



Black River Blues
Blueberry Farm

YOUR GUIDE TO

Small but mighty,
Rochester packs in
history and happenings



EXPERIENCEROCHESTERWA.COM

This little town has deep roots in its Native, pioneer, and Scandinavian past. What is now Rochester was home to tribal nations before the mid-19th-century arrival of pioneers who initiated businesses based on the region's natural resources. Early railroad lines shuttling timber around the country made Rochester something of a boom town and when that industry declined, the town became known for its strawberries. The Chehalis Tribe still calls this area home, and today they thrive thanks in part to the presence of Lucky Eagle Casino.

Rochester honors the heritage of some of its founders with the annual tradition of Swede Day. Rochester's most notable attraction is the Gate City Schoolhouse, a one-room building dating back to 1910 and reminiscent of Laura Ingalls Wilder's life. Prehistoric sea life, including whale fossils, have been found along the high bank bluffs above the Chehalis River, some of which are viewable at the Grand Mound/Rochester Chamber of Commerce. Like the old days, agriculture still plays a major role here, with several farms and nurseries ready to offload flowers, fruits, vegetables, and plants in this agriculturally rich area alongside the Chehalis River.

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THINGS TO DO

1 SWEDE DAY MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL

Going strong since 1978, this June festival honors Rochester's Swedish past with a parade, live music, pony rides, family activities, Swedish meatballs and a strawberry dessert served at Swede Hall.

rochestercitizensgroupswedehall.net

2 SWEDE HALL

The barn-like structure, built in 1939 and modeled after traditional Scandinavian halls, is maintained as an affordable rental hall for the community. Swede Hall serves as a grange and hosts events throughout the week, including church services, town meetings, and community dances.

18543 Albany St, 360-273-7974

rochestercitizensgroupswedehall.net

3 GATE CITY SCHOOLHOUSE

Step back in time to the days of Little House on the Prairie in this sweet one-room schoolhouse. Built in 1910 and added to the Washington State Historic Register in 1994, the building contains the original windows, slate blackboard, beadboard wainscoting, and old wooden desks—used by children lucky enough not to be stuck with apple crates.

16925 Moon Rd SW

gatecityschoolhouse.com

4 WALUPT FARMS

Opened by a physician's assistant and lavender enthusiast in 2021, Walupt Farms is a purple haze of aromatic lavender plants abuzz with bees. And chickens. And some goats. The owner collects honey and distills the fragrant flowers into essential oils and



linen sprays. For now, visits to the farm are by appointment only.

19441 Jordan St SW, 360-870-7921

waluptfarms.com

5 HELSING JUNCTION FARM

Started in 1992 by two female graduates of The Evergreen State College in a pastoral setting near the Chehalis River, Helsing Junction provides produce to its 550 CSA members and hosts a farmstand nearby, where passers-by can browse seasonal offerings between June and November. Tours of the farm are available by appointment.

Fields and office: 12233 Independence Rd SW, Farm stand: 12013 Independence Rd SW, helsingjunctionfarms.com

6 LAEL'S MOON GARDEN NURSERY

Larry and Bethany Lael left their government jobs behind to start this idyllic nursery, where novices and gardening aficionados alike can browse their selection of fruit trees, conifers, shrubs, and edible plants; pick up soil products; or consult with Larry and Bethany about how to create their own personal Eden.

17813 Moon Rd SW, 360-273-9567

laelsmoongarden.com

7 LUCKY EAGLE CASINO AND HOTEL

The Chehalis Tribe's casino and pet-friendly hotel is a city unto itself. With all the traditional gaming tables, live poker, and 1,200 slot machines, as well as an indoor pool, restaurants, bars, and cafes, Lucky Eagle offers a one-stop vacation for anyone who likes the rush of a Roulette table or just the cha-ching of the slot machine.

12888 188th Ave SW

luckyeagle.com

8 HERITAGE MEATS

Meat lovers can't pass through Rochester without stopping by Heritage Meats, a haven of sustainable, humanely prepared, locally sourced beef, pork, goat, lamb, and poultry products. Look for the schoolhouse-style building and the American flag.

18241 Pendleton St SW, 360-273-2202

heritagemeatswa.com

9 PACIFIC NORTHWEST HONEY COMPANY

Pick up a jar of raw clover honey from their honey bar, take a beekeeping class, or troubleshoot your Queen problems here. Amanda and Kevin Mills are dedicated not just to the production of honey, but to the entire business of running a healthy hive.

10020 Hwy 12 SW, 360-706-4978

hive5bees.com

10 BLACK RIVER BLUES BLUEBERRY FARM

Situated in a fertile valley, Black River Blues Blueberry Farm has been hand-picking their berries and selling them at the Olympia Farmers Market since 2004. Visitors are welcome to visit the farm and sample their berries.

17132 Moon Rd SW, 360-273-3489