



Weekend Window on Lake Pend Oreille

Reach High, Dive Deep and Take in the Views at Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho

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To allow the eyes to wander across the landscape surrounding Lake Pend Oreille, from the imposing cliffs which surround the lake to the water's placid, glassy surface, is nothing short of a visual adventure.

But that contrast is only half of what makes this Idaho natural wonder stand out.

Lake Pend Oreille is one of the deepest freshwater lakes in North America.

According to resident Skip Pucci, 80 percent of the lake is over 1,000 feet deep.

"It's the thirteenth largest body of fresh water by volume in the world," he proudly told "Good Morning America."

The towering cliffs surrounding the lake are called The Green Monarchs, named after a copper mine.

"They rise out of the water here about 4,000 feet and they go down into the lake over 1,000 feet deep," Skip said. "And they are very majestic."

The area's beauty is not found just in the landscape, however, but also in the wildlife which inhabits it.

"It's an area where if you're going to fish this, you would find a variety of fish species, ranging from warm water fish around the peripheral of the lake to very deep cold water loving fish like Bull Trout," said Tom Whalen, Senior Conservation Officer for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Lake Pend Oreille Cruises employee Linda Mitchell knows there is more to be seen than fish.

"[The lake] has more wildlife in the lower 48 states than any other state," she told "Good Morning America." "We know where the osprey's nests are and often times they fly right over the boat. It's spectacular. We had an osprey fly by with a fish in its talons."

"I have a complete affinity with this lake," she said. "I can't imagine ever leaving. I love it here."

Skip Pucci agrees, and knows that the surreal beauty of the lake's reflection of the land and sky as the sun sets in hazy pastel colors is not something to be taken for granted.

"It's kind of like a nice glass of wine," he said. "It's clear and it has a very distinct color with shades to it which reflect the sky and the flavor to it that is very unsurpassed."

How To Get There and What To Do

[Horizon Air](#). One of the best ways to visit Lake Pend Oreille is to fly into Spokane, Wash., rent a car and drive the rest

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of the way. The Lake is just 75 miles from Spokane International Airport, across some of North Idaho's most beautiful scenery. Horizon Air is the sister carrier to Alaska Airlines, serving 52 cities in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

<http://www.horizonair.com>.

Lake Pend Oreille Cruises. The 110-plus miles of Lake Pend Oreille's mostly undeveloped shoreline is best explored by boat, and you can't see it any better than aboard the Shawnodese. Linda and Curtis Mitchell will give you an intimate tour of the deep blue waters and myriad of waterfowl and wildlife. <http://www.lakependoreillecruises.com>.

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>

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