



PASSPORT MAGAZINE,  
NOVEMBER 2005

# what's new in...

## PORTLAND OREGON

by Sherri Telenko

A recent weekend visit to Portland revealed a vibrant urban enclave with a robust LGBT community. Unlike so many North American cities, downtown shows no signs of wear and tear. Just the opposite—it's a compact, clean entertainment and shopping Mecca bolstered by no state sales tax.

The second defining feature of the city is its neighborhoods, each with its own personality, and all located within one of the four quadrants. Two neighborhoods definitely of interest to gay travelers are **Burnside/Stark Street** (where rainbow flags line the curbs), and the **Pearl District**, currently the most desirable address in the city.

A walking tour map that celebrates the culture of the Burnside/Stark area is available from the **Burnside Triangle Advisory Group** (1221 SW 4th Ave., Suite 110, Tel: 503-823-3075). The contents are simple, but easy to follow. Clubs, restaurants, and historical sites are listed (although why the sites are historical isn't always explained). Perseverance seems to be the reason several places get that moniker, including **Scandals** (1038 SW Stark St. Tel: 503-227-5887), a men's lounge since the 1980's, and the landmark **Silverado** (1217 SW Stark St. Tel: 503-224-4493) whose history dates back to the decade of love, peace, and harmony.

The vote for the best new clubs on the block, however, goes to a region slightly



east of Burnside. According to Jim Radosta, Arts and Culture Editor of *Just Out*, Portland's gay urban weekly, **Holocene** (1001 SE Morrison. Tel: 503-239-7639. [www.holocene.org](http://www.holocene.org)) and **Crush** (1400 SE Morrison. Tel: 503-235-8150. [www.crushbar.com](http://www.crushbar.com)) get his vote because "Both serve yummy food and drink, feature separate smoking rooms, and attract a mixed crowd of boys, girls, and in-betweens." Holocene's appetizer menu encourages social interaction as the "plates" it serves—breads, marinated vegetables, cheeses, and olives—are designed for sharing.

Crush is recently renovated with three rooms added: the Vice Room for smoking, the Blue Room for dining and dancing, and the Crush Lounge which hosts a huge curved bar, granite tables, and comfy couches.

North of Burnside, industry no longer dominates the landscape in the **Pearl District** ([www.shopthepearl.com](http://www.shopthepearl.com)), but brick and steel warehouses transformed into hip urban lofts now do. This district lives up to its name because each cluster of studios, art galleries, boutiques, and home décor stores nestle into the neighborhood like gems worth discovering. An explosion of urban renewal blanketed the

area recently, so almost every corner is crisp, clean, and refurbished. **The Portland Institute for Contemporary Art** (219 NW 12th, Suite 100. Tel: 503-242-1419. [www.pica.org](http://www.pica.org)) makes its home here, and so does **BridgePort Brewery Co.** (2730 NW 31 St.. Tel: 503-228-5269. [www.portlandbrew.com](http://www.portlandbrew.com)), Oregon's oldest microbrewery.

The best place to lay your hat in Portland is **Hotel Lucia** (400 SW Broadway. Tel: 877-225-1717. [www.hotellucia.com](http://www.hotellucia.com)), a renovated landmark turned boutique hotel that rivals anything the W has to offer. Located between the downtown core and the Northwest district, the hotel's king- or queen-sized feather-top beds are heavenly, and the streamline décor is a page out of a Stockholm catalogue. Black and white photographs line the hallways and dabs of chartreuse punch up the otherwise neutral color palette. Aveda products are in the bath, along with Torrefazione coffee and Tazo teas.

Not to be out-trended by anyone, the Lucia offers a pillow menu and Thai food room service from its own **Typhoon!** restaurant downstairs. The recently minted hotel even added a new package to its list: "He/he She/she Whatever" getaways that include a one-night stay, valet park-