

A Magical Food Tour of Portland

Written by Allison Young

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From Voodoo doll donuts to blue cheese ice cream, nothing is off limits.

You know when you're so stuffed, verging on food coma, and someone mentions ice cream and miraculously the fullness subsides and you're able to down a double scoop. That's food magic, one of many forms of culinary alchemy that strikes wondrously and regularly in Portland, a Northwest town that really wants you to think it's weird so they can have all the food offerings to themselves. No way, locals. We see through your trickery and descended on P-town for a spellbinding food tour that had us donut-hopping, coffee-sipping, brunch-savoring, street-food sampling, ice cream-licking, cocktail-sipping and even lining up—something we'd never do in Phoenix—across three tasty neighborhoods.



First stop: Downtown Eating means sleeping, so before you taste-trek across the city, make sure you have dreamy quarters in close proximity to good grub—and nothing fit that bill like [Ace Hotel Portland](#) (pictured), the original hipster hotel that not only has street cred (as well as rooms with original artwork, beds with Pendleton blankets and a lounge-with-your-laptop lobby outfitted with a vintage photo boot) but food cred. The in-room mini-bar and room 215 breakfast buffet are both filled with gourmet riches (oh, that granola!), plus it's sandwiched between [Stumptown Coffee Roasters](#) (pictured on opening page) for responsibly sourced brew (try the Nitro Cold Brew on draft) and [Clyde Common](#), a happy hour hotspot known for its barrel aged negronis. When brunch calls, take the 5-minutes walk to [Tasty N Alder](#) for a chocolate malt milkshake and fries (dip the fries, obvi) or a breakfast spin on Korean bibimbap. For early morning or late-night munchies, follow the pink glow to [Voodoo Donut](#), a cash-only deep-fried dough emporium that sells spellbinding rings topped with things like Captain Crunch, bacon and bubble gum; there's even a deliciously diabolical raspberry jelly-filled Voodoo Doll donut that comes with a pretzel stake.



Next stop: Mississippi Ave The sun is to Phoenix what restaurant lineups are to Portland. Any place worth its salt has a queue, and the wait is like a food badge to be worn with pride. So when you're strolling Mississippi Ave in North Portland, follow the crowds to [¿Por Qué No?](#). Yes, the name is as funky as the mismatched décor, but it's the transcendental tacos that'll grab you. Corn tortillas are made fresh and stuffed with sustainably-sourced ingredients, from banana leaf-braised brisket to crispy cornmeal encrusted Alaskan Cod. Wash it down with a smoky

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Mescal Margarita or housemade horchata spiked with rum for extra yum. And because just one standout donut shop per town is never enough, across the street there's [Blue Star Donuts](#). Instead of cereal toppers you'll find cake and brioche taste bombs elevated with sophisticated flavors like blueberry bourbon, Cointreau and marionberry compote.



Last stop: Richmond Neighborhood If you waved a magic food wand with spells of tricking your tasted buds with unusual food pairings and ethnic street food scents—POOF!—you'd have Richmond Neighborhood, Southeast Portland's walkable stretch of savory, sweet and umami offerings, some that are so Portland and others that can whisk you away on a magic carpet ride. Take [Bollywood Theater](#), the brainchild of chef Troy MacLarty, formerly of Berkeley's Chez Panisse, who traveled to India and brought back the spirit and aroma of Mumbai's cooking. Savor lamb samosas, potato dumpling sliders and rich and creamy curries while taking in Bollywood movies on the big screen. Down the street at [Pok Pok](#) (pictured at top of page) is chef Andy Ricker's bold take on Thai. What started as a takeout shack has turned into a delicious eating adventure with food as layered as the multi-tiered restaurant. Must-orders include the papaya salad, fish sauce chicken wings, drinking vinegars and can't-find-anywhere-else cocktails, like the Salted Plum Vodka Collins, a slightly sweet, slightly salty spin on a gin and tonic. Save the best for last with [Salt & Straw](#) (pictured above), an ice cream joint to end all ice cream joints. With whimsical yet well-thought-out flavors, sample all they have to offer, from the Pear & Blue Cheese to the Sea Salt with Caramel Ribbons, and you'll suddenly have a lot more room than you thought.