



Mima
Mounds

Your Guide To



Small Town with
Big Attractions

experiencegrandmound.com

Grand Mound traces its origins to the days when the Chehalis Tribe grazed animals on the prairie. The tribe thrives here today, sharing ownership of Grand Mound's biggest attraction, Great Wolf Lodge. With a dozen indoor waterslides and activities for all ages, as well as plenty of other activities, shopping and dining, this theme park is a premier destination for families.

Grand Mound, so named by early settlers—the James, Mills and Brown families—has gone through a few name changes; from Agayt ("long open space") to nsq'wanxtn ("place to dry hides on a frame") to Prairie de Butte once Hudson's Bay Company began to settle in the area—the current name refers to the same wide, raised land that's part of a system of regional hillocks. A few miles north are the famously mysterious Mima Mounds,

fields of earthen piles that, after much studying, appear to be random acts of nature (unless aliens had something to do with it). A three-story brick structure, once the old Grand Mound School and one of the largest buildings in the area, is now in private ownership and is across the street from Great Wolf Lodge.

Grand Mound today provides views of mountains, evergreen trees, and the Chehalis River, making a bucolic place to get away from it all or to journey to a nearby mountain or one of Thurston County's bigger cities.

GRAND MOUND

Things To Do

1 Great Wolf Lodge

Water Park – This prime attraction is an all-inclusive funfest for everyone from toddlers to grandparents. The indoor water park hosts a water challenge course, a river run, a mini splash park for the little ones, and a “hot springs” for everyone—but let’s face it, it has “parents” written all over it. Climb a four-story treehouse and take a waterslide down, shoot hoops in the pool, or whoosh down a six-story funnel. The fun is endless. But the park does close, and there’s no better place to sleep off the excitement than in the forest-themed suites.

Dining – Kid-friendly food abounds in this cruise ship of a resort. Pizza, burgers, pasta, a deluxe continental breakfast, and a dinner buffet are just some of the offerings coming out of the lodge’s five eating establishments. Parents will appreciate a pick-me-up at the onsite Starbucks and cocktails at Grizzly Rob’s Bar.

Attractions – In the event that the water park does not provide enough to do, Great Wolf features a range of dry-clothes activities for kids, including MagicQuest, an arcade, Build-A-Bear, an interactive mining experience, black-light mini golf, and a teen-friendly outdoor ropes course (summer only). And if the kids get bored (ha!), there’s always the Great Wolf Candy Company. 20500 Old Hwy 99 SW, greatwolf.com/grand-mound

2 Oregon Trail Marker

Come face to face with history throughout Thurston County at the various stone monuments marking the Oregon Trail. In Grand Mound, this marker reads “Oregon Trail 1844, marked by Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution in the State of Washington, 1916.” 20639 Old Hwy 99 (corner



of Grand Mound Way SW, located between two cedar trees)

3 Fort Henness Monument

For another foray into the past, stop by the Fort Henness monument across from the Grand Mound Cemetery. The simple stone marker is all that’s left of a fort that housed 30 families during the 1855 “Indian Wars.” The inhabitants lived in relative peace, and the fort was never attacked. 183rd St, across from Grand Mound Cemetery

4 Talking Cedar Brewery and Distillery

This brewery, distillery, and gastropub is owned by the Chehalis Tribe, a first for US history, which barred tribes from producing alcohol on tribal land until Washington state legislators got the law repealed in 2018. The 35,000 square foot space sources grain from local growers in the region and is a partnership with Heritage Distilling with over 20 beers on tap and spirits to sip, as well as a few cider options, all the better to pair with their robust menu.

5 Restaurants

In addition to the dining options at Great Wolf Lodge and numerous fast food joints in town, Grand Mound offers some fan

favorites, including Figaro’s Pizza, Mariachi Alegre, and Burger Claim—home of the Peanut Butter Bacon Burger and the one-pound Shaft Cheeseburger.

Nearby ...

6 Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve

This lumpy field has long been a mystery, with various natural—and extraterrestrial—explanations for its acres of perfectly rounded little hills (sometimes called “soil pimples” for their shape and composition). Chehalis tribal tales credit the mounds to sea creatures beached here after an ancient flood receded; a popular theory involves burrowing gophers. However they got here, they make for an intriguing walk. Ramble along the 1.5-mile ADA accessible paved path, learn from interpretive signs, or chat with a site steward for more information. No dogs allowed. Discover Pass required. Littlerock, dnr.wa.gov/mimamounds

7 Scatter Creek Wildlife Area

Three thousand acres of verdant land make for an idyllic day hike any time of year, with trails that accommodate horses, dogs, and humans. Maintained by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Scatter Creek preserves a prairie ecosystem and provides opportunities for viewing wildlife and various plant and tree species. wdfw.wa.gov/places-to-go/wildlife-areas/scatter-creek-wildlife-area-unit

8 South Sound Speedway

This .375-mile track hosts races for dwarf cars, hobby stocks, vintage modifiers, baby grands, and more, from spring through fall. 3730 183rd Avenue SW, Rochester, southsoundspeedway.com