

Mt. Spokane State Park: A Ticket to Happiness

The [awe-inspiring beauty](#) awe-inspiring of Mount Spokane State Park makes it well worth a visit, whether you live on the other side of the country or are lucky enough to live right on the doorstep, and is the ideal place to break away from your busy daily life and look after your health and happiness. Here are the top three reasons to visit the park and give yourself a boost.

Get Outside



[Above the valley fog in Mt. Spokane State Park](#)

Getting away from city pollution and into the fresh mountain air has obvious health benefits for your lungs, but what about your mental state? "Finding time to get outside on a nice day is [a] key happiness booster," says [3B Scientific](#) – to the point that some doctors have prescribed woodland walks to improve their patients' health by reducing depression, stress and heart disease. Even if you have health problems that prevent exercise, or are just looking for a rest, simply being outside improves your wellbeing: a research team at the London School of Economics found that participants in a [mood-tracking study](#) "were found to be substantially happier outdoors in all natural environments than they were in urban environments". Given that urban environments emerged incredibly recently in human history, it makes perfect sense that enjoying the outdoors makes us feel better, especially when taking into account the necessity of sunlight for our bodies to make essential

nutrient Vitamin D. Spending time hiking, picnicking, mountain biking or just appreciating the jaw-dropping beauty of the mountains can help you to relax, slow down and increase your happiness.

Get Moving



Snowshoeing is the fastest growing activity at Mt. Spokane

The more we study exercise, the more we begin to realize the vast range of benefits it has in store for us. We've known for ages that regular physical activity can help to lower blood pressure, improve glucose metabolism, and reduce risk of heart disease, but research has more recently been [exploring the link between physical fitness and mental fitness](#), finding that "cardiorespiratory fitness may have a selective protective effect against age-associated cognitive decline" – that is, physical fitness may help to stave off dementia and similar diseases in old age. Physical activity can also be a major boost to happiness and "has such a profound effect on our happiness and well-being that it's actually been proven to be an effective strategy for overcoming depression," [says LifeHacker](#). The best way to work physical activity into your life is to ensure that it's fun; don't suffer through hours on an exercise bike or torturous aerobics classes if you hate it, but rather look for something you enjoy. The best trick of all is activities that are fun in and of themselves, like skiing and snowboarding. If you're already a winter sports enthusiast looking for something different, or if you fancy an alternative to the normal range of winter sports, right now is the best time

to try a different activity: “the explosion of new technology for skis, boots, clothing, and safety gear [has made the backcountry more accessible](#) to anyone moving up from intermediate level,” advise IgluSki. Try out alternative winter sports such as backcountry skiing, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, or dog sledding for the most fun you’ll ever have while, [notes WalkJogRun](#) with only a hint of jealousy, “torching major calories”.

Connect With People and Animals



[Learning about Mt. Spokane butterflies](#)

Our social relationships are one of the most important predictors of our happiness. Both [social network size](#) and [time or money spent helping others](#) have powerful links to increased happiness, while not staying in touch with friends and family is one of the [top five regrets of the dying](#). A peaceful holiday playing board games, hiking, and picnicking in the mountains, or even just a day-long walk in the woods is an ideal way to set aside quality time with the people in our lives. It’s also an ideal way to fit in contact with animals, whether that’s horseback riding, bird-watching, or walking with your dogs. This contact with animals is yet another thing that improves our wellbeing, [notes the Coca-Cola Company on its blog](#): “The more time you spend with your four-legged companion, the better you feel.” Just a few minutes of petting an animal provides an immediate psychological and

physical boost, helping to “decrease levels of stress hormones, regulate breathing, and lower blood pressure”, as well as release bonding hormone oxytocin, [reports the National Geographic](#).

So why not come and enjoy the fresh air, spectacular scenery, quiet, peace and cozy cabins at Mt. Spokane State Park, and nurture yourself in the process?

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