

SEATTLE METROPOLITAN

52 GREAT WEEKENDS

GO FAR spend LESS

SCALE MOUNTAINS



JANU
\$4.99



Style watch.
Easy updates
for winter

The house that
Frank Chopp
built in Olympia

Absinthe gives
Seattle a new
way to be green





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ENJOY AN ART WEEKEND IN THAT OTHER BIG WESTERN WASHINGTON CITY

Over the past decade, **TACOMA** has transformed from a suburban wasteland famous for gritty industries (like the “aroma of Tacoma”—producing Simpson Tacoma Kraft pulp mill) into an eclectic mix of iconic museums and upscale cuisine. **THE TACOMA ART MUSEUM** (253-272-4258; www.tacomaartmuseum.org) houses a rich collection of nineteenth-century European, twentieth-century American, and Japanese art. While Tacoma is an easy day trip, there is good reason to

stay overnight—tequila flights and homemade chiles rellenos at **MASA** (253-473-3510; www.masatacoma.com). So check in at **HOTEL MURANO** (253-254-0560; www.hotelmurano.tacoma.com), which displays world-class glass art and is named for a famous Venetian glass-making island.

DRIVE TIME 45 minutes
WHEN TO GO National Arts Program Exhibit, June and July

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BE ABLE TO SAY YOU KNEW VANCOUVER WHEN

Our rival city across the border’s a year away from becoming the white-hot center of the universe. By the time the Olympic torch glides into the city on February 12, 2010, **VANCOUVER** will be on everyone’s lips. You won’t be able

to score a room at the **FAIRMONT HOTEL VANCOUVER** (604-684-3131; www.fairmont.com/hotelvancouver) come next winter, so make it a weekend home now. The hotel’s a perfect HQ from which to plan expeditions in the city.

Hit **ROBSON STREET** (www.robsonstreet.ca) for high-end fashion or drag your offspring to Granville Island’s **KIDS ONLY MARKET** (www.granvilleisland.com) for all manner of toys, games, and half-pint sartorial accoutrements. Then, because you won’t be able to get the host to look at you during the Olympic Games, put your feed bag on for seafood at **C RESTAURANT** (604-681-1164; www.crestaurant.com).

DRIVE TIME 2 hours, 40 minutes
WHEN TO GO Next weekend

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FLOAT A BOAT FOR BC FUN

Dart up the Strait of Juan de Fuca aboard the **VICTORIA CLIPPER** (206-448-5000; www.clippervacations.com), which takes on passengers at Seattle’s Pier 69, and you’ll be in **VICTORIA, BC**, in time for tea. Stay at the **FAIRMONT EMPRESS** (250-384-8111; www.fairmont.com/empress) but don’t expect your scruffy Seattle ways to fly at the hotel’s famous tea service, for which reservations are required, locals dress in their Sunday best, and a tuxedoed man materializes at your table with a silver pot of tea and a five-tiered hors d’oeuvre tray. Duck out of teatime early and meander over to the Butchart Gardens, 55 acres of tranquil paths exploding with more flowers than your grandma’s bathroom wallpaper. For a more raucous time, march toward the **IRISH TIMES PUB** (250-383-7775; www.irishtimespub.ca), which pours 30 varieties of suds—and not a tea-toting tux wearer in sight.

TRAVEL TIME 2 hours, 45 minutes by boat
WHEN TO GO May through September

