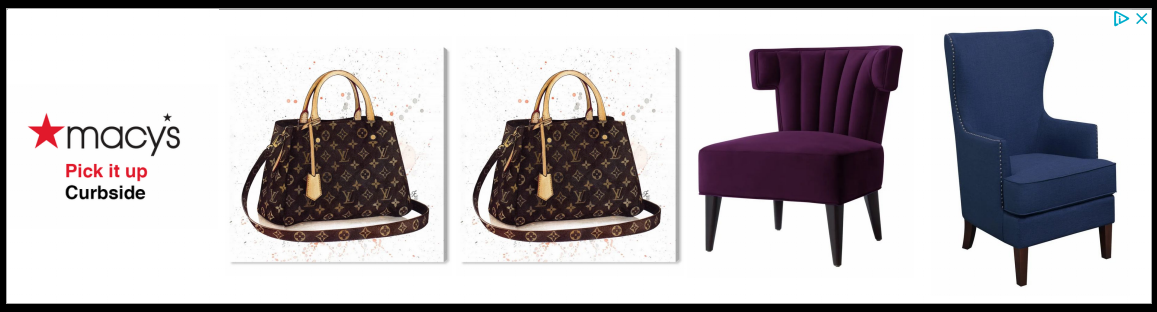

Courtesy Central Provisions

PORTLAND, MAINE TRAVEL GUIDE

10 Best Places for Brunch in Portland, Maine

This city does not sleep on brunch.

BY ALEXANDRA HALL
August 29, 2019

The city that never sleeps, Portland is not. So few visitors arrive here expecting the morning-after brunch scene to be anything to write home about. But man, are they wrong. As one bite of the buttermilk biscuits at Dutch's, or the smoked brisket sweet potato hash at Terlingua's will prove, Portlanders take their lazy-weekend-all-day-meal as seriously as they do every other repast—and they season it with big dashes of deliciousness, creativity, sass, and community. Here are ten of Portland's best brunches not to miss.

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Courtesy Hot Suppa

AT&T tv

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Hot Suppa →

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Hot Suppa, a fun, loud enclave of Southern feasting in an 1860 Victorian in the city's West End, nails food with gusto. This isn't about subtle flavors or constructed dishes put together with tweezers. It's made-from-scratch, high-flavor specialties that ricochet between super spicy and creamy and indulgent. Dishes dovetail Southern traditions with Maine seafood, from the charbroiled oysters (with Creole garlic butter, parmesan, and French bread) to the shrimp and grits (with salty country ham and oozing melted cheddar).

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Miss Portland Diner →

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From the porcelain exterior and hardwood booths inside to the stainless steel panels, Miss Portland Diner, which has been around since 1949, is every inch the real deal. You'll find all the usual diner suspects at Miss Portland—as well as a few unusual ones: satisfying, hearty corned beef hash with eggs and buttery toast; soups of the day (don't miss the white bean), and a sweet-peppery house-made coleslaw. Other signatures include the Shamrock omelet, stuffed with corned beef hash, grilled onions, and cheddar; or the open-faced Downeast Reuben, which replaces corned beef with fried local haddock. The giant cakes are all made by local bakeries.

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Vrbo

Courtesy Evo Kitchen + Bar

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Evo Kitchen + Bar →

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Sure, Chef Matt Ginn won "Chopped." But his biggest win yet is Evo, where he's taught his team to combine Maine ingredients with Mediterranean flavors. Local farms bring in the meat for his lamb ribs with yogurt and dates; and his black bass in a chickpea stew comes straight out of the surrounding waters. At brunch that means flavor-bomb falafel breakfast wraps and ethereal potato doughnuts, not to mention chickpea fries that seem to melt almost immediately on your tongue.

Courtesy Central Provisions

RESTAURANT

Central Provisions →

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The menu at Central Provisions changes daily, and small plates dominate. Think: ethereal bone marrow toast with fontina, horseradish creme, and red onion jam. Or the foie gras parfait with custard and daily fruit gelée. The crudos and tartare have a dedicated following, and the brunch menu carries almost all of the house's greatest hits, plus breakfast-friendly dishes like smoked whitefish dip on Danish rye with cornichons, and a breakfast cheeseburger with egg, bacon, and fried onion.

Erin Little

RESTAURANT

Woodford Food & Beverage →

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At Woodford Food & Beverage, everything chef Courtney Loreg touches is exceptional, from the moules frites (mussels from abutting Casco Bay in a lemony-shallot butter sauce) to the award-winning burger (brisket with smoked bacon, grilled onions, cheddar cheese, and dijonaise on a sesame seed bun). You can order that burger for brunch, alongside dulce de leche bread pudding French toast and a plate of biscuits and white sausage gravy with eggs.

RESTAURANT

Terlingua →

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It may be named after a Texas ghost town a few miles from the Rio Grande, but a ghost town Terlingua is not. In fact, it's anything but. With little-to-no competition around Portland in the barbecue arena, this contemporary, colorful spot is a go-to for neighborhood denizens, as well as anyone craving exemplary 'cue around all of Southern Maine. They pile into the dining room, which is filled with gleaming copper tables and a brightly lit bar, and most know to get here before 7 pm—right around the time the ribs sell out.

Mathew Trogner

RESTAURANT

The Honey Paw →

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Let the oversized communal table that anchors The Honey Paw, a cool, quirky, and modern boîte, be your first clue as to where the emphasis lies. The sparsely designed room, decked out in honeycomb motifs at every turn, is all about eating delicious fare and having fun while you're at it. Everything arrives on mismatched china, and the experience is meant to be shared with others—friends, strangers, and everyone in between.

Kari Herer

RESTAURANT

Union at the Press Hotel →

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At Union, chef Josh Berry, has earned myriad awards for his dedication to his suppliers and his approach to sustainable cooking. Try the Bangs Island mussels with house-made green curry; the truffled beef pot roast with fresh horseradish; and the Maine crab pasta with pancetta, peas, chili, and mint. At brunch, dishes practically have their own fan clubs, and one bite of the Szechuan pork belly B.L.T.—or the chicken and waffles with house-smoked maple and chilies—and you'll know why.

Courtesy East Enders

RESTAURANT

East Ender →

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At East Ender, orders like the smoked hake chowder are deceptively simple, teeming not with a deluge of dairy (as so many are), but with the smoky, briny flavors of fresh, local fish. Even the burger isn't some perfunctory staple; rather, it's a patty of local beef cold-smoked in-house, on a schmaltz-slathered bun with Monterey Jack. On weekend days, the place becomes a brunch temple with plates of duck confit hash with poached eggs and light-as-a-feather homemade doughnuts.

RESTAURANT

Dutch's →

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Breakfast and lunch are all you'll get at Dutch's, but frankly they're so good, you won't want anything else anyway. The fluffy buttermilk biscuits alone are the obsession of many a Portlander, not to mention all the other comfort food, from homemade croissants and pretzel bagels topped with tobiko and smoked salmon to fried confit chicken with bacon, cheddar, romaine, and red-pepper jelly on homemade brioche buns. Owners Lucy and Ian Dutch make nearly everything from scratch, including the hash browns, which justifiably have their own local cult.

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