

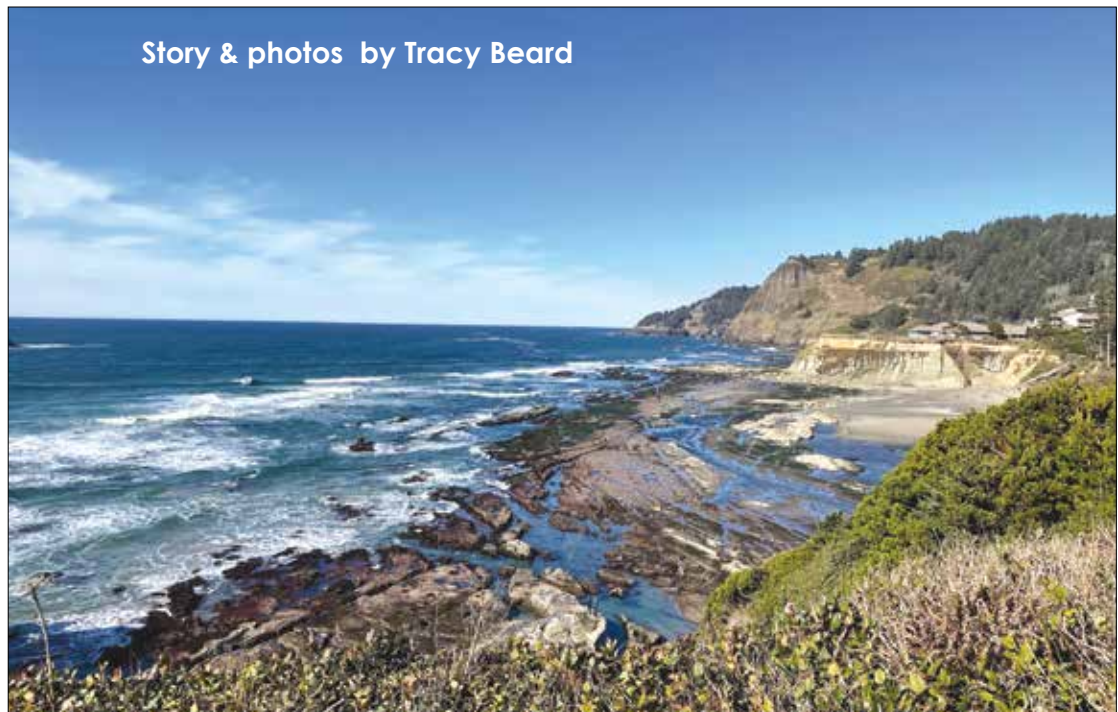
Total Engagement in Depoe Bay

Plenty to capture your interest and senses on the Oregon Coast

A long weekend getaway to the beach is always a good idea, and the time of year is insignificant. Whether you wish to bask in the sun during the summer or watch a winter storm roll in while you relax by the fire, the roar of the ocean waves, the whistling wind and the silky sand beneath your feet will lighten your spirit. The Pacific Northwest boasts numerous beautiful beaches. Last month, my daughter Brittney, her boyfriend Jordan and I headed to Depoe Bay on the Oregon Coast for three nights. This stunning area offers eclectic dining, a variety of hikes and a long beach perfect for walking alone, playing with a pet or even proposing to that special someone.

The Main Event

I must admit that I was “in the know” regarding the proposal. Jordan and I discussed the matter before the trip, and the plan was for me to take some photographs of the special event. After checking the weather, we determined that our first night would be the best for pictures. The couple went for a beach walk, and I situated myself on a perch to take the shots. The sunset was lovely and after the main event we went upstairs to the balcony of our unit at the Cavalier Oceanfront Condominiums. We whipped up some of Brittney’s limoncello martinis and took more photos while the sky displayed a range of reds, oranges and yellows.



Story & photos by Tracy Beard

Out and About

The following morning, we awoke to a gloriously sunny day. We drove 15 miles outside Depoe Bay to Drift Creek Falls trailhead. From US Highway 101, just south of Lincoln City, turn east onto Drift Creek Road and then south onto South Drift Creek Road. Turn east onto Forest Road 17 and drive for 10 miles on the paved road to the trailhead. The three-mile, round-trip hike affords a gentle ascent with only 380 feet gain in elevation. There is a clean outhouse located at the trailhead. This spectacular hike is terrific for adults and children.

The trail is open year-round and although the path was clear during our hike, snow decorated the sides of the route. Various trees bordered the course, and many sword ferns blanketed the forest floor. We crossed two small bridges along the way; and at the end of one and a half miles, we traversed the long suspension bridge.

We stopped in the middle of the bridge



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and took in the dramatic view of the 75-foot-high waterfall cascading over the mossy cliff.

After returning to the car, we drove back to town. No matter your reason for visiting the beach, it is vital to enjoy some classic dishes like clam chowder, fish and chips and coleslaw during your stay. Depoe Bay and Lincoln City offer numerous options for these seaside delights. We dined at Mo’s Restaurant in Lincoln City. The ocean views were noteworthy, and the food was good.

The weather continued to hold, so we drove down to check out some of the area’s natural sights. The Devil’s Punch Bowl is a large bowl carved in the rock headland. The waves from the Pacific Ocean rush into the bowl. The powerful water whips around creating violent sprays of water and large amounts of foam. Check the tides before you go so that you can experience the full thrill of this natural landmark. Our timing was off, and we missed the show.

We traveled further south to Thor’s Well in Yachats, Oregon. This stunning water feature rests on the precipice of the Oregon Coast near Cape Perpetua and appears as a bottomless sinkhole engulfing the surrounding water.

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cont page 15

from page 14

Seaside Dining

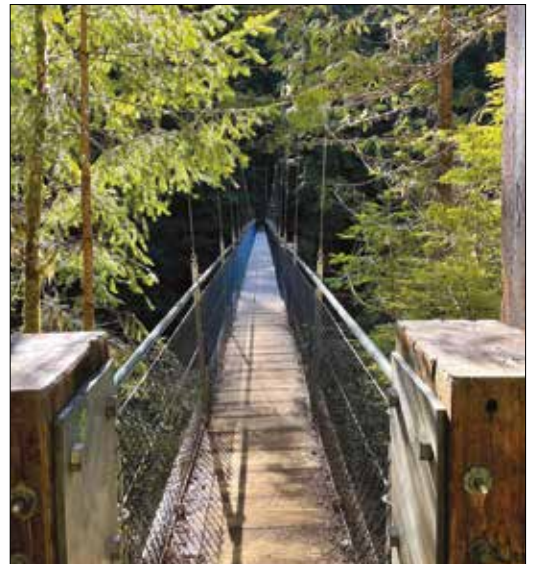
Tidal Raves Seafood Grill in Depoe Bay offers one of the best sunset ocean views and tasty food to boot. This destination is famous for whale watching during the migration season from mid-December through mid-January and from late March to the end of May. The restaurant does not take reservations, but you can order a drink while waiting for your table. Seafood is king at this establishment. However, my favorite dish was the five spice pork belly lettuce wraps with spicy Saigon slaw as an appetizer, simply delicious.

Another fantastic dining option is the Bay View Thai Kitchen. Although not your traditional US coastal cuisine, they make exceptional Thai food well worth a visit. We stopped by for lunch on our third day. Brittney ordered the raw coconut, and both Jordan and I had the Thai iced tea. The drinks were delicious. We shared pad Thai, yellow curry with chicken and an order of chicken satay with peanut sauce. Every dish was scrumptious, but I was particularly delighted with the satay. A cucumber relish in a sweet liquid accompanied the peanut sauce. I didn't ask, but I would guess it was a rice wine vinegar concoction. Our host recommended putting both the peanut sauce and cucumber on the satay. The flavors and textures were incredible!

There is so much to do and see on the Oregon Coast. Book a trip now to watch the whales, savor tasty culinary bites and breathe in the refreshing ocean air.

Try out some of my favorite recipes (below) and relive those beach memories at home.

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Depoe Bay is a city in Lincoln County, Oregon, located on U.S. Route 101 on the Pacific Ocean. The bay of the same name is a 6-acre harbor that the city promotes as the world's smallest navigable harbor. Photos, from left: A coastal view, the Devil's Punch Bowl, Thor's Well, and a suspension bridge and waterfall along the Drift Creek Falls Trail.



By Tracy Beard

PROVISIONS

ALONG THE TRAIL, IN THE PARK OR IN FRONT OF THE FIRE!

Tracy's Clam Chowder

- 6 slices bacon - chopped
- 2 medium russet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 large onion - chopped
- 1 tsp. garlic - minced
- 2 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 cup fresh razor clams or another canned variety, chopped
- 1 8-oz bottle clam juice
- 1 Tbl. flour
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 2 cups heavy cream
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 individual round French bread bowls
- 6 Tbl. butter
- ½ tsp. garlic salt

Fry up the bacon until golden brown and set aside. Place the carrots, potatoes and one teaspoon of thyme in water. Bring to a boil and simmer until vegetables are fork-tender. Drain off water and set aside. Place two tablespoons of butter in a soup pot. Add the flour and cook for two more minutes until light brown. Pour in the chicken stock and clam juice. Stir to mix with the roux. Add in clams, cooked vegetables, remaining dried thyme, bacon and heavy cream. Bring to a simmer, but do not boil. Add salt and pepper to taste.

While the chowder is cooking, place bread bowls on a sheet pan. Cut off the top and dig out a hole for the chowder. Butter the inside of the hole, sprinkle on garlic salt and place under the broiler until golden brown. Serve the chowder in the bowl.

Brittney's Limoncello Martini

- 2 oz limoncello
- 1 ½ oz domestic vanilla vodka
- 2/3 oz fresh lemon juice
- ½ oz triple sec

Pour over ice in a cocktail shaker, shake and serve in a glass with a sugared rim.

Tracy's Creamy Coleslaw

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 Tbl. rice wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. celery seeds
- A good pinch of salt
- 4 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 cup shredded carrot

Whisk all the ingredients through the salt in a large bowl. Add cabbage and carrot. Place in refrigerator for 30 minutes to marry the flavors.



After he pops the question, Jordan and Brittney celebrate their engagement with Limoncello martinis