



Simply Wander

THE LATEST TRAVEL GUIDE TO INSPIRE YOUR NEXT TRIP

10 Things to Do in Mount Hood in the Summer

1. Drive the Scenic Columbia River Highway

The Historic Columbia River Highway is an iconic roadway that offers a spectacular window into the beauty of the Columbia River Gorge.

The 80-mile gorge is a river canyon that is up to 4,000 feet deep in some areas.

The highway hugs along the Columbia River in the shadow of towering cliffs and offers great views of the Cascade Mountain Range.

The Columbia River Highway was constructed between 1913-1922 and is known as "The King of Roads".

It is the first scenic highway in America to be designated as a national historic landmark and was designed to work with, not against, the natural environment.

It is also called the "Waterfall Highway" due to the countless waterfalls found along the drive. Many of the waterfalls can be seen from the highway or accessed by a short hike.

2. Hike to a Latourell Falls

Latourell Falls is the first waterfall trail you'll come to when driving through the Columbia River Gorge.

This waterfall is the 3rd tallest waterfall in the Columbia River Gorge and attracts visitors with both its sheer beauty and accessibility.

The best place to view the waterfall is from a short 0.2-mile trail to the base of the falls.

There is also a longer moderately challenging 2.1-mile loop trail that takes hikers to the top of the waterfall before looping down to the base of the falls.

From the parking lot, the beginning of the longer loop trail is on the left. It starts with a steep incline and leads to a great lookout point before continuing through the forest to the top of the waterfall.

If you want to just go to the base of the waterfall, the trailhead is located on the right at the parking lot.

Once you reach the bottom, the scene is breathtaking as the 224-foot waterfall plunges dramatically off the sheer moss-covered cliffs.

You can get up close to the waterfall and feel the mist on your face, but just use caution as the rocks are quite slippery.

3. Hike to Bridal Veil Falls

The trailhead for Bridal Veil Falls is located just down the road from Latourell Falls.

The 0.6 mile out-and-back trail descends down through a dense forest of oaks, maples, ponderosa pines, and ferns until you reach the base of the waterfall.

Bridal Veil Falls is a 120-foot two-tier waterfall. There is an observation deck at the bottom of the trail, or you can scramble over rocks to get a closer view of the waterfall.

There is also a 0.4 mile loop trail from the parking lot that leads to a scenic overlook of the Columbia River Gorge.

4. Visit Multnomah Falls

Multnomah Falls is the crowning jewel of the Columbia River Gorge and the most popular stop.

The observation deck at the base of the waterfall is only a short walk from the parking lot and doesn't require any hiking.

Visitors do have the option to hike up to Benson Bridge or take the challenging 2.6-mile out-and-back trail to the top of the waterfall.

However, the best view is from the bottom where you can see the picturesque bridge set against the backdrop of the waterfall, so if you're short on time I would skip the hike.

Restrooms, food vendors, and a gift shop can also be found here so it does have a very touristy feel.

Just keep in mind that [timed parking reservations](#) are required from the end of May to the beginning of September. Reservations are not needed if you take the shuttle.

If you have time, [Wahclella Falls](#) is also a great 1.9-mile waterfall trail located down the road from Multnomah Falls.

The [Onenota Gorge](#) to Lower Onenota Falls Trail is also a stunning hike, but is currently closed due to damage from the 2017 fire. Check the site for updates.

5. Eat Lunch at The Gorge White House

The Gorge White House is a fourth-generation 30-acre family farm in the Hood River Valley.

It features a farm-to-table food cart, u-pick gardens and orchards, a small farmers market, and a beautiful Dutch Colonial farm house that was built in 1910.

The home is the family's private residence and is closed to the public, but tables are scattered around the home so you can enjoy an outdoor lunch in an idyllic setting.

The food cart serves up farm-fresh dishes like flatbread pizza with homemade crust and farm grown heirloom tomatoes.

The burgers are made with high-quality local beef and served on homemade buns made fresh daily.

Everything on their menu is a fresh and flavorful culinary masterpiece created by Chef Jack Kennedy who studied at the Le Cordon Bleu Institute in Paris.

You'll also find award-winning hard cider and wines available for purchase.

The on-site farmers market sells fresh fruits, vegetables, and artisan products sourced directly from the surrounding orchards and local producers.

The u-pick gardens and orchards are open seasonally where you can pick produce to take home with you. The strawberries were so juicy and sweet, we ate the whole basket on our drive home!

You can also pick a colorful bouquet of flowers from the flower fields that would be perfect to adorn your windowsill or kitchen table.

6. Stop at the Hood River Lavender Farm

You may have seen the iconic shot of rows of lavender with Mount Hood standing dramatically in the background.

This shot was taken at Lavender Valley Farm, which unfortunately has been permanently closed.

However, you can still visit the nearby Hood River Lavender Farm.

You won't have the same view of Mount Hood, but it is still a beautiful and tranquil farm with views of the surrounding Cascade Mountain Range.

They also have a shop that sells a variety of lavender-infused products.

July is the best time to visit the farm when the lavender is in full bloom. We visited in late August and just missed it in its prime.

7. Visit Produce Stands on the Hood River Fruit Loop

The Hood River Fruit Loop is a 35-mile scenic drive along country roads that passes by 28 different farm fresh fruit stands, restaurants, wineries, orchards, and flower fields.

Click the link for more information and a self-guided driving map of all of the different stops along the [Hood River Fruit Loop](#).

One of our favorite stops is Packers Orchards & Bakery. Here you will find fresh seasonal fruits as well as homemade jams, pies, and baked goods.

We sampled several of their baked goods and everything was mouthwateringly delicious!

We especially loved their boysenberry cinnamon roll, huckleberry empanada, apple cider donuts, and salted caramel snickerdoodle cookie.

We also purchased freshly picked peaches and they were the best peaches we've ever had!

8. Paddle Board at Trillium Lake

As you make your way to the next destination, you'll pass by the trailhead for [Tamanawas Falls](#).

If you have time, take this 3.4-mile out-and-back trail to the stunning 110-foot waterfall. The water flows over an overhang so you can even get behind the waterfall.

As you continue along your road trip, your next stop will be at Trillium Lake.

This is one of the best spots to see the majestic Mount Hood perfectly reflected in the mirrored water.

Mount Hood is a dormant stratovolcano that last erupted in 1866. It is also one of Oregon's most iconic landmarks.

To reach the best viewpoint, drive through the Trillium Lake Campground until you reach the Trillium Lake Dam parking lot on the southwest shore of the lake.

Here you will find a small beach with picnic tables.

In the summer months, Mount Hood Outfitters sets up a rental booth at the beach where you can rent paddle boards to explore around the lake.

If you prefer to take in the beauty on dry ground, there is a 2-mile Trillium Loop Trail that contours along the shore of the lake.

Nearby Mirror Lake is also a great spot to catch Mount Hood reflected in the water, but you'll need to take a 4.2-mile loop trail to reach the lake.

9. Explore Government Camp

Government Camp is an alpine village located at the base of Mount Hood. The small town offers dining, shopping, and lodging. It is also a great jumping-off point for outdoor adventures in the area.

It is centrally located to Mount Hood Meadows, Mount Hood Skibowl, and Timberline Resort which are all winter playgrounds for skiers and snowboarders.

In the summer months, Mount Hood Meadows offers scenic chair lift rides and hiking trails. The [Adventure Park](#) at Skibowl also has an alpine slide, summer tubing hill, and other activities.

Timberline is Mount Hood's highest ski resort and boasts the longest ski season in North America.

It is also home to [Timberline Lodge](#), a unique historic lodge whose exterior served as the filming location for the Overlook Hotel in the 1980 Horror Film, *The Shining*.

You can book a room at the lodge, or enjoy dinner with a view at the Ram's Head Bar & Restaurant.

The nearby Little Zigzag Falls Trail is also a great short hike near Government Camp. The 0.6 mile out-and-back trail leads to an enchanting waterfall in the middle of a moss-covered forest.

We stopped for a snack at the Huckleberry Inn Restaurant in Government Camp and were enticed by the name alone.

We ordered a giant homemade donut that literally melted in your mouth.

We also tried the huckleberry shake made with fresh huckleberries and real ice cream. It was delicious, although it was a bit pricey.

The huckleberry pie was a bit of a disappointment and overpriced as well.

A few other restaurant options include Glacier Public House, the Ratskeller, or the Phlox Point Cabin.

* **Related Post:** [10 Fun Things to Do in Seattle With Kids](#)

10. Grab a Bite to Eat in Mount Hood Village

Mount Hood Village is a quaint little mountain town and an unexpected foodie destination.

Chicali Cantina offers a creative twist on traditional Mexican food.

The dishes are made fresh from scratch using locally sourced ingredients. It also has a fun ambiance and the service is so friendly.

Dragonfly Cafe is the best place to go for a hearty home-cooked breakfast.

You'll find giant cinnamon rolls and the best homemade biscuits and gravy. Be sure to order a side of hashbrowns, they are skillet-fried and perfectly crisp!

The sweet oatmeal bread french toast with honey butter was also divine.

Koya Kitchen specializes in Asian fusion dishes with a cool outdoor seating area hung with lights.

Brightwood Tavern serves hearty burgers, pizza, and traditional pub food inside of a log cabin.

Skyway Bar & Grill also has a cool atmosphere and is known for their smoked meats.

Al Forno Ferruza is the place to go for authentic Italian dishes. Be sure to save room for their homemade cannolis!

Hopefully this guide will help you discover the best things to do in Mount Hood, Oregon!