



By Sue Frause

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**As a travel writer, I'm frequently asked for my recommendations** and favorite spots, and I'm more than happy to share. Last year, my two dozen trips took me from Port Townsend to Vietnam, traveling by train, plane, helicopter, and automobile. The majority of my adventures were in the Pacific Northwest, which has no shortage of places for overnight or long weekend getaways. Here are 12 places for 2012, listed month by month. Bon Voyage!

**January - Dine Out Vancouver:** This 17-day food festival, Jan. 20 - Feb. 5, is the largest in Canada. It features 225 restaurants offering three course meals for \$18/\$28/\$38. Hotels are also in the mix, with discounted rates of \$78/\$108/\$138.[www.tourismvancouver.com](http://www.tourismvancouver.com)

**February - Iron Springs Resort:** Located on Copalis Beach, Washington, this has been a favorite Pacific Ocean getaway since 1947. The resort was recently bought and renovated by the True family of Seattle. Twenty-five cabins, ideal for storm watching, cooking, and catching up on reading. The Chocolate on the Beach Festival is Feb. 24-26, 2012.[www.ironspringsresort.com](http://www.ironspringsresort.com)

**March - Whistler:** You don't need to ski or snowboard to enjoy winter in Whistler. New this year are an outdoor skating rink and two Olympic experiences at Whistler Sliding Center: the skeleton and the bobsleigh, with speeds of up to 62 and 75 MPH. Or do nothing but take to the indoor/outdoor waters, sauna and solarium at Scandinave Spa.[www.whistler.com](http://www.whistler.com)



**Sue Frause**  
**Sunset at Missoula (July 2011)**



**Sue Frause**  
**Kelp on Copalis Beach near Iron Springs Resort (September 2011).**

**April - Tacoma:** No more *Aroma of Tacoma*. This is now a classy, glass city, from the Museum of Glass to the nearby Tacoma Art Museum. It was the biggest surprise of my travel year. Hotel Murano's *Hot Piece of Glass* package includes two tickets to the Museum of Glass, along with glass blowing lessons and making your own glass creation. [www.traveltacoma.com](http://www.traveltacoma.com)



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**Vancouver's Coal Harbour (January 2011).**

**May - Missoula:** The Garden City is my new favorite town. Located on the Clark Fork River, it's home to the University of Montana Grizzlies. Springtime is perfect for biking or fly fishing. There's a fun food scene (Red Wine Bar, Hob Nob Cafe, Lolo Creek Steak House) and the 20th Annual Garden City Brewfest is May 5, 2012. Running May 5-12 is the 35th International Wildlife Festival. [www.destinationmissoula.org](http://www.destinationmissoula.org)

**June - Campbells Resort:** - This Lake Chelan landmark opened in 1901 and is a fourth-generation owned and operated business. A \$3 million renovation a few years ago resulted in updated cottage-like decor, modern yet retro. The resort features two swimming pools, hot tubs, a boardwalk, sandy beach, plus a full-service spa. More than a dozen of the Lake Chelan Wine Valley's wineries are located nearby. [www.campbellsresort.com](http://www.campbellsresort.com)

**July - Whidbey Island:** It's my backyard, but if I didn't live here, I'd sure visit. Langley features locally owned shops, galleries, and restaurants — plus Whidbey Island Center for the Arts and a 75-year-old movie palace called The Clyde Theatre. Farmers markets are open on the weekends, plus Langley's Second Street Market on Fridays. My favorite place on the planet is just up the highway in Coupeville — Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve. [www.visitlangley.com](http://www.visitlangley.com)

**August - Alderbrook Resort & Spa:** Enjoy the heart of Hood Canal at this resort and spa, with views to the Olympic Mountains. There's a marina, golf course, full-service spa (best massage I had all year), plus workouts and yoga by the water. Twice weekly during August, enjoy a two-hour narrated cruise aboard the 54-ft. yacht *Lady Alderbrook*. [www.alderbrookresort.com](http://www.alderbrookresort.com)

**September - Portland:** Take Amtrak Cascades to The Rose City, which now boasts more than 200 food carts clustered in pods throughout the city. Sept. 20-23, 2012 marks the debut of Feast Portland, a four-day food festival. The downtown restaurant scene is thriving, with Little Bird (sister restaurant to Le Pigeon); Bunk, a gourmet sandwich shop; Rome native Simone Saviano's Mucca Osteria; Chef Cathy Whims' Oven & Shaker; and a Portland outpost of Seattle-based Via Tribunali. [www.travelportland.com](http://www.travelportland.com)

**October - Methow Valley:** Sun Mountain Lodge in Winthrop has expanded since it first opened in 1968, and today features 112 guest rooms. At 3,000 ft., enjoy 360-degree views of the surrounding mountains and valleys, with 40+ miles of trails that start

at the lodge's door. Take in Twisp, too: Hank's (since 1975) for groceries; Cinnamon Twisp Bakery for bread and sweets; Glover Street Market for breakfast and lunch; and Blue Star Coffee Roasters. [www.sunmountainlodge.com](http://www.sunmountainlodge.com)

**November - Cedarbrook Lodge:** This ain't your typical airport hotel. As a former WaMu retreat center, it's now a 110-room hotel for both leisure and business travelers. Located on 18 acres, the hotel boasts floor to ceiling windows and original artwork. The Copperleaf Restaurant features fresh farm to table local and regional cuisine. November highlights include the restaurant's Thanksgiving buffet and a shopping package at nearby Westfield Southcenter. [www.cedarbrooklodge.com](http://www.cedarbrooklodge.com)

**December - Seattle and Victoria (tie):** Enjoy the holidays in your hometown with the many hotel packages offered during the season. Further afield, take the Victoria Clipper or Kenmore Air to Victoria on Vancouver Island. Both offer hotel/transportation packages, and the Christmas lights at Butchart Gardens are on my Christmas bucket list. [www.visitseattle.org](http://www.visitseattle.org) | [www.tourismvictoria.com](http://www.tourismvictoria.com)

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