

BEST EATS

on Oregon's North Coast

by Allen Cox

As one of the Northwest's most scenic and historic destinations, Oregon's North Coast never disappoints. And one of the things they do particularly well is food with a distinctly local flair. Legendary seafood, epic pub grub and over-the-top gastronomic delights—that's what you'll find from Cannon Beach to Seaside to Astoria. Bring your surf board, bring your fishing pole, bring your camera, but don't leave your appetite at home. Here are a few of the eateries making North Coast culinary history.

Cannon Beach

Breakfast at the Wayfarer Restaurant (wayfarer-restaurant.com) is always a dilemma. Should you have the best razor clams and eggs on the coast? Or one of their eggs Benedict creations? The solution is to come back more than once. Executive Chef Josh Archibald is adept at letting fresh local ingredients speak for themselves, and when you're dealing with the bounty of Northwest seafood, that's a water-tight policy. The lightly breaded, tender razor clams

practically sing on your fork. When it comes to Benedict, discard tradition; go with smoked salmon, Dungeness crab or wild local mushrooms and Oregon blue cheese.

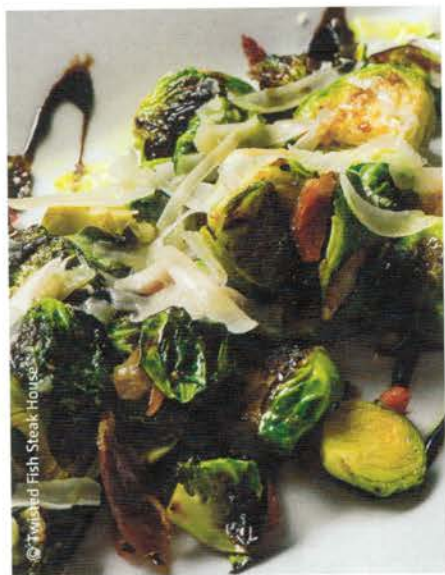
Dinner at EVOO (evoobiz.com) is an event, literally. You will watch a husband and wife culinary team create your meal, mirthfully instructing you every step of the way, and then you get to eat it. Not only will you pick up a few new kitchen skills but you'll leave feeling as though you just been thoroughly entertained with gourmet fare in a good friend's home.

For more information about visiting Cannon Beach, go to cannonbeach.org.

Seaside

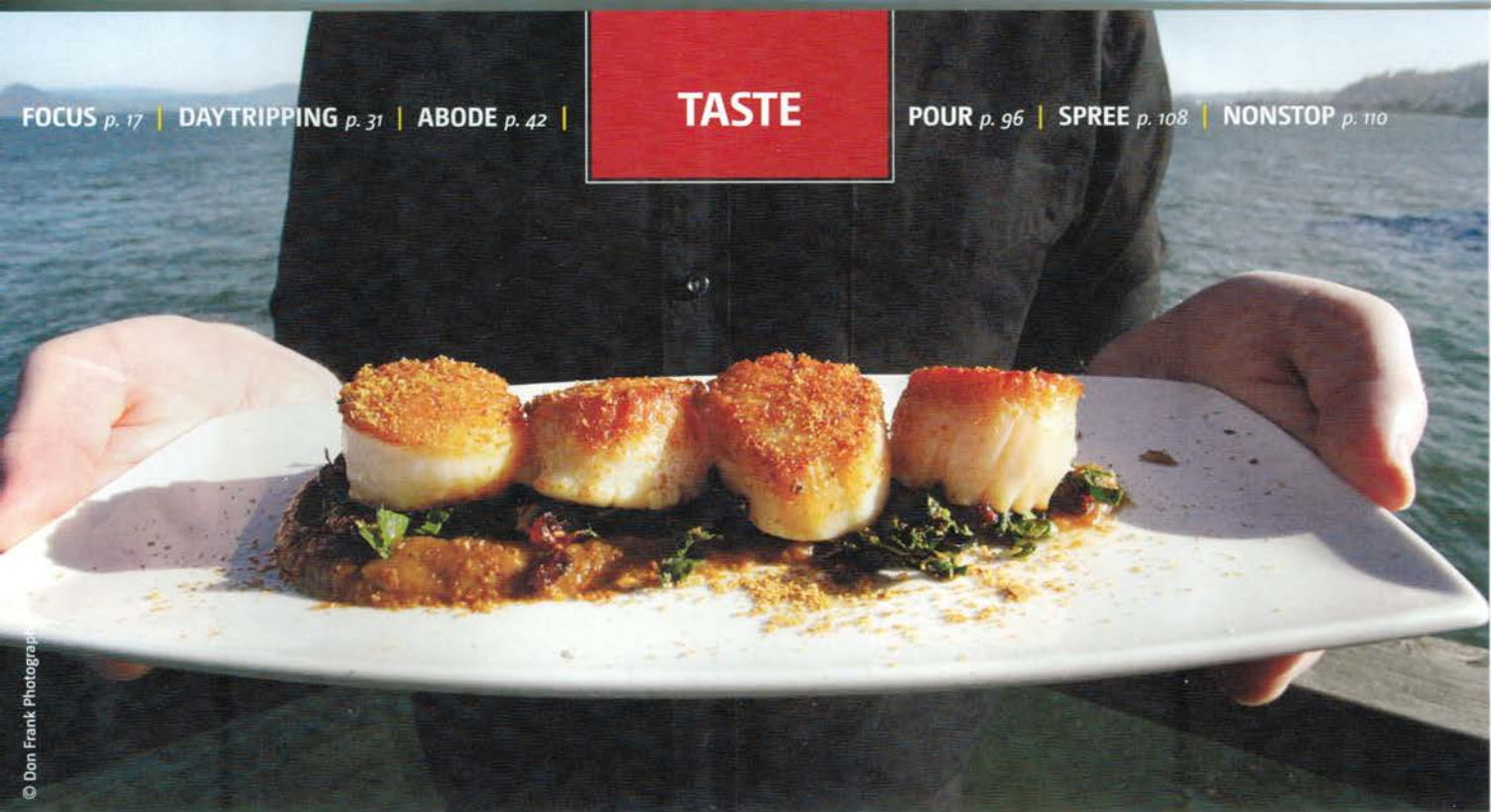
Seaside is one of the best family destinations on the coast, and, consequently, dining tends to be casual, and kid-friendly choices are common. Word on the Promenade suggests that this lineup of casual eateries rank among the best discoveries.

With all the restaurants in Seaside specializing in fresh seafood, it's hard to go wrong with any pick. Twisted Fish Steakhouse (twistedfishsteakhouse.com) has crafted a menu that showcases creative combos of ingredients that pop on the palate. Big, bold flavors rule here. Arguably two of the tastiest appetizers are brussels sprouts sauteed with bacon and Buffalo fried oysters. (Who knew oysters and blue cheese go so well together?) The steak, seafood and pasta entrees are superb and more than ample, and if you are really packing an appetite, check out the long list of comfort-food sides.



From left: The popular Brussels sprouts appetizer at Twisted Fish. The dining room at Bridgewater Bistro.





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Dooger's (doogersseafood.com), a long-time North Coast favorite, has crafted a surf and turf menu that showcases the region's fresh seafood and let's you choose your method of preparation with most seafood dishes. The indecisive gravitate toward the combo plate of fresh fish, including salmon, oysters, scallops, calamari and prawns.

Seaside is a chowder town. Everyone serves it and everyone argues about which is best. Bell Buoy of Seaside (bellbuoyofseaside.com), a top-notch fresh seafood market with a restaurant, makes a chowder that's creamy and full of clams and commands a steady following of return chowder lovers.

This historic oceanfront town happens have a deli that would hold its own among the best in New York City. Tsunami Sandwich Company (tsunamisandwiches.com) offers an eclectic menu of between-the-bread choices, and they pile it high. Hungry: Go for the MegaPastrami, a Godzilla-sized sandwich with a full pound of pastrami. More demure appetites might go for the Sand Dollar, a tasty gourmet grilled cheese with tomatoes.

Don't forget dessert. What better place than an old-fashioned soda fountain and malt shop? Head to Flashback (flashbacksoda.com), where you'll climb onto a stool at the throwback soda fountain. Whether you choose a classic hand-dipped malt, an old-fashioned banana split or a float with one of Flashback's own brand of bottled sodas, this place, with it's collection of vintage paraphernalia and plenty gifts to browse, will put a smile on your face. Buy your favorite soda and take it home.

To learn more about a vacation in historic Seaside, visit seasideor.com.

Astoria

When Chef Chris Holen opened Baked Alaska (bakedak.com) more than a decade ago, Astorians' collective response was "Huh? Fine dining here?" But locals took to it like salmon to spawning grounds. And tourists followed. The foundation was set for a food revolution. Baked Alaska is a destination within a destination. With a creative culinary mind like Holen's at the helm, give it up and order the Chef's tasting menu, and insist on the volcanic baked Alaska for dessert.

Restaurateurs Ann and Tony Kischner are no strangers to operating a fine dining establishment. They jumped on the tracks of Astoria's food revolution and opened Bridgewater Bistro (bridgewaterbistro.com) after leaving the acclaimed Shoalwater across the river. When you step into the airy, refurbished waterfront structure that houses the restaurant, a sense of history seems to speak to you from the reclaimed wood. Thus sets the stage for some of the finest seafood on the coast.

Find out more about visiting Astoria, including the city's food scene, at oldoregon.com. 🍷



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Top: Scallops at Baked Alaska.
Right: The Seaside boardwalk at Sunset.