

# PORTLAND - AMERICA'S GASTRONOMIC PARADISE



Portland is the largest city of Oregon, the second largest in the Pacific Northwest. It is known as the 'city of roses' and its image has always been affected by relatively nearby Seattle and San Francisco. Up until around 15 years ago, the afore-mentioned roses were the most frequent things to pop up in a sentence containing the name Portland. Indeed, food and dining were mostly considered necessities rather than the great pleasures they are today. Nowadays, Portland is America's gastronomic capital and the masses of food shops, markets and restaurants have overtaken the roses in the race for fame.

Chefs came to Portland originally for a few reasons. The first reason is its affordability. If we take a look at a similar chef migration to East Village and Brooklyn, which took place in the 90's, we can realise the financial benefits Portland provides. Many failed to open their own restaurant due to extortionate costs. This is not the case in Portland, where there is much less of a financial burden on entrepreneurs. Chefs could cook for cash without the need for corporate backers and expensive lawyers.

Furthermore, Portland is blessed with the perfect surroundings for a gastronomic feast. The nearby Hood River Valley is home to an abundance of glistening berries and the centre of Oregon's wine industry, Willamette valley, is less than half an hour away by car. Similarly, almost all meat and fish is reared by local environment-conscious farmers and all is available at reasonable prices. There are 6 micro-distilleries in Portland and more breweries than in any other city on the planet. Portland has every ingredient possible for any masterchef's dish. One of these masterchefs is James Beard, perhaps the most famous entity in Portland, known as "the father of American gastronomy". He is currently the owner of one of Portland's mass of restaurants.

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