

A WEEKEND ADVENTURE DRIVE

WASHINGTON AND OREGON EDITION

Panning for gold



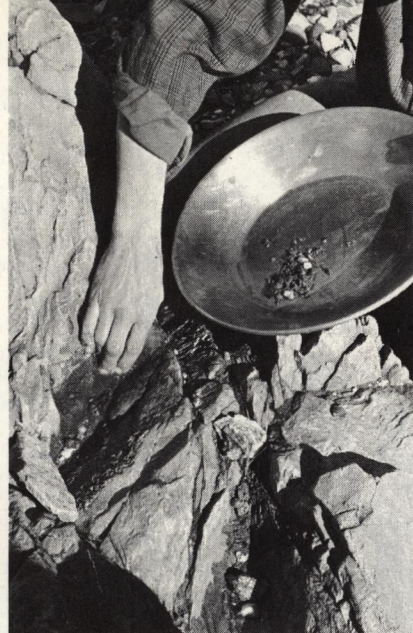
HIDDEN DOWN DEEP in rock crevices, river potholes and canyon gravel lies placer gold that miners have missed in a century of searching. More nuggets, grains and dust drift down every year during cloudbursts and river runoff—swimmers sometimes see their skin flecked with the glitter.

With pan and patience, and the energy to dig down to bedrock, you can “mine” this gold on a weekend. Steel pans cost about \$1.50, copper pans up to \$10 but old camping skillets, wooden salad bowls and even aluminum pie plates will work. Dude-mining outfits will stake you to a pan and paydirt for a dollar or so, provide an oldtimer to help with your wrist action and let you keep all the color you can concentrate.

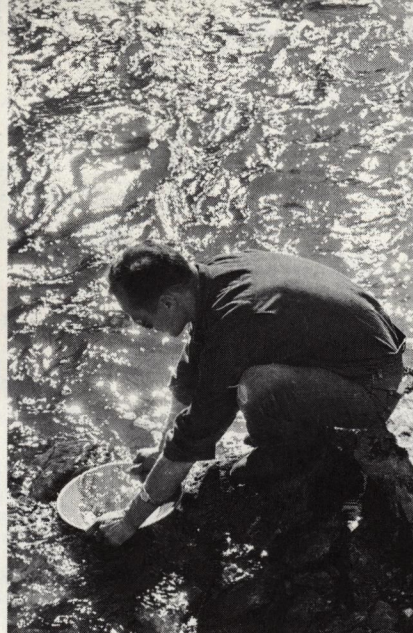
Here, from your Union 76 Minute Man, is a guide to gold-panning—a special regional edition listing the streams and canyons near you. For gold panning in other areas you can pick up similar Weekend Adventure Drive folders at Union 76 stations throughout the West.



Placer gold put this entire family to work 100 years ago—it still lures parents and children to dude mines (below) salted for amateurs.



Scrape deep in cracks and potholes in bedrock and under the lee edge of big boulders. Use a spoon, knife or screwdriver to dig out the sand. Add nearby moss, lichen or roots (they trap gold flakes), heap your pan two-thirds full.



Dunk your pan up and down in the stream so silt and light sand float away. Break up clods with your fingers and pick out rocks and gravel. Along dry gulches you can pan in a bucket, scoop out sediments, use your water again.



Swirl and jiggle your pan now to wash off all but the heavy black sands. If you see any color in this concentrate, dry it out and use tweezers to pick up flakes and grains of gold. Gently blow the sands, mostly iron pyrites, from the remaining dust—or pick them up with a magnet—and fill a vial with your “poke” of gold.

Steep canyons let gold settle out at quiet pools, bends (pan the inside banks), bars and tributaries where the river slows.



Mine tailings above ghost towns offer paydirt for panners. Ask permission before prospecting on private land, and pick up local mineral lore at nearby museums and historical exhibits. For dry panning take along an old blanket, toss the sands up in it and let the wind blow them away—you'll find color trapped in the wool. You can also winnow from pan to pan, setting one on the ground. If you miss color you can still enjoy touring among stamp mills, water wheels, flumes, iron doors, brick buildings and other remnants of oldtime mining.

WASHINGTON

① Neah Bay

Gold flour mixed in the sand on beaches south to Lapush—especially Shi Shi Beach.

Cape Arago south beyond Bandon.

⑪ Josephine County beaches

More placer gold in the beach sands and old marine terraces from Sixes south past Gold Beach to the California line.

Real gold is guaranteed at "Sourdough Gulch" from 9 in the morning until 10 at night during the Josephine County Fair at Grants Pass, August 21-24—panning 50 cents for adults, 25 cents for children.

⑫ Marial

Hike a few miles upstream along the old Rogue River Trail (recently re-built almost to Rand by the Bureau of Land Management) panning for color in the river and its tributaries—and enjoying this wilderness gorge.

⑬ Holland

"Old-timers" at Browntown and Tigertown four miles south take you on a tour of the mines, stake you to pick and pan (\$2.50) and help you find color—also try tailings nearby, the Sucker, Josephine, Briggs and Althouse creeks (a one-pound nugget turned up here last spring) and the Illinois Valley from O'Brien to Selma, all free.

⑭ Gold Hill

North four miles to Sardine Creek—where the Last Chance Mine will outfit you with pan and paydirt for \$1.25, and let you keep all of the color you can concentrate.

⑮ Antone

Gold placers in Spanish Gulch.

⑯ Canyon City

Canyon Creek in town and the John Day River just north, plus the headwaters of its middle and north forks and their tributaries.

⑰ Baker

The bars and tributaries of the Powder and Burnt Rivers—especially west up the Sumpter Valley and on to Whitney, Greenhorn, Granite and Bourne, and east up Conner Creek and other creeks and gulches below Lookout and Little Lookout mountains.

⑱ Sparta

The gulch and gravel bars of Eagle Creek, and Pine Creek Valley below the old lode mines at Cornucopia.

Cedar Creek, Johnson Point, Yellow Banks and Big Wink Creek, some closer to the road from Sekiu to Ozette Lake.

② Mazama

Drive along the Methow Valley, up over Harts Pass and drop down to Chancellor at the end of the road—you'll find color there in the waters of Ruby Creek.

③ Oroville

The Similkameen River west of town toward Nighthawk.

④ Blewett

Peshastin Creek as it flows north from Swauk Pass—work it on both sides of town.

⑤ Liberty

Swauk Creek gold lies right beside Highway 97 as you drive north to Blewett Pass.

⑥ Clarkston

Prospect in the sands and gravels of the Snake River west along Highway 410.

OREGON

⑦ Gates

The Little North Fork of the Santiam River above Elkhorn.

⑧ Sweet Home

Take the road northeast along the Middle Santiam River, continue to Quartzville and pan for nuggets in Quartzville Creek—a favorite among prospectors since the Civil War.

⑨ Cottage Grove

Take the loop road southeast into the Bohemia mining district—and pan for color in Sharps, Martin and Steamboat creeks.

⑩ Coos County beaches

Placer gold in the beach sands and old marine terraces from

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