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Portland's Conscious Evolution

Now that *Portlandia* has aired its final episode, Oregon's culture capital is ready for a new narrative. *By Hannah Wallace*

Every year in late June, 10,000 naked cyclists bike through my neighborhood. A man who lives nearby regularly walks his goat down Hawthorne Boulevard, stopping at the waffle window to order breakfast. My friend Laura runs a library for the homeless, powered by a trike.

Yes, I live in Portland.

Although *Portlandia* put my home city on the map—and held up its off-beat DIY, locavore, cycling- and coffee-obsessed culture for all the world to see—some of the city's inhabitants are eager to move beyond the hipster caricature and forge a more cosmopolitan identity.

Portland, population 639,000, is Oregon's biggest city and getting bigger every day, with 1,000 new arrivals each month. Coming with them are high-rise

apartments, opulent spas, and ambitious high-end hotels from brands like the U.K.-based Hoxton. Satellite offices of tech companies such as Airbnb, Amazon.com, Google, New Relic, and SurveyMonkey have been inspired to move here thanks, in part, to the city's relatively cheap real estate and dynamic restaurant scene.

In the midst of rapid gentrification and a serious citywide housing crisis, longtime locals are trying their damndest to preserve community, affordability, and the quirky vibe that makes Portland unique. Last year developer Kevin Cavanaugh, whose **Zipper** and **Ocean** food halls are popular in the tree-lined Inner Southeast neighborhood, built an angular structure with a psychedelic facade

designed by Los Angeles artist James Jean on one of the most visible corners in the city. He then filled it with homegrown businesses and risk-taking creative companies and called it the Fair-Haired Dumbbell.

The building's ground-floor vendors include an outpost of beloved local cafe **Crema** and a modern office supply shop, **11:11 Supply**, where you can buy goal-tracking notebooks and pencils emblazoned with mantras such as "Empathy rules." There are also workshops on the neurology of inclusion. (OK, so it's still Portland.)

"For being the whitest city in the country, you can have an experience here that is very diverse," says WeWork Portland's community director and local startup booster Stephen Green. "That's a happy surprise." Green is also the founder of PitchBlack, a crowdfunding platform for black entrepreneurs; he steers visitors to black-owned businesses such as **Olive or Twist**, an elegant martini bar in the Pearl District, and **Deadstock Coffee**, a shop owned by former Nike Inc. shoe designer Ian Williams, where the walls are adorned with never-worn sneakers.

Sometimes the rapid-fire appearance of sleek new hotels and restaurants can be alienating to long-term residents. In a welcoming gesture, Portlander Aaron Hall is planning neighborhood discounts and events for community nonprofits at **Hey Love**, the restaurant he co-owns inside the new Jupiter Next hotel.

One new venue has even rallied the natives through organized chorusing: OK Chorale PDX, a bimonthly singalong founded by prominent Portland composer Ben Landsverk and producer Kate Sokoloff. Held at a bar at a former high school turned concert space, **Revolution Hall**, it draws hundreds of amateur singers as well as local guest performers. The choir's repertoire ranges from *Jesus Christ*

Above: The Fair-Haired Dumbbell building. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Wildfang, a local "tomboy" clothing shop; the on-site restaurant Jackrab-bit at the Duniway Hotel; a dish of *oeufs en mayonnaise* at Canard.

Superstar to David Bowie and Lady Gaga. “Group singing is something we don’t have enough of in America, though it’s prevalent in other cultures,” Landsverk says. The cost for two joyful hours that make you feel part of something bigger than yourself? A mere \$10.

Where to Eat

Despite all the changes, the city remains a place where ostentation is shunned and informality reigns. On the other side of the river from downtown, in southeast Portland, three of the city’s most established high-end restaurants have opened more casual places adjacent to their original locations, each with a focus on natural wines. The city’s longtime Italian standard-bearer, Nostrana, has the sexy **Enoteca** next door, with a quartz bar and a two-story, 3,000-bottle cellar. The team behind Le Pigeon now serves all-day oysters and rillettes at its **Canard** outpost. And the modern venue Castagna, in Hawthorne, has debuted a playful bistro called **OK Omens**.

In the Pearl, newcomers include Arden Wine Bar & Kitchen, where chef Sara Hauman, most recently of San Francisco’s Michelin-starred **Octavia**, turns out giddy dishes such as seared duck breast with gilfeather turnips,

fava greens, and pistachios. Prefer classic French? Greg and Gabrielle Denton’s restaurant **Bistro Agnes** will transport you to Paris. For seasonal Middle Eastern, Sam Smith’s restaurant, **Tusk**, offers addictive salads, meat kebabs, and silky smooth hummus.

Where to Stay

Over the past year, 1,300 rooms have been added to the city’s hotel inventory, with an additional 1,700 on the way—which means hungry travelers who want to sleep off their food comas have more luxurious choices than ever. Downtown, the **Duniway** is a unique Hilton property with 65-inch HDTVs, Tivoli Audio Bluetooth radios, and Waldorf Astoria mattresses in each of its 327 rooms. Its nearby sister property, the just-opened 297-room **Porter**, combines Frette linens, Stickley furnishings, and a 16th-floor bar with views of Mount Hood. Across the river on the east side of the city is **Jupiter Next**, a new hotel in a once-derelict part of east Burnside. (It’s also just one block from Canard.) The 67 rooms are stocked with chocolates—of the non-medicated kind—from local edibles company Grön and have enormous windows with views of the city’s ever-morphing skyline. **B**



LOCAL INTEL

Three Portlanders share their favorite spots

The urban hike

On the east side, head to dormant volcano Mount Tabor for a one-of-a-kind climb: “On trails that pass each of the park’s reservoirs, you can wind your way to the summit and get a great view looking westward across the city.” On the west side, Forest Park has more than 80 miles of trails, including the 5-mile Pittock Mansion hike, which culminates at a 1914 French-style chateau. —*Cheryl Strayed, author of Wild and Dear Sugar*

The whiskey bar

Downtown, the Multnomah Whiskey Library has one of the most incredible collections, housed in a dimly lit, leather-sofa ambiance. —*Emma McIlroy, chief executive officer of Wildfang*

The rooftop deck (if the weather’s nice)

Steer toward Chinatown’s Society Hotel, which has Oregon wines by the glass, including those made by black winemaker Bertony Faustin at Abbey Creek Vineyard. —*Stephen Green, founder of PitchBlack*



THE WINE WEEKEND

Highlights in Oregon’s answer to Napa

One of the fastest-growing winemaking regions in the U.S. is the Willamette Valley, a 45-mile drive west of Portland. Drop your things at the 36-room **Atticus Hotel** in McMinnville, where rooms come with French presses and Pendleton robes. Then head 10 miles down to **Stoller Family Estate** for a glass of the 2017 Dundee Hills chardonnay, best enjoyed from one of the Adirondack chairs on the sprawling lawn. **White Rose Estate**, which has lush pinot noirs and unobstructed views of the Cascade Range, is also nearby. But don’t miss out on some of the smaller, off-the-beaten-path wineries such as winemaker Brian O’Donnell’s **Belle Pente** (tastings by appointment only). **Elevée** (open only on weekends), offers tastings of an unusual, but delicious, wine: a crisp white pinot noir.

