

Whirlwind weekend

Rain or shine, Portland beckons

By LAUREN VIER/
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.

There's one defining characteristic associated with the City of Roses: rain. While sun

worshippers may balk at the idea of visiting the Pacific Northwest at any time other than in 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 in which to duck the drizzle. Visit Stumptown in the winter and a parka and an umbrella (though locals don't really use them) are a nice change from snow gear, especially when there's a full agenda: Trailblazers 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.

Friday

Portland is divided into five districts — Northeast, Northwest, Southwest/Downtown, Southeast, and North Portland — each with its own neigh-

borhoods and personality. Your best bet for lodging is downtown. Recom-

mended: the boutique Hotel Modera (515 SW Clay St.; 877-484-1084; hotelmopera.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; 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.



TRAVELPORTLAND

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