
Portland

Tips and Tricks for Traveling to Portland



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Introduction

Portland welcomes millions of visitors every year. Whether they come for business or pleasure, each person coming into the city should ask themselves the same critical questions. How will they get there? How will they get around the city? Where can they stay without breaking the bank?

While Portland is extremely visitor-friendly, every city it has its tourist traps. Understanding where the biggest, sneakiest and most unexpected travel expenses tend to come from can help you make the most of your trip while staying within your budget. Apply a few extra travel-savvy tips and tricks besides, and you can amp your adventure from “good enough” to “unforgettable.”

Enjoying everything Portland has to offer starts with spending your money on the

things that matter to you and not on basic necessities like transportation and a place to sleep. The first step to saving money on these basics is using smart booking strategies.



Tips for Flying to Portland

The award-winning Portland International Airport (PDX) makes travel easy once you get there. Lined with fantastic restaurants, art installations and conveniences of every kind, the airport itself is a perfect gateway to the wonders that await travelers in the city.

With more than a dozen major carries offering service into and out of PDX, finding a flight is easy. Getting there inexpensively, however, can take a bit of planning. In general, travel industry experts recommend booking domestic flights between three months and 30 days in advance to secure the best pricing. Tickets are typically cheapest in August and most expensive in June.

Need even better prices? Experts say buying tickets early in the morning, at around 6 a.m.

EST, or in the middle of a Tuesday afternoon (around 3 p.m.) are the best ways to secure the cheapest possible domestic flights. You may be able to save additional money by selecting flights scheduled for lower-volume days or times. To save money, try to book flights:

- ✓ During the months of September, October and May.
- ✓ For Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Saturdays.
- ✓ For dawn, red-eye flights or during mealtimes such as lunch or dinner

If possible, avoid flying on peak days (Friday and Sunday) or over holidays when flights are at their most crowded and most expensive.



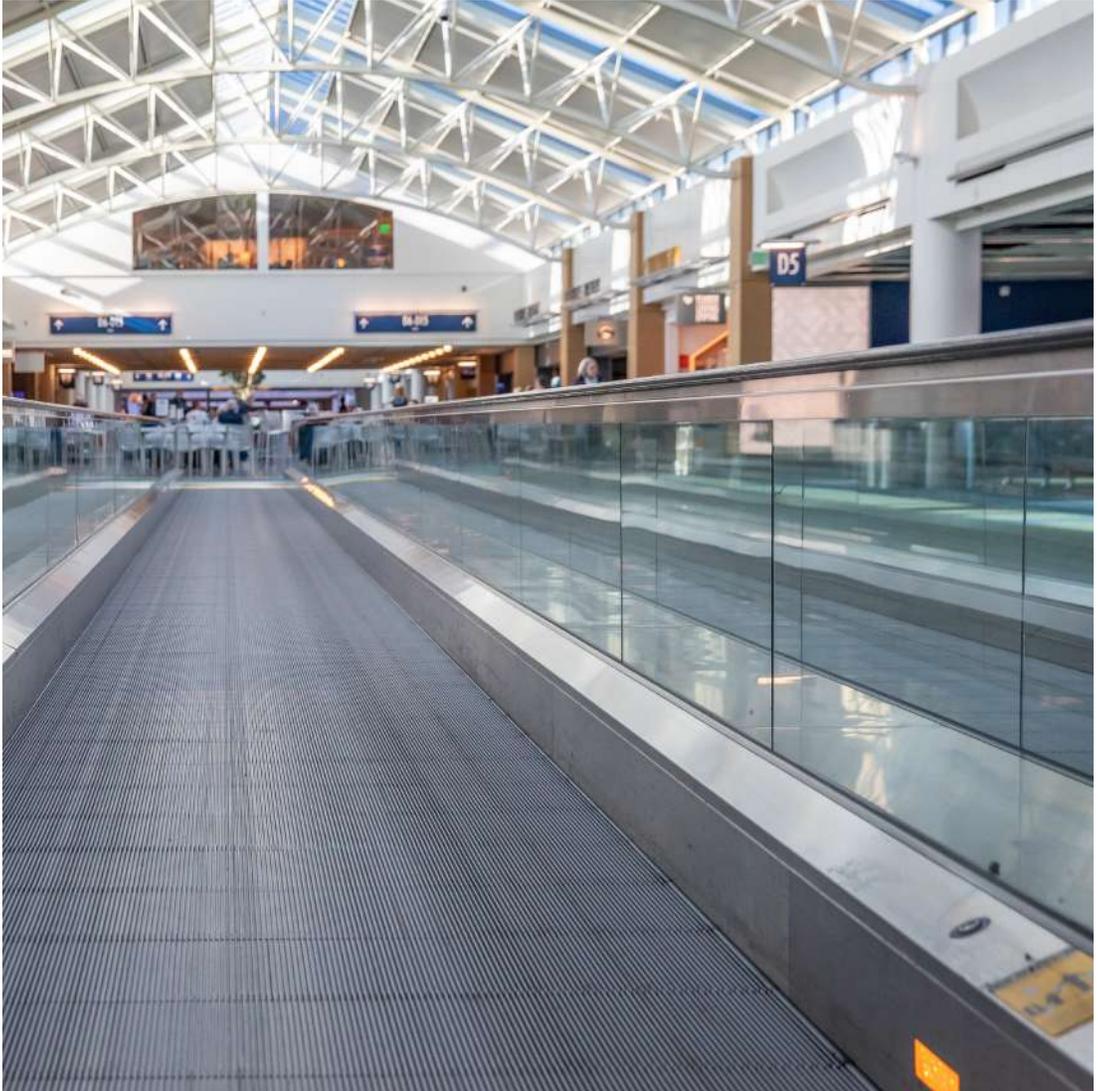
Planning Ahead for Easy Transit

One of the most effective ways to reduce hassles while traveling by air is to enroll in the [TSA Pre-Check Program](#) or the [Trusted Traveler Program](#). While these programs require enrollees to invest a little time up front in paperwork, they pay off quickly by saving travelers enormous amounts of time and frustration in airports every time they fly.

Pre-screened program enrollees get priority treatment at airport security, typically passing through expedited lanes. They are exempt from removing shoes, belts and outer wear in the security line, and are not required to remove laptops and other equipment from their travel bags.

All visitors can simplify their travel plans by checking out PDX's [virtual tour](#), which introduces travelers to the:

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- ✓ Layout of the airport.
 - ✓ Location of essential conveniences and guest services.
 - ✓ Types and locations of other transportation connections.



Tips for Finding the Best Hotels

Portland is filled to the brim in highly rated hotels with big personalities. With hotels styled in classical Art Deco, kitschy artist chic or modern minimalist elegance, there's a hotel perfect for everyone. What this means for visitors to the city is that finding the "best" hotel is a matter of deciding what is most important to you during your stay rather than relying on arbitrary ranking lists.

To narrow down your options, ask yourself:

- ✓ Are you traveling with children or pets that will need special accommodations?
- ✓ What businesses or attractions will you be visiting?
- ✓ What price range fits your budget?

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- ✓ How do you plan to get around? By rental car? Public transit?
 - ✓ What style appeals to you?

Once you have answered these questions, you will be able to comb through the extensive lists of hotels in Portland and narrow down your options to find the one that is right for you and your trip.



How to Get Hotel Discounts

Getting hotel discounts is easier than you think. Looking on standard hotel websites, it's easy to get the impression that room rates are fixed - a certain type of room costs a certain amount, period.

What many travelers don't know is that most hotels actually have multiple price points for each type of room they offer. Which price a customer gets depends on numerous factors including what discounts or coupons they have, when they book their stays, how long they are staying and the likelihood that the hotel can sell that room for a higher price to someone else for the same night.

To get the best price then, travelers can use a few simple strategies to find and take advantage of discount opportunities:

✓ **Enroll in programs that routinely offer hotel discounts or points that can be used toward hotel stays.** There are three primary types of discount programs.

- **Membership programs** such as AAA offer assistance, insurance and discounts on a variety of travel-related services.
- **Company-specific programs**, such as Marriott Bonvoy, provide travelers with discounts and perks at services and hotels within the chain.
- **Credit card rewards programs** fall somewhere between the other two, allowing customers to accrue points that they can redeem for qualifying costs at participating hoteliers. Truly savvy travelers will pick a few programs and strategically stack them for maximum discount potential.

- ✓ **Travel during off-peak times.**

Unsurprisingly, high demand for hotel rooms drives up cost. Hotels typically offer fewer discounts during their busiest seasons because they know they can fill the rooms at higher prices. Traveling during off-peak seasons or even slower days of the week allows travelers to get the best discounts and pricing on their stays.

- ✓ **Use smart booking strategies.**

Shopping for airfare and a hotel room between 30 days and three months in advance can help travelers secure the best deals. Booking during off-peak hours of the day, such as 6 a.m. EST, has also been proven to give travelers access to hotels' best pricing offers.

- ✓ **Price shop.** The golden rule of travel discounts, of course, is comparison shopping. Instead of booking hotel

rooms directly through hotels' websites, travelers can often find cheaper prices by using dedicated travel sites, which sift through available discounts and offer the best pricing on any given room. Comparing multiple travel sites can further ensure that travelers are getting the best possible pricing.



Tips for Staying at an Airbnb

Airbnb can be an ideal way for visitors to find a place to stay in Portland that meets their every need, especially for visitors on a tight budget, traveling as part of a group or planning an extended stay. Although hotels are a great option for many, part of the magic of the Airbnb system is that it allows visitors to experience the feeling of being a local or at home in the city.

Finding the right Airbnb location, however, is essential to capturing that magic. Fortunately, travelers can use a few common-sense tips and tricks to help them find the right Airbnb spot and make the most of their stay.

- ✓ **Use Airbnb's filter tools.** Airbnb allows users to screen potential sites using a variety of criteria. Travelers can choose

to lease an entire space, to rent a single room with access to shared spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms, or to stay in wholly shared spaces. They can also sort sites by amenities, such as laundry facilities. Deciding what you need or want upfront and screening sites by your priorities can go a long way towards ensuring that you find the best site for your needs.

- ✓ **Evaluate the description, photos and reviews carefully.** Site descriptions typically contain critical information about what to expect from an Airbnb property. More than just a depiction of the space, they will tell you if there are animals present in the home, quiet hours which must be observed, and illuminate other key factors that may influence your enjoyment of the property. Thoroughly reviewing this information can prevent unpleasant surprises.

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- Photos of the space can also provide important cues. Sites with very few photos, or photos which are ambiguous, blurry, or which do not show all portions of the space to be rented are often a sign they are hiding undesirable facets of the property.
- ✓ **Check the reviews.** Reviews from other guests to the property can tell you essential information. Due to the site's design, all Airbnb reviews are verified and a generally reliable source. Look for complaints shared by multiple reviewers to get a feel for any potential problems with the site.
 - ✓ **Use mapping tools to double check the location.** While the address initially provided by Airbnb is an approximation rather than exact (to protect hosts' privacy), plotting the point

on GoogleMaps or another mapping tool can help you see where the site is located and what amenities you can expect.

Is the site really “close to the center of town” as it claims? Consider looking for points of interest and amenities that you would like to be close to before booking, such as coffee shops, restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations and public transit stops.

- ✓ **Check the pricing details twice before booking.** While the Airbnb system is generally easy to navigate, travelers who do not read the conditions and site descriptions carefully can sometimes find themselves facing unexpected costs. Read host policies carefully and double check your booking information before making your reservation to ensure that you understand exactly what you will be charged before finalizing your reservation.

✓ **Don't be afraid to contact the host.**

Good Airbnb hosts are very responsive to inquiries, and many open their homes and properties specifically because they enjoy interacting with their guests. If you have questions about a property, host policies, or other aspects of a prospective stay, don't hesitate to contact the host with polite questions. Their responsiveness can tell you a lot about whether or not their site is a good fit for you.



Tips and Tricks for Getting Around A New City

Portland's massive investment in a strong, deeply integrated public transportation system makes it a dream to get around. Unless you plan to do a lot of traveling outside of Portland on your trip, forget about renting a car and travel like a local via the city's abundant walking paths, biking paths and easy-to-use public transit system.

- ✓ **Walking and biking paths.** Portland loves its bicycles, and most visitors do, too! Many Portland neighborhoods are engineered to be walkable, so travelers staying near the attractions they wish to visit can often get around quickly and easily on foot. Bicycles are readily available, too. Visitors can bring their own, borrow bikes from numerous local hotels, or [rent them via user-friendly](#)

[digital apps](#). The city even offers [a comprehensive map of its walking and biking paths](#) to help visitors get started.

- ✓ **The MAX light rail system and TriMet bus lines.** Visitors can hop directly on Portland's light rail line from Portland International Airport (PDX) and then use the system to get all over the city during their stays. Bus and rail lines run directly to most major points of interest, such as the convention center and Washington Park.

Hop Fastpasses are available for purchase at PDX and retailers all over the city. Fastpasses can be used to access all of the city's public transportation lines for a seamlessly integrated experience. Adult day passes cost \$5 each and discounted day passes are available for \$2.50 to:

- Seniors 65 years of age or older.

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- Individuals on Medicare or receiving disability.
 - Children between seven and 17 years of age.

[Full system maps](#) are available online to help visitors who want to plan ahead, and an [interactive route planner](#) takes all the guesswork out of timing, scheduling and costs.

- ✓ **Portland Streetcar lines.** Visitors can get around in distinctive Portland style on the city's [modern streetcar lines](#). [Interactive maps](#) help visitors plan transitions between the TriMet, MAX and streetcar lines for maximum convenience and expediency. The same Hop Fastpass provides access to every line at no additional cost.
- ✓ **Cabs.** [Radio Cab](#) and other Portland taxi services can be a valuable resource for visitors who just need a quick hop from one point to another in a hurry.

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- ✓ **Rideshares.** Visitors who prefer private transportation can use their favorite ridesharing app or check out a [local-to-Portland site](#) that connects drivers with riders outside standardized company setups and facilitates easy payments.



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