



Portland, Oregon

Pawing through Portland: A Stop and Sniff Guide to Oregon's Rose City

One of the 449 dogs washed at Dogtoberfest.

By Mark R. Johnson

Gary Geist

I NOTICE THE STATELY RED BRICK buildings, the boats upon the river and the wooded hills that rise up around the city. She regards a sooty rind of pizza on the sidewalk. I admire the outdoor art, the fountains, statues and gardens. She seems enchanted by the pigeons. I'm riveted by strong wafts of roasted coffee and brewing beer. She'd rather press her nose to a Pug's privates.

Though our respective agendas may only have a six-foot leash in common, my Border Collie and I are sharing a perfect day in Portland, Oregon. And while we differ on what's of interest when it comes to the city's charms, we're in agreement on one distinction: It's decidedly dog-friendly.

With more parks per capita than any other city in the country, a pleasing, pedestrian-oriented layout and a dog-crazed culture, Portland possesses a rare breed of canine savvy. There's a mindset found throughout the city that moves past a general receptiveness of dogs and into a downright embracing of them.

In Portland, doggie day care is a booming industry. There's an annual dog-washing benefit called "Dogtoberfest"—featuring one kind of suds for dirty hounds, and another for their thirsty owners. And even the Portland International Airport has a boutique for dog lovers.

You can bone up on local matters in the Dog Nose News (www.dognosenews.com), a publication dedicated to Portland's dogs, with information and listings for regional shows, trials and clinics. Or get the dish on dog topics with KPAM's "Animal Tracks" (860 AM, Sundays, 9–10 A.M.).

Plenty of local businesses pay homage to the dog world. Patrons of the Lucky Labrador Brewing Company, home of the esteemed Dogtoberfest, can kick back on the patio and quaff a glossy-coated Black Lab Stout—with dogs at their side. Pups & Cups pairs a dog-washing business with a café: because you just might need a good espresso to fuel that Newfoundland scrub session.

If you're deserving of a reward, Good Dog/Bad Dog is a purveyor of homemade

sausages, and the doggy memorabilia alone is worth a look. Also there are numerous cold-nosed outfitters like Portland Pet Supply at which to pick up the latest and greatest toys.

With a dog, you're forced to discover Portland the way it was meant to be—on foot. Downtown, there's much to occupy the both of you. People-watch (and get leashes entangled) at Pioneer Square. Or stroll along Tom McCall Waterfront Park, a scenic pathway overlooking the Willamette River, where you'll run into other breeds and maybe even catch an outdoor concert.

The Saturday Market (March–December open Sundays too) is a Portland must. With several hundred food and craft booths, including a few stalls that sell dog wares, the outdoor market promises a colorful experience; dogs are allowed on leash. Nearby, the Skidmore Fountain, which had canines in mind when it was constructed over a century ago, features troughs incorporated into its design.

Powell's Books is another Portland highlight. It covers an entire city block and is the nation's largest independent bookstore, with many titles devoted to dogs (note: only dogs small enough to be carried are allowed inside). Check with the Portland Oregon Visitors Association (www.pova.com) for additional attractions.

There are more than 80 parks to choose from in the metro area. Forest Park, at 5,000 acres, is the country's largest park within city limits, and serves as a wilderness retreat; if you're a runner, this is the place. For the record, Portland also boasts the world's smallest park—though measuring only several feet in size, Mill Ends Park is probably not the best place to lob tennis balls. For a great view of the city, climb to the summit of Mount Tabor Park.

Water dogs will love the setting, hedged in by the Willamette and Columbia rivers. Take advantage of this at Kelly Point Park, with its secluded beach, or head for Sauvies Island, just north of the city, where farms and orchards give way to riverside trails.

Three city parks welcome dogs off-

leash: Gabriel, West Delta and Chimney. For more information on where to stretch your legs, contact Portland Parks & Recreation (503.823.PLAY; www.ci.portland.or.us/parks). Scoop and leash laws are enforced throughout the city.

There are many options for pet-friendly lodging in Portland. Pamper your pooch, and yourself, at the downtown Westin Portland, where luxurious rooms start at \$170; a \$25 non-refundable pet deposit is required. Mind your tail in the elevator, please. At the Mark Spencer, also downtown, rooms start at \$109 and some feature kitchens; pets are allowed with a "make me proud" \$200 deposit. Or curl up at the Mallory Hotel for as little as \$85, in a quieter section of downtown, where pets are permitted with a \$10 fee. Call 1-87-PORTLAND for additional lodging.

Cosmopolitan, quaint and canine-friendly, Portland has an allure that's hard to shake. Whether you're a cultured sophisticate—or like to drink from a toilet.

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Lucky Labrador Brewing Company
915 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.
503.236.3555
www.luckylab.com

Pups & Cups
4516 N.E. 42nd Ave./503.493.4000

Good Dog/Bad Dog
708 S.W. Alder St./ 503.222.3410

Portland Pet Supply
4246 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.
503.233.3866

The Saturday Market
Old Town Portland/503.222.6072

Powell's Books
numerous locations/503.228.0540

Westin Portland
750 S.W. Alder St./503.294.9000

Mark Spencer Hotel
409 S.W. 11th/800.548.3934

Mallory Hotel
729 S.W. 15th Ave./800.228.8657