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# Seattle Gay News

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## OUTBOUND: Bite of the San Juan Islands, Friday Harbor Film Festival are two reasons for a NW island escape



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by Albert Rodriguez - SGN A&E Writer

It's always a great time to visit the San Juan Islands. Accessible in the fall and winter seasons by ferry or plane, this archipelago resting between Washington state, Vancouver Island and mainland British Columbia is a perfect getaway for those seeking time away from the urban grind. But two reasons to consider going there soon are the Bite of the San Juan Islands (October 25) and the Friday Harbor Film Festival: 'Stories of the Pacific Rim & Beyond' (November 6-8).

For anybody who loves food more than movies, the Bite of the San Juan Islands is a one-day event spotlighting chefs from the three main islands - Lopez, Orcas, San Juan - who will partner with local farmers and producers to create tasty bites using island ingredients, from cheeses to preserves to fresh oven-baked breads, which can all be washed down with wines, beer, and spirits from nearby vineyards, breweries, and distilleries. The Bite is taking place at San Juan Island Cheese (150 Nichols Street), in Friday Harbor, with admission set at \$5 + \$2 for each taste ticket. For additional details on this foodie event, log onto [visitsanjuans.com/events/bite-san-juan-islands](http://visitsanjuans.com/events/bite-san-juan-islands).

The movie festival, in its third year, is being held in the main tourist area and commercial center of San Juan Island, the most populated of the islands, Friday Harbor. Among the films being presented at this event, mostly documentaries focused on marine ecology, environmental issues, and great adventures in and around the Pacific Ocean, are *The Great Alone*, *No Place on Earth*, *The Rainforest Waters of Cascadia*, *The Tree That Would Not Be Broken*, the environmentally-themed *Trashed*, which earned the Earth Grand Prix-Special Award at the 2012 Tokyo International Film Festival, and *Chihuly Fire & Light*, a bio-doc that captures the artistry and magic of internationally known glassblower Dale Chihuly. Besides the screenings at multiple venues, all within walking distance of the ferry terminal, the festival will feature Q&A sessions with the filmmakers and two veteran actors, Sam Elliott and Katherine Ross, will receive lifetime achievement awards in person. For more information on the festival, go to [fhff.org](http://fhff.org).

Year-round ferry service is provided by Washington State Ferries (WSDOT) from Anacortes to Friday Harbor, available for vehicles and walk-ons. Should you choose to visit the San Juan Islands in the spring or summer, the Victoria Clipper ([clippervacations.com](http://clippervacations.com)) runs daily between the Seattle waterfront and Friday Harbor from May through September. Once on the islands, there are wonderful hotels, resorts, and natural retreats to unwind at. Friday Harbor House ([fridayharborhouse.com](http://fridayharborhouse.com)) and the Bird Rock Hotel ([birdrockhotel.com](http://birdrockhotel.com)) are two hotels within footsteps of the ferry terminal that I'd recommend staying at; the former is an upscale hotel with beautifully designed rooms and modern amenities with amazing views of the harbor, while the latter is a contemporary hotel with more of a Bed & Breakfast feel and an amazingly friendly staff. Both hotels are walking distance from restaurants, bars, and retail shops.

For travel planning on the San Juan Islands, go to [visitsanjuans.com](http://visitsanjuans.com).