

5

Where to Dine

Despite slow economic times, the Portland restaurant scene is still jumping and the city has developed a reputation to rival Seattle's when it comes to great restaurants. Several distinct dining districts are full of upscale spots, and though you aren't likely to choose to eat at one of these places on the spur of the moment (reservations are usually imperative), their proximity allows you to check out a few places before making a decision for later.

The Pearl District's renovated warehouses currently house the trendiest restaurants, while Nob Hill's Northwest 21st Avenue boasts half a dozen terrific establishments within a few blocks. The Sellwood and Westmoreland neighborhoods of Southeast Portland make up another of the city's hot restaurant districts, and for good inexpensive food, it's hard to beat the many offerings along NE Broadway in the Irvington neighborhood.

Dinner in Portland isn't complete without an Oregon wine. Pinot noir and pinot gris in particular receive widespread acclaim. However, they can be more expensive than other domestic wines.

1 Downtown (Including the Skidmore Historic District & Chinatown)

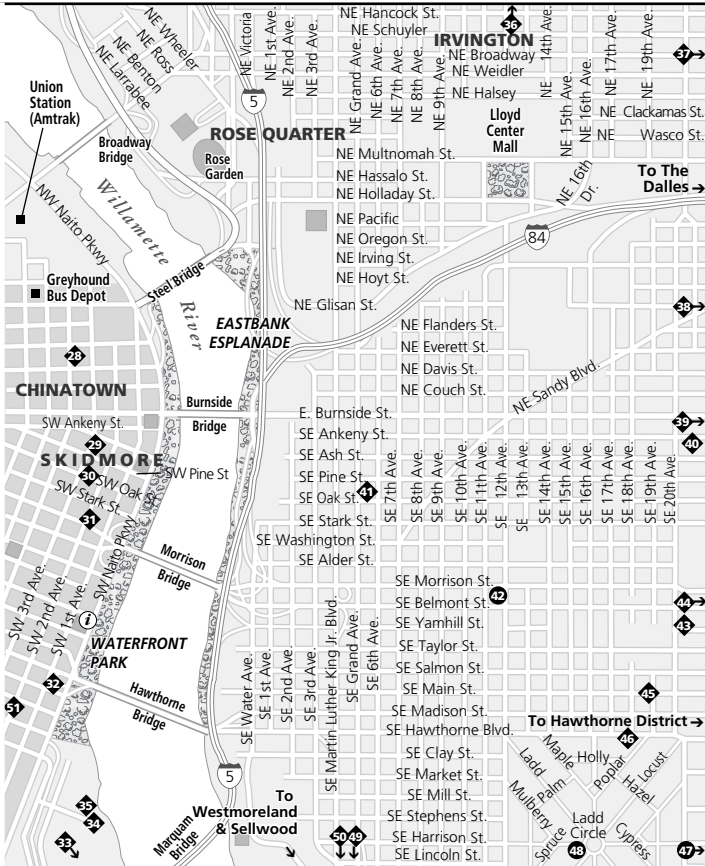
EXPENSIVE

In addition to the restaurants listed below, two high-end steakhouse chains—**Ruth's Chris Steak House**, 309 SW Third Ave. (☎ 503/221-4518), and **Morton's**, 213 SW Clay St. (☎ 503/248-2100)—both have restaurants in downtown Portland.

The Heathman Restaurant and Bar ★★★ NORTHWEST/FRENCH This grande dame of Northwest-style restaurants serves Northwest cuisine with a French accent, and chef Philippe Boulot has received the James Beard Foundation's "Best Chef in the Northwest" award. Boulot's menu changes seasonally, but one thing remains constant: The ingredients used are the very freshest of Oregon and Northwest seafood, meat, wild game, and produce. The

This map of Portland, Oregon, illustrates the city's layout across several key districts. The **NORTHWEST** district is characterized by a grid of streets including NW Thurman St., NW Upshur St., NW Cornell Rd., and NW Westover Rd. The **NOB HILL** area features streets like NW 24th Ave., NW 25th Ave., NW 26th Ave., and NW 27th Ave. The **PEARL DISTRICT** is located south of Nob Hill, with streets such as NW Irving St., NW Hoyt St., NW 18th Ave., NW 19th Ave., NW 20th Ave., NW 21st Ave., NW 22nd Ave., NW 23rd Ave., NW 24th Ave., NW 25th Ave., NW 26th Ave., NW 27th Ave., NW 28th Ave., NW 29th Ave., NW 30th Ave., NW 31st Ave., NW 32nd Ave., NW 33rd Ave., NW 34th Ave., NW 35th Ave., NW 36th Ave., NW 37th Ave., NW 38th Ave., NW 39th Ave., NW 40th Ave., NW 41st Ave., NW 42nd Ave., NW 43rd Ave., NW 44th Ave., NW 45th Ave., NW 46th Ave., NW 47th Ave., NW 48th Ave., NW 49th Ave., NW 50th Ave., NW 51st Ave., NW 52nd Ave., NW 53rd Ave., NW 54th Ave., NW 55th Ave., NW 56th Ave., NW 57th Ave., NW 58th Ave., NW 59th Ave., NW 60th Ave., NW 61st Ave., NW 62nd Ave., NW 63rd Ave., NW 64th Ave., NW 65th Ave., NW 66th Ave., NW 67th Ave., NW 68th Ave., NW 69th Ave., NW 70th Ave., NW 71st Ave., NW 72nd Ave., NW 73rd Ave., NW 74th Ave., NW 75th Ave., NW 76th Ave., NW 77th Ave., NW 78th Ave., NW 79th Ave., NW 80th Ave., NW 81st Ave., NW 82nd Ave., NW 83rd Ave., NW 84th Ave., NW 85th Ave., NW 86th Ave., NW 87th Ave., NW 88th Ave., NW 89th Ave., NW 90th Ave., NW 91st Ave., NW 92nd Ave., NW 93rd Ave., NW 94th Ave., NW 95th Ave., NW 96th Ave., NW 97th Ave., NW 98th Ave., NW 99th Ave., NW 100th Ave.

Huber's **31**
 Jake's Famous Crawfish **19**
 Ken's Place **46**
 Kornblatt's Delicatessen
 & Bagel Bakery **9**
 McCormick & Schmick's **35**
 Morton's **51**
 Newport Bay Restaurant **34**
 Nicholas's **42**
 Paley's Place **3**



Pambiche **38**
 Peanut Butter & Ellie's **36**
 Pho Van **16**
 Pizzicato Gourmet Pizza **21**
 Piazza Italia **14**
 Ringside West **12**
 Ruth's Chris Steak House **30**
 Salvador Molly's **44**
 Southpark Seafood Grill
 & Wine Bar **24**

Swagat **4**
 Tapeo **1**
 Typhoon! **11**
 Veritable Quandary **32**
 Western Culinary
 Institute's Bleu **23**
 Wildwood **2**
CAFES, COFFEE BARS
& TEA ROOMS ●
 Florio **40**

Ken's Artisan Bakery **10**
 Palio Dessert House **48**
 Papa Haydn **8**
 Pearl Bakery **18**
 Pix Patisserie **47**
 Rimsky-Korsakoffe
 House **42**
 Stumptown **29**
 Torrefazione Italia **7**
 World Cup **15, 19**

62 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

interior is Art Deco inspired, the atmosphere bistrolike. I advise picking entrees from the “Northwest Specialties” lists. The bar offers Northwest microbrewery beers on tap, while an extensive wine list spotlights Oregon wines.

The Heathman Hotel has an extensive collection of classic and contemporary art, and on the restaurant walls you’ll find Andy Warhol’s *Endangered Species* series.

In the Heathman Hotel, 1001 SW Broadway. ☎ 503/790-7752. Reservations highly recommended. Main courses \$7.75–\$15 lunch, \$12–\$40 dinner. AE, DC, MC, V. Sun–Thurs 6–11am, 11:30am–2pm, and 5–10pm; Fri–Sat 6–11am, 11:30am–2pm, and 5–11pm.

Higgins ★★ NORTHWEST/MEDITERRANEAN Higgins, located just up Broadway from the Heathman Hotel, where chef Greg Higgins first made a name for himself in Portland, strikes a balance between contemporary and classic in both decor and cuisine. The menu, which changes frequently, explores contemporary culinary horizons, while the decor in the tri-level dining room opts for wood paneling and elegant place settings. Yet despite all this, the restaurant remains unpretentious, and portions can be surprisingly generous for a high-end restaurant. Flavors change with the season, but are often both subtle and earthy. A recent entree of honey-and-chili-glazed pork loin with stuffed Walla Walla sweet onions and sharp cheddar–mashed potatoes highlighted the restaurant’s ability to balance creativity with familiarity. Be sure to leave room for dessert, and if you happen to be a beer lover, you’ll be glad to know that Higgins has one of the most interesting beer selections in town (plenty of good wine, too).

1239 SW Broadway. ☎ 503/222-9070. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$7.75–\$15 lunch, \$18–\$27 dinner. AE, DC, MC, V. Mon–Fri 11:30am–2pm; daily 5–10:30pm; bistro menu served in the bar daily until midnight.

Veritable Quandary ★★ NEW AMERICAN Located in an old brick building just a block off Tom McCall Waterfront Park, this restaurant is a must for summer meals. The restaurant’s garden patio, the prettiest in town, faces a small park. The menu changes daily, but keep an eye out for the grilled prawns, and don’t pass up the osso buco. The chef here pulls in all kinds of influences, so don’t be surprised if you find bacon-wrapped dates stuffed with goat cheese or prosciutto with grilled green figs and Gorgonzola crostini, or springs rolls filled with duck confit, shiitakes, and Chinese cabbage (served with a side of wasabi-ginger sauce).

DOWNTOWN 63

1220 SW First Ave. © 503/227-7342. www.veritablequandary.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$17–\$26. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–3pm and 5–10pm; Fri 11:30am–3pm and 5–11pm; Sat 9:30am–3:30pm and 5–11pm; Sun 9:30am–3:30pm and 5–10pm.

MODERATE

There's an outpost of **Typhoon!** at 400 SW Broadway (© 503/224-8285), in the Hotel Lucia. See the complete review on p. 70.

Carafe Bistro ★★ FRENCH Portland lost a couple of its favorite French restaurants in recent years, but luckily for Portlanders and visitors, this place has stepped in to fill the void. With its small zinc bar, wicker patio chairs, and warm interior hues, it feels just the way you'd expect a neighborhood bistro in Paris to feel. The menu is simple bistro fare (everything from fresh sardines to croque-monsieur to rabbit braised with prunes), and as you would expect in any good French bistro, there is a nightly special (sweet-breads on Wed, bouillabaisse on Fri). With lots of appetizers, salads, and side dishes, you can easily assemble a thoroughly Gallic meal. On top of all this, Carafe is right across the street from Keller Auditorium. Oh yes, and there's free valet parking after 5:30pm.

200 SW Market St. © 503/248-0004. Main courses \$7.50–\$13 lunch, \$14–\$20 dinner. AE, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11am–10pm; Fri 11am–11pm; Sat 5–11pm; Sun 4–9pm.

Huber's ★ (Finds) AMERICAN Huber's, Portland's oldest restaurant, first opened its doors to the public in 1879 and is tucked inside the Oregon Pioneer Building down a quiet hallway. The main room has a vaulted stained-glass ceiling, Philippine mahogany paneling, and the original brass cash register. Turkey dinner with all the trimmings is the house specialty, but you can also gobble turkey enchiladas, turkey Parmesan, and even Moroccan turkey. Another specialty is Spanish coffee made with rum, Kahlúa, triple sec, coffee, and cream. The preparation, which involves flaming the rum in a wineglass, is a very impressive tableside production. Because Huber's bar is quite popular, you'll probably enjoy your meal more if you come for lunch instead of dinner. Be sure to ask for a table in the old vaulted room.

411 SW Third Ave. © 503/228-5686. www.hubers.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$6–\$21 lunch, \$9–\$24 dinner. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–4pm and 5–10pm; Fri 11:30am–4pm and 5–11pm; Sat noon–4pm and 5–11pm.

64 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

Jake's Famous Crawfish ★★ SEAFOOD Jake's has been a Portland institution since 1909, and the back bar came all the way around Cape Horn in 1880. Much of the rest of the decor looks just as old and well worn as the bar, and therein lies this restaurant's charm. However, it's the great seafood at reasonable prices that makes this place a real winner. There's a daily menu listing a dozen or more specials, but there's really no question about what to eat at Jake's: crawfish, which are always on the menu and are served several different ways. Monday through Friday from 3 to 6pm, bar appetizers are only \$1.95. The noise level after work, when local businesspeople pack the bar, can be high, and the wait for a table can be long if you don't make a reservation. However, don't let these obstacles put you off.

401 SW 12th Ave. ☎ **503/226-1419**. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$6–\$15 lunch, \$9–\$30 dinner. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11am–11pm; Fri–Sat 11am–midnight; Sun 4–11pm.

McCormick and Schmick's Harborside at the Marina ★★ SEAFOOD Anchoring the opposite end of RiverPlace Esplanade from the RiverPlace Hotel, this large, glitzy seafood restaurant serves up a view of the Willamette and excellent seafood. Four dining levels assure everyone a view of the river and marina below, and in summer, customers head out to tables on the sidewalk. Because it's so popular, the place tends to be noisy and the help can sometimes be a bit harried; however, this doesn't detract from the fine food. Although seafood (such as mahimahi with mango-lime vinaigrette or salmon sautéed with forest mushrooms, hazelnuts, and berries) is the main attraction here, the menu is quite extensive. The clientele is mostly upscale, especially at lunch and during the after-work hours.

0309 SW Montgomery St. ☎ **503/220-1865**. www.mccormickandschmicks.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$8–\$26. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Sun–Thurs 11am–10pm; Fri–Sat 11am–11pm.

Newport Bay Restaurant ★ *Kids* SEAFOOD Though there are Newport Bay restaurants all over the Portland area, this one has by far the best location—floating on the Willamette River. Located in the marina at Portland's beautiful RiverPlace shopping-and-dining complex, the Newport Bay provides excellent views of the river and the city skyline, especially from the deck. Popular with young couples, families, and boaters, this place exudes a cheery atmosphere, and service is efficient. Nearly everything on the menu has some sort of seafood in it, even the quiche, salads, and pastas. Entrees are

DOWNTOWN 65

straightforward and well prepared—nothing too fancy. Sunday brunch is a very good deal.

0425 SW Montgomery St. ☎ 503/227-3474. www.newportbay.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$9–\$15 lunch, \$15–\$24 dinner. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11am–11pm; Fri–Sat 11am–midnight; Sun 10am–11pm. Closes 1 hr. earlier Oct–May.

Southpark Seafood Grill & Wine Bar ★★ (Value) MEDITERRANEAN/SEAFOOD With its high ceiling, long heavy drapes, halogen lights, and interesting wall mural, the wine bar here is a contemporary interpretation of late-19th-century Paris, and the main dining room is both comfortable and classy. For a starter, don't pass up the fried calamari, rock shrimp, and vegetables served with spicy aioli. Equally delicious is the butternut-squash-and-ricotta-filled ravioli with toasted hazelnuts, which comes in a rich Marsala wine sauce that begs to be sopped up with the crusty bread. An extensive wine list presents some compelling choices, and the desserts are consistently fine.

901 SW Salmon St. ☎ 503/326-1300. www.southpark.citysearch.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$14–\$22; 3-course prix fixe dinner \$25. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–3pm and 5–10pm; Fri 11:30am–3pm and 4–11pm; Sat 11am–3pm and 5–11pm; Sun 11am–3pm and 5–10pm.

Western Culinary Institute's Bleu ★ (Value) CONTINENTAL/AMERICAN If you happen to be a frugal gourmet whose palate is more sophisticated than your wallet can afford, you'll want to schedule a meal here. The dining room serves six-course gourmet meals prepared and served by advanced students at prices even a budget traveler can afford. For each course you can choose from among two to half a dozen offerings. A sample dinner menu might begin with *velouté Andalouse* (a delicious cream of tomato soup) followed by sautéed vegetables in a puff pastry, a pear sorbet, grilled ahi tuna with black-bean salsa, Chinese salad with smoked salmon, and mocha cheesecake. Remember, that's all for under \$25! The five-course lunch for \$15 is another great deal. The institute also operates the casual Café Bleu here in the same building.

SW Ninth Ave. and SW Alder St. ☎ 503/294-9770. Reservations required. 5-course lunch \$15; 6-course dinner \$25. AE, MC, V. Tues–Fri 11:30am–1pm and 6–8:00pm.

INEXPENSIVE

Bijou Café ★ NATURAL FOODS The folks who run the Bijou take both food and health seriously. They'll serve you a bowl of steamed brown rice and raisins for breakfast, but you can also get

66 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

delicious fresh oyster hash or brioche French toast. However, the real hits here are the sautéed potatoes and the muffins, which come with full breakfasts. Don't leave without trying them. Local and organic products are used as often as possible at this comfortably old-fashioned cafe.

132 SW Third Ave. ☎ 503/222-3187. Breakfast and lunch \$5–\$11. MC, V. Mon–Fri 7am–2pm; Sat–Sun 8am–2pm.

House of Louie ★ CHINESE Located a block over from the Portland Classical Chinese Garden, this old-fashioned Chinese restaurant is a great spot for dim sum after a visit to the gardens. Dim sum, the traditional meal of small plates that are wheeled around the restaurant on carts, is served all day. With lots of steamed dumplings, pot stickers, and shrimp balls, it's easy to order more than you can eat. Pace yourself. Oh, yes, and watch out for the chicken feet!

331 NW Davis St. ☎ 503/228-9898. Main courses \$5–\$11; dim sum \$2.20–\$3.60. MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11am–10pm; Fri 11am–midnight; Sat 10:30am–midnight; Sun 10:30am–10pm.

2 Northwest Portland (Including the Pearl District & Nob Hill)

EXPENSIVE

bluehour ★ FRENCH/ITALIAN Restaurateur Bruce Carey has long dominated the Portland restaurant scene, and at this high-style restaurant, he continues to woo and wow the local trendsetters. Located in a converted warehouse that serves as headquarters for Portland advertising giant Wieden+Kennedy, bluehour has a very theatrical atmosphere. With sophisticated menu items such as seared foie gras and American sturgeon caviar, it's obvious that bluehour is Portland's most haute restaurant. Unfortunately, the cacophonous noise level and tightly packed tables severely detract from the cultured cuisine. If you value conversation with your meal, steer clear of bluehour. This is definitely the sort of place where being seen by the right people is more important than the food.

250 NW 13th Ave. ☎ 503/226-3394. www.bluehouronline.com. Reservations highly recommended. Main dishes \$18–\$32. AE, DISC, MC, V. Tues–Fri 4:30–10:30pm; Sat 5–10:30pm.

Café Azul ★★ GOURMET MEXICAN Located in the Pearl District in what was clearly once an old warehouse, Café Azul is a long, narrow space softened by expanses of warm yellow and terra-cotta walls. The food here includes some of the best regional Mexican

NORTHWEST PORTLAND 67

dishes you're likely to find this side of the border. Tasty margaritas are generous and can be made with a number of different tequilas; sangrita, a spicy nonalcoholic ancho-chili-and-orange drink, also gets two thumbs up. Start by spreading some dangerously tasty chili butter on a crusty roll, then follow this with a taco sampler platter that includes handmade corn tortillas served with Yucatecan-style pork roasted in banana leaves. From Oaxaca, Mexico, comes the inspiration for Café Azul's *mole*, a rich, spicy sauce made with more than two dozen ingredients, including toasted nuts, chocolate, and chilies, which might be served over chicken or duck. The house-made ice creams and sorbets, often made with unusual tropical fruits, are always a fitting finale. This may be expensive for Mexican food, but it's well worth it.

112 NW Ninth Ave. ☎ 503/525-4422. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$17-\$20. MC, V. Tues-Thurs 5:30-9pm; Fri-Sat 5:30-9:30pm.

Paley's Place ☞ NORTHWEST/FRENCH Located in a Victorian-era house, Paley's is a favorite of Portland foodies. The menu relies extensively on the freshest local organic ingredients (often stacked in baskets on the front porch) and ranges from traditional bistro fare (look for the egg stand on the bar) to dishes with complex flavors and a hint of Northwest inspiration. Chef Vitaly Paley continues to receive accolades year after year. Whether you're in the mood for the superb house-made ham or Peking duck eggs over brioche with bacon and wild mushrooms, you'll certainly find something that appeals. If you've never tried sweetbreads, this is the place to do so, and the signature frites, with a mustard aioli, are not to be missed. Big on wines, Paley's offers wine tasting on Wednesday. For dessert, I can't pass up the warm chocolate soufflé with outrageously rich house-made ice cream. Inside, the restaurant is small and stylishly comfortable but can be quite noisy.

1204 NW 21st Ave. ☎ 503/243-2403. www.paleysplace.citysearch.com. Reservations highly recommended. Main courses \$19-\$28. AE, MC, V. Mon-Thurs 5:30-10pm; Fri-Sat 5:30-11pm; Sun 5-10pm.

RingSide Downtown ☞ STEAK Despite the location on a rather unattractive stretch of West Burnside Street, RingSide has long been a favorite Portland steakhouse. Boxing may be the main theme of the restaurant, but the name is a two-fisted pun that also refers to the incomparable onion rings that should be an integral part of any meal here. Have your rings with a side order of one of their perfectly cooked steaks for a real knockout meal. The three-course prix fixe dinners are only \$25 if you order before 5:45pm or after 9pm.

68 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

2165 W. Burnside St. ☎ **503/223-1513**. www.ringsidesteakhouse.com. Reservations highly recommended. Steaks \$23–\$35; other main courses \$16–\$42; prix fixe dinner \$25–\$35. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Sat 5pm–midnight; Sun 4–11:30pm.

Wildwood ★★ NEW AMERICAN With a menu that changes daily and a spare, elegant interior decor straight out of *Architectural Digest*, Wildwood has for many years been one of Portland's best restaurants. If you love creative cuisine, be sure to give this place a try. Fresh seasonal ingredients combined into simple-yet-imaginative dishes are the hallmark of chef Cory Schreiber's cooking, and often there are no more than a handful of ingredients in a dish so as to let each of the flavors shine through. On a recent evening, there were skillet-roasted Washington mussels with garlic, sun-dried tomato, and saffron and an excellent oyster-topped salad with pancetta and aioli. This is the only non-Indian restaurant I know of that has a tandoor oven, and you can usually count on the meat dishes that are roasted in this oven. Salads and sorbets are exceptionally good. If you can't get a reservation, you can usually get served in the bar.

1221 NW 21st Ave. ☎ **503/248-9663**. www.wildwoodrestaurant.com. Reservations highly recommended. Main courses \$10–\$14 lunch, \$19–\$26 dinner. AE, MC, V. Mon–Sat 11:30am–2:30pm and 5:30–10pm; Sun 10am–2pm and 5–9:15pm.

MODERATE

Caffe Mingo ★★ *(finds)* ITALIAN This intimate little neighborhood restaurant has terrific food, an interior as attractive as that of any other upscale restaurant here on Restaurant Row, and lower prices. If there's any problem with this immensely popular place, it's that you almost always have to wait for a table and they only take reservations for larger parties. The solution? Get here as early as possible. The menu is short, and focuses on painstakingly prepared Italian comfort food. Just about all of the items on the menu are winners, from the antipasto platter, which might include roasted fennel, fresh mozzarella, and roasted red pepper, to an unusual penne pasta dish with tender beef braised in chianti and espresso. The *panna cotta* dessert ("cooked cream" with fruit) is reason enough to come back here again and again, even if you have to wait in the rain to get a seat.

807 NW 21st Ave. ☎ **503/226-4646**. Reservations accepted only for parties of 6 or more. Main courses \$9–\$19. AE, DISC, MC, V. Sun–Thurs 5–10pm; Fri–Sat 5–11pm.

Fratelli ★★ REGIONAL ITALIAN In this rustic-yet-chic restaurant, cement walls provide a striking contrast to dramatic draperies and candles that drip casually onto the tabletops. Dishes are consistently good, with surprisingly moderate prices for the Pearl

NORTHWEST PORTLAND 69

District. There's excellent olive oil to go with your bread and an *antipasto* plate that might include spring beans with arugula and octopus, chicken wrapped in prosciutto, rabbit *crepinette* (a sort of sausage), or a luscious *panna cotta*. The polenta with wild mushrooms and the seared chicken wrapped in prosciutto are longtime favorites here. This restaurant's aesthetic and menu are similar to Caffè Mingo's (see above), but at Fratelli you can make reservations. 1230 NW Hoyt St. ☎ 503/241-8800. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$13–\$18. AE, DC, MC, V. Sun–Thurs 5:30–9pm; Fri–Sat 5:30–10pm.

Pho Van ★★ VIETNAMESE If you think of Formica tables and fluorescent lights when you think of Vietnamese restaurants, think again. This Pearl District Vietnamese place is one of the most stylish restaurants in town, with everything from decor to bamboo-encased menus affecting a modern Asian aesthetic. Yet the prices are extremely reasonable. As the name implies, you can get flavorful *pho* soup (a Vietnamese staple), but I prefer the dishes from the grill and the other entrees and complex hand rolls. These latter include grilled minced shrimp and chicken wrapped around sugarcane, as well as crispy crepes filled with shrimp, scallops, and vegetables. Also be sure to try the round steak wrapped around lemongrass and vegetables.

1012 NW Glisan St. ☎ 503/248-2172. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$10–\$16. AE, MC, V. Mon–Sat 11am–3pm and 5–10pm.

Piazza Italia ★★ ITALIAN Portland has more than its fair share of good Italian restaurants, but none feels as much like a trip to Italy as this one. The staff all speaks Italian most of the time and the TVs over the bar are tuned to Italian soap operas and soccer matches. Just inside the front door is a glass case full of the imported meats, cheeses, and olives that go into the antipasto plate. This place isn't very big and has a very limited menu, but it's always bustling. After your antipasto, try the simple linguine *squarciarella*, which is made with eggs, prosciutto, onions, and Parmesan cheese. During the summer, the tables on the sidewalk are the in-demand seats.

1129 NW Johnson St. ☎ 503/478-0619. Main courses \$8–\$13. AE, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–10pm; Fri–Sat 11:30am–11pm; Sun noon–9pm.

Tapeo ★★ *(Finds)* SPANISH This a great place for a light meal or a romantic evening out. With the feeling of an old European restaurant, this small yet plush neighborhood spot nestled deep in Northwest Portland seems intimate, but the noise level rises considerably when the place is full—which is often. People wait around for the tables, which are placed so close together that you might as well be

70 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

sitting with your neighbor. But it's worth the wait for authentic Spanish tapas such as excellent grilled eggplant thinly sliced and stuffed with goat cheese and deliciously crisp fried calamari served with aioli. The flan is the richest you'll ever taste. Prices on wines, both by the glass and bottle, are decent.

2764 NW Thurman St. ☎ 503/226-0409. Reservations not accepted. Tapas \$1.75–\$9.75. DISC, MC, V. Tues–Thurs 5:30–9:30pm; Fri–Sat 5–10pm.

Typhoon! ★ THAI Located just off NW 23rd Avenue, this trendy spot is a bit pricey for a Thai restaurant, but the unusual menu offerings generally aren't available at other Portland Thai restaurants. Be sure to start a meal with the *miang kum*, which consists of dried shrimp, tiny chilies, ginger, lime, peanuts, shallots, and toasted coconut drizzled with a sweet-and-sour sauce and wrapped up in a spinach leaf. The burst of flavors on your taste buds is absolutely astounding. (We first had this in Thailand and waited years to get it in the United States.) The whole front wall of the restaurant slides away for Thai-style open-air dining in the summer. There is an extensive tea list.

There's another Typhoon! at 400 SW Broadway (☎ 503/224-8285), in the Hotel Lucia.

2310 NW Everett St. ☎ 503/243-7557. www.typhoonrestaurants.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$7–\$23. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–2:30pm and 5–9:30pm; Fri 11:30am–2:30pm and 5–10pm; Sat noon–3pm and 5–10pm; Sun 4:30–9pm.

INEXPENSIVE

Kornblatt's Delicatessen & Bagel Bakery ★ AMERICAN/DELI Located in the heart of NW 23rd Avenue, a dozen tables and a takeout corner are the setting for some very satisfying (and kosher) Jewish soul food. The corned beef and pastrami come directly from New York, and the bagels are made on the premises. If Nova lox, whitefish salad, knishes, potato latkes, or blintzes don't tempt you, how about a selection of five different kinds of cheesecake?

628 NW 23rd Ave. ☎ 503/242-0055. Reservations not accepted. Sandwiches \$4.50–\$10. AE, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 7am–8pm; Fri 7am–9pm; Sat 7:30am–9pm; Sun 7:30am–8pm.

Swagat ★ *Value* INDIAN This Indian restaurant specializes in south Indian dishes. The *dosas*, crepes made of lentil flour stuffed with vegetable curry and served with a variety of sauces, are deliciously savory, and the tandoori chicken is intriguingly smoky. Be sure to start your meal with the *sambar*, a thin but flavorful soup. I also like the vegetable samosas, crisp turnovers stuffed with potatoes

NORTHEAST PORTLAND (INCLUDING IRVINGTON) 71

and peas, and the *keema mattar* (ground lamb with peas). Don't forget to order some of the puffy nan bread. At lunch there is an extensive buffet that, at \$6.95, is a very good deal.

Another Swagat is located in the west-side suburb of Beaverton at 4325 SW 109th Ave. (☎ 503/626-3000).

2074 NW Lovejoy St. ☎ 503/227-4300. Reservations not accepted. Main courses \$8–\$12. AE, DISC, MC, V. Daily 11:30am–2:30pm and 5–10pm.

3 Southwest Portland

EXPENSIVE

Chart House ★★ SEAFOOD Although this place is a part of a restaurant chain with lots of outposts all over California and the rest of the West, it also happens to boast the best view of any restaurant in Portland. On top of that, it serves the best New England clam chowder in the state. While you savor your chowder, you can marvel at the views of the Willamette River, Mount Hood, Mount St. Helens, and nearly all of Portland's east side. Fresh fish, either grilled, baked, or blackened, is the house specialty. You'll also find a selection of excellent steaks for the diner in your group who just won't eat seafood. No dinner here is complete without the hot chocolate lava cake, which has to be ordered at the start of your meal if you want it to be ready when you are. Between 5 and 6:30pm there are early evening dinners for \$11 to \$16.

The Chart House is in an out-of-the-way spot about a 10-minute drive from downtown Portland; be sure to call ahead and get driving directions.

5700 SW Terwilliger Blvd. ☎ 503/246-6963. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$10–\$16 lunch, \$15–\$40 dinner. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 11:30am–2pm and 5–9 or 10pm.

INEXPENSIVE

There's also a **Chez José West** at 8502-A SW Terwilliger Blvd. (☎ 503/244-0007); see the review of Chez José East on p. 72.

4 Northeast Portland (Including Irvington)

MODERATE

Pambiche ★ *(finds)* CUBAN Driving past this tiny-hole-in-the-wall neighborhood restaurant, you'd never guess that it's one of Portland's best and most popular restaurants. However, you certainly can't pass the tropical hot-pink building without giving it a glance. Don't just gawk, get in there. The food is straight out of Havana, with taro root fritters, codfish-and-potato croquettes, fried yucca root, and fried

Kids **Family-Friendly Restaurants**

Chez José East (see below) Between 5 and 7pm, kids under 6 eat free at this friendly Mexican restaurant.

Newport Bay Restaurant (p. 64) A cheery atmosphere, straightforward meals, and a great location on the Willamette River make this a good family pick.

Peanut Butter & Ellie's (see below) This place isn't just family friendly, it's designed exclusively for kids, and, of course, the various peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches are big hits with the little ones.

bananas. And that's just on the appetizer list. Just don't fill up on all those tasty little tropical treats; the main dishes, such as shrimp Creole, Cuban-style beef hash, and oxtail braised in red wine, are served in huge portions.

A sister restaurant/bar, **Cañita**, is across the river at 503 W. Burnside St. (☎ 503/274-4050). This place is bigger than Pambiche and has live Cuban music on the weekend.

2811 NE Glisan St. ☎ 503/233-0511. Main courses \$7–\$17. MC, V. Sun–Thurs 11am–10pm; Fri–Sat 11am–midnight.

INEXPENSIVE

Chez José East ★ *Kids* MEXICAN It's obvious both from the hip decor and the menu that this isn't Taco Bell. Although a squash enchilada with peanut sauce (spicy and sweet with mushrooms, apples, jicama, and sunflower seeds) sounds weird, it actually tastes great. Don't worry, though, there's also plenty of traditional—and traditionally cheap—fare on the menu. Because the restaurant doesn't take reservations, it's a good idea to get here early, before the line starts snaking out the door. This is a family-friendly place, so don't hesitate to bring the kids, and if the kids are under 6, they'll eat for free between 5 and 7pm. There's a Chez José West at 8502-A SW Terwilliger Blvd. (☎ 503/244-0007).

2200 NE Broadway. ☎ 503/280-9888. Reservations accepted for 7 or more. Main courses \$2.50–\$12. AE, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11:30am–11pm; Fri–Sat 11:30am–midnight; Sun 5–10pm.

Peanut Butter & Ellie's ★ *Finds Kids* This cozy, colorful little spot in an upscale northeast Portland neighborhood takes kid-friendly to

HAWTHORNE, BELMONT & INNER SE PORTLAND 73

the extreme. This place is exclusively for children, though their parents are welcome if they are well behaved. The menu features—you guessed it—peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches (some topped with grapes, raisins, or even shredded carrots). Okay, so there are soups, salads, chicken sandwiches, grilled cheese sandwiches, and a few other offerings, but the peanut butter constructions are the real highlights. Most of the tables are kid-size, but there are a few for adults. Oh, and by the way, the peanut butter is organic and is ground right here.

1325 NE Fremont St. ☎ **503/282-1783**. www.peanutbutterellies.com. Main courses \$4.50–\$8.50. MC, V. Summer Mon–Sat 9am–3pm, Fri 9am–7pm; shorter hours off season.

5 Hawthorne, Belmont & Inner Southeast Portland**VERY EXPENSIVE**

Genoa ★★ ★ REGIONAL ITALIAN This has long been the best Italian restaurant in Portland, and with fewer than a dozen tables, it's also one of the smallest. Everything, from the breads to the luscious desserts, is made fresh in the kitchen with the best local seasonal ingredients. This is an ideal setting for a romantic dinner, and service is attentive—the waiter explains dishes in detail as they are served, and dishes are magically whisked away as they're finished. The fixed-price menu changes every couple of weeks, but a typical dinner might start with tuna marinated with cranberry beans and red onions, followed by tomato-leek soup. The pasta course might be yellow and green fettuccine with chanterelle mushrooms and prosciutto. There's always a choice of main courses, such as salmon in a sweet-and-sour marinade with fresh fennel or a pork chop that has been marinated with rosemary, juniper berries, coriander, allspice, thyme, and bay leaves. It takes Herculean restraint to choose from a dessert selection that includes chocolate and nut tortes, fresh berry tarts, and liqueur-infused concoctions.

2832 SE Belmont St. ☎ **503/238-1464**. www.genoarestaurant.com. Reservations required. Fixed-price 4-course dinner \$56, 7-course dinner \$68. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 5:30–9:30pm (4-course dinner limited to 5:30 and 6pm seatings only).

EXPENSIVE

Castagna ★★ ★ FRENCH/ITALIAN Located on a rather nondescript stretch of Hawthorne Boulevard and much removed from the bustle of this boulevard's central commercial area, Castagna is a magnet for Portland foodies. Considering the less than stylish location and minimalist (though thoroughly designed) interior, it's obvious that the food's the thing here. Dishes tend toward simple preparations that

74 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

allow the freshness of the ingredients to express themselves. A friend swears the New York steak, served with a heaping mound of shoe-string potatoes, is the best he's ever had. However, less familiar entrees, such as duck breast with dried cherry and chervil sauce or halibut with artichoke, cardoon, salsify, and clams in a white wine-thyme sauce, flesh out the menu. In addition to the main dining room, there is an inexpensive cafe serving much simpler fare.

1752 SE Hawthorne Blvd. ☎ **503/231-7373**. Reservations highly recommended. Main dishes \$22–\$27; cafe main courses \$9–\$16. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Main restaurant Wed–Thurs 5:30–9:30pm; Fri–Sat 5:30–10:30pm. Cafe Mon–Thurs 5–10pm; Fri–Sat 5–11pm; Sun 5–9:30pm.

MODERATE

Assaggio ★★ **RUSTIC ITALIAN** This trattoria in the Sellwood neighborhood focuses on pastas and wines; the menu lists a dozen or more pastas, and the wine list includes more than 100 wines, almost all Italian. The atmosphere in this tiny place is theatrical, with indirect lighting, dark walls, and the likes of Mario Lanza playing in the background. Don't be surprised if after taking your first bite, you suddenly hear a Verdi aria. The pastas, with surprisingly robust flavors, are the main attraction. *Assaggio* means a sampling or a taste, and that is exactly what you get if you order salad, bruschetta, or pasta Assaggio-style—a sampling of several dishes, all served family-style. This is especially fun if you're here with a group.

7742 SE 13th Ave. ☎ **503/232-6151**. www.assaggiorestaurant.com. Reservations recommended. Main courses \$11–\$17; 3-course prix-fixe dinner \$26. AE, DISC, MC, V. Tues–Thurs 5–9:30pm; Fri–Sat 5–10pm.

Ken's Place ★ *Value* **AMERICAN REGIONAL** It's just a tiny retro diner with three big raspberry-colored booths and a couple of tables, but chef/owner Ken Gordon turns out dishes here that would do justice to the best restaurants in town. On any given night, there might only be half a dozen entrees, but these economically priced dishes might include roasted black bass with lentil, bacon, and red wine stew or an Asian-style pork chop with ginger applesauce and scalloped potatoes. There are always plenty of side dishes with which to fill out a meal. Desserts such as chocolate torte with raspberry sauce should not be missed. This casual neighborhood place is the absolute antithesis of Portland's chic restaurants, but the food is every bit as good. Desserts are stacked on a desk just inside the front door, so you'll know what you're saving room for.

1852 SE Hawthorne Blvd. ☎ **503/236-9520**. Reservations not accepted. Main courses \$7.75–\$18. MC, V. Wed–Thurs 5:30–9:30pm; Fri–Sat 5:30–10:30pm.

HAWTHORNE, BELMONT & INNER SE PORTLAND 75

INEXPENSIVE

Chez Grill ★ SOUTHWEST One of the Portland pioneers of creative Latino fare, Chez Grill leans toward nuevo Mexican and Southwestern flavors. Although the restaurant is at the western end of the Hawthorne district, it looks as if it could have been transported straight from Tucson or Santa Fe. Whatever you do, don't miss the grilled fish tacos: They're the best in town! The prawn enchilada is also exquisite, although you only get one (with rice and beans). Be sure to start a meal with the rough-cut guacamole; for a strangely sweet appetizer, try the unusual baked avocado.

2229 SE Hawthorne Blvd. ☎ 503/239-4002. Main courses \$4.75–\$12. DISC, MC, V. Sun–Thurs 5–10pm; Fri–Sat 5–11pm (bar open later nightly).

Esparza's Tex-Mex Café ★ Finds TEX-MEX With red-eyed cow skulls on the walls and marionettes, model planes, and stuffed iguanas and armadillos hanging from the ceiling, the decor here can only be described as Tex-eclectic, a description that is just as appropriately applied to the menu. Sure there are enchiladas and tamales and tacos, but they might be filled with ostrich, buffalo meat, or smoked salmon. Rest assured Esparza's also serves standard ingredients such as chicken and beef. Main courses come with some pretty good rice and beans, and if you want your meal hotter, they'll toss you a couple of jalapeño peppers. The *nopalitos* (fried cactus) are worth a try, and the margaritas are some of the best in Portland. While you're waiting for a seat (there's almost always a wait), check out the vintage tunes on the jukebox.

2725 SE Ankeny St. ☎ 503/234-7909. Reservations not accepted. Main courses \$7.50–\$18. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Tues–Sat 11:30am–10pm (in summer Fri–Sat until 10:30pm).

Nicholas Restaurant Finds MIDDLE EASTERN This little hole-in-the-wall on an unattractive stretch of Grand Avenue is usually packed at mealtimes, and it's not the decor or ambience that pulls people in. The big draw is the great food and cheap prices. In spite of the heat from the pizza oven and the crowded conditions, the customers and waitstaff still manage to be friendly. Our favorite dish is the *Manakish*, Mediterranean pizza with thyme, oregano, sesame seeds, olive oil, and lemony-flavored sumac. Also available are a creamy hummus, baba ghanouj, kabobs, falafel, and gyros.

318 SE Grand Ave. (between Pine and Oak sts.). ☎ 503/235-5123. www.nicholasrestaurant.com. Reservations not accepted. Main courses \$4.75–\$11. No credit cards. Mon–Sat 11am–9pm; Sun noon–9pm.

76 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

Salvador Molly's ★ *(Finds)* CARIBBEAN With lots of colorful mismatched tables and chairs and a funky, tropical decor, this Caribbean restaurant has become a real hot spot. Flavors are in your face, servings are big, and prices are low. Best of all, this self-styled pirate cookin' is a surefire antidote to a gray winter day. What's not to love? With lots of spicy starters, this is also a good spot for a light meal. Be forewarned, however, that the food here can be fiery. There's even a "Wall of Flame" for people who can survive Salvador Molly's habanero-spiked great balls of fire. For tamer tastes, try the *arepas* (Venezuelan corn cakes), the oyster taco, or the tamales, which here are steamed in banana leaves.

3350 SE Morrison St. ☎ 503/234-0896. www.salvadmollys.com. Main courses \$7.50–\$15. AE, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 4:30–10pm; Fri 4:30–11pm; Sat noon–11pm; Sun noon–10pm.

6 Westmoreland & Sellwood

EXPENSIVE

Caprial's Bistro and Wine ★★ NORTHWEST If you're a foodie, you're probably already familiar with celebrity chef Caprial Pence, who helped put the Northwest on the national restaurant map and has since gone on to write several cookbooks and host TV and radio food shows. That her eponymously named restaurant is a fairly casual place tucked away in a quiet residential neighborhood in Southeast Portland may come as a surprise. The menu changes monthly and is limited to four or five main dishes and about twice as many appetizers. Entrees combine perfectly cooked meat and seasonal seafood with vibrant sauces. Desserts are usually rich without being overly sweet. There is also a wine bar offering a superb selection of wines at reasonable prices. The restaurant also has a cooking school.

7015 SE Milwaukie Ave. ☎ 503/236-6457. www.caprial.com. Dinner reservations highly recommended. Main courses \$7.75–\$12 lunch, \$19–\$28 dinner. MC, V. Tues–Thurs 11:30am–2:30pm and 5–9pm; Fri–Sat 11:30am–2:30pm and 5–9:30pm.

7 Coffee, Tea, Bakeries & Pastry Shops

CAFES

If you'd like to sample some cafes around Portland that not only serve the full range of coffee drinks but are also atmospheric, I recommend the following:

Torrefazione Italia ★★, 838 NW 23rd Ave. (☎ 503/228-1430), serves its classic brew in hand-painted Italian crockery and has a good selection of pastries to go with your drink. Order a latte just to see

COFFEE, TEA, BAKERIES & PASTRY SHOPS 77

what a wonderful job they do with the foam. Other locations are at 1403 NE Weidler (☎ 503/288-1608) and 1140 NW Everett (☎ 503/224-9896).

With an upscale Starbucks-style interior decor, a social conscience, and a Pearl District location, **World Cup**, 721 NW Ninth Ave. (☎ 503/546-7377), is a coffee haven for the politically correct. It's even located in an unusual environmentally friendly "green" building that has a rooftop terrace. Other World Cups are located inside Powell's World of Books, 1005 W. Burnside St. (☎ 503/228-4651, ext. 234), and in the Nob Hill neighborhood at 1740 NW Glisan St. (☎ 503/228-4152).

There's many a Portlander who swears by the coffee at **Stumptown Coffee Roasters**, 128 SW Third Ave. (☎ 503/295-6144), a big, trendy cafe with an art-school aesthetic. Whether you go for the French press or a double shot of espresso, you're sure to be satisfied. Over on the east side of the Willamette River are Stumptown's two original cafes: 3377 SE Division St. (☎ 503/230-7797) and 3356 SE Belmont St. (☎ 503/232-8889), which both tend to attract a young, hip clientele.

BAKERIES & PASTRY SHOPS

Pearl Bakery ★★, 102 NW Ninth Ave. (☎ 503/827-0910), in the heart of the SoHo-like Pearl District, is famous in Portland for its breads and European-style pastries. The gleaming bakery cafe is also good for sandwiches, such as the roasted eggplant and tomato pesto on crusty bread.

Say the words *Papa Haydn* to a Portlander and you'll see a blissful smile appear. What is it about this little bistro that sends locals into accolades of superlatives? The desserts. The lemon chiffon torte, raspberry gâteau, black velvet, and tiramisu at **Papa Haydn West** ★★, 701 NW 23rd Ave. (☎ 503/228-7317), are legendary. There's another location at 5829 SE Milwaukie Ave. (☎ 503/232-9440), in Sellwood.

Also in the Nob Hill neighborhood, you'll find **Ken's Artisan Bakery**, 338 NW 21st Ave. (☎ 503/248-2202; www.kensartisan.com), which doesn't do a wide variety of pastries, but what it does do, it does very well. Yum! Try the fruit tarts.

Located in Ladd's Addition, an old neighborhood full of big trees and craftsman-style bungalows, **Palio Dessert House** ★, 1996 SE Ladd Ave. (☎ 503/232-9412), is a very relaxed place with a timeless European quality. To get there, take Hawthorne Boulevard east

78 CHAPTER 5 • WHERE TO DINE

to the corner of 12th and Hawthorne, then go diagonally down Ladd Avenue.

The **Rimsky-Korsakoff House** ☼, 707 SE 12th Ave. (☎ 503/232-2640), a classic old-style coffeehouse (complete with mismatched chairs), has been Portland's favorite dessert hangout for more than a decade. Live classical music and great desserts keep patrons loyal. (The mocha fudge cake is small but deadly.) There's no sign on the old house, but you'll know this is the place as soon as you open the door. Open from 7pm to midnight on weekdays, until 1am on weekends.

Florio Bakery, 2728 SE Ankeny St. (☎ 503/234-0206), located in a neighborhood packed with wine bars, bakes rustic breads and unusual pastries that are more buttery than sweet. Try the seasonal fruit galette.

I've saved the best for last. **Pix Patisserie** ☼☼, 3402 SE Division St. (☎ 503/232-4407), makes by far the most decadent pastries in Portland. Every sweet little jewel here is a work of art and it can sometimes be a real challenge to desecrate these creations with a fork. Go ahead, take a bite. You won't soon forget the experience!

8 Quick Bites & Cheap Eats

If you're just looking for something quick, cheap, and good to eat, there are lots of great options around the city. Downtown, at **Good Dog/Bad Dog**, 708 SW Alder St. (☎ 503/222-3410), you'll find handmade sausages. The bratwurst with kraut and onions is a good deal.

Designer pizzas topped with anything from roasted eggplant to wild mushrooms to Thai peanut sauce can be had at **Pizzicato Gourmet Pizza** ☼. Find them downtown at 705 SW Alder St. (☎ 503/226-1007); in Northwest at 505 NW 23rd Ave. (☎ 503/242-0023); and in Southeast at 2811 E. Burnside (☎ 503/236-6045).

For quick Middle Eastern food, try **Garbonzo's**, 922 NW 21st Ave. (☎ 503/227-4196), a casual little place that calls itself a falafel bar and is a popular spot for a late-night meal (but it's also good for lunch or dinner). The menu includes all the usual Middle Eastern offerings, most of which also happen to be American Heart Association approved. Other Garbonzo's are at 3433 SE Hawthorne Blvd. (☎ 503/239-6087) and 6341 SW Capitol Hwy. (☎ 503/293-7335).