

TRAVEL

Greater Salem Offers Pet-Friendly Access to Oregon's Farm Country



Myscha Theriault

October 9, 2014

The southern part of Oregon's Willamette Valley makes an excellent destination for an extended road trip across the border. With whimsical roadside farm stands, access to charming wine country venues and more than its share of hops fields resulting in local breweries to begin rivaling the number of vineyards and wineries, it's a great place to get away from it all.

The town of Silverton offers easy access to the city of Salem for those who want to supplement with a little brand-name shopping, while still providing a more laid-back place to rest your head. Do you tend to travel with your dog? Try out the Oregon Garden Resort, which has pet-friendly rooms with private back-door courtyards for easy potty breaks. The in-room fireplaces are great evening entertainment for Bowzer, and the on-site restaurant offers patio dining seating for family pets.

When Fido needs a break from formal behavior, head into Salem and check out the Minto-Brown Island Park, which has 900 acres of trails for jogging and one of the largest off-leash canine areas in the Pacific Northwest. Twenty full acres of unfenced play space make for a great way to spend the morning. Doggy water stations and shaded picnic tables for pet parents are available, along with portable outdoor toilets for humans.

Feel like tasting some local craft brews? Head to Rogue Farms, where pets are welcome to join you at the picnic table for a tasting tray or pint. The seating area is located right in the middle of a hops field, which makes for a relaxing atmosphere for Rover. Fun flavors include their hazelnut brown and chipotle ale.



When heading home up I-5 through Portland, be sure to stop in McMinnville and check out the Evergreen Air and Space Museum. Home to a number of out-of-this-world astronomy exhibits, the famous Spruce Goose plane and other aviation memorabilia, it's a must-see museum with multiple buildings, outdoor picnic table resting area, a rocket-shaped piece of playground equipment and more.

The picnic table park is perfect for letting your furry friend rest after exploring the outdoor displays, and also for taking turns seeing the inside exhibits while someone keeps Fifi company. Yes, it will take a bit longer this way, but if one person brings a project to work on and you have a few picnic items to nosh, it can be a great break in the road trip before you head up the highway to your next hotel.

Finally, on your way out of Willamette Valley, take time to stop in Portland at the Tin Shed Garden Café. Not only do they allow dogs to dine with their owners in both the uncovered and covered seating areas, they also have an entire section of the menu devoted to items suitable for canine consumption. How cool is that?

Photo Credit: [Myscha Theriault](#)

Theriault is a best-selling author and avid trip taker who is currently traveling through North America with her husband and 80-pound Labrador. You can keep up with their adventure by following [@MyschaTheriault](#) on Twitter.