



## Northwest Passage 2025: A Tyrolian Adventure

PHOTOS: DAN WILSON



*A collective recap of  
Oregon Region's first  
Northwest Passage  
Tour of the year.*

### A TYROLIAN ADVENTURE BY LISA MEYER

**T**his was my very first time participating in a PCA tour, and I couldn't have asked for a better introduction than the Northwest Passage 2025 Tyrolian Adventure. Our journey began in Welches, Oregon, and from the moment we checked in, I was impressed by how organized everything was. The welcome bag included everything we needed: route details, itinerary, and tags for our cars. It was a smooth, professional start that set the tone for the entire trip.

Each morning kicked off with a driver's meeting, where we reviewed the day's route and logistics. A printed guidebook

outlined all the details, and for those of us using tech, the Ride With GPS app made navigating even easier. With voice-guided turn-by-turn directions, it was almost impossible to miss a turn (even though we did!)

Forty cars participated in this tour and were split into two groups. Group 1, with about 20 cars, set off first at a more "spirited" pace. Fifteen minutes later, Group 2 followed at a more relaxed pace. This made it easy to choose your comfort





level without holding anyone back. The weather was perfect the entire time.

Our route on Day One took us past Mt. Hood with light traffic and wide-open views. After crossing the Hood River Toll Bridge, we cruised briefly along the Columbia River, where we saw smoke from the Rowena fire in the distance. We stopped for lunch in Union Gap at Famous Dave's, a great way to break up the drive.

As Group 1 continued toward Leavenworth, several cars at the front of the pack encountered a bowling ball sized rock in the road that couldn't be avoided. Several tires were damaged, but thanks to the quick response from Les Schwab, replacements were quickly installed. Everyone still made it to Leavenworth in time to enjoy dinner at the Bavarian Lodge.

The next leg of our trip took us toward Sandpoint, Idaho, winding through Davenport, Washington, and surrounding farmland. We could see the landscape change dramatically from flat, high plateaus to steep-walled canyons. It was a highlight for anyone who loves geology or scenic drives. Lunch and bathroom stops were well spaced, giving us time to catch

## FIRST NORTHWEST PASSAGE TOUR OF THE YEAR

BY DAN WILSON

**L**ynn and I were impressed with Oregon Region's first Northwest Passage Tour of the year in June and all it had to offer, including gorgeous weather and interesting folks to mingle with.

The Tour Team did a superb job of creating scenic, fun and exciting routes, along with nice lodging options, and daily hosted receptions. Several evenings also included tasty hosted dinners.

This tour included a "navigator's day off", or free day, to enjoy golf, a scenic boat cruise on Lake Pend Oreille, a half-day tour loop over to Troy, Montana and local exploring around Sandpoint, Idaho.

Our favorite memories include visiting with new friends and past acquaintances. Humbird Hotel at Schweitzer Mountain Resort provided varied dining opportunities, and a spectacular view to the East. The nine-mile drive to and from Schweitzer and Sandpoint was twisty and a blast to burn through the hairpin turns each day. On our final evening in Sandpoint, the Idaho Club was the perfect venue for our group to enjoy the hosted reception and dinner.

My favorite section of road was the eight-mile curvy and scenic Old Spiral Highway between highways 95 and 128 in Idaho (apparently the inspiration for the song "Hot Rod Lincoln").

We are looking forward to what the Northwest Passage Team dreams up for next year. ■





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up, regroup, and share road stories.

Our destination was the mountaintop resort of Schweitzer, overlooking Lake Pend Oreille. It was for two nights, which offered a navigator's day off! Some members golfed at The Idaho

Club, others took a boat ride on the lake, and a few went rogue with a day drive through Bonners Ferry, dipping into Montana before looping back. We rented e-bikes in downtown Sandpoint and rode the downtown area trails. It was a relaxing way to soak in the natural beauty.

That evening's dinner at The Idaho Club was a standout. During the event, the Northwest Passage Committee members were recognized, along with Keith Martin, founder of Sports Car Market, who supported and sponsored the trip. It was an honor to have a sponsor participate in the entire journey and be acknowledged by fellow enthusiasts.

Our final destination was Walla Walla, Washington, but the road there was anything but ordinary. We passed through Coeur d'Alene, then followed winding roads through lush greenery toward St. Maries. We descended the Old Spiral Highway into Lewiston, Idaho, a favorite among driving enthusiasts for

its curves and views.

We wrapped up the day at the historic Marcus Whitman Hotel. Our last evening included a group dinner and some fun awards.

On Day 5, some participants chose to head home from Walla Walla, while others continued on to Maryhill Winery, a perfect spot to enjoy a break and soak in some last views before driving back toward Portland. We opted to head home, since we had a seven-hour drive ahead of us back to Grants Pass. While the group continued, our minds were already filled with memories and highlights from the past few days, making it a trip to remember.

I started this journey knowing only one couple, but by the end, I had made meaningful connections with so many others. Seasoned club members and fellow first-timers alike were welcoming, down to earth, and genuinely enthusiastic about the experience.

This unforgettable trip wouldn't have been possible without the dedicated work of the 2025 Northwest Passage Committee, whose efforts behind the scenes included logistics, route mapping, hotel bookings, meal planning, and overall event coordination. Every detail was thoughtfully executed, and we're incredibly grateful for the time and energy they put into making this adventure such a success.

If you've ever considered joining a PCA trip, don't hesitate. Sign up for the next Northwest Passage in September. The routes are breathtaking, the camaraderie is real, and the memories are well worth the miles. ■

## NORTHWEST PASSAGE – A CRUISE ON LAKE PEND OREILLE

BY: BRIAN CLEMONS & JOYCE KIM

On Saturday's "Navigator's Day Off" we enjoyed a private guided boat tour of Lake Pend Oreille (pronounced "Ponderay"). Approximately 30 passengers joined the tour, filling the boat to capacity. We started from Sandpoint City Beach Park, a 25-minute drive from Schweitzer Ski Resort where we stayed for two days.

We did a little preliminary planning and found a Farmers Market in Sandpoint less than a mile from the park. It was a wonderful market filled with produce, fruit, baked goods, pasture-raised meats and jewelry. We bought sandwiches and baked treats to take along for lunch.

The slow cruise offered both drivers and navigators a chance to relax, delightful service from the Captain and crew (snacks and beverages) and an opportunity for everyone to socialize.

The scenery was beautiful, with views of the many magnificent homes along the shoreline. At one point, we passed what looked like a castle and the captain informed us that its construction has been ongoing for nearly 20 years. At the same location there was an eagle's nest, though we didn't spot any eagles on our adventure.

Toward the end of our tour the captain played audio commentary on the history of the lake, which was fascinating. It described how the lake was formed during the Ice Age, and how the "ice dam" created the Palouse and Columbia River Gorge that we drove through on our journey. After the ice dam collapsed, floodwater in Portland would have been 400 feet deep, which would have submerged all but the tallest buildings currently standing. We learned about the early explorers and settlers and how the Northwest was nearly part of Canada but for David Thompson (a Canadian Fur Trader) stopping a few miles short of discovering that the Pend Oreille River drained into the Columbia. We also learned that the lake was one of the Navy's largest submarines training bases during World War II.

It was a memorable and relaxing experience seeing the beauty of Northern Idaho at a much slower pace than through the windshield of our Porsches. ■





# SPECIAL SECTION: NORTHWEST PASSAGE

## THE PEOPLE OF NORTHWEST PASSAGE





