

# Top Reasons for Families to Visit the San Juan Islands



The San Juan Islands are nature's theme park—offering wildlife watching, fun on the water, tide pools, driftwood-strewn beaches, trails to explore, craft activities, museums, and spectacular waterfront parks. Most importantly, they offer an opportunity to breathe deeply, unwind and create miles of memories.

## 1. Scenic Byway maps and island tours make it easy to plan.

Explore [Washington State's newest byway](#) with over 40 art, nature and history stops along the way on Orcas, Lopez and San Juan Islands.

## 2. Cool things for kids to do:

Take a sunset [cruise](#) on a historic wooden schooner.

[Bike](#) bucolic Lopez Island and learn the Lopez wave.

[Zip line](#) through a fern-filled forest on San Juan Island.

Get a birds-eye view of the islands while [flightseeing](#).

Learn and play at Orcas Island's educational [Funhouse Commons](#).

Fly a kite, skim board or build a driftwood fort on one of our beaches.

Skateboard at world-class skate parks on Orcas, Lopez and San Juan Islands.

Visit San Juan Island's [Krystal Acres Alpaca Farm](#) with over 50 endearing alpacas.

Tour [Pelindaba Lavender Farm](#) and make your own lavender crafts on San Juan Island.

Play hide and seek at the 20-acre [San Juan Islands Sculpture Park](#), near Roche Harbor.

Enroll in a summer [Pod Nod](#) — overnight sleepovers for children at The Whale Museum.

Take a summer class at the [San Juan Islands Museum of Art \(SJIMA\)](#) in Friday Harbor.

Visit Orcas Island's Buck Park for skate boarding, pickle ball, basketball, and tennis courts.

Look for this and other helpful media resources with hot links on the [MEDIA](#) page of the San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau website [www.visitsanjuans.com/media](http://www.visitsanjuans.com/media)

*Photos Top: Whale Watch by Amy Nesler / Orca Breaching by Tom Averna / Day Hikers by Robert Demar / Bottom: North Beach by Robert Harrison*





### 3. Learn in nature's classroom.

See real skeletons and find out about marine mammals at [The Whale Museum](#) in Friday Harbor, then spot them in the wild! Be on the lookout for seals, sea lions, whales and shorebirds from our [parks and shorelines](#). [Sea Kayak](#) as a family group with a tour outfitter or get out on the water with a guided [wildlife watching](#) cruise. Take the walking tour at the [Port of Friday Harbor](#) check out the Native American sculpture and the critters in the saltwater aquarium.

### 4. History lives here.

At the [San Juan Island National Historical Park](#) learn why the "Pig War" was all about peace, not just the pig. Children can become Junior Rangers, Web Rangers or engage in reenactments. Visit Orcas Island's historical Crow Valley Schoolhouse in summer. Experience pioneer life while exploring the cool log cabins at the [Orcas Historical Museum](#). Learn about island homesteaders and the islands' original Native American inhabitants at the [San Juan Island](#) and [Lopez Island](#) historical museums. Take a [walking tour of Friday Harbor](#), a National Trust for Historic Preservation Destination of Distinction. Stay at one of many lodgings on the [National Historic Register](#).

### 5. Enjoy expansive parks with hiking, biking, swimming and horseback riding.

[Moran State Park's](#) 38 miles of hiking, cycling and horseback riding trails take you past crystal-clear waterfalls, lakes and mossy forests on Orcas Island. Camp, swim, paddleboat. Relish the view from Mt. Constitution (2,409 ft.) where a panoramic view awaits. At San Juan Island's [Lime Kiln Point State Park](#), watch for whales, seals, and bald eagles. Tour the iconic 1919 Lighthouse and restored lime kiln. Visit Lopez Island's [Spencer Spit State Park](#), a picturesque place to camp, picnic or hike along forested trails and lovely sandy beaches. Many more [parks](#) await...

### 6. Find affordable places to camp and stay for families.

Stay at a campsite, glamping tent, yurt, cabin, lodge or motel. Private resorts offer an abundance of choices, many with swimming pools, lakes and beaches nearby. State and county parks offer waterfront camping, as well.

### 7. We're closer than you think!

[Getting Here is Half the Fun](#). Year-round, just a 30-45 minute flight from Seattle or Bellingham, or a scenic hour ride on a Washington State Ferry. In summer, passenger-only ferries connect Seattle, Bellingham and Port Townsend with the Islands.

### 8. Weather won't stop you.

Two hundred and forty-seven days with sunshine annually and about half the rainfall of the Seattle area make the San Juan Islands a year-round destination with many family-oriented events and activities.

### 9. Savor healthy food, not fast food.

You'll find fresh seafood and farm-to-fork restaurants, farm stands, shellfish farms, great grocery stores and co-ops throughout the islands and pick-your-own food farms and gardens at select B & Bs. Meet the makers and find out more about [agritourism](#) by visiting one of our farmers markets or farms.

### 10. Let us entertain you!

With three performing arts/community centers and two first run movie houses; films, plays, musicals, concerts and dance recitals provide entertainment year-round.

[Family activities, all events](#) and much more may be found at: [www.visitsanjuans.com](http://www.visitsanjuans.com).



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