

# Fall Fun on Sauvie Island

*Hike, gather harvest treats, pick out your pumpkin*

Story & photos by Tracy Beard

Sauvie Island is a fabulous place for fall fun. Whether you enjoy picnics in the sun, hikes along the beach, or meandering through markets, there is something for everyone. Autumn is the time to pick out your pumpkin, get lost in a corn maze, or cook some tasty autumn fare.

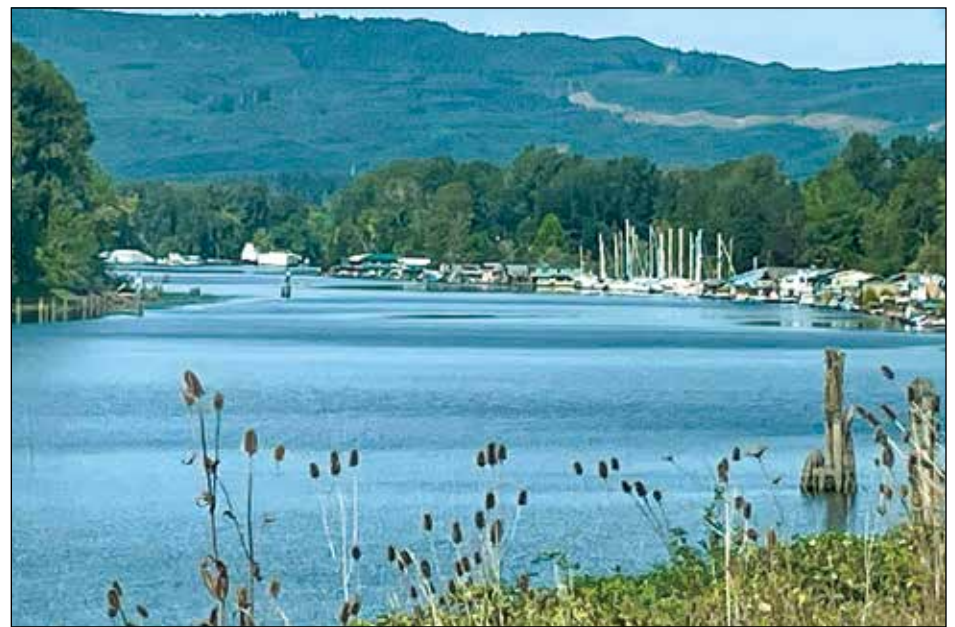
## What to Know

My husband Steve and I recently made a trip to Sauvie island. We drove over the Rainier Bridge and east on Highway 30 to the ramp to the Sauvie Island Bridge. Once on other side of the Columbia River's Multnomah Channel, we followed the road west. Soon we spotted a little market and a large parking lot on the left side of the road.

To hike or sit on the beach, you must have a Sauvie Island parking permit.



It costs \$10 per day or \$30 annually. Purchase one online or pick up a day pass at one of the many markets on the island. The large parking lot is a great place to start if you plan to ride



your bike. Park your car and check out a large map of the island on the east side of the lot.

In 1947 the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area was established to provide a public hunting space and to protect the wildlife habitat. The Wildlife Area hosts a variety of birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, fish, and plants. If you are interested in migratory birds, hundreds of thousands of waterfowl come to the island each year. Hundreds of Canadian geese, swans, bald eagles, and Sandhill cranes stop by in the fall.

There is plenty to do on the island. I recommend making a large loop around the island and taking a few less-traveled roads for outdoor adventure. The island is approximately 32 square miles, about the size of Manhattan.

## Where to Hike

Our first stop on the island was the Oak Island Nature Trail. We drove to the trailhead before realizing we needed the \$10 parking permit, so we could not do the hike that day. I hiked the trail years ago. It is an easy 2.7-mile loop famous for running, walking, and birding, so keep an eye out for eagles, ospreys, and hawks. Another easy hike, although much longer, is the 6.5-mile, out-and-back Warrior Rock Lighthouse Trail. This trail follows the Columbia River to Oregon's smallest lighthouse, the old Warrior Rock Lighthouse.

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There are plenty of beaches where you can walk, relax, or bring a picnic. Walton Beach is the most accessible and popular it is the first beach, nine miles after crossing over the bridge. North Unit is further away and more private. It is three miles long and naturally beautiful. Warrior Point Beach is only accessible by boat or on foot. You have to hike 3.5 miles to reach this secluded destination.

**Farms to Visit**

Visiting the local farms is another favorite activity on the island. Steve and I stopped at The Pumpkin Patch, Bella Organic Pumpkin Farm, and Topaz Farm. Each farm has a produce market, and many people come to pick fruit and vegetables directly from the fields.

•The Pumpkin Patch has been a family destination for more than 50 years. Visit the animal barn, the Patio Café, the produce market, and Portland's Original Maze. There are free daily hayrides in October.

•Bella Organic Pumpkin Farm boasts a corn maze, produce market, animal petting area, grill, and a cow train.



•Topaz Farm is not far down the road from the bridge if you are heading west, and it can be seen directly from the road. Kid-centric, this farm features a children's sunflower maze, farm animals, a grill with picnic fare, a cow train, and a produce market.



•Kruger Farm is another popular stop. However, Steve and I did not make it to this one.

We enjoyed driving around the island and looking at the farms and flowers. Be sure to purchase the permit and pack a lunch to enjoy on one of the many beaches.

Seeing all the fall produce inspired me to make a yummy fall lasagna and a delectable cocktail for the season. Maybe you'll be inspired, too!



By Tracy Beard

**PROVISIONS**

ALONG THE TRAIL

**Autumn Lasagna**

- 1 package oven-ready lasagna
- 2 medium yellow onions, sliced; *you will need ¾ cup caramelized onions*
- 6 Tablespoons olive oil
- 4 Tablespoons canola or vegetable oil
- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled and cubed; *you will need 1- 1-½ cups, cooked*
- 2 heads roasted garlic; *you will need 10 cloves roasted*
- 3 cups Alfredo sauce, homemade or store-bought
- 6 ounces fresh shredded or diced mozzarella cheese
- 3 ounces goat cheese
- 6 slices Prosciutto, *diced and fried til crisp*
- Salt and pepper

Grease an 8x8 Pyrex or other oven safe glass dish. Toss the cubed butternut squash in the Canola oil and lay in one layer on a rimmed cookie sheet. Cut off and discard the top ¼ of the two garlic heads. Place heads in an oven-proof dish and drizzle with olive oil. Roast the garlic and the squash in the oven at 400 degrees for 40 minutes. Set both aside.

Divide the olive oil between two separate large frying pans. Add half the onions to each pan. Lightly salt the onions. Cook on medium for approximately 30 minutes or until soft and brown. Stir frequently. Do not burn. Add a little water while cooking if necessary. Set aside.

**Alfredo Sauce**

- 3 Tablespoons butter
- 4 Tablespoons flour
- 3 cups half and half
- ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 ounces cream cheese
- Salt and pepper

Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the flour, and cook until light brown. Add the half and half. When it thickens and coats the back of a spoon, add the cream cheese and Parmesan, salt, and pepper to taste. Squeeze the roasted garlic into the sauce and blend with an immersion blender. Set aside.



**Assemble the Lasagna**

Place a little Alfredo sauce on the bottom of the glass dish. Place a layer of lasagna sheets on the sauce. Add the butternut squash and mash down a little to cover more space. Add some onions and some mozzarella. Top with some Alfredo sauce. Continue to layer. Your final layer should be the lasagna sheets topped with Alfredo sauce, mozzarella, and goat cheese, not veggies. Cover with foil. Bake in the oven for 30-40 minutes at 375 degrees. Top with crispy Prosciutto. Let sit for 15 minutes before cutting and serving. Top or serve with arugula tossed in a light lemon vinaigrette.



**Peanut Butter Cup Cocktails**

Makes 2

- 2 Tablespoons peanut butter
- ¼ ounce 72% dark chocolate bar
- 1 cup ice, plus more for the shaker
- 6 ounces peanut butter whiskey (like Screwball)
- 2 ounces chocolate liqueur (like Godiva)
- ¼ cup half and half
- 2 pinches sea salt

Spread the peanut butter on a plate and grate the chocolate bar with a Microplane onto another plate. Dip two whiskey glasses into the peanut butter and then the chocolate.

Pour the whiskey, chocolate liqueur, half and half, and salt into the cocktail shaker. Fill with ice. Shake for 20 seconds and pour over ice into glasses.