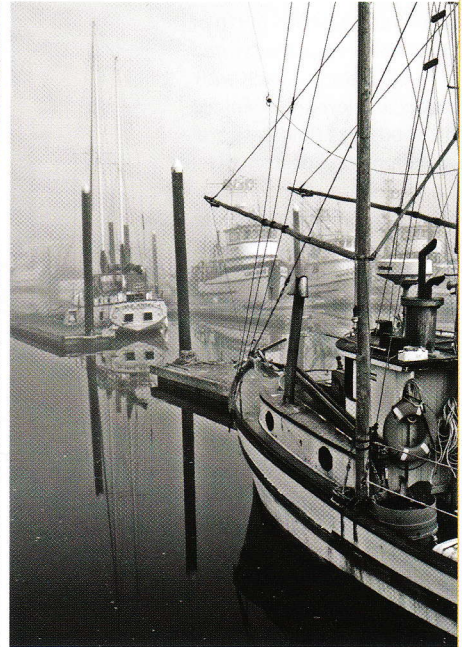


## → GRAYS HARBOR COAST

Riding the waves at Westport; right, walk the docks at the Pacific Northwest's largest coastal marina



## 22. Westport

The once-sleepy fishing village is reinventing itself as one of Washington's oceanfront resorts

FRESH AIR, FRESH FISH AND MILES of sandy beach have been a constant at Westport (130 miles southwest of Seattle off Highway 101) for more than a century. But its metamorphosis from “Salmon Fishing Capital of the World” to chic oceanfront resort is just now taking shape. After the town lost a huge chunk of its economy due to regulations limiting salmon fishing in 1980, Westport residents gradually began to recognize their other assets: namely 18 miles of beautiful sandy beach, and the town's relative proximity to Seattle.

Today, the quaint fishing village atmosphere still lingers in little mom-and-pop restaurants, taffy stores and souvenir shops spread across downtown Westport's four square miles. However, thanks to the increase in value of waterfront property, the town is reinventing itself with high-end marina-front condos (with moorage), such as those of The Point at Westport Harbor, a development of modern beach homes and an oceanfront championship Scottish links golf course along Jetty Haul Drive (opening in the fall). While sport fishing is still a popular pursuit—charter boats are widely available during salmon season, usually July and August—Westport now offers a lot more.

Just a few minutes northeast of downtown, Westhaven State Park is Washington's most popular surf spot with three main places to surf: Half Moon Bay (or “The Cove”), the South Jetty and the Groins. Throngs of diehards brave the frigid Pacific to ride the rip curls, stopping by **THE SURF SHOP** (207 N Montesano St.;

### 22 Seattle magazine food editor Allison Austin Scheff's Westport pick:

#### MERMAID DELI & PUB

Dave Harris knows deli. He owned the famed Other Coast Café in Ballard before moving to the coast to feed fishers and surfers in Westport at his Mermaid Deli & Pub (200 E Patterson; 360.612.0435; [mermaiddeli.com](http://mermaiddeli.com)). The hot and cold sandwiches—including the Rajun Cajun and the Reuben that earned Harris his lofty reputation—keep the locals loyal at lunchtime. The outdoor patio attracts beer lovers with four rotating taps and a classic pub-grub menu (think burgers, barbecue and shepherd's pie).

360.268.0992; [westportsurfshop.com](http://westportsurfshop.com)), owned by local surfing icon Al Perlee, for rentals or just to hang out. If you'd rather watch, a trail leads from the park's parking lot to a bluff overlooking the beach where you can enjoy front-row seats.

Westport is also home to the Washington coast's tallest lighthouse. The 107-foot-tall **GRAYS HARBOR LIGHTHOUSE** (1200 W Ocean Ave.; 360.268.6214; [westportwa.com/museum/a.htm](http://westportwa.com/museum/a.htm)) at the southeastern edge of Westport Light State Park ([parks.wa.gov](http://parks.wa.gov)) was built in 1898 and is open for tours daily. From the lighthouse you can bike or stroll the 2.2-mile paved Maritime History Trail, which takes you along the boardwalk connected to Westhaven State Park, along Half Moon Bay, and ends at **WESTPORT MARINA** (Westhaven Drive; 360.268.9665; [portofgraysharbor.com/westport](http://portofgraysharbor.com/westport)).

The largest coastal marina in the Pacific Northwest has moorage space for 650 vessels, and the adjacent esplanade is chock-full of retailers where you can shop for artwork and souvenirs as well as slurp salmon chowder and lick giant ice cream cones. At dinner time, head to **ANTHONY'S RESTAURANT AT THE ISLANDER** (421 E Neddie Rose Drive; 360.268.9166; [Westport-Islander.com/anthonys.htm](http://Westport-Islander.com/anthonys.htm))—no relation to the Seattle chain—for Mediterranean-inspired seafood dishes (entrées, \$22–\$38). Ask about the regular winemaker dinners showcasing Washington wines. Planning a weekend getaway? **VACATIONS BY THE SEA** (1600 W Ocean Ave.; 877.332.0090; [vacationbythesea.com](http://vacationbythesea.com); from \$159) near Westport Light Park offers one- and two-bedroom oceanfront and ocean-view condos for short rentals, just steps away from the sandy beach. If you'd rather commune with nature, the 172-acre campground at **TWIN HARBORS BEACH STATE PARK** ([parks.wa.gov](http://parks.wa.gov)) is just three miles south of town. *Pat Tanumihardja*