

Portland: Keeping it both Real, and Weird

Portland won me over from the start; This quirky, liberal, funky town has a pretty cool vibe. Within a few days, it jumped to the top of my list of favourite cities in the world.

My little bit weird and favourite thing to do: is that people looked you right in the eye and gave a genuine smile. And this my friends is the place to do it, people weren't glued to their mobiles, avoiding eye contact so much like the rest of the world – nope – straight in the eye look with a real smile.... and that my friend, is priceless!

The city, for those that are unaware, is also the inspiration and muse of the much-loved quirky little bit weird show ['Portlandia'](#). If you've not seen it, be sure to check it out before you go.

Yes, the city is weird in the best of ways; its bike friendly, food cart crazy. Home of the alternative crowd – dare I say, critical thinkers.... that are all growing their own food and beards (other than the ladies).

For a crafty creative like me, it's a huge Creative Mecca – one that must be visited and walked around at least once in this lifetime. It features some of the Best indie craft fairs, such as; [crafty wonderland](#), [renegade Craft Fair](#), [Picnic Music+Arts Festival](#), [Portland Fleaforall](#). All worth visiting, be sure to check the dates before you go.

My Portland Recommendations:

To Sleep:

I used **Airbnb**, and stayed in Val's [Buddha room](#) – If I could've I would've moved in stayed forever! A lush, green and safe neighbourhood, a short walk to top local eateries, shops and gardens.

Where to Eat in Portland



[Brass Tacks](#), Most delicious Sandwiches I've ever eaten, ever! (This folks, is saying something – no not because I eat tones of sandwiches, but because I am an older than 29 ;-)). I had the vegan 'Meatball Wizard, and Salamigeddon'. Makes my mouth water just thinking about them!

[Sweeedeedee](#) – this home cooked food rocked it! I loved the homely unpretentious vibe as much as the outstanding quality of their food...

[Salt & Straw](#); The Best Ice Cream; with flavours like Pear and Blue Cheese, Honey Lavender and Strawberry Honey Balsamic with Black pepper. As well as the standard classics. Don't wait for summer; these are worth checking out all year round.

[Que Sabosa](#), it the best Mexican food cart, I had the Burrito

that was filled with fresh roasted vegetables, and mind blowing handmade sauces – that you don't come across this side of the border – authenticity all the way. @ N Williams.

Others recommend [voodoo doughnuts](#). I didn't get any, I walked passed saw the line of people waiting, wondering if it was a pop concert. But no, it gets this busy – so I put it top of my list for my next visit. I didn't even wait in line at the Vatican, sorry dude's can't wait in line for doughnuts....

Where to shop in Portlandia

[Crafty wonderland pop up shop](#): I recommend you visit Portland in June for the real event, which I missed. This pop-up soothed the pain. I was awestruck by the stunning and unique handcrafted items on display. There ain't no suitcase big enough to fit all I wanted to buy (no credit card limit high enough either).

[Collage craft supplies](#) If you craft, pondering the idea of crafting this is the supply store to go to. I spent hours and hours in there – it has everything and more.

[Contemporary museum of Craft](#): This has rotating exhibitions of fine quality handcrafted artisan good are. Let's say its many leagues above what I fathom to make.

– [Mississippi Ave](#): This is the street where you want to hang, shop and live nearby, it has the quaintest, to unique shops. There are too many to list in one post.

What to visit/ do

[City parkland](#), huge, walk-worthy and a must visit. I wish I'd put more time aside for this, as you could take a picnic and get lost in there for a very long time.

[Powells Bookshop](#): filled to the brim with both the best

collection of new and used books. I never buy books when travelling, but made the exception as there were a few books that I knew I'd not find anywhere else. this alone would be worth living close to Portland for. Also check out their schedule they often have speakers, authors or evenings of banter.

[Made here PDX](#) for best artisan handcrafted goods for both men & women.

To finish off, to prove that Portland is weird, here are a few unknown yet interesting facts;

- It's illegal to walk across the street with your shoes untied.
- It's illegal to whistle underwater.
- It's against Portland law to modify the weather without obtaining a license first. Luckily this is not something I attempted to do while there ☐ Does make me wonder if anyone has this license?...

Despite what others say about the weirdness, I felt more at home in Portland than I have anywhere in a long time. I had some deep thought-provoking conversations with some incredible people, saw and bought some amazing handmade wares, was inspired by all the creative craftiness that I saw – and ate some of the best food of my life. This is my kind of city, for visiting or living and any time in Portland is time well spent.

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