

SAN JUAN ISLANDS WONDERFUL: A FAMILY VACATION TO FRIDAY HARBOR



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The San Juan Islands were not on my radar until last March. Not even a peripheral blip. But, an engaging call from a publicist piqued my interest and suddenly a family trip to the Pacific Northwest fell into place. The San Juans were a perfect stop between Vancouver and Seattle. We thought about visiting Orcas; everyone raves about this island. But, it was San Juan Island that I ultimately chose. First, because of Friday Harbor, a happening village filled with local shops and restaurants as well as a national park. But, discovering , [Island Inn 123](#) sealed the deal. The property lived up to it's tagline-"off the coast of ordinary" -with modern, quirky decor, high thread count sheets, flat screen TVs and perks like heated towel bars, a coffee concierge service and radiant bathroom flooring.



The San Juans are teeming with wildlife. We drove to Lime Kiln Point State Park, also known as Whale Watch Park, where we hiked along the coast and spotted Orcas-tons of them-going about their day. Also along the shore were crazy, cool Jellyfish that resembled blown glass glistening in the sunlight. Our hotel reservation included a whale watching package with [San Juan Safaris](#). We spent three hours with serious naturalists that research Orcas year round. We boated all the way into Canadian waters, our guides expertly identifying each pod of Orcas and pointing out sea lions, bald eagles and wild goats . Our final day we rented "scooters," hybrid scooters the size of a number car which are permitted to traverse the island's roads. Except for being sandwiched between pickup trucks, this was a hoot.



The crab, oysters, mussels were so fresh, so tangy that they went down like candy. A standout meal was had at [Friday Harbor House](#). New chef Jason Aldous, a Willows Inn alum, is turning out elegant farm-to-table fare that may be as impressive as the view.