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Exploring Southern Oregon & Northern California Rogue River Extension Ideas

The area surrounding the Rogue River is diverse and spectacular offering everything from arts and culture to wild rivers and mountains. One could spend months exploring the area. Here are a few highlights.

Oregon Shakespeare Festival: Located in Ashland, and with roots going back to 1893, the first Oregon Shakespeare Festival was held in 1935. Eleven performances are given between February and October, presented on three stages and roughly half of the plays produced each year are by William Shakespeare. Over 400,000 people come annually from around the world to enjoy the productions as well as the area's fine dining, art and accommodations. Visit www.osfashland.org. (Ashland is just 20 minutes south of the Medford Airport and about one hour from our meeting point for Rogue River trips.)

Local Accommodations: Our favorite is the [Winchester Inn](#) which features 19 rooms in and a nationally- acclaimed restaurant, all within four Victorian-style buildings replete with award-winning gardens.

The [Ashland Springs Hotel](#) is another option, located just down the street. On the National Register of Historic Places, it is a beautifully restored landmark hotel with 79 rooms.

Jacksonville and the Britt Music Festival: Just 30 minutes from Ashland is the historic 1850's gold rush town of Jacksonville, the first town in America to be named a National Historic Landmark. It is home to the Britt Festivals with dozens of summer concerts that feature superb artists performing jazz, blues, folk, classical, world, country and pop music. All this is set outside in a naturally formed amphitheater within the beautiful hillside estate of 19th century photographer Peter Britt. Tens of thousands of music lovers come every year to enjoy Britt's world-class performances.

Local Accommodations: Our favorite is the [Jacksonville Inn](#), one of gold-rush Jacksonville's early permanent structures, that exudes the nostalgic romances of that era. Built in 1861, there are rooms in the original building as well as several luxury cottages. The Inn is renowned for its gourmet restaurant with an astounding wine list.

Southern Oregon Wine Country: With a warm, dry climate that is considered to be similar to the Bordeaux region of France, this is one of the warmest growing regions in Oregon. There are some 60 wineries in five AVA's (American Viticultural Area) and most are open for tastings and visits. If you don't have time to visit them all, focus on the [Applegate Valley Wine Trail](#) where you'll find proof that there's more than Pinot Noir in Oregon.

Crater Lake National Park: For hundreds of years, Crater Lake has inspired people with its combination of water and mountains. With excellent trails, boat tours on the lake and a historic lodge there are many ways to enjoy this natural wonder created some 7700 years ago

when volcanic Mount Mazama collapsed after a monstrous eruption. The Park is located just under two hours from the Medford airport and two and a half hours from our Rogue River meeting point.

Oregon Caves National Monument: This fabulous but little-known National Monument offers a wide range of activities including the main highlight, a tour through an active marble cave that has been created by natural forces over the course of millions of years. On these ranger-led hikes, you learn about the geology, fossils, cave ecosystems, bats and much more. Above ground, there's more to explore including a remnant old-growth coniferous forest, home to a fantastic array of plants, and a Douglas-fir tree with the widest known girth in Oregon.

The Oregon Coast: Called "The People's Coast" Oregon has made all 363 miles of its coastline public land, available for all to enjoy. Rugged cliffs, historic lighthouses, verdant forests, spectacular coastal scenery, impressive sand dunes and vast sandy beaches await you along the Pacific Coast Scenic Byway, US Highway 101. Recreational opportunities include hiking, fishing, cycling, beachcombing, whale and bird watching and much more. In addition there are art galleries, festivals and aquariums.

Redwoods National and State Parks: Once covering over two million acres, only 4% of the world's old-growth redwoods remain and 45% of all remaining protected old-growth forests in California are contained in these Parks. It's a place where trees grow to 35 stories tall and are over 2000 years old. There is incredible diversity of life at [Redwood National and State Parks](#) and the ancient coastal redwood ecosystem that is preserved here contains some of the planet's most majestic forests. You will find not only old-growth redwood groves, but also open prairie lands, rivers, creeks and 37 miles of pristine California coastline.

Table Rocks, Rogue River Valley: The Table Rocks were once a sanctuary for the Takelma Indians and now offer easy to moderate hiking opportunities to mesas where you the views extend across the Rogue River to the Siskiyou and the Cascades. The Upper Table Rock Trail is an easy 2.8 mile trip; while the Lower Table Rock hike is a 5.4 mile trip. The trailhead is just north of Medford and is open all year. Spring is the best time to visit to see the variety of endangered wildflowers in bloom.

Out 'n' About Treehouse Ziplines: Looking for another adrenaline rush? Visit Out 'n' About where you will find ziplines for the beginner and the more advanced adventurer. Located just south of Cave Junction the treehouse ziplines are about an hour away from our meeting point in Merlin, Oregon.

Wildlife Images Rehabilitation and Education Center: A 24-acre facility in Grants Pass, the Center treats sick, injured and orphaned wild animals, giving them a second chance at life. The facility is open year-round with daily guided tours are available

It's easy to see how a person could explore southern Oregon for months. Depending on your available time and interests you can easily create a wonderful itinerary. ROW Adventures also offers fully-guided custom trips for groups of six or more that combine the best of the area along with our signature lodge-based Rogue River rafting trips. This can be designed exactly as your group desires or you can choose one of our designs. Please contact us for further information.