

# Where to Go for Golden Hour

**Here are a few of Paul's favorite Golden Hour photo hikes and backpacks**

**Barclay Lake** Found in the Wild Sky Wilderness area off U.S. Highway 2, this is an excellent early-season choice, and, with a relatively short hike back to the trailhead, it's also good bet if you can't spend the night. At sunset, the light shines down the canyon, lighting up Baring Mountain. On windless evenings, glassy Barclay Lake will produce a fantastic reflection!

**Distance:** 4.4 miles round trip

**Elevation Gain:** 225 feet

**Highest point:** 2,425 feet

**Map:** Green Trails Monte Cristo 143

**Best Shooting:** fall for foliage, or spring for a snow-defined peak



**The vast wildflower meadows of Spray Park offer countless variations of foreground, all with the stunning backdrop of Mount Rainier.**



**This small tarn just off the Park Butte trail offers a perfect reflection, while a set of unique trees and rock formations make a perfect frame.**



**The view of Mount Shuksan from Artist Point. A fresh blanket of snow creates interesting abstract shapes and lines.**

## Hike It»

**Spray Park** This great hike is accessed from the Mowich Lake entrance of Mount Rainier National Park. Visit at the right time and you'll see the most spectacular wildflower show around. The trail is relatively short and doesn't involve too much scrambling, which you will greatly appreciate when trying to find your way in the dark.

**Distance:** 7.5 miles round trip

**Elevation Gain:** 1,600 feet

**Highest Point:** 6,400 feet

**Map:** Green Trails Mount Rainier West 269

**Best Shooting:** peak bloom, usually mid-August

**Park Butte** While most hike this trail in the Mount Baker National Recreation Area in a day, I have taken some of my favorite images while spending the night at the numerous small tarns just below the lookout.

**Distance:** 7.5 miles round trip

**Elevation Gain:** 2,200 feet

**Highest Point:** 5,450 feet

**Map:** Green Trails Hamilton 45

**Best Shooting:** during the last of the wildflowers and the first fall foliage

## Snowshoe It»

**Artist Point** Washington grants great photo opportunities at any time of the year, even in winter. Artist Point, located just off the Mount Baker Ski Area, provides relatively safe and accessible snow camping opportunities, along with unmatched views of Mount Baker and Mount Shuksan. If you're lucky, you'll wake up to a light blanket of fresh snow and some soft morning light. And as the road to Artist Point was never plowed this year, snowshoeing really is the only way to go.

**Distance:** 5.5 miles round trip

**Elevation Gain:** 1,200 feet

**Highest Point:** 5,200 feet

**Map:** Green Trails Mount Shuksan 14

**Best Shooting:** after a fresh snowfall

## Check Back»

We'll have more golden hour picks on our website this fall. Stay tuned! Hit the trails, then enter your best images in **Northwest Exposure**.

*All images and recommendations by Paul Raymaker.*