



# HIDDEN TREASURES

ALL YOU NEED FOR A WEEKEND GETAWAY ON BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

BY NATALIE COMPAGNO AND GREG FREITAS

**L**ike a beachcomber's paradise — sifting sand to reveal sea glass or flipping wet rocks to find sea creatures — **Bainbridge Island** is filled with hidden treasures worth exploring. Here are tips, finds, and local favorites for a perfect weekend.

Taking the renowned Washington state ferry to Bainbridge Island is the quintessential Puget Sound experience. Adventurous island hoppers will drive past Winslow Way to find riches off the beaten path at **Lynwood Center**, the lively little burg filled with fun-loving locals and breathtaking views. Grab to-go sandwiches at the **Marketplace at Pleasant Beach** (the Fort Ward tuna sandwich is addicting), then go strolling and creature collecting on the sands of stunning **Crystal Springs**. At night, take in a movie at the historic 1936 **Lynwood Theatre**, or party with the locals at **Earth & Vine Wine Bar**, where the wine is always flowing.

Sail Bainbridge offers several tours for fun on the water.

After you see one Polaroid-perfect hidden cove on Bainbridge, you'll want to see them all. **Sail Bainbridge** offers visitors the chance to experience the "yachty" side of life. Choose from a two-hour sail, sunset cruise, or a dreamy overnight at anchor, while pretending it's your own personal vessel. The locals love Captain Ben and are beyond enthusiastic about his tours and company. Just ask anyone.

The Washington state sport of pickleball is sweeping the nation. Locals take immense pride in the sport — it was invented on Bainbridge at late businessman/politician Joel Pritchard's house. In 2020, the island unveiled a brand new pickleball facility at **Battle Point Park**, with six dedicated courts plus tennis courts that can be converted to pickleball. Reserve ahead (\$18 per hour per court for nonresidents) or strike up a conversation with the locals.

With their infectious zeal for the sport, visitors are often invited to play. But beware the octogenarian with the devilish backspin serve. He's a ringer. Before leaving the island, grab an original art-souvenir pickleball racquet at on Winslow Way at **The Ravine**.

If you go, you know: the **Bainbridge Island Museum of Art** is one of the finest small museums in the Pacific Northwest.

Its collections regularly feature top Native American and local artists. The Artists' Book Collection — 3D art in the form of books — is totally unique, with more than 1,300 volumes. Even better, admission is free! The museum recently reopened its onsite **BIMA Bistro** with a new **Pegasus Coffee** espresso bar, plus beer and wine, for hungry art aficionados waiting to catch the ferry.

Beautifully designed, the **Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial** is a poignant, rewarding reminder of the island's place in our shared history. The new audio tour brings to life the voices of the American citizens who were interned during World War II and keeps these Japanese American families' stories alive. **Nidoto Nai Yoni** (Let It Not Happen Again).

Packed with fertile farmland, talented artisans, and foodie fanatics, Bainbridge is a haven for unique food and drink. What better way to experience this than eating at a working farm? The harvested veggies and fruit go into **Heyday Farm's** famed year-round Thursday and Friday night community dinners. Guests are spoiled at the community table, chef's counter, or outdoor tables during summer. "Secret" dining is upstairs in three private dining rooms, formerly B&B accommodations. Book by clicking the reservation button on the site and making a request in the appointment notes section, availability depending. Wherever you dine, the ambiance is as lovely as the dishes themselves.



**Bainbridge Organic Distillers** is the first and only distiller in the state producing 100% organic alcohol, onsite, from scratch. The Two Islands Collection makes the perfect gift for the whisky lover in your life. Each of the oak barrels used to age the whisky comes with the terroir and nuance of a different island: Barbados rum barrels, and Hokkaido and Islay whisky barrels. Try to taste the difference or sit back, take a sip, and dream of visiting these exotic islands.

**Highside Distilling** is a family owned and operated team and a little darling of the mixology world. Using cider distillate to create vodka, gin, amaro (herbal liqueur), and whisky makes the flavors smooth, curious, and refined.

For laid-back elegance, **The Inn at Pleasant Beach** has 22 lovely rooms and a three-bedroom townhouse suite that is luxury personified. Guests enjoy **The Pool at Pleasant Beach Village** with hot tub,

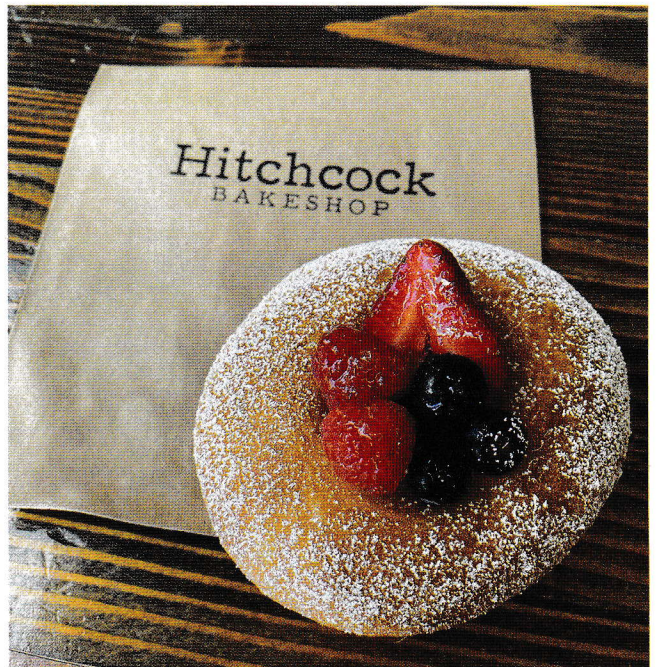
Winslow Way bustles with delicious reasons to have a progressive dining experience. **Ba Sa** has become quickly renowned for its elevated Vietnamese fare. **Thuy's pho**, **Hi Life** for poke, **Taco Barn** at The Ravine (catch live music there, too), and **Harbour Public House** are all slightly off the main drag and less touristy. The Brendan McGill restaurants — **Bruciato** and **Café Hitchcock** — are deservedly beloved. Seafood lovers, activate! If foraged kelp, geoduck crudo, or seaweed focaccia sound amazing then his latest, **Seabird** is your jam.

Insider tip: On Saturdays at the farmers market or Sundays at **Hitchcock Bakeshop** in the business park off Day Road, foodies can buy their famous seaweed focaccia, fermented goods, and other yummys direct to consumer.

Take a short drive up the island's east side to **Rolling Bay**. Via **Rosa 11** is an island favorite, an Italian market and kitchen with immaculately curated Italian provisions. Dine on the shaded outdoor patio, or grab wine, imported sardines, and a fresh baguette for a picnic on scene-stealing **Manitou Beach**, with its majestic views of the Seattle skyline.

To taste an oyster is to savor an island's essence in one slurp. Look out for **Salish Sea Greens & Moble Oyster Bar** pop-ups at farmers markets, events, and wineries. Take home the kelp seasoning products and peruse the website for the health benefits of kelp, cooking with kelp tips, as well as its pivotal importance to our marine habitats.

These same farmlands also create a dynamic drinking scene. **Bainbridge Vineyards** sits on historic Suyematsu Farms, the oldest continuously farmed property in Kitsap County. Owner Betsey Wittick carries on the tradition of Akio Suyematsu, who made Bainbridge the strawberry capital of the Pacific Northwest. She farms the land by draft horse. Taste the history with each organic sip.



From top: Visit **Heyday Farm** for its famous community dinners and enjoy creative pastries at **Hitchcock Bakeshop**.

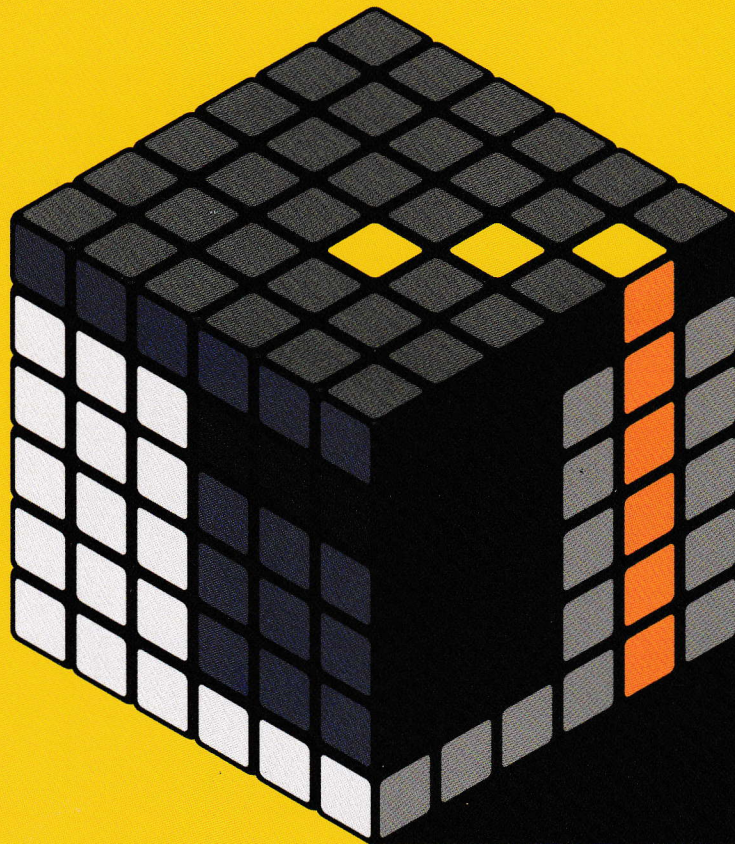
full bar, and kiddie wading pool. It will be hard to leave the property, but **Lynwood Center** is just a staircase away.

**The Eagle Harbor Inn** has seven beautiful rooms of all shapes and sizes, sunny terraces, and free Pegasus coffee in the common room. The short walk to Winslow Way is a major draw. We recommend the **Ferryboat Townhome**, which boasts a charming private elevator replete with wrought iron gate. Heaven. **S**

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