

Getaway weekend to the Olympic Peninsula

By Kevin Max

We nailed Memorial Day weekend. While it was snowing and raining in Bend, we lit out north to the Hoh Rainforest of the Olympic Peninsula, where spruce, red cedar and alder drip in neon green moss and algae. Marmots, eagles, bears and cougars make their homes here, too. But before creatures, creature comfort.



Day 1

Alderbrook Resort: Hood River Canal, Washington

Alderbrook Resort on the Hood River Canal was an early innovator in the Pacific Northwest. It began as a spartan tent camp in the forest whose access was by boat. After World War II, Schafer Logging Company bought it and built what would become a classic lodge with first rate accommodations. Today, owed by North Forty Lodging, The Alderbrook Resort is a luxurious respite in the forest.

The restaurant serves local fish, lobster and crab from the Puget Sound. Wines come from California, Washington and Oregon. While there are others, only vine vanity will drive you farther afield. We had Dungeness

crabcakes with scallion yogurt and lobster bisque to start then seafood fettuccine and a New York steak to finish.

After dinner, the kids chased baby crabs and the adults strolled out the long pier, past the kayak rental overlooking the along the Hood River Canal. There's a pool and a barbell shaped hot tub. There's a fitness room with ample space and equipment and a tented outdoor space to continue your workout.

This was our first visit to Alderbrook—it won't be our last.

Day 2-3

Lake Crescent, Olympic National Park

The next morning, it's north along Highway 101 and up into the Juan de Fuca Strait, past Port Angeles and down along Lake Crescent at the northern tip of the Olympic National Park. Lake Crescent Lodge is a fantastic throwback. The lodge draws you back in time, to 1916, before mobile phones, when conversation, books and drinks were the



preoccupation.

Lodging runs from small cabins to surprisingly well equipped banks of rooms that overlook the lake. A network of trails for hiking and biking crawl into the rainforest and up to the Marymere waterfalls just a mile from the Lake Crescent lodge. Don't forget your camera.



After a good two-hour paddle underneath beautiful skies over Lake Crescent, it's the dining hour approaches. As remote as the resort is, its food is well-connected with the best traditions in seafood and local wines.

If you've managed to hold off desert at the lodge, the lake shore is a great place to stoke a fire and roast marshmallows after dinner. Moments like

these may be pleasing to adults but are precious for kids.

In September, the largest dam removal project in the country gets under way in the park. A demolition contractor from Montana will blow the Elwah Dam (1913) and the upper Glines Canyon Dam (1927) in a spectacle that will allow Pacific salmon to return to their natural habitat in what will be the second largest ecosystem restoration in the National Parks. As the river takes on a new life, so too will the surrounding habitat, making it an old place new for those of you who have been here before.

