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**Subject: What's New: Oregon Awesome**

Yep. We're pretty awesome in Oregon. Don't believe us? Well, we can prove it. How about we give you a scare, show you some fabulous foliage, and then introduce you to wine, beer and, what the heck...more wine? Don't worry. We'll also deliver a delectable dinner, crafted with local ingredients and a comfy place to rest your head. When all is said and done, you can fly home with memories, mementos, and WINE. Have we mentioned wine? Cheers!

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**Autumn Alert**

Oregon's [Fall Foliage Hotline](#) and [blog](#) kicks off its 10th colorful season this September, giving leaf peepers the most up-to-date information on fall foliage developments around the state. The fall-fresh hotline and blog allow out-of-towners, and locals alike, to zero in on the state's most vivid leaves, from the Columbia River Gorge to the McKenzie River Pass and all the way to the coast. Weekly reports from forest service rangers, photographers and [Oregon Leaf Reporters](#) from around the state make the hotline the go-to resource for travelers seeking out the beauty of fall in Oregon during peak color times.



**You're Free to Wine about the Cabin**

Starting Sept. 10, Oregon visitors can bring up to a case of wine home free of charge, thanks to the new Oregon Wines Fly Free program from Alaska Airlines. The promotion, which runs through Nov. 20, allows domestic Alaska Airlines passengers to check one case of wine sans baggage fees when flying out of one of four Oregon airports -- Portland, Eugene, Medford and Redmond. In addition, passengers showing their Alaska Airlines boarding passes within a week of their arrival will receive complimentary tastings at any of more than 220 [participating Oregon wineries](#).



### **Ponzi Goes Public**

Set atop a northwest-facing Chehalem Mountains slope, famed New World Pinot noir producer [Ponzi Winery](#), has opened its vineyard doors to the public for the first time. The modern tasting room and state-of-the-art winery offer innovative wine tasting experiences, including table-side service and tours of the four-level, gravity-flow winemaking facility. Outside, a wrap-around, heated terrace invites guests to enjoy the sensational views year-round. Or, in the summer months, play a game of Bocce ball while having a picnic beside the vineyard's sprawling amphitheater.



### **Wine and Wonder**

Pioneering Oregon winery [Sokol Blosser](#) has expanded to meet popular demand with a new building designed by internationally renowned Allied Works Architecture – made famous for designing the headquarters of Wieden + Kennedy. Both pleasing and provocative to the eye, the architectural marvel frames views and vistas of the vineyard's rolling landscape through strategic placement of windows and skylights from all sides. Featuring 5,000 square feet of space, including eight uniquely designed tasting areas, the new tasting room offers a level of hospitality and service that is outstandingly Oregon. Visitors can choose from tailored wine flights to wine and food pairings to private events. True to Sokol Blosser's roots as a leader in sustainability, the new tasting room is the first in the U.S. to pursue the Living Building Challenge (LBC) certification.



### **The Ale Runneth Over**

[Pelican Brewing](#), one of the top microbreweries on the West Coast and the only one that sits on Oregon coastal sand, is set to open an expanded facility in downtown Tillamook, Ore., in the fall of 2013. The expansion and renovation of what was a former warehouse-turned-brewery will include a new tasting room, viewing area and allow for more production of their award-winning ales, including first-time distribution of 12-ounce bottles. The company will continue to operate its namesake restaurant and pub at its beachside location in Cape Kiwanda, Ore.



### **Salt of the Earth, er, Ocean**

Top local and national chefs unite for collaborative dinners at [Jacobsen Salt Co.](#), the first salt facility of its kind on the Oregon Coast. Founder and proprietor Ben Jacobsen will lead tours of the facility – a renovated oyster factory in Netarts Bay – and highlight the salt harvesting process. The dinner series features chefs who cook with Jacobsen's salt to season Oregon-fresh dishes in their award-winning restaurants. Fall will bring collaborative dinners by Naomi Pomeroy of [Beast](#) and John Gorham of [Toro Bravo](#) and [Tasty n Sons](#). The series will continue into 2014 with dinners by Seattle stars Renee Erickson of [The Walrus and the Carpenter](#), Nicholas Coffee of [Sitka & Spruce](#), and Edouardo Jordan, a Per Se and French Laundry veteran now stationed at [Bar Sajor](#).



### **A Chop off the Old Block**

[Frankie's](#), a new restaurant from two-time Food Network “Chopped” champion, and Albany/Corvallis native Cody Utzman, opened this summer in the Willamette Valley. The main dining room includes large, comfortable booths and community tables, while outdoor dining and an old time soda fountain make it perfect for family gatherings. The menu ranges from local meats and seafood to vegan and vegetarian dishes to an array of homemade desserts. With a classic and creative cocktail menu, eye for detail and outstanding customer service, the bar at Frankie’s is sure to rank among the best cocktail lounges in the region.



### **Room at the Inn**

The [Inn at the Commons](#), soon to be located in the heart of downtown Medford, will be a centerpiece of the city’s urban renewal development, which includes a scenic new park, an up-and-coming restaurant scene and a great jumping off point for wine touring in the [Applegate Valley](#). Owners Doug and Becky Neuman, known for renovating local properties and turning them into thriving businesses such as the Ashland Springs Hotel and Ashland Hills Hotel & Suites, hope to likewise turn the Inn at the Commons into a Medford go-to destination. In addition to being the largest convention center in the city, the property will include restaurant Larks at Medford.



### **Local Haunts**

This November, the SyFy Channel will put Sumpter, Ore., on the map during its new season of “Ghost Miner,” but visitors can get a sneak peek in October. The remote woods of Eastern Oregon hold one of the richest gold mines in the U.S., abandoned 80 years ago when a series of tragedies gave it an infamous reputation for being haunted. Discovering the history of the Crescent Mine is the main attraction for [The Haunted Mine Experience](#), which includes a chance to visit with past crew members and take a ride on the Midnight Express Ghost Train, also rumored to be haunted. A half hour ride away, guests can stay the night in a haunted hotel – The Geiser Grand Hotel in Baker City offers a [Ghost Hunting](#) tour with paranormal investigators.