

TRIP



IDEAS

EASY ADVENTURES
ON OREGON'S SOUTH COAST



Shore Acres State Park, Coos Bay, Jim Cottingham



Shore Acres botanical gardens, Coos Bay

This itinerary makes it a breeze to tour Oregon’s Southern Coast in 4–7 days, heading north to south (or feel free to reverse it and go the other way!).

GETTING ORIENTED

There’s nothing quite like the epic oceanscapes and sheer diversity of the 140-mile stretch of Oregon’s Southern Coast, every inch of it accessible to the public. You could drive this coastline in three hours without stopping, but why zoom through when you can dine, stroll, see five lighthouses and explore these friendly communities in style and comfort, at your leisure? The Native people who’ve lived along these shorelines for generations have a rich history; look for interpretive signs along the coast to hear their stories.

DAY 1: REEDSPORT AND LAKESIDE

Along the **Umpqua River Scenic Byway**, pull off to stretch and spy roaming elk at the **Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area**. The charming town of Reedsport is one of the best places to access the **Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area**, a rare landscape of windblown dunes stretching 40 miles long. You don’t have to be extreme to explore it—visit the **Dunes Visitor Center** to ask about guided dune walks. Stop in at the **Umpqua River Lighthouse** to glimpse its distinctive red-and-white prism and some great historical artifacts. In the tranquil community of Lakeside, drop a fishing line in the calm waters of **Tenmile Lake** and picnic at **William M. Tugman State Park**.



Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area, Reedsport
Brian K. Harris

DAYS 2–3: COOS BAY / NORTH BEND / CHARLESTON

This part of the South Coast is called the Bay Area, named for its many waterways. In North Bend, take a leisurely stroll along **Horsfall Beach** and rest for a spell on the benches at the viewing platform. In Coos Bay, the most populous city on the coast, explore the downtown boardwalk, visit the **Coos Art Museum** and **Coos History Museum** and nosh your way through the **Coos Bay Farmers Market** in the summer. Visit the downtown mural, statue and gallery honoring Olympic track legend **Steve Prefontaine**, a native son. Hop on a scenic tour with **Coos Boat Tours** to see the area from a different perspective.

Dedicate a full day to exploring the sights along the **Cape Arago Loop**. In Charleston, throw crab rings off the place locals know as **D Dock**. Hop out of the car to spot harbor seals and sea lions, walk the beaches, or enjoy a picnic at **Bastendorff Beach**, **Sunset Bay State Park** (a big surf spot), **Cape Arago Lighthouse viewpoint** and—high on a bluff with spectacular views—**Shore Acres State Park**. Shore Acres’ botanical gardens dazzle with a giant light display during the holidays and showy blooms in the warmer months. Follow the trail to **Simpson Reef Overlook** to see migrating whales in spring and fall, as well as the largest year-round gathering of harbor seals and sea lions anywhere on the Oregon Coast.

DAY 4: BANDON

Along its stunning shoreline, look for likenesses that inspired the names **Face Rock**, **Howling Dog** and **Elephant Rock**. Soak up the views at **Coquille Point** and the **Face Rock State Scenic Viewpoint**, where you can watch the awe-inspiring **Circles in the Sand** labyrinth

- STAY:**
Winchester Bay: Salmon Harbor Landing – views of Umpqua Lighthouse
North Bend: Itty Bitty Inn – cozy retro inn
Charleston: Bay Point Landing – modern camping with cabins & Airstreams
Coos Bay: Coos Bay Manor B&B – historic manor
Bandon: Bandon Inn – bayfront views
Port Orford: WildSpring Guest Habitat – tranquil oasis
Gold Beach: Tu Tu’ Tun Lodge – riverfront luxury
Brookings: Lowden’s Beachfront Bed & Breakfast – quiet beachfront locale

- EAT:**
North Bend: Ciccarellis – brick-oven pizza & Italian favorites
Charleston: Miller’s at the Cove – Cajun crab chowder & fish tacos
Coos Bay: Noster Kitchen – fresh vegan-friendly fare
Bandon: Edgewater – intimate steak & seafood spot
Port Orford: Redfish – PNW bounty with great view
Gold Beach: Spinner’s Seafood Steak & Chop House – seasonal seafood and top-notch steaks
Brookings: Misty Mountain Brewing & Tap Haus – local beer scene mavericks

- DON’T MISS:**
Reedsport: Umpqua Discovery Center – engaging displays about the region’s culture
Port Orford: Historic Lifeboat Station Museum – exhibits on little-known WWII history
Charleston: Charleston Marine Life Center – touch tidepool, live tanks and fossil displays

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Circles in the Sand, Bandon



drawn by a local artist at low tide. Bandon's historic **Old Town** is a charmer, with a bounty of boutiques and places to sample treats. Don't miss the handcrafted confections at **Coastal Mist Chocolates** and Vampire Slayer cheddar at **Face Rock Creamery**. Stroll the boardwalk and spend time at **Washed Ashore**, where volunteers make whimsical sculptures from marine plastic found on the shoreline. Just north of Bandon, grab a glass of wine and watch the golfers come in at the world-famous **Bandon Dunes Golf Resort**.

DAY 5: PORT ORFORD

Forty minutes south of Bandon, climb into the working lantern room at **Cape Blanco Lighthouse**, where the historic lens still serves as a beacon. Stroll down the trail to visit the scenic bluff of **Cape Blanco State Park**. **Peters' Cranberries**, open daily in season, is part of the **Wild Rivers Coast Food Trail**—visit the bog and farm stand for a taste of their fresh cranberries and cranberry juice. Watch the dolly dock in action in Port Orford, where fishing boats are dropped into the Pacific by a crane. Spot whales in the cove at **Battle Rock Wayside Park**, named for the historic battle of 1851, part of the town's fascinating history. Find a souvenir at one of nearly a dozen art galleries in town.

DAY 6: GOLD BEACH

Head south for about 30 minutes from Port Orford to Gold Beach, with several turnouts

boasting panoramic ocean views. Go beachcombing for colorful glass floats hidden February through April as part of the **Gold Beach Treasure Hunt**. At **Jerry's Rogue Jets**, climb aboard a **Historic Mail Boat** tour on the Rogue River to see how the pioneers delivered mail on this route since 1895. The scenic 64-mile round trip in this large boat is a more relaxed way to experience the Rogue than a traditional jet boat. On land, consider touring in comfort with Gold Beach-based **South Coast Tours**, which shuttles guests to local breweries, beaches and other attractions. Try your hand at razor clamming at **Meyers Beach** for a DIY dinner.

DAY 7: BROOKINGS

You'll find plenty to explore along this 12-mile stretch between Gold Beach and Brookings, known as the **Samuel H. Boardman State Scenic Corridor**. Take a short walk at Arch Rock Picnic Area to fairy tale-like views of islands topped with windswept trees. At **Natural Bridges**, follow the wooden platform to a secluded cove. In Brookings, visit the tide pools at **Chetco Point Park**, browse the shops at the Port of Brookings Harbor and raise a glass at **Chetco Brewing**.

GET IN TOUCH

Say hello@travelsouthernORcoast.com. We'd love to help you plan your trip.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Distance: 140 miles/
225 km of easy
adventures, boardwalk
strolls, scenic tours
and tasty stops.

