

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

TRAVEL

Where to Go on a Weekend Trip to Portland, Oregon

The city's hip aesthetic has won us over

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Portland, Oregon.

Photo: David Gn Photography/Getty Images



The City of Roses, Portlandia, PDX—whatever you call it, Oregon's capital has [creative cachet](#) in spades. Enterprising artisans offer shops selling everything from handcrafted ceramics to Himalayan salt blocks. Innovative chefs take creative license to define [Pacific Northwest](#) cuisine in revamped industrial warehouses. Bartenders shake up classic cocktails and pour local craft beer and wine from the nearby Willamette Valley. In recent years, Portland has begun to grow up, retaining its scrappy spirit but upping the design quotient. You'll find the highest concentration of chic places to go downtown, where hotels like the Sentinel and the Nines—both of which have happening bars—provide a stylish home base. Of course, one of the best things to do when in Portland is to get out of the city and explore natural wonders like the Columbia River Gorge. Whatever your reason for visiting, you'll find design-forward places to stay, eat, drink, and shop, and things to do in our curated guide.

Where to Stay

Sentinel Two historic buildings were combined to form the Sentinel, and original details like the lobby's inlaid ceilings give the property character. Rooms and suites sport a Pacific Northwest–appropriate design scheme of forest-green walls, plaid textiles, and owl-shaped lamps. The hotel's wood-lined bar, Jackknife, is a hot spot for locals. *From \$239/night; sentinelhotel.com*

The Nines, a Luxury Collection Hotel Located in the landmarked Meier & Frank building near Pioneer Square, the Nines features a playful design full of color and original artworks curated by Paige Powell, a friend of Andy Warhol. Guests can hang out in seating nooks and glass gazebos in the soaring seven-story atrium. The hotel's 331 rooms and suites feature white headboards, crystal chandeliers, and Tiffany-blue accents. Departure, the rooftop restaurant and lounge, evokes the glamour of airline travel and is a popular spot for cocktails with a view. *From \$309/night; thenines.com*

Where to Eat

Imperial Renowned Portland chef Vitaly Paley serves soulful Pacific Northwest cuisine at this welcoming restaurant inside Hotel Lucia. Exposed brick, dark wood, concrete columns, and bespoke wallpaper give the space a modern, relaxed vibe. Ask for a table at the back if you want to watch the chefs in the open kitchen as they prepare steaks in the wood-fired oven. *Hotel Lucia, 410 Southwest Broadway; imperialpdx.com*

Lincoln At this restaurant in a converted warehouse, the streamlined design lets the cuisine take center stage. There are no extraneous decorations here, just floor-to-ceiling garage doors, salvaged lumber, a cement floor, exposed beams, and a charcoal rooster drawing. The deceptively simple-seeming dishes are actually mind-blowingly delicious (notably the Marcona almond–stuffed dates and cavatelli with fresh figs, brown butter, and blue cheese). *3808 North Williams Avenue; lincolnpdx.com*

Chesa Opened earlier this year, up-and-coming chef José Chesa's namesake restaurant modernizes both the design and the dishes of traditional Spanish tabernas. Inside the spacious restaurant, guests dine on tapas like *croquetas* and grilled octopus and savor paella served in cast-iron pans. A frosted-glass partition separates the dining room from the bar area, where bartenders serve up delicious sherry-based cocktails. *2218 Northeast Broadway; chesapdx.com*

Where to Drink

Multnomah Whiskey Library The hushed sitting-room-only cocktail den hidden has the same emerald lamps, wood tables, and leather sofas as classic libraries, but instead of books the shelves are stocked with 1,000 bottles of potent spirits. Expert bartenders can help you navigate the daunting list of whiskeys, bourbons, ryes, and scotches, or shake up any cocktail you can imagine, from a classic Manhattan to an esoteric variation on a whiskey sour. They might even roll over a cart and stir your old-fashioned tableside. It's enough to make you wish all libraries were whiskey libraries.

1124 Southwest Alder Street; mwlpx.com

Pépé Le Moko This dark, tunnel-like bar under the Ace Hotel provides an intimate spot for a tête-à-tête. Leather banquettes and booths line the room, distressed walls give it a weathered feel, a barrel-vaulted ceiling imbues it with a cozy atmosphere, and a bronze pineapple sits atop the bar, adding some cheekiness. House cocktails—playful takes on baby boomer classics—include an espresso martini made with Stumptown coffee and a tart Amaretto sour. *407 Southwest 10th Avenue; pepelemokopdx.com*

Driftwood Room This dark, atmospheric lounge inside the Hotel Deluxe has remained virtually unchanged since the 1950s, so patrons can still appreciate its glam midcentury aesthetic today. A curved bar, wood-paneled walls, and mustard-yellow banquettes set the mood for expertly mixed Manhattans, Champagne cocktails, and bar bites. *729*

Southwest 15th Avenue; hoteldeluxeportland.com

Where to Shop

Tender Loving Empire For a quirky but well-edited compendium of cards, posters, T-shirts, jewelry, and other handcrafted items by indie artisans, this shop can't be beat. You may not exactly need that little felt cactus in a terra-cotta pot, but it would certainly be a cute memento of your time in Portland. TLE is also a record label repping local musicians. *Multiple locations; tenderlovingempire.com*

Carter & Rose On lively SE Division Street, where you'll find many chic boutiques selling shoes, apparel, and much more, this airy little shop specializes in ceramics. Stop by to pick up a beautifully crafted wall planter, cute ceramic fortune cookie, small bowls, or jewelry made with ceramic beads. The store also offers pottery classes. *3601 Southeast Division Street; carterandrose.com*

The Meadow For salt and sundries, make a beeline for one of the Meadow's two locations in Portland. Owner Mark Bitterman, author of *Salted: A Manifesto on the World's Most Essential Mineral, with Recipes, Salt Block Cooking*, and *Bitterman's Field Guide to Bitters and Amari*, opened this shop to share his passion for craft salt, chocolate, bitters, and other gourmet items. If a Himalayan salt block is too hefty for your suitcase, bring home a few bars by Portland-based Alma Chocolate or a bottle of specialty bitters for your home bar. *Multiple locations, themeadow.com*

What to Do

International Rose Test Garden Originally founded during WWI as a safeguard against the destruction of hybrid roses in Europe, the International Rose Test Garden covers 4.5 acres in Washington Park and boasts 590 varieties blooming on 8,000 rose bushes. Take a stroll through the garden to admire roses in shades of red, pink, yellow, white, and even psychedelic swirls of pink and white. You might feel like you're walking through the Queen of Hearts's garden in Alice in Wonderland. *400 Southwest Kingston Avenue, portlandoregon.gov*

Portland Art Museum An outdoor sculpture court with a funky piano covered in painted lips and spiky protrusions greets visitors entering the Portland Art Museum. The oldest art museum in the Pacific Northwest, it boasts a collection of 42,000 items, including a robust selection of art by the native peoples of North America. The Case Work exhibit exploring the architecture of native Portlander Brad Cloepfil, principal of Allied Works, runs until September 4. *1219 Southwest Park Avenue; portlandartmuseum.org*

Columbia River Gorge Portland is one of the greenest cities in the U.S., and locals relish the opportunity to explore the surrounding area. A side trip to the Columbia River Gorge—about 20 miles east of the city—is well worth it to see Multnomah Falls. Park and hike the trail or take a scenic drive along the Historic Columbia River Highway and you'll pass by a series of waterfalls. *Cascade Locks; fs.usda.gov*