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## PORTLAND, ORE.

# Weather Or Not, A Lengthy List Of Delights

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Chicago Tribune

PORTLAND, Ore. — Why everyone in the world hasn't up and moved to Portland is a mystery.

Beyond being virtually pollution-free, surrounded by lush greenery and, at 568,300 people, a manageable size, it's home to the kinds of people many folks would want as neighbors: laid-back, eco-conscious city dwellers who love quality restaurants and art galleries and are as game for an evening in with

a bottle of pinot as a morning hike through the woods.

Portlanders seem to attract kindred spirits, those who love organic food, strong coffee, independent bookstores and locally brewed beer. They don't let poor weather stand in the way of going out. And they have killer independent music and arts scenes.

Though sun worshipers might balk at the idea of visiting the Pacific Northwest at any time other than during its glorious 80-degree summers, Portland is arguably a year-round destination.

Head here in the fall, and a light rain jacket will carry you through autumn-leaf-covered streets to dozens of cafes where you can duck the drizzle. Visit during the winter, and a parka and an umbrella will suffice (though locals don't really use them). And there's lots to do: Trail Blazers basketball games, movies at McMenamins' brew-and-view theaters, tax-free shopping in Nob Hill and, if you've got time, day trips to the mountains, the coast or both.

Here's our Whirlwind Weekend in Portland.

AT 452, F4

### Friday

Portland is divided into five districts — Northeast, Northwest, Southwest/Downtown, Southeast and North Portland — each with its own neighborhoods and personality. Your best bet for lodging is downtown. Recommended: the boutique Hotel Modera (515 SW Clay St.; 877-484-1084; [www.hotelmodera.com](http://www.hotelmodera.com)), in the historic South Park Blocks. The gut-rehabbed Modera emerged last spring with a luxe lobby, spacious, souped-up guest rooms (starting at \$139) and a courtyard with native plants and shrubs furnished with inviting fire pits. Just east of PGE Park, Hotel deLuxe (729 SW 15th Ave.; 866-986-8085; [www.hoteldeluxeportland.com](http://www.hoteldeluxeportland.com)) offers top-notch service in an award-winning, renovated Art-Deco building. Luxury amenities such as the pillow menu complement comfortable, well-appointed rooms (starting at \$127) priced lower than they should be.

Most downtown hotels are within walking distance of Portland's trifecta of public transportation options: the light rail MAX, the TriMet bus and the streetcar, all of which are free when traveling within the high-traffic Fareless Square region. Catch the 12, 19 or 20 bus across the Burnside Bridge to your first amazing meal of the weekend: dinner at Le Pigeon (738 E. Burnside St.; 503-546-8796; [www.lepigeon.com](http://www.lepigeon.com)). When it comes to locally harvested, expertly prepared dishes, Portland rules, and Le Pigeon is proof. It's exquisite — and tiny. Three communal tables are crammed around a large open kitchen, lined with front-row action bar seats. French bread and sea-salted Plugra butter whet the palate for the specialty here, squab, though rotations on the minimal menu include beef cheeks, a delectable