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Washington Coast Resort Beckons With Maximum Indoor Comforts and Boundless Outdoor Adventures

No matter the season, Semiahmoo Resort is a perfect choice for your next family getaway

BY GEMMA ALEXANDER (/AUTHOR/GEMMA-ALEXANDER) |

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Whatcom County is a Pacific Northwest insider secret. Families love it in summer for berry farms, beaches and bike rides. But if you're not afraid of some rain (and who is, here in the Northwest?), the area holds just as much appeal any other time of year. From skiing at nearby Mount Baker to storm watching on the Salish Sea, [Semiahmoo Resort \(https://www.semiahmoo.com/index.php?utm_source=parentmap&utm_medium=web&utm_content=sponsored-content\)](https://www.semiahmoo.com/index.php?utm_source=parentmap&utm_medium=web&utm_content=sponsored-content) makes a great base from which to explore this remote corner of the Washington coast.

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Chock-full of amenities, Semiahmoo is a casual beachfront resort that caters to families. Located on Semiahmoo Spit, which stretches out from Blaine, Washington, and into the Salish Sea, the 300-acre resort is designed for maximum indoor comfort (the resort wrapped up room renovations this past spring) and boundless outdoor adventures.

Despite the resort's associations with golf and its spa, there are enough all-ages activities to keep you and your kids busy for your entire vacation stay. If you do want to squeeze in a round of golf or a massage, plans are in the works to resume child-care service this summer. But if you like to cast your activities net a little wider, Semiahmoo is also a perfect point of departure for exploring an under-the-radar getaway destination: Northwestern Washington just may be the most underrated stretch of the West Coast.

Get outside

Matt Skaletsky, general manager of the resort, came to Semiahmoo last year after working at resorts in Hawaii and the Caribbean. He's spent the past few months getting to know the Salish Coast area. Despite the temperature difference, he is enthusiastic about his new post: "It's so amazing! We're surrounded by water. Families bring dogs to the beach and go shell hunting all day long. We have three or four resident bald eagles and their younglings on the property."

People do swim at some of the beaches on Semiahmoo Spit. But if you prefer warmer water, try the resort's heated pool instead and save the beach for exploring the tidal flats. For more-active exploration, families can grab bikes (some even have training wheels) and hit the easy, paved [Coast Millennium Trail \(https://www.wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/semiahmoo-spit\)](https://www.wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/semiahmoo-spit). Semiahmoo's Beach Activities Center also offers kayaks and stand-up paddleboards for folks who want to get out on the water. Families generally wrap up a long day of adventuring by enjoying s'mores around the firepit.

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"It's a special place, no matter what time of year," says Skaletsky. "The winter storms here can be amazing for kids to watch." When the weather gets dramatic, there's indoor basketball and pickleball, pool tables, board games and a stacked program of family events, such as movie nights. Kids won't go stir-crazy, even when outdoor activities get rained out – which, happily, isn't very often in the summer.

Blaine and beyond

For those fatigued by Seattle traffic, the idea of parking your car for the duration of your stay is appealing. But at Semiahmoo, you can park your car and still explore. On summer weekends, take the historic [Plover ferry \(https://www.cascadiadaily.com/news/2022/may/23/historic-plover-ferry-to-reopen-on-may-27/\)](https://www.cascadiadaily.com/news/2022/may/23/historic-plover-ferry-to-reopen-on-may-27/) to Blaine. It's a fun and inexpensive way to reach the Blaine waterfront, as entertaining as a harbor tour – keep an eye out for the 150 resident harbor seals!

Once in Blaine, visitors can enjoy the [Saturday market \(https://blainebythesea.com/blaine-market-by-the-sea/\)](https://blainebythesea.com/blaine-market-by-the-sea/) or unleash their littles at the Marine Park Playground. You can also take a self-guided tour of the town's [historic buildings \(https://blainebythesea.com/blaine-historic-tour/\)](https://blainebythesea.com/blaine-historic-tour/). Depending on your interest in old technology and local history, the free [cannery museum \(https://blainebythesea.com/apa-museum/\)](https://blainebythesea.com/apa-museum/) is a nice place to pop into on your way to a picnic or a way to while away an entire afternoon. If you're inspired by all the talk about fishing, you can drop a line or even a crab pot off [Jorgensen Pier \(https://blainebythesea.com/enjoy-a-walk/#jorgensen-pier\)](https://blainebythesea.com/enjoy-a-walk/#jorgensen-pier).

If you decide to take a drive, Vancouver, Canada, makes a great side trip ([border restrictions \(https://blainebythesea.com/border-info/\)](https://blainebythesea.com/border-info/) are easing). It's about a 45-minute drive to Vancouver, but White Rock, visible from Semiahmoo on the other side of the border, still counts as visiting another country. There, you can explore the [public art walk \(https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/224419e25785493b8db465911dadebba\)](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/224419e25785493b8db465911dadebba) and loads of parks and trails. But the main attraction may be the scenic pier jutting out from the promenade that runs the length of the beach, where selfies in front of the big white rock are practically mandatory.

If crossing the border seems like too much trouble, you can still enjoy Peace Arch Park (the U.S. side is open) and explore the rest of Whatcom County. There's a [water park \(https://www.birchbaywaterslides.net/\)](https://www.birchbaywaterslides.net/) on Birch Bay that features eight fast slides and a couple of pools (birchbaywaterslides.net). For a more natural water experience, bring fishing poles (or inner tubes) to the Nooksack River near Lynden.

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A great destination for foodies, Lynden plays host to [food- and farm-focused festivals](https://www.bellingham.org/things-to-do/farms-agriculture/) every month throughout the growing season. If your visit doesn't happen to coincide with such a "feastival," console yourselves by selecting your "just desserts" from among the 40 flavors of ice cream offered at [Edaleen Dairy Store](https://www.edaleendairy.com/our-stores); or venture to any of several area farms where you can [pick berries to your heart's content](https://eatlocalfirst.org/wa-food-farm-finder/).

Head 20 miles south to Bellingham to explore historical Fairhaven and cruise along scenic Chuckanut Drive. Mount Baker is a bit farther away – about an hour-and-45-minute drive directly east – but Semiahmoo is one of the closest accommodation options to the mountain, which has as much to offer in summertime as winter. Don't miss a stop at stunning Nooksack Falls on the drive up!

"At Semiahmoo, families get to unplug and spend time together," says Skaletsky. The northwest corner of the continental United States has whatever you need for your kind of family quality time, whether it's a peaceful place to stretch your legs, an activity-packed weekend that doesn't take a lot of planning, or a home base for all-seasons exploration.

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