The Flyin' Solo VanLife on the Highways and Byways of North America
RICK'S ROADS
Ride Along and Enjoy the People, Places, and Who Knows What

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The Northwesternmost Point in the Contiguous USA, Cape Flattery, Washington



I don't recall paying $20 to come up here last time (2022), but I must have. The woman who took my money said the booth has been there since 2007. Hmm. Guess I just wasn't paying attention while I was paying money.

Cape Flattery is such a cool place. It's on Native American land; the Makah tribe owns this tip of the state, and like the rest of the Washington coast, commercialism has been kept far away. On my first visit, the parking lot was dirt, and just on hand-painted brown sign pointed me to the raw path. But the lot was upgraded to asphalt a couple of decades ago, and the sections of the half-mile trail that needed reinforcement were all done with wood, by hand. I love this trail!





All the overlooks too. They are all hand-made of sturdy wooden logs and planks. They are well-placed platforms with sturdy and stylish railings and benches. Such a perfect complement to this beautiful natural site.

That's me, rocking my Key West XC hoodie, repping the Southernmost Point in the Continental USA at the Northwesternmost Point of the Contiguous USA: 2,847 miles as the unladen African swallow flies; 3,652 expeditious highway miles (according to Google Maps); or 9,284 miles via the convoluted RoadMode 2026 route.

But look at that cool overlook! So well constructed! They are all like this.

This was a repeat visit. Third time, actually. Each time the weather was good but different.

In 2006, it was closing in on sunset and there was not a hint of marine layer. I could see beyond the flock of floating puffins, past Tatoosh island, all the way to the horizon. Tatoosh sits 750 yards off the tip of the cape, and is home to Cape Flattery Lighthouse.

Four years ago, I thought I was done-for when my sunny ride was suddenly engulfed in thick morning fog on the long uphill road to get here. I emerged back into sunshine just as I reached the parking lot though. I got some nice shots of the AM sun on the sea stacks, and on the advancing wall of marine layer, but soon found myself with nothing to photograph but the inside of a fogbank.

This year, as you can see, my early afternoon visit was in glorious sunshine. The cape was well-attended, including a blonde teenager with a guitar, who I saw sitting on the edge of a cliff, just plucking and strumming away for nobody but himself.

The cape's various observation deck gives you a 270-degree view, but north-facing view, across the Strait of Juan de Fuca all the way to the mountains of Vancouver Island in Canada, is my favorite (see page 1).

It's a long ride from anywhere to get here – about two hours to Port Angeles, where I was headed next. I hope I get back here again. Such a cool spot.



Tatoosh Island, NNW of the cape



A young guitarist does a solo seaside seranade



One of several intriguing sea caves