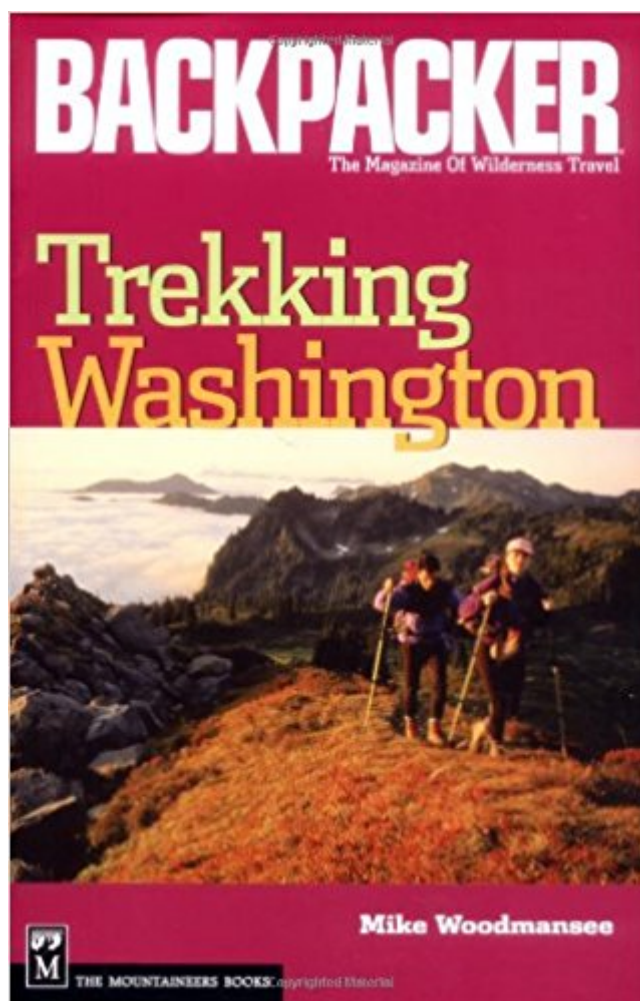


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# Trekking Washington (Backpacker Magazine)



## Synopsis

\* Ninety color photographs\* 26 maps\* The Cougar Traverse is included as a bonus trekFor those seriously seeking the solitude and unadulterated beauty of the backcountry, this book offers a great selection treks in Washington over thirty-miles long and how to best plan for them. These long distance Washington treks are rated easier, strenuous, very strenuous, most strenuous, and toughest. Devils Loop tops out at 43 miles, for example, and is rated easier. The Sawtooth- Lake Chelan Traverse boasts 86 miles and has a very strenuous rating. There's something for everyone who enjoys muscle-powered challenges (and aren't afraid of a few blisters) in this unique Washington hiking guidebook.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Offers useful advice – Author Mike Woodmansee writes with a knowledgeable, easy-to-read style and the accompanying full-color photographs range from the natural beauty one is likely to encounter on the trail to fun pictures of people hiking and swimming along the way. (Sequim Gazette) Woodmansee does a good job of offering itineraries for trekkers with differing paces – The guide is well-designed and the essential information is concise and helpful. Trip descriptions are interesting and include a variety of side trips – Overall, this is a high-quality and inspiring guide – Quit dreaming, read this guide, and take a very long trip in the wild. (Washington Trails) For those who have been bitten with an extra dose of wanderlust, this book will

only make it more intense. These trails are a good cross-section of some of the best the state has to offer. This is a great resource for someone seeking multiday treks. (Idaho Falls Post Register) An advantage to this book is its suggestions on where to camp to keep days to a reasonable number of miles. The routes are shown in color illustrations that have a 3-D feel and the photography is excellent. (Longview (WA) News) Targets the hard-core backpacker with a penchant for long distance and long hours on the trail. If you are a backpacker's backpacker, this is your book. (The Cascadian) Trekking Washington provides a fine service by focusing on a form of travel that Woodmansee describes as 'being more about the journey than about the destination.' (Klamath Falls (OR) Herald and News)

MIKE WOODMANSEE is a very experienced hiker. His hiking background spans 29 years and includes hikes in WA, a dozen other states, and six countries. It is his passion. He did the Washington PCT and he has summited Denali and other major peaks, including Mt. Rainier (to the top 10 times). With his wife he twice almost reached the top of Everest. Currently he works in finance and resides in La Conner, WA. This is his first book.

I have hiked and run the trails all over the Cascades for over 35 years, and have an extensive library of guidebooks (going all the way back to the original Manning's 100 Hikes from 1965). Although there are many excellent guidebooks and a few not so useful, this one is among the very best for the purposes of the fit who want some good long routes that are accurately described and detailed. Here's why: I have been able to do the majority of the routes Mike describes, or at least portions of them, and I believe that his descriptions are "spot on". True, his recommended daily mileages are excessive for some people (witness a review here by another person), but for almost every trip Mike gives two alternatives to each 20 mile/day itinerary: 10-15 mpd, and 10 mpd. For those for whom 10 miles per day is still too much, relax, because there are plenty of guidebooks to trips for a more relaxed pace. So if this book isn't for the folks who don't want to or can't travel long distances, don't condemn it! One of the strengths of the book is his attention to detail of water availability and campspots. I do, however, find his list of clothing and equipment to be a bit overkill. To do some of these trips with 35 or 40 or 50 pounds would be too punishing to be really enjoyable. It is possible to pair the weight down considerably, perhaps at the sake of comfort but not safety, but that is a whole 'nother story. Also, for those so inclined, running rather than walking allows one to travel easily 35-45 miles per day. Many of the treks Mike describes make fine multi-day fastpacks and can be done in half the time he recommends, even considering his fastest-paced itinerary. But

for the trips of over 100 miles, logistics for food become problematic and make running with a 20+ pound pack lots less fun. The book has excellent production quality, and the selection of photographs is stunning, a tribute to the author's photographic skill and also to the beauty of the Cascades and Olympics. Well done, Mike!

Overall a very useful book, although the author is clearly more fit than we are (and we aren't couch potatoes) as some of the expected distances to be travelled per day are strictly for the young tough mountain goat types. I actually bought two of these and suggest you do the same; one to keep intact for planning purposes in the comfort of home, and one so you can tear out the relevant section to take along on the trek.

Full of great treks and interesting information. I'm looking forward to hiking them.

Two criticisms of a fun book to read and follow. One, the daily mileages described are only reasonable for the young and fit. Two the elevation gains described are unrealistically high. Every small rise of 10 feet or so must be totaled to reach this sum.

I was given this book by a friend a few years ago and since have taken a few of the trails. The author did an excellent job giving descriptions of the trail and surrounding areas. I really like the maps and the elevation variance shown as a grid. I purchased this one for a friend who was about to take a trek on the Peninsula. My next trip will be the Devils Loop... Next year!

Good quality, condition as described, no complaints

Trekking Washington is for people who want ideas for extended backcountry hikes, mostly in the Cascades but also some in the Olympics as well as across the northern BC boundary. By "trek" the author means multi-day mountain trail hikes, ranging in distance from 30 to 246 miles. The average length of the twenty-five treks is 65 miles. For the most part these are outings for people who want to immerse themselves in the landscape rather than just have a quick weekend getaway. I have covered a lot of the described terrain and find the descriptions accurate and the trips worthwhile. For each of the treks author Woodmansee provides a difficulty rating ("easier" to "most strenuous"), a mileage and total elevation gain calculation, suggested seasons, general information about water availability, logistics and details for reaching trailheads. There's are suggested itineraries at three

daily paces (10 miles per day, 10-15 miles per day and 20+ miles per day.). Some trips are obvious to anyone familiar with Washington's mountains (e.g., sections of the PCT and the Wonderland Trail around Mt. Rainier) but several provide novel connections of trail networks or provide more information than just a map to give hikers a feel for what an outing will be like. Each trek has a day-by-day description of highlights and a selection of high quality color photos (almost always bright sunshine!) to whet one's appetite for the trail or let you know what you missed if your trip is rainy. I dislike the multi-page color shaded relief maps. They take up a lot of space but provide little usable detail. In my opinion b&w sketch maps with more notations would be more helpful and, unlike, say, some of the excellent PCT guide books, you'll absolutely have to buy topo maps to follow these trips (not to mention that the book, printed on heavy coated paper, weighs in at nearly 1 1/2 pounds!). The author has a bias toward so-called "fastpacking". He opines that the only way to complete the tempting "Cougar Traverse" in the Pasayten Wilderness is to cover the 246 miles in 10 days (25 miles and 5,000' of climbing each day!) due to supply logistics, but it's possible to cache some food with prior planning or slight detours and enjoy a more relaxed pace. In fact several trips require two cars anyway because they don't make complete loops and others have opportunities to lighten loads by caching some food, which the author never mentions. Years ago I routinely knocked off daily mileage in the high teens or twenties on these hikes with conventional - i.e., relatively heavy - gear, but in retrospect feel I missed a lot of details, side trips and just plain wilderness atmosphere in my urgency to keep to a schedule. Now I think, "what's the hurry", (not to mention I'm 30 years older with six extra inches under my pack's waist belt!). Trekking Washington has a 20-page introduction and appendices with sample gear/food lists, a list of agencies administering the various jurisdictions (with phone numbers and web addresses), a summary of all twenty-five treks that rates them on a 1-5 scale for scenery (most are 5) and probable level of solitude (average about 3), a spotty index and an impressive photo of the super-fit author and a summary of his experience that indicates he likes to hike 25-30 miles per day. Trekking Washington is highly recommended as a planning and "wish book" when, especially during mid-winter, a hiker's thoughts turn to the possibility of long summer days in the Cascades and Olympics.

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