



2010 AAA Western Region Meeting

Guide to Portland (Eating, Transportation, Things-to-Do, etc.)

**Hilton Executive Tower
Portland, OR, USA
April 29-May 1, 2010**

Getting to the Conference Hotel – from PDX International Airport

Ground Transportation – the pickup area for taxis, town cars, long-haul shuttles, hotel vans and parking lot shuttle buses is located in the center section of the airport terminal's lower roadway on the baggage claim and departure level. Airport shuttles, off-airport rental car shuttles and reserved vehicles are found in the section of the lower roadway closest to the garage.

Taxis – A cab ride from the PDX airport to the Conference Hotel will cost you approximately \$35.00 each way, and take approximately 20-35 minutes depending on time of day.

Light Rail Transportation – you can board Portland's famous "MAX" light rail system right from the Portland International Air Terminal. The pick-up point will be to the right of the exit at baggage claim. Take the RED LINE as follows (it's basically one stop right to within walking distance of the hotel).

- Starting from Portland Int'l Airport MAX Station (Stop ID 10579)
- Board MAX Red Line to "City Center & Beaverton TC"
- Get off at Mall/SW 5th Ave Max Station
- Walk 0.2 mile southwest to 921 SW 6th Ave (Hilton Exec Tower)
- Travel time: 45 minutes (including 5 minutes walking)
 - Fares: Adult All Zone (\$2.30), Youth/Student (\$1.50) or Honored Citizen (\$0.95) Where to buy

Note about PDX: PDX has been selected multiple times as the best airport in America. It has free wifi and there are several free business areas with desktops and power outlets. All shops are required to charge the same price as their stores outside the airport. You won't get a great deal, but you won't get ripped off either. There are a number of good places to eat in the airport was well.

Getting Around Downtown Portland

- Portland is one of THE most pedestrian, bicycle, and "green friendly" transportation cities in the country. Much of what you may want to do outside the conference hotel can be done by walking on foot. Alternatively, taxis are inexpensive, and virtually ANYTHING mentioned in this guide will be less than a \$10 cab ride (tip included) from the conference hotel, each way.
- TRIMET / MAX – blessed with one of the best public transportation and light rail systems in the country, downtown Portland has a "free ride" zone for both streetcars and light rail. Find a link to the "free zone" / downtown fare-free area here:
<http://www.trimet.org/maps/citycenter.htm>
- Getting to "The Pearl" – The Pearl District is one of the most popular eating and entertainment, areas in Portland. The hotel is in the fareless square – free transit zone. Ask at the front desk for directions to the nearest stop... either the green or yellow line ... taking either of these trains gets you right to the heart of the Pearl District (get off at the NW 6th and Davis exit).

Items of Interest Near the Conference Hotel:¹

- *Pioneer Place Mall* (700 Southwest 5th Avenue) – Portland has no SALES TAX. So the price you see is the price you pay. Shop at more than 100 noted retailers.
- *Pioneer Courthouse Square* – hosts more than 300 events a year such as political rallies, festivals, and concerts. It features an amphitheater, a central fountain, and a tile display that depicts Portland's history.
- *Tom McCall Waterfront Park* – The green park blocks run the length of the downtown area along the Willamette River. Portland's largest outdoor festivals are held at Waterfront Park. The wide concrete walkway that winds through the park and along the river is usually crowded with people strolling, on bicycles or rollerblades.
- *Arts, Music etc.* – Downtown Portland has a vibrant arts community which includes the Portland Art Museum, the internationally-known Oregon Symphony, and the Arlene Schnitzer concert hall, as well as many art galleries and museums. Outdoor art displays and statues, often whimsical, can be found all around downtown.
- *Powell's Bookstore* (1005 W. Burnside) – the largest used bookstore on the planet – pretty much says it all, and it takes up an entire city block. You can (and might) lose days in here!
- *The "Pearl District"* – Once decaying industrial warehouses, the Pearl District has undergone significant renovation and is now one of the top "urban renewal / living" models in the United States. An uber-chic neighborhood, aging warehouses have been turned into luxurious lofts, townhouses, condos, shops, and a horde of some of the best restaurants in the country. The ultimate in convenience, this prime destination neighborhood features stylish boutiques, specialty retailers, grocery and book stores, up-and-coming art galleries, and trendy restaurants. The Pearl is more popular with the "younger" crowd.
- *Nob Hill or 21st-23rd Street* - The Nob Hill neighborhood, also known as the NW 21st and 23rd Avenue neighborhood (with street signs also referring to the area as the Historic Alphabet district), is apparently known by many names. This is a very popular and trendy area to shop, dine, walk, and generally just hang out. Many restaurants, coffee shops, and specialty retail shops and boutiques line the two main drags of NW 21st and NW 23rd Avenues. You'll also find some great bars, spas, salons, and local markets...all with a creative flair. Nob Hill is more popular with the "boomer" crowd.

Events - Willamette Week is the best source of Portland Music, Events, Movies and Food.

Homepage - <http://wweek.com/>

Stage - <http://wweek.com/megasearch/#Stage>

Live Music - <http://wweek.com/megasearch/#Live Music>

Dance - <http://wweek.com/megasearch/#Dance>

Classical Music - <http://wweek.com/megasearch/#Classical Music>

Visual Arts - <http://wweek.com/megasearch/#Visual Arts>

Words - <http://wweek.com/megasearch/#Words>

- More information can be found at:

<http://www.travelportland.com/>

<http://www.portland.com/>

www.portlandguide.com

¹ Key Source: <http://www.portlandguide.com/>

Restaurants

Portland is considered one of the best food cities in America. As Jane and Michael Stern say, food in Portland tastes about 10% better than elsewhere. However, Portland's food is somewhat unique. There are limited options for Italian, French, or other classic cuisines. Rather, Portland emphasizes Pacific NW food with an emphasis on local ingredients and fresh preparation. Portland also has great ethnic foods, especially Asian. And as you might expect, Portland has numerous vegetarian options.

All the restaurants listed below (except Vegetarian) are personal recommendations from Washington State University Vancouver (or former-WSUV) faculty. Needless to say, we can't list all our favorites – and many restaurants not listed are excellent. Also remember that faculty tastes range from steakhouse tradition, to only the finest dining, to cheap eats. To check out options on your own, look at Willamette Weeks website – their recommendations rarely miss the mark.

Willamette Week 2009 Restaurant Guide - <http://wweek.com/editorial/3550/13206/#36.22>

Willamette Week Recent Reviews - <http://wweek.com/food/#36.22>

Willamette Week Food Event Calendar - <http://wweek.com/events/latest/dish/#36.22>

Food Carts

One of the most popular food scenes in Portland is food carts. They are usually some type of trailer rather than a push cart. Often times they are grouped together and offer seating. They are especially popular with the younger crowd later in the evening, but also are crowded for lunch. The range of options is too large to list (the Portland food cart website lists 58 cuisines). Check out <http://www.foodcartsportland.com/> for locations and reviews.

A short walk, cab ride, or MAX ride away

- Southpark (901 Southwest Salmon Street) - Mediterranean inspired cuisine utilizing fresh local fish.
- Heathman Hotel (1001 SW Broadway) – Hotels in Portland learned long ago that if you need a great restaurant. The Heathman offers good food, relatively reasonable prices, and a nice atmosphere. Not spectacular, but never disappoints.
- Higgins (1239 Southwest Broadway) – considered one of the best restaurants in Portland, it epitomizes NW cuisine. It is also noted for its vegetarian options and often has several on the menu. Past winner of best restaurant in Portland and nationally recognized.
- Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery – (206 S.W. Morrison St) – urban brew pub. Varied menu, reasonable prices, some patio seating.
- Veritable Quandary – (1220 SW 1st Ave) – eclectic dining and drinks. Excellent setting and terrific patio which overlooks the Willamette.
- Morton's Steakhouse (213 Southwest Clay Street) – A classic steakhouse chain.
- Murata's Restaurant (200 Southwest Market Street) – Consistently rated the best sushi restaurant in Portland. But you pay for it.
- Nel Centro (1408 S.W. Sixth Ave.) 503-484-1099. Good food, great atmosphere. The place to go when someone else is paying.

- Saucebox – (214 SW Broadway near Burnside) t 503 241 3393. Pan-Asian with swanky atmosphere.
- Ringside – (2165 W. Burnside) – consistently ranked as one of America’s top Steak Houses. “Old School”, classic non-chain steakhouse. Excellent wine list, and excellent overall value for what you get, though not inexpensive by any stretch. Too far from the hotel to walk.
- El Gaucho – (319 Southwest Broadway) – an excellent top-shelf type steakhouse. Very pricey, but you get excellent service, food and ambience. Truly a great experience, and at the limit of walking distance from the hotel.
- Café Bijou – (132 SW Third Ave) – Portland eclectic dining at its finest. Interesting food pairings, spicing, etc. Really good for breakfast or lunch, though dinner is excellent too.
- McCormick & Schmick's Harborside at the Marina (309 Southwest Montgomery Street) – Simply prepared, fresh, and perfectly cooked seafood with a stunning view of the river.
- Mother’s Bistro (212 SW Stark Street) – One of the best breakfast restaurants in Portland. But it is not limited to that.
- Nicholas’s (318 SE Grand Ave) – Fabulous Lebanese food. Fresh with huge portions and low prices (no atmosphere and not conducive to parties of more than 4). Soon after you sit down they bring a nice, hot, out of the oven pita. But you may need to wait in line at popular times. Closes at 9pm.
- Hamburger Mary's (1135 S W Washington St) – very popular at lunch, with lots of outdoor seating.
- East India Company (821 Southwest 11th Avenue) – top rated for Indian food.

“Pearl District” (note – a short walk, MAX or cab ride away). Check out this list or just head to Powells books (1005 W. Burnside) and start walking north and you’ll find dozens of excellent eateries.

- Peemkaew Thai Restaurant (323 NW Park) – The menu features standard Thai dishes with a few intriguing house specialties .
- Silk Vietnamese Restaurant & Bar (1012 NW Glisan) – Vietnamese cuisine beyond the casual noodle soups and grill fare where familiar Vietnamese dishes are dressed up to appeal.
- Fenouil (900 NW 11th) – “Colorful, fancy, and seasonal” modern French-influenced cuisine.
- Fratelli (1230 NW Hoyt) – Regional Italian cuisine with a wood-burning oven .
- Giorgio's (1131 NW Hoyt) – Traditional Northern Italian with French and NW influences.
- Henry's 12th Street Tavern (10 NW 12th Ave) - 100 beers and hard ciders on tap with pub food.
- Oba (555 NW 12th Ave.) – one of the first restaurants in the Pearl district and still one of the best. Latin menu with elegance.
- Andina (1314 NW Glisan) Peruvian tapas. They have full entrees too. Great flavors, but small portions and a bit pricey.
- Bridgeport Brewpub (1318 N.W. Northrup) – classic NW beers with good pizza and pub food, reasonable prices.

Nob Hill or 21st – 23rd Avenue (a cab ride)

- Wildwood (1221 Northwest 21st Avenue) – Another top rated NW cuisine restaurant. Past winner of best restaurant in Portland
- Paley's Place () - Another top rated NW cuisine restaurant. Past winner of best restaurant in Portland
- Patanegra (1818 Northwest 23rd Place) – Spanish tapas, haven't eaten here but is supposed to be quite good
- Swagat's (2074 Northwest Lovejoy Street) – The Beaverton location (long drive) has better food, but this is acceptable traditional Indian food at a reasonable price.

Old Town (streetcar)

- Golden Horse (238 NW 4th – 503-228-1688) – Excellent Cantonese food – but no atmosphere.
- Voodoo Doughnuts (22 SW 3rd Avenue) 503-241-4704. It's where Portland gets its reputation for being weird.

Others

- Pok-Pok (3226 Southeast Division Street) – currently the most popular restaurant in Portland. No reservations and long lines. Food is Asian/Vietnamese – but with a twist.
- Ping (102 NW 4th Ave). Same owners as Pok-Pok – recently rated #4 of top ten best new restaurants in the US by GQ magazine. Cuisine similar to Pok-Pok.
- Hoda's (3401 Southeast Belmont Street) – similar to Nicholas' (his daughter), but larger space and nicer atmosphere. Can take large groups but a longer cab ride.

Vegefusion

- The Farm Cafe (10 Southeast 7th Avenue) – NW Fresh
- Bye and Bye (1011 NE Alberta St) – Pub with an all vegan food menu but bit of a cab ride
- Portobello Vegan Trattoria (2001 SE 11th Ave) – Little Italian restaurant serving all vegan food. Features a seasonal menu.
- Crowsenberg's Half & Half (923 Southwest Oak Street) – Sandwiches
- Tube Bar (18 Northwest 3rd Avenue) – Fast food
- Paradox Cafe (3439 Southeast Belmont Street) – Sandwiches
- Old Wives' Tales Restaurant (1300 East Burnside Street) – Multi-ethnic menu of vegetarian, chicken and seafood dishes. The extensive menu, including many small plates and a la carte choices, makes it possible to select a range of dining experiences from light meals to multi-course feasts.
- Backspace (115 NW 5th Ave) – Simple, casual, spacious. Sit inside or out on sidewalk. Menu features pastries including vegan ones, sandwiches, salads, soups, a few main entrees, and snacks.

Vegetarian Friendly

- Higgins – see above
- Karam Lebanese (316 Southwest Stark Street) – Middle Eastern
- Andina – see above

- Queen of Sheba (2413 Northeast Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard) – Ethiopian, bit of a cab ride
- Nicholas Restaurant – see above
- East India Company – see above
- Tabor (433 Southwest Stark Street) – Food cart
- Bashas Mediterranean (600 Southwest Pine Street)
- Caffè Allora (504 Northwest 9th Avenue) – Italian
- Hot Pot City (1975 Southwest 1st Avenue) – Chinese
- Caffè Mingo (807 Northwest 21st Avenue) - Sandwiches
- Vegetarian House (22 Northwest 4th Avenue) – Vegan friendly Chinese
- Blossoming Lotus (1713 Northeast 15th Avenue) – Various vegetarian cuisines
- Homegrown Smoker Natural Barbecue (SW 4th and College) – All vegan Portland based barbecue food cart. Menu includes soy curls, tempeh ribs, field roast chorizo, barbecue beans, cole slaw, mac-no-cheese, sweet mint iced tea

Wine Bars & Taverns

- Blitz Bar -- Phone: 503/222-2229 110 NW 10th Ave
- BridgePort Brew Pub -- Phone: 503/241-3612 1313 NW Marshall
- Jimmy Mak's -- Phone: 503/295-6542 221 NW 10th
- Life of Riley -- Phone: 503/224-1680 300 NW 10th
- Low Brow Lounge -- Phone: 503/226-0200 1036 NW Hoyt
- Trust...A Lounge -- Phone: 503/227-6400 903 NW Everett
- Vault Martini Bar -- Phone: 503/224-4909 226 NW 12th

Pre or Post Conference Activities

There are innumerable options for pre or post conference activities. Oregon is a beautiful state with a highly varied geography. Check <http://www.traveloregon.com/> for ideas, but here are a few options.

- The Coast – Oregon declared the sea coast a state highway. As a result, 100% of the coast is public land. Oregon is best known for its rugged coastline, but there are sand beaches, dunes, fishing, and surfing. <http://www.traveloregon.com/Explore-Oregon/Oregon-Coast.aspx>
- Mt Hood and the Gorge (just outside Portland) – Mt Hood (11,249 feet - 3,429 M) sits just outside Portland. The Columbia River cuts a beautiful gorge on its North flank. See stunning waterfalls, ski or snowboard year round (America's longest ski season), walk beautiful alpine meadows, or see the classic WPA-era Timberline Lodge. <http://www.traveloregon.com/Explore-Oregon/Mt-Hood-Columbia-River-Gorge.aspx>
- Central Oregon and Bend – Central Oregon is an outdoor play land with a wide range of activities from golf to mountain biking, to whitewater rafting and fishing. Central Oregon is a high plains desert, so in May it will be warm and dry. Also known for incredible lava features. <http://www.traveloregon.com/Explore-Oregon/Central-Oregon.aspx>
- Willamette Valley (just outside Portland) – This gentle agricultural area is best known for its wines. But there are lots of other activities as well. <http://www.traveloregon.com/Explore-Oregon/Willamette-Valley.aspx>
- Eastern Oregon – This less well known part of Oregon contains incredible, desolate beauty. It includes the magical Painted Hills near John Day, the colossal Steens Mountains (the largest continental geological fault) and the jaw-dropping depths of Hells Canyon, the deepest river gorge in North America; plus desert rivers (rafting and fishing), and fossil beds. <http://www.traveloregon.com/Explore-Oregon/Eastern-Oregon.aspx>
- Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument – Just over the border in Washington, this stunning scene of devastation offers vistas, hikes, and interpretive centers. A day-trip from Portland. Even if you don't visit, you have to view the famous Rosenquist photo sequence of the eruption in 1980 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgRnVhbfIKQ>); it is absolutely incredible.