

Attractions



(Photo courtesy Lelooska Cultural Center)

ARIEL

On the south side of Mt. St. Helen's sits **Ariel**, Washington in Cowlitz County, a rural community with abundant recreational and cultural opportunities. www.visitmtsthelens.com. Traveling east from Woodland, Washington, **Ariel** begins as you reach Lake Merwin, one of three reservoir's created by Pacificorp's hydroelectric dams on the Lewis

River. At Merwin Park families gather to swim and fish and visit the nearby fish hatchery. Ariel store hosts the annual D.B. Cooper Days on the last Saturday of November, with a D.B. Cooper look alike contest.

The **Lelooska Cultural Center** located on Merwin Village Road, provides educational performances and activities on the Native Peoples of North Amer-

ica. The **Lelooska Foundation** sponsors living history performances of Northwest Coast masks, dances and stories. The Lelooska Museum houses a diverse collection of Native American art and artifacts from across North America. The Lelooska Family also shares their creations of woodcarvings, jewelry and more in their exhibit space on the grounds. Individuals, families and groups of all sizes can learn more about opportunities for tours, performances, classes and more at www.lelooska.org.

As **Ariel** extends east on Hwy. 503, you enter the Yale Valley, home to Yale Elementary School, one of the rare "Remote but Necessary" schools in the state. Each year in July the Yale Valley Arts Festival takes place at Yale School and the nearby Anderson Lodge. The festival includes a classical concert by Third Angle, art and dance workshops, an oral history night and family arts day. www.yalevalleyartsfestival.org

Anderson Lodge offers visitors a plethora of overnight and event accommodations at their Main Lodge and Hilltop House. Weddings, reunions, and conferences regularly gather here on this quiet side of the mountain, to enjoy the lushly forested accommodations. Cozy cabins nestled in the forest, or on the hilltop can also be enjoyed by couples and families. Both sites offer spacious confer-

ence rooms and lush outdoor gathering and dining areas. Here is your chance to explore the many hiking, swimming, boating, hunting, and fishing opportunities that are abundant in and past the Yale Valley at the Merwin, Yale and Swift Reservoirs. www.lewisriver.com

The Yale Valley serves as a gateway to Mt St Helen's for climbers, hikers, and cave explorers. As **Ariel** continues east on the Hwy. 503 spur, you will come to Cougar, your last stop for 65 miles for permits, gas, groceries, dining and accommodations before you head into Skamania County towards Mt St. Helen's.

CASTLE ROCK

Draped in history, this small community's true story seems to get lost in the fact that it is one of the best view points of Mount St. Helens and it is also the home of the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument Visitor Center.

Located at the start of the Spirit Lake Memorial Highway, State Route 504, **Castle Rock** has always been a landmark beginning as early as 1832.

The town was named for the 150 foot high rock which served as a landmark for American Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company traders. **Castle Rock** continued to prosper as the steamboat port on the Cowlitz River and the trading center for

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Lelooska Cultural Center

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Northwest Coast masks, dances, songs and stories come to life in our living history programs. Visit the Lelooska Museum's extensive collection of Indian artifacts. Call for dates and times.

valley farms.

Spirit Lake Memorial Highway is the route that leads past the areas affected by the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980.

The visitor center is located five miles east of I-5, exit 49.

CATHLAMET / SKAMOKAWA / NASELLE

Nestled in turn-of-the-century buildings and historic homes, **Cathlamet** offers visitors attractions such as Strong Park, with picnic tables, an award-winning salmon rearing pond built by local students and a 1926 Locomotive Logging Shay display and mural. Strong Park is an entrance to the Waterfront Trail, which connects a full service 250 slip marina and the downtown area, including the Wahkiakum County Historical Museum where fishing and logging history are on display.

Accommodations include hotels and bed and breakfast inns here and on pastoral Puget Island just across the Cathlamet Bridge. There are miles of country roads for bicycling and touring on Puget Island with views of historic churches, boat moorage and dairy farms.

Skamokawa is a National

Historic District. Known at one time as "Little Venice", you can learn about local history at Redmen Hall which was built in 1894, where the River Life Interpretive Center presents the community's fishing heritage and cannery life on the lower Columbia River. Traveling exhibits are also a regular feature. **Skamokawa Vista Park** is a wonderful spot for picnics and gazing at passing ships.

The park also has RV and tent sites, a boat launch and a play area. West of **Skamokawa** on a short loop road off Hwy. 4 is the historic Grays River covered bridge. Farther west of **Skamokawa** is the community of **Naselle**, a stronghold of Finnish Heritage.

Salmon Creek Park in **Naselle** has picnic facilities and primitive overnight camping. The Columbia River Estuary, located between **Cathlamet** and Ilwaco is an excellent place to observe resident, migrating and winter birds and mammals from the fall through the spring.

During the fall migration of shorebirds, the estuary is one of few areas between Alaska and Mexico with over 100,000 shorebirds at any one time.



(Photo courtesy King Oscar Motels)

Endangered species such as the bald eagle, northern sea lions, brown pelican and the Columbian White-tailed deer can be seen in and around the estuary throughout the fall. The 4,000 acre Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for Columbian white-tailed deer between **Skamokawa** and **Cathlamet**, provides drive-through and walking access to see these remarkable native deer, plus eagles, elk, diving and dabbling ducks and river otters.

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(see advertisement this page)

CHEHALIS / CENTRALIA

Known as the "Twin Cities", **Chehalis** and **Centralia** are located off I-5 between Seattle and Portland. The two cities boast of being less than two hours from just about anywhere, Seattle, Portland, the Pacific Ocean, or the Cascade Mountains.

Chehalis is proud of its official nickname, "The City of Roses". Beautiful roses can be seen around the City Hall and throughout the downtown area. The city is also occasionally referred to as "The Mint City" because the largest mint factory in the world is located here.

Historic **Centralia** was first settled in 1852 and was originally called Centerville. It became a primary rail center once the railroad came through the territory in 1872. Much of **Centralia's** history can still be found here today. Historic murals have painted a picture of the past and they can be seen bigger than life on the side of several buildings as you take a walking tour of the area.

Fort Borst still stands, although it has been moved from its original location near the Joseph Borst Home, which is also still standing.

Centralia also features many other historic homes which add a charming quality to the city. For those of you who like to take a bit

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