



Fuel Up for These 11 End-of-Summer Road Trips

Summer is flying by and before you know it, you'll be gearing up for the back-to-school grind. Before that happens, make the most of your last days of summer by planning an end-of-summer road trip. Whether it's a last-minute weekend excursion to the mountains or an extended trip to a seaside town, scroll down for 11 family road trip destinations—all within a few hours drive or less of Seattle.



photo: Semiahmoo Resort

Semiahmoo & Birch Bay

Craving a beach experience without the high surf? Consider a trip up North (less than two hours from Seattle, just prior to the Canadian border) to the Semiahmoo and Birch Bay areas. [Semiahmoo](#) (pronounced Semi-ah-moo) is located at the tip of a one-mile "spit" of land bordered by Drayton Harbor and Semiahmoo Bay with views of White Rock, BC. No roaring ocean surf here; just gentle waves from passing fishing boats lapping at the shore of the rocky beach. When the tide goes out at either Semiahmoo or nearby Birch Bay, you can explore the sand flats for miles. Bring your beach shoes for the rocky part and plan to go barefoot when the [tide](#) is low!

In addition to beach walking, shell-finding, clamming-digging, kite-flying and wildlife-watching (bald eagles, seals and more), Semiahmoo has a paved trail, perfect for biking and walking, that runs the length of the spit (about a mile). The addition of [Paddle and Pedal Adventures](#), which set up shop right next door to the hotel, is the place to go if you don't want to haul your own bikes; they can rent you one along with kid trailers and kid-tandems, too. They also rent kayaks and sell an assortment of sand toys. (Hint: This little spot tucked behind the water tower by Semiahmoo Resort has the best sandy beach on the spit...great for sandcastles!). During the summer months, short rides around the bay are offered on a charming, vintage passenger ferry named [Plover](#). Kids get to steer for part of the journey and will become honorary captains—taking home their own certificate. Open Memorial Day through Labor Day, the [Birch Bay Waterslides](#) offers fun for all ages with advanced slides and a kiddie area with three tame slides. The nearby [Miniature World Family Fun Center](#) has an 18-hole mini golf course, go-karts and a miniature train ride through a quirky "Forest of Imagination."

Stay at: [Semiahmoo Resort](#) for an ideal [beach weekend](#). You can literally park your car at the resort and not leave again for the whole stay. The hotel, reminiscent of a New England seaside resort, is welcoming to families. Kids love the outdoor swimming pool and the sprawling beachside lawns for volleyball, croquet, horseshoes and just running around. The hotel also offers G & PG-rated family movies along with evening bonfires with s'mores fixings and daily scavenger hunts. Another option on Semiahmoo spit is to rent a condo at the adjacent [Beach Walker Villas](#) and purchase passes to use the hotel's pool and gym. Nearby Birch Bay (more boisterous than Semiahmoo and not as self-contained) is home to numerous condo rentals of many vintages. Check out [Vacationville](#), [VRBO](#) or even Craigslist for assistance. In Birch Bay, you'll have to cross the road to get to the beach and will often find people "cruising the strip" in the summer months. Like Semiahmoo, low tides in [Birch Bay](#) provide plenty of beach fun.