

Beaches

Visiting any spot where water collides with land provides a valid form of recreation. Beaches by definition have much in common, but a beach in Southern California differs greatly from another in Washington State because of climate, landscape, and solitude. The dissimilar climates affect the clothing worn and activities pursued at these two beaches. Expect to see a distinctive environment at either as well. An interesting effect of these climate variations is the amount of people you will be exposed to at either beach resulting in a feeling of solitude or lack thereof. Beach trips are always enjoyable, but depending on the destination the path to enjoyment will be unique.

Because of the disparity in latitudes these two beaches have different climates. One expects to be basking in sunshine on a San Diego beach, regardless of the time of year. The people enjoying this beach dress sparsely with the intent to get wet. On Washington's coast people consider themselves lucky on the average summer day if they can remove their coats. Very rarely will you see anyone swimming in the ocean this far north due to the temperature of the water and the dangerous combination of riptides and rocky shores. A warm, overcast day without rain evokes a distinct reaction at each beach.

Scenic views can be found at both of these beaches, although the scenes are quite unlike. The California beaches are flat and sandy, providing a sense of infinite perfection as the coastline draws one's gaze outward. The imposing, towering coastal rocks found scattered about a beach in Washington draw the eye, and people have been known to watch waves crash into a specific rock in uncommon ways for hours. Take a camera along to either beach, but expect to have a wider variety of views from the rockier shores.

The amount of solitude provided is noticeably different on these two beaches. Crowds are drawn to the beaches in San Diego to enjoy mostly group activities which include playing volleyball, surfing, and building sandcastles. Some beaches in California can be covered for most of the day with people sunbathing on beach towels. However in Washington most activities are pursued in smaller groups or alone such as hiking and sleeping on logs. Even when people travel in large groups the landscape creates for them an introspective mood and allows a sense of solidarity. Depending on if solitude or a social activity is sought a specific type of beach is required.

The beaches of Southern California and Washington State are not far apart geographically, but have many significant distinctions. If you want to be guaranteed a sunny, social outing you will want to be in San Diego. However, if you don't mind an overcast, solitary, and contemplative trip you may want to visit a beach in Washington State. Beaches all over the world follow a similar trend, so know the climate, landscape, and expected visitor density to plan the most enjoyable beach trip wherever you are.