

Wellness Awaits

Top Reasons the San Juan Islands are a Wellness Destination

Feel an inner peace as you stroll a driftwood-strewn beach or perch atop a rocky bluff to watch the sunset linger over the Salish Sea. Let the beauty of nature, the ocean-scrubbed air, clear water and clean food, heal you, body and soul. For generations, the San Juan Islands have been and remain a mecca for those seeking the solace of natural living.

HOLISTIC HEALING: DOE BAY RESORT & RETREAT

Doe Bay has a long, [colorful history](#) and a loyal group of fans and followers both local and worldwide. During the late 1960s and through the 70s, it was known as the Polarity Institute, a center for Polarity Therapy, an alternative energy medicine system that was developed in the 1940s by an Austrian, Dr. Randolph Stone. This holistic approach uses “complementary forces” of energy through touch, talk therapy, nutrition, and other means, to heal the body. Today, the accommodations are homey and charming. The [Doe Bay Spa](#) features three outdoor saltwater soaking tubs, a dry sauna, and on-site yoga classes. Deepen the relaxation with a massage in one of the colorful on-site treatment studios. Complementing the holistic healing experience, fresh-as-it-gets food from the nearby one-acre organic garden is served in the renowned Doe Bay Café.

OASIS ON ORCAS ISLAND: INDRALAYA

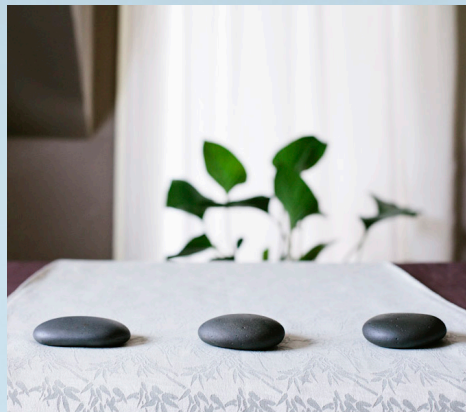
Indralaya was founded in 1927 by members of the Theosophical Society as a practical experiment in theosophical living. This intention continues to form the basis of their philosophy, community life, and programs. The name Indralaya is derived from Sanskrit and means “a home for the spiritual forces in nature.” The camp encompasses seventy-eight acres of

forest, meadows, and trails, situated along three-quarters of a mile of coastal shoreline, and offers a wide variety of [programs](#) year-round. There is also daily meditation, trail walks, a small bookshop, and a surprisingly well-stocked metaphysical library. In this environment, individuals and families are encouraged to live in cooperative harmony with nature and each other, experiencing the interconnectedness of all forms of life while exploring individual pathways to wholeness.

FOREST BATHING

Imagine mindfully experiencing the beauty of breathing cool, damp air; listening to leaves rustle, and watching sunlight peek through the treetops. This is the Japanese art of “*shin-rin-yoku*,” more commonly known as “forest bathing.” Wash off stress with a cleansing stroll through a lush, mossy wonderland. Breathe in the petrichor – that fresh scent of rain. In the San Juans, you can venture out into the stunningly beautiful parks and preserves and feel the magic unfold. Run your hands along the smooth limbs of a madrone tree, the lime-green inner layer peeking out beneath the papery red bark as it flakes off. Listen to the chirps and trills of shorebirds, and the occasional whoosh of a whale coming up to take a breath.

Photos top: Moran State Park Bottom: Angela Douglas, Orcas Spa & Health Club / Earthbox Spa / Rosario Resort Spa



THE STORY OF ROBERT MORAN

In 1905, shipbuilding tycoon and former Seattle mayor Robert Moran was so ill and stressed doctors warned him he likely only had a one year left to live. He escaped to Orcas Island to build his dream retreat, a mansion at what is now [Rosario Resort & Spa](#) and ended up living another 38 years. In 1921, Moran donated 2,700 acres to the state, the land found its raison d'être with the creation of Moran State Park. Today, it's a healing getaway with 38 miles of hiking, cycling, and horseback riding trails past crystal-clear waterfalls, through mossy forests of monster old-growth Douglas Fir and Western Red Cedar and around five separate lakes. Moran called the Islands, "a place to regain physical, mental and spiritual health." Moran State Park celebrated its centennial in 2021 with the completion of a new interpretive center.

DIGITAL DETOX

Getting away to the San Juans is the perfect antidote to experiencing life through a digital screen. Many lodgings—from cabins to farm stays—are outside of cell phone range, nor do they necessarily offer fast Wi-Fi connections. Instead, curl up on the window seat and watch the hummingbirds at the feeder, or meander down to the beach and look for sea glass. There's no to-do list, no buzzing alarm, no Zoom calls, and no deadlines. The day is yours to wander the trails, the lavender fields, or maybe just as far as the lounge chair in the garden. Of course, you can always go into a village or town for a quick digital fix over a cappuccino or latte at a cozy café.

THE HEALING ARTS

The [Healing Arts Center](#) on Orcas Island offers a range of health services including Massage Therapy & Bodywork, Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine, the services

of Counselors/Psychotherapists, Nurse Practitioners, a Nutritional Therapist Practitioner, an Astrologer, and more. Release tension with craniosacral therapy and structural integration or discover lomi lomi—a light stroking massage derived from master healers in Hawaii.

SPA-AHHH

What could be more refreshing than to be surrounded by nature and also indulge yourself with a spa experience? At [Rosario's Spa](#) take a dip in the historic indoor pool—built in the lower levels of the Moran Mansion by Robert Moran himself and now an adult only, therapeutic quiet pool—after indulging in one of Rosario's signature facial treatments, massages or yoga classes. Or if you're on San Juan Island, check out [Afterglow Spa](#) at Roche Harbor Resort for an age-defying caviar facial or a mineral recharge massage. If you need to be closer to the ferry, or just want a little more pampering before leaving the Islands, try the [Spa at Earthbox](#) in Friday Harbor for a Mother Earth mud wrap or Swedish massage.

ISLAND TIME...AT HOME

Add the essence of the San Juan Islands to your everyday self-care routine. Soothe aches and pains with [Island Thyme's](#) Deep Heat analgesic balm—warming capsicum extract is coupled with ginger and cinnamon essential oils and tingly menthol to ease creaky joints and muscle cramps. If lavender is one of your go-to scents, check out [Pelindaba Lavender's](#) variety of products for your kitchen, beauty routine, and even your furry family members. Bath salts, eye pillows, cookies, even insect repellent—all handcrafted on San Juan Island. A visit to the farm is a healing experience, especially when the lavender is in full bloom!



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Photo Bottom: White Wolf Yoga

