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GETAWAYS

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2 Off-Season Escape

Lincoln City, Oregon

The Oregon Coast saw a record number of visitors during the summer of 2020. And while the allure of blue skies, a warm sun and cool breezes on the coast are all easy to understand, there is a different season with an alternate set of reasons that many of us actually prefer. Winter. It's when things reset to a more natural state. There is calm and quiet, there is gray and green. You can walk, listen, look and experience with minimal interference.

There are just as many things to see and do, just different versions, with far fewer people around. And one of the finer destinations for a coastal winter getaway is Lincoln City. Instead of laying out on the beach, it's time for storm-watching. Rather than a hike up or out to the sweeping views afforded from a Cape or summit, walk through the dense forests and wildlife-rich habitats of the city's Open Spaces. And thanks to the fall and winter seafood seasons, dining options remain just as enticing. Here's a rundown.

A room with an ocean view is coveted in all seasons. If you plan on hunkering down and doing some storm-watching, cozy confines on the beach

BY ADAM SAWYER

Plan Your Trip

Lincoln City is about a 2-hour drive from Portland and a 4.5-hour drive from Seattle. Plan your Lincoln City coastal getaway at oregoncoast.org.

Siletz Bay

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Aerial Park, Salishan Coastal Lodge

© Salishan Coastal Lodge



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are a must. Three can't-miss options are Surftides (surftideslincolncity.com), Seahorse Oceanfront Lodging (seahorsemotel.com) and Chinook Winds Casino Resort (chinookwindscasino.com/lodging). All offer options on room size and amenities, like fireplaces, and ocean views are in abundance, whichever you choose.

While it's not quite on the beach, the Salishan Coastal Lodge throws lodging in a woodsy setting into the mix, along with dining and outdoor adventures—weather permitting. Golf is still the headliner at the lodge, but the recent additions of an Aerial Park and a mountain bike Pump Track add to the Salishan's outdoor allure. And while the time-tested Attic Bar & Lounge remains the favored spot for a nightcap, Coffee & Cravings and Beachcrest Brewery provide additional liquid assets. And as of late 2020, the city's premier dining destination, the Bay House, has moved onto the resort grounds. You technically never have to leave.

But if you do, the Blackfish Cafe is a go-to restaurant for expertly prepared fresh, local seafood. For a hearty winter meal, a prime choice is the Autobahn 101. A German eatery that specializes in rib-sticking, scratch-made classics from schnitzel to cabbage rolls, with an impressive list of imported German, craft and house beers to help wash it all down.

If you're feeling the need to work off that last doppelbock, or it's just time for a walk in the woods, year-round hiking possibilities abound. The Lincoln City-owned Parks and Open Spaces are a treasure, and quite diverse. The Alder Island Nature Trail at the Siletz Bay National Wildlife Refuge is a 1-mile semi-loop that showcases excellent views of the Siletz River along with wildlife viewing opportunities.

Also on the Siletz Bay, the Cutler City Wetlands are home to a collection of trails that wind their way through a very attractive Sitka spruce forest replete with rhododendron and salal. For a little more mileage and elevation gain, visit the trails at Spyglass Ridge. The area was the site of some "light-touch" logging in 2016, rendering a fascinating mix of existing forest and regrowth.

Finally, for fans of legitimate coastal old-growth forest, a walk through the preserved parcel of land known as Friends of Wildwoods is a must. Impressive stands of Sitka spruce and western hemlock preside over a lush understory of sword fern and salmonberry. Be forewarned, however, that it can be a muddy track during the wetter months—but nothing proper footwear can't overcome. 🍄