

Celebrate fall in Oregon wine country!

Vibrant towns, award-winning wineries, gorgeous autumn vistas and epic outdoor adventure options make this Oregon region a vacation delight!

Named for the river that flows through it, and known the world-over for its wineries and rustic beauty, the Willamette (pronounced wil-LAM-it) Valley is a perfect autumn escape. Whether you hit this 100 mile-long valley looking to taste the region's celebrated Pinot Noirs, to explore its charming towns and lively cities or simply to downshift from your 70-mph lifestyle, you'll discover a spectacular getaway!

Launch your visit with an up-with-the-sun hot-air balloon ride, then blaze your own trail, driving or biking the take-it-easy roads that lace the countryside. Along the way, stop at award-winning wineries, enjoy the farm-to-table culinary scene, search through treasure-filled antiques shops and pause for photo ops at historic covered bridges.

Ready for some urban pleasures? There's no sales tax, so get set for some serious shopping, then tour historic buildings or catch ballet and theater performances. Everywhere you go you'll get a warm welcome!

SALEM

Set in the heart of the Willamette Valley, Oregon's capital boasts a historic downtown. Visit the "Golden Pioneer"-topped Capitol, go for a spin on the historic carousel in Riverfront Park, then explore A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village, a popular kids' museum!



NEXT WEEK: Have fun in the sun in



SILVER FALLS STATE PARK
 Set in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, the largest of Oregon's state parks is ablaze in color in the fall. Hike through old-growth forest, spy wildlife and settle in a pretty spot for a picnic. Don't miss the Trail of Ten Falls, a National Recreation Trail that leads past sparkling cascades.



COTTAGE GROVE COVERED BRIDGE TOUR

Start in the charming town of Cottage Grove and motor a 30-mile route that connects six historic (and photogenic!) covered bridges. One of Oregon's Scenic Byways, get ready for heart-stopping vistas of amazing autumnal splendor!



MCMINNVILLE

This heart-of-wine-country town is a must-visit for foodies and vino-lovers! Wander its tree-shaded streets and treat your taste buds to a memorable meal at one of the many restaurants and wine bars that now fill the restored turn-of-the-century buildings.



Armchair travel

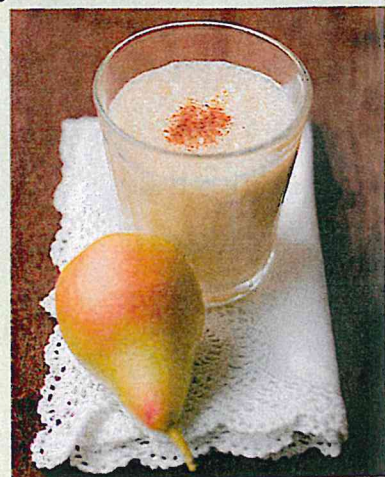
Enjoy a pear-fect Oregon breakfast smoothie!

In the Willamette Valley, pears are at their height of sweet deliciousness right now. This Pear Smoothie pairs

Oregon's official state fruit with tangy citrus and sweet vanilla soy milk to create a fiber-, vitamin C- and calcium-rich breakfast treat. Want even more calcium? Blend in your favorite yogurt!

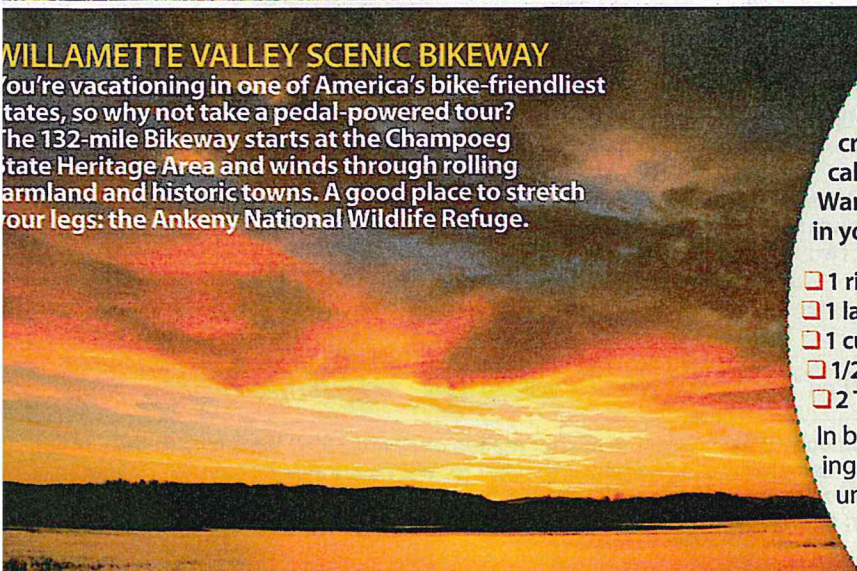
- ❑ 1 ripe pear, cored, chopped
- ❑ 1 large orange, peeled, seeded
- ❑ 1 cup ice cubes
- ❑ 1/2 cup vanilla soy milk
- ❑ 2 Tbs. sugar

In blender, combine all ingredients. Cover and blend until smooth. **Serves 2.**



WILLAMETTE VALLEY SCENIC BIKEWAY

You're vacationing in one of America's bike-friendliest states, so why not take a pedal-powered tour? The 132-mile Bikeway starts at the Champoege State Heritage Area and winds through rolling farmland and historic towns. A good place to stretch your legs: the Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge.



Recipe courtesy of Pear Bureau Northwest. Photos: SuperStock; Ron Cooper; Danita Delimont/Alamy; Craig Tuttle/Corbis; Frank Barnett Photography/oregonwinecountry.org; Sporrer/Skowronek/Munic; Stark Food; George Oertman/Alamy.