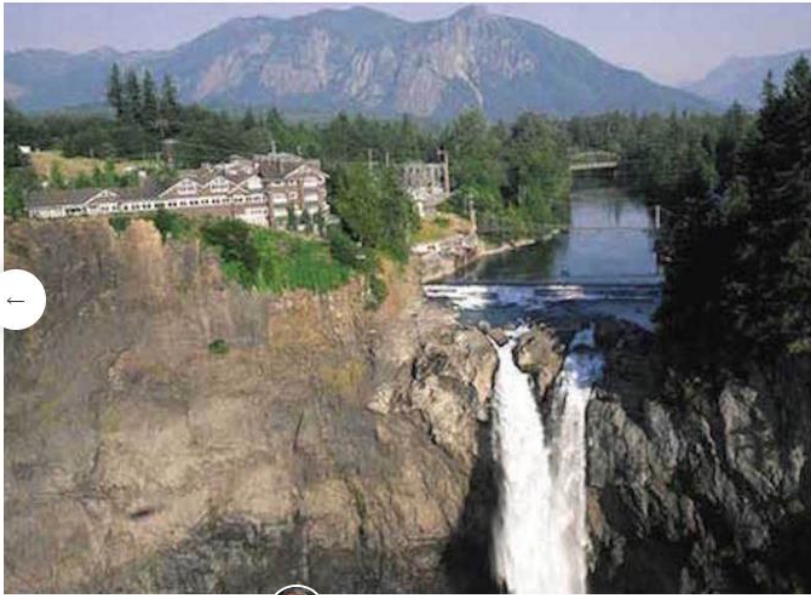




Grungeless in Seattle – still a stunning city to rock out in



NEIL SOWERBY 22 January 2018

Neil Sowerby enjoys wine, cherry pie and Wild Ginger in Washington State

THAT end of the road feeling never felt better. On paper it's 800 miles direct from San Francisco to Seattle, from Fisherman's Wharf to Pike Place Market, swapping the tourist hub of the Hippy City for its counterpart in the Birthplace of Grunge.

“ *The Market Theater Gum Wall started with employees sticking their used bazooka on the side of the building; when it was finally scraped clean three years ago they cleared 200 pounds of the stuff.* ”



The Gum Wall – you took on more than you could chew

The actual mileage of our two week road trip had more than doubled as we detoured in search of giant redwoods and wild coast roads, craft breweries and biodynamic wineries, while the bearded Sirens of Portland lured us into a state of ‘let’s hang loose here a little longer’.

Bend and Yakima gave us a taste for Oregon and Washington State’s small town pleasures. So it was a joy to take in two contrasting stop-offs– **Snoqualmie Falls** and **Woodinville Wine Country** – before the challenge of navigating Seattle’s hectic freeways to our journey’s end.



Snoqualmie Falls with Salish Lodge perched on the brink



Heading west towards the Pacific after the desert climate of Yakima, we hit BIG rain in the suitably named Cascades range. The mountain murk was so dense we couldn't even get a view of 14,411ft Mount Rainier, the USA's fifth highest and one of the world's great standalone peaks (we glimpsed it later from the equally iconic Space Needle in Seattle).

After slaloming down forested switchbacks it was a relief to reach **Snoqualmie**, one of Washington's big visitor draws. The famous waterfall there, swollen by those rains, was in full spate as the clouds cleared enough for a proper view from the terrace path of the **Salish Lodge**, where we were booked in for lunch at its Attic restaurant.

But first we couldn't resist investigating this luxury inn's *Twin Peaks* souvenir shop. Yep, Salish stood in as the Great Northern Hotel in David Lynch's surreal TV series and echoing some Lynchlike plot twist, one of the stars of the original and the recent follow-up series, Harry Dean Stanton, had died the previous day.

It was a mark of respect to a great actor that, after oysters, clams and stone hearth fired pizza, we had to order a Twin Peaks homage dessert of Cherry Pie and Damn Good Coffee.