

PORTLAND TOUR SUGGESTIONS

Below are suggestions for both self-guided and hosted tours. With advance notice, several Portland tour companies can design custom tours that focus on the arts, history, sustainable architecture, culinary exploration – even ghosts.

THE PEARL DISTRICT

The Pearl District, a former industrial section of northwest Portland, is now a thriving community with a stylish mixture of art, commerce and residential life. The Pearl District supports galleries, as well as chefs, entrepreneurs and designers. Chic condos featuring the latest green technology have risen from an abandoned rail yard, while vacant warehouses have been transformed into clever retail spaces, cavernous studios, eclectic galleries and upscale lofts. The Portland Streetcar conveniently connects the Pearl District to downtown, the South Waterfront and the Northwest/Nob Hill neighborhood. Allow 4-6 hours. www.explorethepearl.com

PEARL DISTRICT MUST-SEES:

- Powell's City of Books – Powell's is the largest independent bookstore in the world. With some 60 percent of its inventory made up of used, rare and out-of-print books, Powell's is a treasure hunter's dream come true.
- BridgePort Brewpub – Oregon's oldest craft brewery, BridgePort offers a restaurant, public/private tours and tasting trays.
- The Gerding Theater at the Armory – The first national historic landmark building to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The building is open for tours and arts performances; groups can rent the facility for events.
- Jimmy Mak's – Rated by *Down Beat magazine* as one of the world's top 100 places to hear jazz music.
- Ecotrust – A green marketplace, in which all tenants strive toward the highest level of sustainable business practices. The building is open for self-guided tours; private tours and event space are also available.
- First Thursday – A monthly gallery walk event.

NORTHWEST/NOB HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

Tucked into the base of Portland's West Hills (just 10 minutes from downtown), Nob Hill/Northwest shares more than a passing similarity to its San Francisco namesake. Turn-of-the-century Victorians line the narrow streets, offering visitors a glimpse into the city's rich architectural past. Storefronts have been restored to their original splendor, transforming Northwest 23rd Avenue ("Trendy-third") into a shopper's heaven. Scores of eclectic, whimsical and sophisticated independent boutiques offer everything from tiaras to topiaries. Restaurants, pubs and cafés offer perfect vantage points for some of the city's best people-watching. Allow 3-4 hours. www.nobhillbiz.com

NORTHWEST/NOB HILL MUST-DOS:

- City Market NW – This gourmet food store is the place to go for local, sustainable produce and more.
- Tax-free shopping – There's no sales tax in Oregon, so you won't feel quite as guilty taking home a few Northwest shopping finds.
- Dining – Northwest 21st Avenue has been nicknamed "Restaurant Row," thanks to its collection of top-rated restaurants.

HISTORY, ARTS AND PARKS

From Old Town/Chinatown to downtown, Portland's art and history are on display. Like the neighboring Pearl and Northwest Portland, these are great walking areas. MAX light rail connects downtown to Old Town/Chinatown. Allow 4-6 hours. www.oldtownchinatown.net

OLD TOWN/CHINATOWN MUST-SEES:

- Portland Classical Chinese Garden – This stunning garden covers a full city block. All of the garden's buildings, decorative features and natural elements – including 500 tons of stone – came from China.
- Old Town Pizza – This historic pizza place is home to more than one ghost. The restaurant, which serves terrific pizza, is also the starting point for some of Portland's ghost-related walking tours.
- Portland Saturday Market – Every Saturday and Sunday (March-December), this outdoor market transforms Old Town with its hundreds of craft and art booths, music, food and more.

DOWNTOWN MUST-SEES:

- Museums – Portland Art Museum; Oregon Historical Society
- Public Art – Portlandia; Pioneer Courthouse Square's *Weather Machine*
- Parks – South Park Blocks, home to weekly (seasonal) farmers markets; Gov. Tom McCall Waterfront park, with its riverfront promenade; and Mill Ends Park, the worlds smallest dedicated park (24" across)

WASHINGTON PARK AND COUNCIL CREST

Begin at historic Pittock Mansion and follow up with the gems of Washington Park: the International Rose Test Garden, Japanese Garden, Hoyt Arboretum, World Forestry Center and the Oregon Zoo. A pleasant drive from Washington Park takes you to Council Crest, which offers spectacular views of the city and Mount Hood. Council Crest, the highest point in Portland, sits 1,073 feet above sea level. Allow 4-6 hours. www.portlandonline.com/parks (type "Washington Park" into search field)

SCENIC RIVER CRUISE

A river runs through it – downtown Portland, that is. For a unique perspective on the "Rose City," cruise aboard a sternwheeler or private cruiser. Get an up-close view of the Willamette River and its many well-known bridges. Or, enjoy the night skyline during an evening dinner cruise. Allow 2-4 hours.