



Sun in Spokane

There's more than meets the eye in Washington's pleasant eastern city.

BY HANNAH DOYLE

Rugged and beautiful, the Pacific Northwest—Oregon, Washington, and Idaho—is known for its green landscape, rainfall, and mountains. Lesser known is the Inland Northwest, a subregion that encompasses the eastern parts of Oregon and Washington and northern Idaho.

It's an important distinction because unlike major Pacific Northwest cities, such as Portland and Seattle, which sit west of the Cascade Mountains, cities east of the Cascades have a different climate and sensibility. Think



less rain, more sun and snow, and fewer people. Fewer tattoos and handlebar mustaches, more work boots and ranches. It's still undoubtedly the Northwest:



Central Food partners with dozens of local farms.

There's a commitment to major beverages—coffee, beer, and wine—and farm-to-table dining; and outdoor adventures such as hiking, biking, and kayaking are easily accessible. At the heart of the Inland Northwest is Spokane, Washington, where summers average in the mid-80s (Spokane fittingly means “sun people”) and life tends to be relatively affordable, without behemoths like Amazon and Microsoft driving up costs. Lately, the city has been shaking off its somewhat sleepy image and showing up on lists of cities on the rise. Experience it for yourself over a weekend that brings together city and country life.

TRAVEL PLANNER
SEE GUIDE AT THE END OF THE
STORY FOR MORE DETAILS

Down by the River



Stand-up paddleboarding on the Spokane River.

Spokane is not only surrounded by but also immersed in nature, thanks to the Spokane River, which runs laterally through the center of the city, dividing it into north and south and acting as a hub for activities. Just south of the river is **Indaba Coffee**, a great place to kick-start the morning. It's no surprise that in Starbucks's home state, there is a serious coffee scene. Indaba has all the classics as well as its own seasonal inventions, such as a lemon lavender “staccato,” made with espresso, sparkling water, in-house syrup, and

cream. Grab a fresh-baked pastry for good measure and walk along **Centennial Trail**, which borders the river. Few trails running through a city lead directly to another city, but the Centennial Trail does just that. The paved walking and biking path spans 37 miles and ends in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.



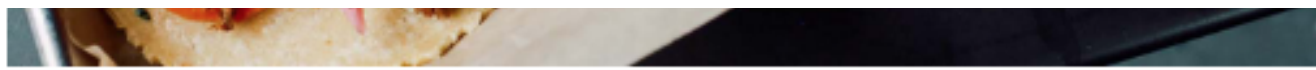
Lunch on the patio by the river at No-Li Brewhouse.

If you head east along the trail parallel to downtown you'll run into **Fun Unlimited**, where you can rent kayaks to experience the Spokane River up close. Paddle east and then right up onto the bank at **No-Li Brewhouse**, where you can eat lunch and sip a cold, slightly citrusy Corner Coast Pacific Northwest ale on an Adirondack chair overlooking the river. When you're done, wind down at Kendall Yards, a

new neighborhood along the northern edge of the Spokane River. West Summit Parkway is the neighborhood's main stretch and packed with shops, tasting rooms, yoga studios, and restaurants. At **Central Food**, the patio overlooks the water you navigated earlier in the day. Try the pan-seared Idaho trout with creamy Moroccan kefir sauce, and then stretch your legs after sundown at the open-air **Kendall Yards Night Market**, with vegetables, fruits, and bouquets from local purveyors.

Take the Town





A variety of tacos served on house-made corn tortillas at Cochinito Taqueria.

Downtown has an air of approachability that also extends to the ambiance of its business establishments. Start the day with a vegetable breakfast scramble at **Frank's Diner**, set in a classic train car. Trains played a large role in the development of Spokane in the 1800s, shipping out timber, minerals, and wheat produced in the area and bringing in settlers on the Northern Pacific Railway, which ran from Minnesota to Seattle. Many trains have since changed their routes, leaving hundreds of miles of mostly flat trails for cyclists and hikers in the area. You can see one for yourself at the 1.1-mile **Ben Burr Trail**, a seven-minute drive east.

Back downtown, you can grab elevated fast food for lunch at **Cochinito Taqueria**, where 20-hour braised carne asada tacos topped with microgreens are speedily brought to your table. Continue exploring downtown to see brick buildings that date back to the 1800s; the 1915-built Bing Crosby Theater, which is dedicated to the Spokane native; and a retired steam plant with stacks from the 1900s.

Inside, the plant now houses boutiques, including the permanent **Pop Up Shop** by **Terrain**, a local art collective. It's stocked with Spokane-made home goods, clothing, and accessories; one cheeky shirt reads "Spokane Doesn't Suck," showing that locals are in on the joke that Spokane is somehow lesser than Seattle. You can see more of Terrain's work five minutes west at its gallery, set in a converted cracker factory. In the basement of the building is **Hogwash Whiskey Den**, which pours a selection of spirits from all over the world and pairs them with really tasty bar food—surprisingly, nothing tops \$15.*



Pop Up Shop sells locally made artisanal goods.

Have Your Pick

Summer is the high season for picking huckleberries, a native fruit. And there are few places better for berry-hunting than **Mount Spokane State Park**, an hour north of town.

Before your outing, fuel up at **Lindaman's**, a café in south Spokane that's been doing gourmet-to-go since the '80s. Its gargantuan quiche of the day is served by the slice but can be shared, since it's about as tall as a hand is wide. Or if your taste skews less gourmet and you're in a rush, pick up lunch on the way at the drive-up **Dick's Hamburgers** (not to be confused with the Seattle chain Dick's Drive-In). The restaurant's prices are as nostalgic as its pink-and-white-tile exterior, with a small fry and a cheeseburger costing less than \$4. Once at the park, check the cross-country ski trails for a large huckleberry yield, but don't be scared to go a little bit off course. Places without direct sunlight are your best bet, because if the weather gets into the 90s, exposed berries will most likely be withered.



A summer concert at Arbor Crest Wine Cellars.

To stick with the day's berry theme, on your way back to town, stop for a glass of the most time-honored berry beverage of all, wine, at the cliffside **Arbor Crest Wine Cellars**. Try the Columbia Valley Bordeaux. With the sun shining on you, and Mount Spokane before you, it's summer at its most sweet.

**Estimated meal prices do not include drinks, tax, or tip.*

WEEKENDERS GUIDE: SPOKANE

Explore

[Ben Burr Trail](#)
Liberty Park Pl.

Centennial Trail

N. Post St. and Riverfront Park; 509-477-4730

Fun Unlimited

Centennial Trail; 208-620-9050; four-hour kayak rentals for two, \$80

Mount Spokane State Park

26107 N. Mount Spokane Park Dr.; 509-238-4258

Terrain

304 W. Pacific Ave.

Shop

Kendall Yards Night Market

1335 W. Summit Pkwy.

Pop Up Shop

159 S. Lincoln St.; 509-850-0550

Eat

Arbor Crest Wine Cellars

4705 N. Fruit Hill Rd.; 509-927-9463; drinks for two, \$20

Central Food

1335 W. Summit Pkwy.; 509-315-8036; dinner for two, \$45

Cochinito Taqueria

10 N. Post St.; 509-474-9618; lunch for two, \$25

Dick's Hamburgers

10 E. Third Ave.; 509-747-2481; lunch for two, \$8

Frank's Diner

1516 W. Second Ave.; 509-747-8798; breakfast for two, \$28

Hogwash Whiskey Den

304 W. Pacific Ave.; 509-464-6541; dinner for two, \$35

Indaba Coffee

210 N. Howard St.; 509-443-3566; coffee for two, \$8

Lindaman's

1235 S. Grand Blvd.; 509-838-3000; breakfast for two, \$24

No-Li Brewhouse

1003 E. Trent Ave., Suite 170; 509-242-2739; lunch for two, \$30

STAY

DCI® affiliated resorts near Spokane include:



0249

Stoneridge Resort

Play, play, and play some more on the miniature-golf course, tennis courts, and rec center at this fun-filled resort in Blanchard, Idaho, about 50 miles from Spokane. *150 Holiday Loop, Blanchard, ID*

MEMBER REVIEW: "Beautiful setting and nice staff."

For complete member review (as member review has been condensed) and additional resort listings, visit [RCI.com](https://www.rci.com) or call 800-338-7777 (Weeks) or 877-968-7476 (Points). Club Members, please call your specific Club or RCI telephone number.



TAP TO VIEW A NON-RCI
AFFILIATED RESORT IN SPOKANE

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Opening Image: The clock tower in Riverfront Park. Photos: iStockphoto, David Blane, Aaron Theisen, Calvin Elam, Through Stories Photography, Erick Doxey, Arbor Crest

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STAY

Non-RCI affiliated resorts in Spokane include:

The Montvale Hotel

Spokane's first boutique hotel offers well-appointed rooms that afford some of the best views of downtown around.

W. 1005 First Ave.

509-624-1518

montvalespokane.com

Doubles from \$100 a night



TAP TO VIEW AN RCI AFFILIATED
RESORT NEAR SPOKANE