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## Cheap Eats: The Driftwood Room

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**Kathy Hinson, The Oregonian**

**Hotel deLuxe** touts itself as "a contemporary tribute to the Golden Era of Hollywood filmmaking," and its **Driftwood Room** cocktail lounge effortlessly plugs you into that mind-set. The Driftwood's angular, wood-lined walls contrast with its curvy banquettes, while low lighting and smoky mirrors add a glamorous just-off-Sunset-Strip vibe.

**The chow:** One of the best happy hours in town comes around twice a day, 3-6 p.m. and 9 p.m.-close. We're not talking blobby prefab dips and meager White Castle-size burger-ettes. The Grilled Oregon Beef Burger is the full-size deal, with fries on the side. Or try the Mac & Cheese, with a habit-forming crisped top giving way to a cheesy cream sauce underneath. For most-addictive dish, it's a tossup between the garlicky Sizzling Forest Mushrooms and the perfectly crunchy french fries with white cheddar on top.

**Real deal:** Rich, meaty Bay Shrimp & Dungeness Crab Cakes, \$6 for two. Pair an order with one of the \$3 salads to make a full meal.

**Hangout factor:** Supreme. After the bright Art Deco/Moderne lobby -- all golds, marble and mirrors -- stepping into the dark retro lounge puts you in a sipping mood. Triangular lights inset in the ceiling give off muted light and a '60s vibe. The bar menu, done Playbill-style, lists drinks over photos of old-time stars such as Marlon Brando and Elizabeth Taylor. In case you missed the theme, drink names include the Barefoot Contessa and the Henry Fonda. How can you not feel satisfyingly sophisticated sipping a smooth Rose City Drop or stout Mallory Manhattan in such a cocoon of cocktail culture?

**Liquids:** At happy hour, a handful of fabulous Champagne cocktails go for around 5 bucks. The best of the lot is the Portland '85, a delicious mix of Clear Creek's pear brandy and pear liqueur with Champagne, garnished with a tangy-rich amarena cherry. Be warned: They go down like honey, and you only feel the sting later when you try to stand up. A daily happy hour bottle of wine is discounted to \$18.

**What's half-baked?** The food is a throwback to an era when no one knew their cholesterol levels. It's all delicious, but don't get carried away.

**Inside tip:** A none-too-big place with a growing fan base means tables can be scarce at happy hour. Arrive early to snag your spot; there's good people-watching to pass the time.