

**BEST NEW BARS**


# Portland monthly

## Summer Day Trips

Secret spots to soak up the sun



The majesty and mystery  
of Bull Run

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Local DJs, svelte bartenders, and stylish tipplers mix for an energetic, booze-fueled scene at Dig a Pony.

## Dig a Pony

736 SE GRAND AVE; DIGAPONYPDX.TUMBLR.COM

**FOR: Portland Scenesters**  
**YOU'RE HAVING: Sam Isaacs**

(bourbon, mint, blackberries, lime)

Dance-party madness spills onto SE Morrison Street from this one-year-old, DJ-fueled destination where great-looking people come to play and everyone else comes to watch. A tremendous horseshoe bar anchors the room, while sprawling white tile, Oriental rugs, and a 110-year-old piano set the stage for impromptu weekend raves. Svelte, speedy bartenders shake up a storm for an impressive 280-degree performance, and local DJs pump '90s vinyl into the well-heeled crowd. Dig a Pony turns out a surprisingly crafty food menu, with a top-quality Painted Hills burger smeared with sweet onion jam, and a bowl of sautéed mushrooms and soft-poached egg mopped up with shoestring fries. The overall vibe? A time-tangling mix of modern sophistication and boomtown honky-tonk. In a word: confidence. —BT

## The Box Social

3971 N WILLIAMS AVE; BXSOCIAL.COM

**FOR: Lovers**  
**YOU'RE HAVING: The Thoroughbred (Torani Amer; brandy, maraschino, lemon, pomegranate shrub)**

Portland may have found its quintessential date spot in the Box Social. Unsurprisingly, it comes courtesy of Shannon McQuilkin, co-owner of the city's other quintessential date spot, the Sapphire Hotel. The Box Social aims for a level of sophistication matched to the modern Portland crowd, with floor-to-ceiling embroidered drapes; a long, tufted-leather banquette; a dark, candlelit mahogany bar; and a huge hand-painted mural of Portland's twinkling cityscape. Sure, it might feel a bit *Sex and the City* for Portland's hipster set, but this 1,000-square-foot box creates a little world that you can't help but get lost in. An extensive menu of original, classic, and bubbly cocktails holds some deliciously potent creations—along with plenty of drinking vinegars, beer, and wine—while well-priced nibbles range from parmesan popcorn to a pitch-perfect butter lettuce salad and decadent fig compote panini. If this place doesn't set the mood, we don't know what will. —RR



Since the longstanding American absinthe ban was lifted in 2007, the infamous anise-flavored botanical spirit has made an impressive comeback. Ignore the poetically misleading PR—modern absinthe won't summon a visit from the Green Fairy, but it will add unique herbal flavors and a fin de siècle flair to your beverage. Try the house-made absinthe at the Gilt Club in Old Town, sample the spirit mixed with root beer at Central, or go for one of the three absinthe flights at Acadia on NE Fremont Street. —AJ