



## WHO LOVES YOU, BABY?

A Portland writer flirts anew with the City of Roses

Some vacationers need to put a good 3,000 miles between themselves and home to achieve a carefree state of mind. All I needed was three miles and 36 hours to erase from memory piles of junk mail, mildewed bathroom grout and waist-high weeds—the ugly reminders of responsible adulthood that dog me whenever I walk through the door of my north Portland bungalow.

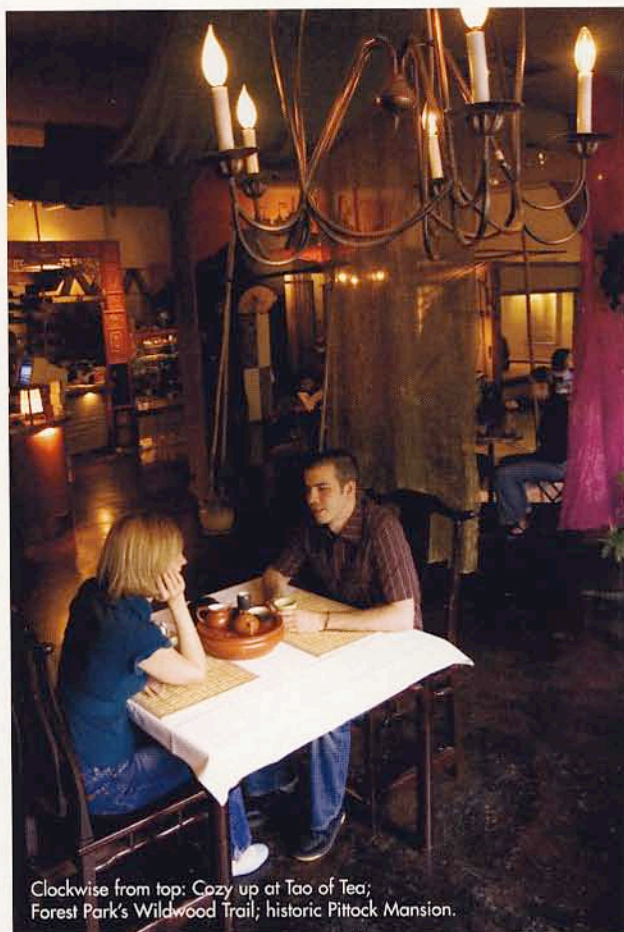
Every time family and friends have come calling during the nine years I've lived in Portland, making the rounds to the Washington Park Rose Garden, ball games at PGE Park and grand old movie houses that let you drink beer, I've been reminded of the city's vitality. But playing tour guide is different than playing tourist. To better understand why my guests always leave raving about Portland, I forced my husband to shut down his laptop, turned my back on a stack of dirty dishes and checked into a local B&B for the weekend. Never underestimate the power of dismissed chores to revive romance.

In my endeavor to experience the city anew, I found myself continually edging upward, as if I needed to see the neighborhoods, rivers and mountains spread out before me to make plain Portland's alluring mix of serenity and cultural frisson.

First, it was a swift hike from Upper MacLeay Park to the Pittock Mansion, a 30-minute climb through Forest Park that gets the blood flowing but isn't so strenuous that it requires a change of clothes (do wear a good pair of sneakers or walking shoes). It only takes a few minutes on the old-growth Wildwood Trail to restore my awe of Portland's within-city-limits natural beauty; it's an infinitely more gratifying route than traveling the paved road up to the hilltop mansion on four wheels.

I had never visited the home built by one of Portland's founding families, and the self-guided tour proved especially insightful on the topics of turn-of-the-century architecture, gender roles and pastimes (be sure to check out the design of the basement billiards room complete with circular anterooms big enough to house card tables). The veranda views of Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens and the port aren't too shabby either.

Reward your physical foray with an amorous lunch at the Tao of Tea, a hideaway just off Northwest 21st Avenue and



Clockwise from top: Cozy up at Tao of Tea; Forest Park's Wildwood Trail; historic Pittock Mansion.

KIM NGUYEN





Serratto, a handsome Italian restaurant with excellent service.

KIM NGUYEN

Hoyt Street that boasts intimate dining alcoves, an extensive tea menu and satisfying chickpea crepes and lentil dal with rice. Try the green tea-soy shake, served in a large bowl sans straw. Now's a good time to stroll over to the many boutiques lining Northwest 23rd Avenue. Be sure to stop in Blush Beauty Bar, Lush or Kiehl's to pick up some aromatic bubble bath or silky body butter for the road.

Heading up the hill once again, we checked into the Heron Haus B&B, a secluded Tudor manse tucked into a bend in the road (there's no sign, so keep the address handy). On clear days, the view is spectacular, especially from

basket and the morning papers the following day at the inn, we ascended even higher, this time by car, to Council Crest Park, a prime picnic spot. From this 1,000-foot perch, you can see all the way to Washington's Mount Rainier.

Before making your way home, wherever it may be, hang out in the pedestrian-friendly Pearl District and cap your getaway with a quickie his-and-hers foot soak at the new Foot Bar, where the MO is healing hydrotherapy, not snip and polish. The 15-minute treatments incorporate hot stones and reflexology massage, providing one last chance to put your feet up before returning to reality. —CHRISTINA MELANDER

## AND WHAT'S MORE...

**COUNCIL CREST PARK** Serving variously as a Native American meeting place, ministerial retreat and amusement park, Council Crest currently attracts bicyclists, dog walkers and view-seekers. S.W. Council Crest Dr. at the top of Marquam Hill, Portland. 503.823.2223, [www.parks.ci.portland.or.us](http://www.parks.ci.portland.or.us).

**FOOT BAR** Put your feet in the hands of licensed massage therapists for rejuvenating treatments ranging from 15 to 60 minutes. 909 N.W. 13th Ave., Portland. 503.224.0292.

**HERON HAUS BED & BREAKFAST INN** Attractive guest suites with private baths in a beautifully situated 10,000-sq.-ft. Tudor. Highlights include a library, enclosed sunroom and continental breakfast with a personal touch. 2545 N.W. Westover Road, Portland. 503.248.4055, [www.heronhaus.com](http://www.heronhaus.com).

**PITTOCK MANSION** A favorite backdrop for wedding party photos, this restored architectural showpiece was the family home of Henry Pittock, who acquired *The Oregonian* newspaper in 1860. 3229 N.W. Pittock Dr., Portland. 503.823.3624, [www.pittockmansion.com](http://www.pittockmansion.com).

**SERRATTO** When it comes to flavors, the fresh, seasonal cuisine spans the many regions of Italy. The dimly lit, cozy atmosphere makes it a romantic stop. Call for reservations. 2112 N.W. Kearney St., Portland. 503.221.1195, [www.serratto.com](http://www.serratto.com)

**TAO OF TEA** Savor some couple time over a leisurely meal and perfectly steeped pot of tea. 2112 N.W. Hoyt St., Portland. 503.223.3563, [www.taooftea.com](http://www.taooftea.com).



Heron Haus Bed & Breakfast Inn

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"Planning Your Trip," page 80.