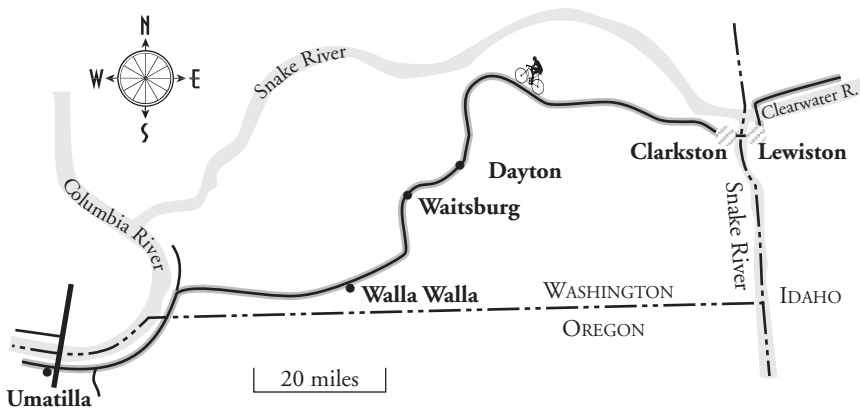




J. INLAND EMPIRE

LEWISTON, ID TO UMATILLA, OR



mile 2465

The name “Inland Empire” was originally coined in 1883 by newspaper editor Frank Dallam to attract people to the area around Spokane. Although there is no official definition of this name, most people believe it covers the area between the Cascade Mountains on the west and the Bitterroot Mountains at the border of Idaho and Montana on the east, and from the Canadian border on the north down to the Blue Mountains near the Oregon border.

The Columbia-Snake River system is very much at the center of this region, and it had much to do with forming the geological and cultural character of the area. Although the Inland Empire includes mountains and forests, it is primarily a rich agricultural area.

The hilly country between Lewiston and Walla Walla is also known as the Palouse. This name may come from the French word “pelous,” meaning grass-covered hills, or from an old Native American village named “Palus.” Although these hills challenge farmers, the soil is too rich to ignore. In fact, the thick layer of humus laden



Rolling wheat country in the Inland Empire, near Pomeroy, WA

loess soil is one of the defining characteristics. Primarily wheat farms cover this area, and the contour farming on the hills produces beautiful patterns of different colors and shades. You may be surprised to learn that eastern Washington produces 10% of the wheat in the United States. Other crops, like onions and fruit are also important, and there are a number of excellent wineries.

Downriver from Clarkston the Snake River loops around to the north through the Snake River Canyon, which is now a lake backed up by a dam. Since there are no roads along the canyon, about ten miles west of Clarkston our route heads inland, following approximately the overland route Lewis and Clark used on their return trip in 1806.

There are more hills than you might expect in this 120-mile stretch to the Columbia River. It's a 2,200-foot climb to Alpowa Summit before dropping into the lush farmland of the Tucannon Valley. Then it's another 1,500 feet of climbing to Dayton, another 800 feet to Walla Walla, and a final 400 feet to the Columbia. You can see that it gets less hilly as you head farther west. If you're heading eastward, the opposite is true; it gets hillier until you crest Alpowa Summit.

From Dayton to Waitsburg, our route follows the Touchet River Valley, very close to the return route of Lewis and Clark in 1806. From Walla Walla we follow the Walla Walla River Valley down to its confluence with the Columbia River—about 12 miles below the mouth of the Snake River. Then most of the last 27 miles to Umatilla is right along the Columbia River as it makes its big curve around to the west.



*Columbia County
Courthouse,
Dayton, WA*

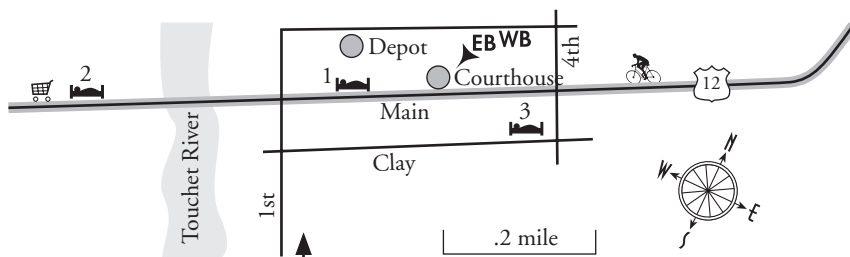
Dayton, WA

Population: 2,600

Often called “historic Dayton,” this pleasant small town boasts 90 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Along with a very attractive county courthouse on Main Street and the oldest Washington railroad depot a block north on Commercial Street, there are many attractive homes within an easy downtown walking area. The Chamber of Commerce offers helpful descriptive maps for walking tours.

There are several good options for lodging, and the Patit Creek restaurant has a reputation throughout the state. Since Dayton is a popular weekend retreat with several wineries nearby, it's a good idea to make reservations.

Lewis and Clark camped just east of town on Patit Creek on their return trip in 1806. The surrounding land was first used for grazing in the 1860s, but it was soon converted to growing wheat and other grains because of the good soil and rainfall. Today it is still primarily a wheat growing area, although Seneca foods claims that it cans 37% of the world's asparagus here.



Dayton, WA — Zip: 99328

- ★ **Dayton Chamber of Commerce:** 166 E Main, 800-882-6299, www.historicdayton.com
- 🏠 1) Weinhard Hotel (\$\$), 235 E Main, 509-382-4032
- 2) Blue Mountain Motel (\$), 414 W Main, 509-382-3040
- 3) Purple House B&B (\$\$), 415 E Clay, 800-486-2574
- ▲ Lewis and Clark Trail State Park, 5 mi. west of Dayton, 509-337-6457, wooded private sites, water, no showers

Special Events

All Wheels Weekend, Fathers' Day Weekend (car show, races, dance)
 Summer Hoopla, mid-July (basketball, parade)
 Columbia County Fair, 2nd weekend in Sept.

Waitsburg, WA

Population: 1,000

Waitsburg is worth at least a quick detour and is only a few blocks from Route 12. The downtown area was rebuilt entirely in brick after a disastrous fire in 1880. The Bruce Memorial Museum at 318 Main St. (509-337-6582) is only open weekends and by special appointment, but you can always ride by and enjoy the exterior.

The Corps of Discovery camped on the bank of the Touchet River near town on May 1, 1806, on their return journey. Today there is a motel, restaurant, and grocery store if you decide you'd like to stay.

Zip: 99361

 Waitsburg Inn Motel (\$), 509-337-8455

Walla Walla, WA

Population: 30,000

“A town so lovely, they named it twice” is the local legend. The Walla Walla Valley was originally the home of several Native American tribes, and the name means “small rapid streams” or “many waters.” In 1818 the North West Company built Fort Nez Perce at the mouth of the Walla Walla River. This fertile area has produced a wide variety of agricultural products, although wheat is king today.

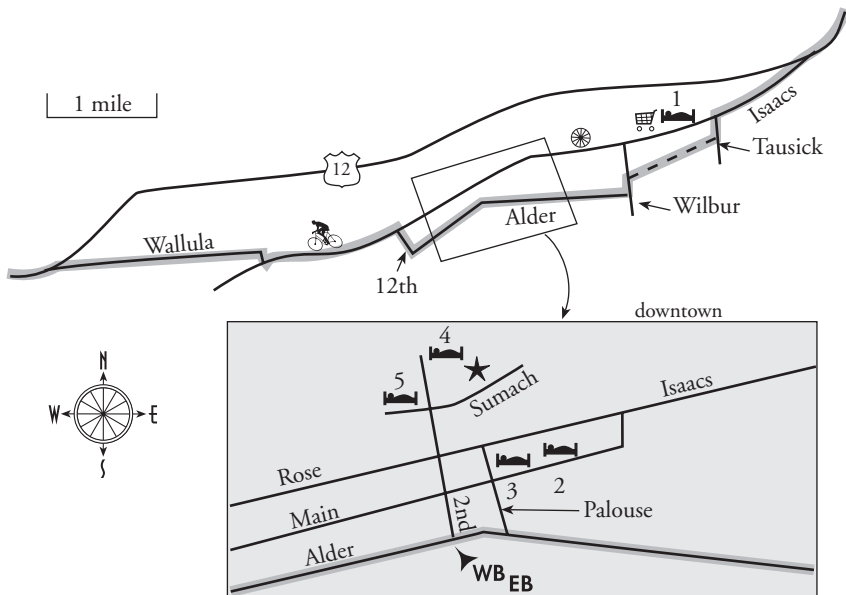
In 1836 Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, early pioneers on the Oregon Trail, established a mission among the Cayuse Indians eight miles west of town at a place called Waiilatpu (place of the rye grass). For many years they taught the Indians about farming as well as Christianity. This was also an important stop for many pioneers on the Oregon Trail.

As in many mission ventures, there was misunderstanding. While the white missionaries wanted to civilize the natives and convert them to Christianity, the Indians cared more about the white man's magic in growing food and defeating enemies than about religion. When a measles epidemic killed many Indians, but very few whites eleven years later, the Indians blamed the missionaries and slaughtered the Whitmans and ten others. The restored Mission can be visited today to learn about pioneer life in this area.

In 1853 the Washington Territory was established, and Walla Walla was the center of activity. Governor Isaac Stevens negotiated the Treaty of 1855 with the local Indian tribes, which set aside reservations for the Indians and most of the best land for American settlers. In 1859 Fort Walla Walla was built by the U.S. Army, and for 50 years it was the center of pioneer life in this area.

Today Walla Walla offers a wide variety of motels, restaurants, and shopping, but no camping. There is an older pleasant downtown and a newer area of malls east of town on Isaacs Ave. You may choose to ride on busy Isaacs to take advantage

of the services there, or you can follow the quieter and more pleasant bypass bicycle route shown on the town map. The Route 12 bypass to the north of town carries a lot of fast traffic and should be avoided.



Walla Walla, WA — Zip: 99362

- ★ **Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce**
29 E Sumach, 509-525-0850, 877-WWVISIT,
www.wwchamber.com, info@wwchamber.com
- The Chamber of Commerce lists 5 B&Bs and 13 motels and hotels. A small sample is listed below:
 - 1) Colonial Motel (\$), 2279 Isaacs, 509-529-1220
 - 2) Travelodge (\$\$), 421 E Main, 509-529-4940
 - 3) City Center Motel (\$\$), 627 W Main, 800-453-3160
 - 4) Best Western (\$\$), 7 E Oak, 800-448-5544
 - 5) Budget Inn Motel (\$), 305 N 2nd, 888-529-4161
- ▲ Pierce's Green Valley Campground, 24676 Hwy. 12, Touchet, 24 mi. west of Walla Walla, 509-394-2387; grass, little shade, water, porta-potties, no showers or privacy
- ⊗ Bicycle Barn, 1503 E Isaacs, 509-529-7860

Umatilla, OR

Population: 3,200

When Lewis and Clark passed through here in 1805, they were slowed down as they negotiated the Muscleshell Rapids. They found a Native American village alongside the river, since this area was used as a river crossing and place of commerce. There is evidence that this site has been occupied since about 470 BCE.

Today this is still an important river crossing and a crossroads of interstate highways and railroads that continue to provide some commerce. The rapids are gone, having been used as the base for the McNary Dam in the 1950s. In fact, most of the lower Columbia River today is really a series of lakes created by dams. Only in pictures and visitor centers can you get an idea what the river was like 200 years ago.

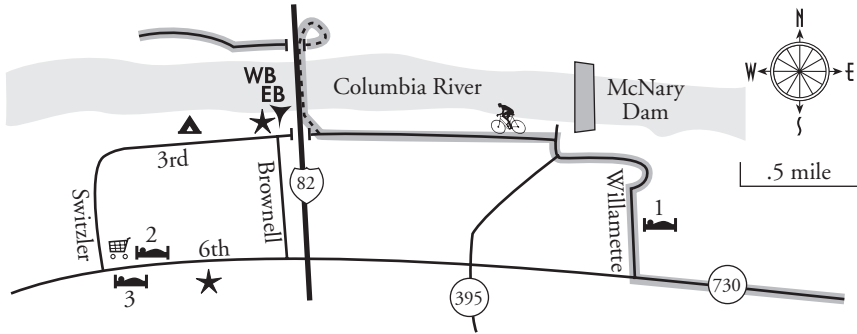
In the late 1800s the town, originally called Columbia, was a freight transfer station for gold mining. It was incorporated in 1864 as Umatilla Landing and became the county seat because it was the only town in the county. The town boomed during the 1940s with the Umatilla Army Depot, and again in the 1950s with the construction of the McNary Dam. In 1963 the John Day Dam, 40 miles downstream, had an even larger effect on the town by flooding much of the original town, most of which was moved to higher land. Only a few buildings are older than 1940.

At McNary Dam there is a visitor center that emphasizes how fish are transported around dams in both directions. You can also visit the fish ladder and watch fish struggling upstream.

If you are camping, there is beautiful camping right in town. You should also consider camping at Crow Butte, another beautiful campground 27 miles west of here, to break up the long stretch to Biggs Junction.



Navigating the Columbia River today



mile 2619

Umatilla, OR — Zip: 97882

- ★ **Umatilla Chamber of Commerce:** 1530 6th St., 800-542-4944
- ★ **Oregon Visitor Center:** 3rd St. just west of I-82
- 🏠 1) Desert River Inn (\$\$), 705 Willamette Ave., 877-922-1000
- 2) Tillicum Inn (\$), 1481 6th St., 541-922-3236
- 3) Rest A Bit Motel (\$), 1370 6th St., 800-423-9913
- ▲ 1) Umatilla Marina RV Park, 1710 Quincy, 541-922-3939, grass, shade, showers
- 2) Hat Rock CG, opposite Hat Rock SP, 8 mi. east of Umatilla on Hwy. 730, 503-567-4188, private, grass, shade, pool, showers
- 3) Crow Butte State Park, Box 217, Paterson, WA 99345, 509-875-2644, 27 mi. west of Umatilla on Hwy. 14, 2 flat mi. off highway, beautiful grass, shade, showers

Bicycle Guide to the Lewis & Clark Trail

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The author and publisher of this book, and the government agencies on whose roads you bicycle, are not responsible for your riding habits, bicycle condition, and any accidents which might occur while following this route. They urge users of this Guide to wear a certified bicycle helmet, wear highly visible clothing, use reflectors and lights, obey all traffic laws, watch for pedestrians and motorists, and generally use good common sense and courtesy.

Road and trail conditions change. The routes suggested in this book may be altered due to road and trail maintenance, changes in state and local roads, and road and trail surface conditions. Surface conditions of roads and trails may change due to weather, construction, and other local factors. Every effort has been made to provide accurate information in this book at the time of publication.

Updates will be posted on the author's website at www.deerfootpublications.com as they are received and verified. Readers are invited to send suggested updates to Tod@deerfootpublications.com.

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