



roadtrips
FOR FAMILIES™

5 WAYS TO EXPLORE CHELAN, WASHINGTON IN SPRING



Chelan, Washington is a wonderful family vacation destination. Why? Lake Chelan and the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest offer year-round opportunities for outdoor recreation from fishing, hiking, kayaking, biking, and even bird watching. And because it's located in the heart of the temperate Pacific Northwest, the region doesn't really experience extreme temperature differentials.

I visited Chelan and Manson earlier this month on what you might consider a "shoulder season" road trip. While many of the stores and restaurants are open year-round, attractions like miniature golf and jet ski rentals weren't quite in full swing. On the flip side, hotel room rates are a bit lower, tee-times are plentiful, and area restaurants are full, but not crowded.

Here are five ideas for enjoying your own springtime getaway in Chelan:

Hike or Bike the Trails at Echo Ridge

The Echo Ridge recreation area is managed by the US Forest Service Chelan Ranger District and is a nice place to get some exercise. The main parking lot is ten miles outside of Chelan (follow the brown road signs), a drive that takes you up above Lake Chelan and into panoramic views like the photo below. Trails are bike, hike, and dog friendly and you'll want to have a map with you (some trails are wider and groomed for skiing in the winter months). We found detailed seasonal maps in a copy of the Lake Chelan Visitor Guide we picked up in the main lobby of our motel. Tip: Carry water and wear good hiking boots. Also, my cell phone also kept going into and out of range; you might want to leave a note or cue someone in to your travel plans.



Try Cosmic Bowling

Website: <http://chelanlanes.com/cosmic-bowl>

For an upbeat and party-like bowling experience, visit Chelan Lanes bowling alley on Friday or Saturday between 7pm and 11pm for Cosmic Bowling night. UV light illuminates the alleys and multi-colored laser lights blink and dance around the room. A push-button jukebox feeds pop tunes into surround sound speakers throughout the entire building. If you don't feel like bowling, try the small arcade area and pool table.



Share a Giant Bucket of French Fries

Website: <http://www.lakeviewdrivein.com/>

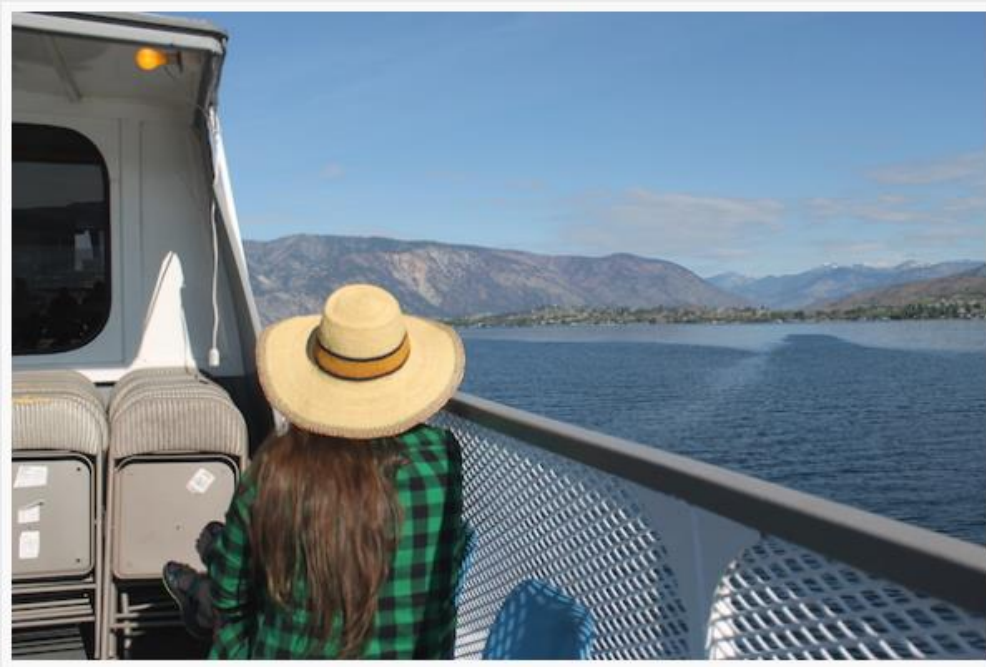
A Chelan landmark since 1957, the Lakeview Drive In serves good ol' American food. Patrons order at the walk-up window and dine at picnic tables overlooking Lakeshore Park and the Lake Chelan waterfront or "to go" from a traditional drive through window. Burgers are made to order and best enjoyed with "legendary" seasoned french fries dipped in homemade tartar sauce. We ordered a giant bucket to share for \$10.25.



Journey by Boat between Chelan and Stehekin

Website: <http://ladyofthelake.com/>

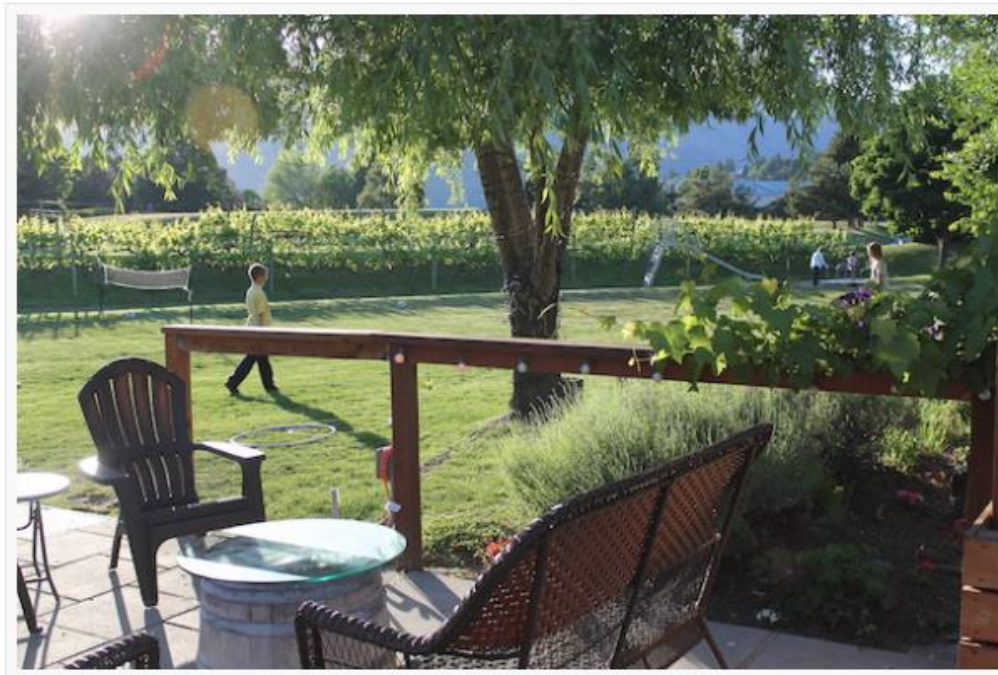
A “must do” experience on a trip to the region is a guided boat tour between Chelan and Stehekin, a fifty mile journey available through Lady of the Lake ferry service. Patrons travel into the Lake Chelan National Recreation Area flanked by 9,000 foot mountain peaks. Two ferries are available and the journey between the two towns takes either two or four hours (depending on schedule, season, and availability). Look for a full account of this bucket-list experience in an upcoming story.



Hang out at a Family Friendly Winery

Website: <http://wapatopointcellars.com/>

Finally! A winery where parents can relax and kids are welcome to run around and play. Located a short drive up Highway 150 in the town of Manson, Wapato Point Cellars features a winery and tasting room, upscale restaurant, gift shop, and outside patio seating for patrons of both the winery and restaurant. Adjacent to the patio area is a large, open green space with permanent playground equipment and lawn games like badminton, beanbag toss, and soccer. If you go, try Vienna, a white blend of Chardonnay and Riesling named in honor of the winemaker's adorable new daughter.



For more ideas on planning your own Lake Chelan vacation, visit: <http://www.lakechelan.com/>