

ads removed
for archival
purposes



By Tracy Beard
PROVISIONS
ALONG THE TRAIL

Blueberry Spritz

Serves one

- 4 blueberries
- 1-½ oz. Empress gin
- ½ oz. St. Germain
Elderflower liqueur
- ½ ounce lemon juice
- 1-ounce simple syrup
- 2 oz. or more Prosecco
- Lemon slice

Muddle the blueberries in a shaker with simple syrup. Add the gin, elderflower liqueur, lemon juice, and simple syrup. Stir. Add ice and shake – strain into a tall bucket glass over fresh ice and top with Prosecco. Garnish with a lemon wheel.

Recipe by Morgan Ekman at the Ruddy Duck Restaurant



**Gnocchi with
Butternut Squash**

Serves 3

- 1 lb. good quality potato
gnocchi
- 1 cup pureed butternut
squash
- 1 cup kale or spinach
- ½ cup pancetta - diced
- ⅓ cup Pecorino Romano,
shredded
- ¼ cup butter
- ⅓ cup microgreens
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper



Fry washed and dried spinach or kale leaves in olive oil at 375 degrees until crisp. Set on a paper towel to drain. Peel and cut one butternut squash into 1-inch cubes. Toss in olive oil until lightly coated. Roast the cubes on a cookie sheet at 375 degrees for approximately 40 min. or until soft. Puree squash in a food processor until smooth. Salt and pepper to taste. Set aside one cup and keep it warm. Put one tablespoon olive oil in a frying pan and cook the pancetta until lightly browned but still chewy; set aside. Cook gnocchi in boiling water according to package directions. Drain. Melt butter in a frying pan. Add the cooked gnocchi and fry until brown and crispy on both sides.

Smear ⅓ cup pureed butternut squash onto each of the three plates. Divide gnocchi into three and add on top of the squash. Garnish with pancetta, fried kale or spinach, and Pecorino Romano. Crown with micro greens and add salt and pepper to taste.

Adventures await along the road

Eastbound on Washington's Highway 12

Story and photos by Tracy Beard

Spring is in the air, a perfect time to explore and discover the sights and sounds on Highway 12 between Salkum and Morton, Washington. Stop along this almost 20-mile stretch to enjoy a bubbling brook, a lakeside playground, scenic vistas, historic murals, and much more.

My husband, Steve, and I left the house around 10am, headed north on Interstate 5, and took Exit 68 toward Morton. The first thing we passed was Papa Bear's West Family Restaurant & Bar on the right side of the road. When following my journey, stop and have breakfast here; it is a great way to begin your day. The little town of Ethel is just off the highway, and although it is a very pretty area to drive through, there is not much to stop and see.

First stop: Stowell Road in Salku.

We drove half a mile off the highway and pulled up beside a lovely little creek. There was ample room to set up a portable chair and savor the moment. Soon, we were back on the road.

After crossing the long bridge spanning picturesque Mayfield Lake, make a left onto Beach Road and follow it down to the parking lot. Here you can go

for a dip in the lake, let the kids play on the playground, or launch a boat to go fishing, tubing, or water skiing.

Back on the road, continue east until you reach DeGoede Bulb Farm and Garden. This nursery is an excellent stop for all your gardening supplies. It is also an incredible place to peruse the seasonal flowers on the grounds.

Next up the road: Pan-American Berry Growers – Mossyrock Farm Stand

The Farm Stand offers everything blueberry: syrup, honey, jam, candies, pies, BBQ sauce, mustards, and of course, fresh blueberries. The Blueberry Farm Stand is typically open July 4 – Labor Day, Mon-Sat, 9am–6pm, and Sunday, 10am–6pm. Call 360-983-3525 to ensure they are open before stopping by.

Further down the road, stop at the Riffe Lake Overlook and take in the stunning views. The area was once home to two pioneering communities, Riffe and Kosmos. Riffe was established in 1898, and Charles W. Hopkinson built a sawmill and post office in 1904, establishing Kosmos; these two communities experienced their peaks during the 1940s when railroad-tie mills and logging thrived in the vicinity.

Steve and I enjoyed the valley views while continuing toward Morton, a town that feels like something out of the Wild West. Visit the Historic Railroad Depot Museum and the Morton Historical Museum. They were closed during our visit but are open now. The museum is open Mon-Sat, 10am–3pm. Access to the Railroad Depot is via the Historical Museum; the docent will unlock the doors for you to peruse the inside. The Morton Depot is the only remaining structure on the historic Tacoma Eastern Railroad, later known as Milwaukee Railroad National Park Rail Line.

Morton's Fire Rescue District 4

On our outing, we meandered around Morton and discovered two very cool murals depicting an old version of Morton's Fire Rescue Dist. 4. Standing at the end of Main Street downtown, I envisioned a movie maker creating an old western film.



It was lunchtime, so we headed into Rivers Coffee House & Bistro. The staff was friendly, and since the weather outside was still a bit chilly, I ordered the Briar Green Cocktail. The hot cider with cinnamon bark syrup, a swirl of caramel, and an ounce of Basil Hayden warmed me up from the inside out. I ordered one of the more popular paninis, the Tatoosh Turkey. This delicious sandwich was made with sliced turkey breast, Swiss cheese, roasted bell peppers, bacon, mayo, and pesto, all between two pieces of focaccia bread, grilled on a panini press. I ordered mine without the peppers, and it was delicious.

The almost 20-mile drive between Salkum and Morton has plenty to keep your interest for the day. Enjoy the drive, savor the views, and taste the local fare.



Tracy Beard writes about luxury and adventure travel, traditional and trendy fine dining and libations for regional, national and international magazines. She is in her eighth year as CRR's "Out & About" columnist. She lives in Longview, Wash.

• • •