

Title:

Family Fun and Finery on Oregon's Coast

Word Count:

867

Summary:

Oregon's coast is perfect for families, with hidden spots that put you right in the middle of some of the best nature can show off, and a myriad of kid-friendly lodgings, restaurants and towns which pull out the stops for the kidlets or bring out the kid in everyone.

Keywords:

oregon coast, Bella Beach, vacation rentals, lodging, family, beaches, helicopter ride, Pacific Ocean, Seaside, Cannon Beach, pizza, fine dining, Depoe Bay, Lincoln City, Newport, Central Coast

Article Body:

It's a place of incredible romantic possibilities, with unbelievably pristine beaches and rugged shorelines, and plenty of hidden spots perfecting for long walks hand-in-hand, finding yourselves all alone. With such gushiness-inducing qualities, it's no surprise you'll soon wind up reproducing.

Lucky you. Oregon's coast is perfect for families as well. Those hidden spots put you and the little ones right in the middle of some of the best nature can show off. Then there are the myriad of kid-friendly lodgings, restaurants and towns which pull out the stops for the kidlets or bring out the kid in everyone.

Still, you don't have to sacrifice the finer things when you bring the kids.

On Oregon's north coast, the tiny town of Manzanita is endowed with a mysterious, woodsy vibe just above its vast expanse of crystalline beach. Here, the San Dune Inn provides a vast array of freebies like bikes, game equipment, popcorn and movies. Stay at this charming, unassuming place just blocks from the beach and you'll find stuff for volleyball and other games suitable for the sand, as well as beach balls, bikes and simple sandcastle-making gear like buckets. They have an enormous selection of movies, and their choice of board games is a kick as well. It's a kid's dream come true.

It's also very pet friendly. www.sandune-inn-manzanita.com. 888-368-5163.

Head northward, and you'll encounter dozens of sandy and rocky beaches perfect for playtime. Drive about 12 miles and you'll find the ritzy resort town of Cannon Beach. Near a famed Lewis & Clark landmark, **Fultano's Pizza** sits and emits wonderful smells of Italian cuisine. With an outdoor patio here, you can still see some of the sights available at the end of Second Street, and enjoy exceptional - even gourmet quality - cuisine at a family pizza joint price.

Fultano's delivers to local hotels, and they feature slices for lunch. They have a special thin crust recipe that's especially tasty, crunchy and yet still tender in a way that manages to combine both those latter qualities seamlessly.

There are many of the standbys, as well as gourmet varieties like the Margherita (garlic and herb olive oil, three cheeses, red onion and more), a Greek-themed specialty, a Goat Cheese pizza, and specialties with Teriyaki Chicken, Linguica, BBQ Chicken and a variety of seafood selections. One item features a distinctive sausage with mashed grapes for the sauce, providing a subtle, sweet tang. The sausage is spicy and zippy, making a nice balance to the slight sweetness.

One must-try is their pasta (about \$10). They have a homemade tomato sauce that is one stunning, mother-of-all sauces, and their meatballs are a serious delicacy. Still, even with its decent wine and microbrew selection, this is a place that welcomes the kiddies nicely. 200 N. Hemlock and Second Street. (503) 436-9717.

Drive north again, to **Seaside**, and you'll find a beach town full of things to do for children - most notably Broadway Ave. with its almost dozen arcade businesses, ice cream vendors, kooky gift shops, bumper cars and other attractions. See www.seasideor.com for more.

One highlight is Seaside Helicopters, which whizzes you around above the town for about \$25 per person. It's thoroughly spectacular, as the helicopter takes you over the headland of Tillamook Head and Cannon Beach as well, allowing you unforgettable glimpses of the sea and these landmarks from this unusual vantage point. You even get to see "Goonies Rock" - where part of the cult film was made. Hwy 101, S. Seaside. www.seaside-helicopters.com. (503) 440-4123.

Down on the Central Oregon Coast - about 100 miles south - it's a vast playground for kids and adults. Lincoln City is filled with miles of super clean

beaches and tons of shops and restaurants.

Just south of Lincoln City, you'll find another haven for families in a very unique resort called **Bella Beach**. Really, it's a collection of rather upscale, gorgeous beach cottages that are vacation rentals or for sale. There are about 40 rentals available inside this pretty place, and more are still being built.

The philosophy of Bella Beach is to create a place with a "neighborly feel," and indeed they've succeeded. Set in the midst of a Central Coast wooded area, there are the rustic architectural themes common to places like Manzanita or Cannon Beach, where garages are tucked away behind the buildings and front porches are the emphasis.

There's a playground for the kiddies, and the homes vary from hideaway lodgings for two with oceanfront hot tubs, to larger accommodations for bigger groups. Bella Beach also offers up accommodations for groups as large as 60, if you happen to have a business retreat or reunion of some sort.

Then there's that wondrous beach. Like many of the beaches in the area, the tide line is at a rather steep slope, so waves come in fast and hard, but dissipate quickly to shyly lap at your feet. 866-994-7026 or www.bellabeach.com.