




Where to find doughnuts, coffee and the best indie shopping in Portland

 Janis Turk, Special Contributor 

I love the smell of retail in the morning, so on a sunny Monday in Portland, after a spending the night in the warm embrace of Macy's department store (its doors and well-dressed window displays flanking the entrance of my hotel) I pop over to [Voodoo Doughnut](#) shop to grab a treat for my own little *Breakfast at Tiffany's* moment.

Best-known for three of my favorite things — shopping, doughnuts and coffee — Portland is arguably Oregon's sweetest city. In fact, Voodoo Doughnut, with its decadent fried dough slathered with icing and sugary sprinkles, pretty much put this sweet northwestern city on the map.

Today, Portland has at least seven different doughnut-hole-in-the-wall shops in the downtown area alone (my favorite being [Blue Star Donuts](#)), along with trendy food trucks, open-air markets, farm-to-fork eateries, seriously hipster coffee shops and magnificent microbreweries.

And since recreational marijuana is even legal in Oregon (with certain strict restrictions), there is a vice for every appetite. But for all its sucrose, caffeine, calories, suds and smokes, Portland's drug of choice is shopping.

Since Oregon has no sales tax, diamond baubles from Tiffany & Co., a shiny Rolex, or even a new car will cost less in Portland, making this pretty "green" city a shopper's paradise. I wasn't interested in pricey purchases, but I did want to browse the world's largest bookstore selling used and new titles, [Powell's City of Books](#), occupying an entire city block and housing nearly a million books, so I packed up my sugar and shopping compulsions and flew to Portland.



The lobby of the Nines and Urban Farmer, A Modern Steakhouse, in downtown Portland, Ore. Starwood Hotels

Dressed to the nines in my Texas best *prêt-à-porter*, I checked into Portland's ultimate shopping and eating base — the glamorous The Nines hotel.

Like a pearl hidden between two pretty clam shells, the entrance to this luxe downtown property is sandwiched between Macy's two front doors. Housed in a 1908 former Meier & Frank department store flagship building, an ornate, glazed terracotta edifice with frosting-like luster of architectural flourishes and tall windows, The Nines is 8 years old and fills the top nine floors of the building, while its lower levels house Macy's.

At the eighth-floor lobby, shiny white mannequins and contemporary retail-themed art pay homage to the building's former department store incarnation and stir my inner shopper.

At the back of the lobby's soaring atrium space stands Urban Farmer, the casual upscale steakhouse of innovative chef Matt Christianson. A library and billiards room tucked just off the lobby gives guests a warm, intimate space to unwind. At rooftop level, a 9,000-square-foot restaurant and bar, Departure, features eclectic Pan-Asian cuisine in a sleek, cosmopolitan setting under executive chef Gregory Gourdet. With two outdoor decks overlooking the city, it's a hip nightlife spot.



Tiffany blue-type velvet upholstery accent chairs are just a small part of the luxurious chic design of the Nines Hotel in downtown Portland, a Luxury Collection Hotel of Starwood.

(Starwood Hotels)

In fashion

Trend-setting, fashionable, flirty and contemporary, The Nines' name seems fitting for this little jewel-box hotel. Throughout its 331 rooms, even the glam velvet settees are Tiffany blue, and the crown molding in the hallways recalls the shape of a vintage hatbox. On one floor there's even a mod caricature of Clark Gable, who in 1922 worked there as a tie salesman at Meier & Frank.

Cater-corner to the hotel stands the multi-level little Pioneer Square shopping space, with high-end stores like Tiffany & Co., Kate Spade NY, Coach, Swarovski, and more. Within walking distance is Powell's City of Books, and across the street from it stands a large airy shop, [Made Here PDX](#), carrying only locally crafted items, like leather journals and handmade jewelry.

After enjoying Voodoo Doughnut's famous Maple & Bacon bar, Audrey Hepburn-style in front Tiffany's, I was ready to explore Portland's best stores and coffee, doughnut and dinner spots. Here are some favorite stops from my sweet Portland shopping trip.



Serving Blue Star Donuts with a smile, this charming worker knows Portland residents love doughnuts, and Blue Star's sell out quickly each day. They make theirs from a classic brioche recipe that originated in the south of France. (Janis Turk)

Doughnuts

Blue Star Donuts: With locations downtown and in the 23rd Street shopping district, drop by Blue Star to taste the Meyer Lemon and Key Lime Curd-filled powder-sugar covered doughnuts. Uber on over to **Pip's Original Doughnuts & Chai**, across the river, for their hot-out-of-the-oil tiny mini-doughnuts. The **Voodoo Doughnut** flagship store downtown often has a long line, so get there early. Try its Voodoo doll-shaped creation that bleeds red raspberry jelly filling with a pretzel stake through its heart.



Get your caffeine rush and find new parts of Portland you never saw before during a Third Wave Coffee Tour of Portland's hippest coffee shops. On the tour you'll learn all about coffee from its origins to its roasting techniques to ways to brew it. Guests can even sign up for a coffee cupping event. (Janis Turk)

Coffee

Take a coffee-tasting tour and find some of Portland's best coffee shops during the [Third Wave Coffee Tour](#), led by tour owner Lora Woodruff, who leads coffee lovers on an interesting, educational, caffeine-fueled journey to places like [Barista Coffee Shop](#), [Red e Café](#), [Sisters Coffee Company](#) and [Nossa Familia Coffee](#).



Will Leather Goods began in Oregon and now has stores across the USA, including this popular one in Portland. (Janis Turk)

Shopping

Yes, Portland's many shopping malls and villages have all the big local chain stores shoppers love, especially at the popular [Pioneer Place](#) downtown and outside town at [Washington Square](#), but for fabulous local finds, shop stores like [Made Here PDX](#), or [Tilde](#) (with home accents, accessories, décor and fashions), [Hunt and Gather](#) (custom furniture design, art and home goods). Check out the [Alberta Arts District](#) downtown.

Other popular shopping villages in the area include Multnomah Village and Bridgeport Village. Don't miss Northwest 23rd Street's Nob Hill Shopping District (where you'll also find another Blue Star Donut location).

Eats

For lunch, stop at a food cart or head to [Public Market House](#) at Monument Square, with local vendors serving everything from pizza to sushi to Latin fare. In the evening, enjoy fresh seafood and innovative local/sustainable fare at [The Hairy Lobster](#) in the Pearl District or a vodka-infused evening of fabulous Russian fare at [Kachka](#). Stay in the hotel and dine in style at [Urban Farmer](#), at The Nines, or nosh and sip with rooftop views at [Departures](#).