

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

Adding leisure to business travel

By MICHELE ANDRUS DILL



ART GRICE



• SEATTLE AREA •
ISLAND EXPERIENCE

Whenever I travel for a business meeting, conference or convention, I enjoy the opportunity to also explore the locale. In the Los Angeles area, I once spent a leisure hour cheering volleyball players at Santa Monica State Beach, then savored Mexican cuisine at Mariasol on the Santa Monica Pier. On a subsequent visit, I segued from a productive three-day business meeting to a fun four-day Carnival cruise from Long Beach to Catalina Island and Ensenada.

After a day spent attending seminars in Baltimore one year, I relished late-afternoon strolling time at the city's Inner Harbor, where I admired historic ships such as the 1854 USS *Constellation* before viewing Blacktip Reef and other attractions at the National Aquarium. A convention in Chicago gave me the opportunity to seek out a top blues club for a marvelous evening of music. In Vancouver, B.C., the meeting planners offered an excursion to test our balance, and our courage, on the 450-foot-long Capilano Suspension Bridge, 230 feet above the Capilano River.

And a few years ago, when I was attending a conference near Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, I extended my visit by a couple of days to check out the award-winning Circling Raven Golf Club, hike Tubbs Hill for outstanding views of Lake Coeur d'Alene, and relax with a world-class spa treatment at The Coeur d'Alene Resort.

Below are a few ideas for extracurricular activities next time you're traveling on business in the following popular meeting destinations.



ELEVEN WINERY

• Bainbridge Island can be reached from Seattle via a scenic Washington State Ferries ride, left. Island attractions include the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, top, and Eleven Winery's Winslow Way Tasting Room, above.

SEATTLE, WA

It's only about a mile stroll or short cab ride from the Washington State Convention Center to Colman Dock in downtown Seattle, where you can walk on—as locals say it—to board a Washington State Ferries boat for an approximately 35-minute crossing to Bainbridge Island. (Or you can drive on if you prefer; drivers are allowed to exit their cars and go on deck during the crossing.)

Stand outside on the pickle fork (twin exterior decks whose shape explains the name) to feel the sun on your face and the wind in your hair while you watch watercraft ranging from tugboats to sailboats on Puget Sound, and admire the view of the Olympic Mountains if it's a blue-sky day. For weather-protected views, sit by one of the large picture windows in the ferry's interior while enjoying locally famous Ivar's clam chowder you can purchase onboard.

When the ferry docks at Bainbridge Island (visitbainbridge.com), walk (or drive) about a quarter

mile to the charming Winslow area, with its boutique shops, restaurants, and several venues where you can taste Bainbridge Island wines. And don't miss the rich artisanal ice creams and refreshing sorbets at Mora Iced Creamery.

In addition, the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art shows works by Puget Sound-area artists, including Native American artists.

Seasonal watercraft rentals are available from various companies. For instance, if you're visiting between approximately mid-May and mid-September,

you can rent a canoe, kayak or paddleboard, or take a guided tour, from Back of Beyond Outfitters. Options include the Sunday Morning Canoe Pull in an 18-passenger canoe that leaves from the island's Waterfront Park west of the ferry terminal.

Greater Seattle activities and attractions also include Pike Place Market; Seattle Center; storied Chateau Ste. Michelle and Woodinville Wine Country; numerous museums and performing-arts venues; and outdoor activities such as hiking, biking and fishing. For more information: visitseattle.org.

• TRI-CITIES •
WINE TOURING

WALTER CLORE WINE AND CULINARY CENTER



TRI-CITIES, WA

Washington is the country's second-largest premium wine-producing state, and more than 200 wineries are located within about a 60-mile radius of the Tri-Cities, providing pleasing options for virtually every après-presentation palate.

Of special interest might be Washington state's first certified-organic vineyard—Badger Mountain Vineyard; the state's first barrel caves for wine aging, at Terra Blanca Winery & Estate Vineyard; and one of the state's largest wineries, Columbia Crest Winery.

The Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center in Prosser offers a rotating selection of tastings from the state's 14 American Viticultural Areas, with a different region featured each month. The Clore center also has meeting and event space that might be of interest for your next business gathering. And the Ste. Michelle Wine Estates WSU

• The Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center, which offers tastings of Washington wines, themed by American Viticultural Area, is a popular Tri-Cities-area wine-touring stop.

Wine Science Center education and research facility, on the Washington State University campus in Richland, will provide tours by prior arrangement.

In addition, if you are an Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan member, a case of wine you purchase while visiting various Eastern Washington areas can fly with you free on Alaska Airlines via the Taste and Tote program; participating wineries also waive tasting fees for visitors presenting qualifying inbound boarding passes; see tasteandtote.com for details.

The Tri-Cities area also has microbreweries, distilleries, pubs and many outdoor activities. For more information: visittri-cities.com.