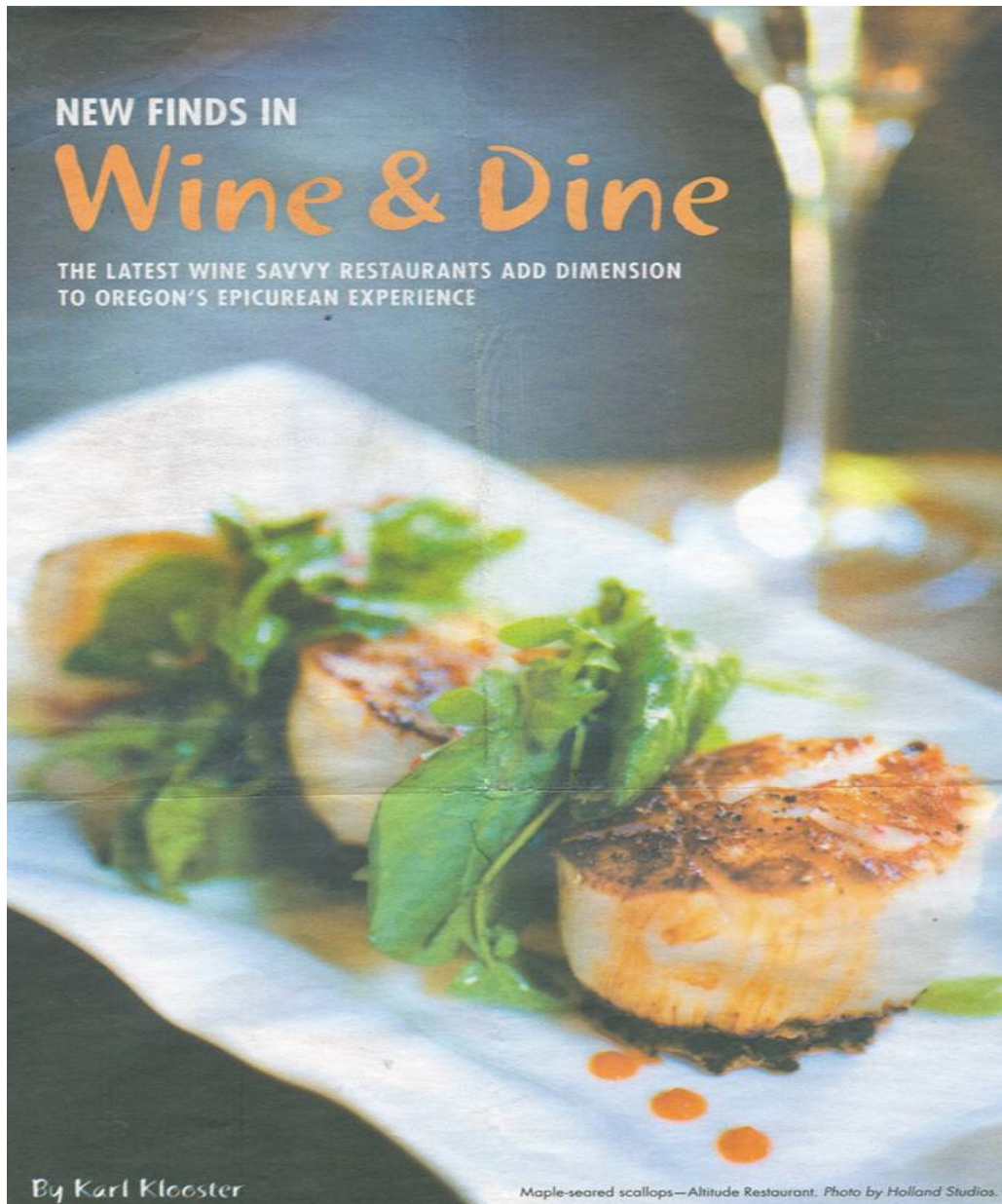


Oregon WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE OF WINE IN OREGON WINEPRESS



Oregon's wine and dine scene has never been better. So many restaurants are cooking up creative cuisine, even the most avid foodie would have to make a full-time job out of trying to eat at every one of them.

Despite the abundance of taste-tempting alternatives already out there, new ones continue to open regularly. Motivated by the stiff competition they face, these fledgling eateries are going that extra menu-augmented mile to attract patrons.

Although the critical mass of culinary excitement centers around the Portland metro, it by no means overshadows the quality and innovation offered in other areas—both urban and rural.

Oregon Wine Press has searched the state in an effort to uncover the best of this new breed. Wine and food being as one for us, our preferences are most critically guided by the thought and care given to both kitchen and cellar.

Since, however, great restaurants are not only about excellent food and complementary wines but also professional service and a pleasurable atmosphere, commitment to achieving the complete fine dining experience commands almost equal importance.

With these criteria in mind, we have chosen the following new bistros on the block, so to speak. Two are in Portland, two in Southern Oregon, one at the coast and one on Mt. Hood.

Altitude Restaurant

RESORT AT THE MOUNTAIN, WELCHES

For visitors venturing up Highway 26 to Mt. Hood with the expectation of eating in style, only one place has consistently delivered the goods—The Cascade Dining Room at Timberline Lodge, impeccably overseen since 1979 by executive chef Leif Benson.

That situation appears to have finally changed. As a part of its recent seven-million-dollar renovation, Resort at the Mountain has opened Altitude Restaurant, an ambitious, upscale dining venue with considerable promise.

The kitchen is overseen by executive chef Paul Bosch, a native of Chicago, who spent time under the wing of the windy city's culinary impresario, Charlie Trotter. He was restaurant chef at Skamania Lodge before coming to Resort at the Mountain.

Bosch's sourcing is substantially Oregon-oriented and his philosophy focuses on creative techniques that, as he puts it, "transform ordinary foods into extraordinary taste sensations and presentations."

Self-congratulatory accolades aside, the majority of menu offerings mate old standards such as crab cakes, prawns, seafood chowder, caesar salad, pork chops, tenderloin, chicken, scallops, short ribs and salmon with imaginative ingredients.

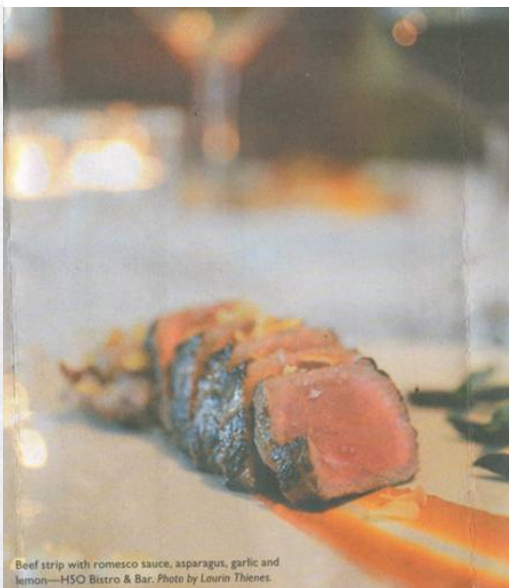
As might be expected, à la carte pricing runs toward the upper end of the spectrum, but is far from sky high. Salads and small plates are \$8 to \$12, and entrées range from \$17 to \$32.

Completing this mountainside scenario is the wine list. Altitude's selections are spread principally among Oregon, Washington and California, sprinkled with the occasional French and Aussie offering.

Each category is well chosen and fairly extensive, most notably 28 Pinot Noirs, all from northern Oregon, including several small producers. There are 104 wines total and 10 by the glass.

Only a few options are priced under \$30 per bottle, almost entirely among the whites. Reds are mostly in the \$40 to \$70 range with wines by the glass available from \$5 to \$16.

68010 E. Fairway Avenue • Welches
503-622-2214 • www.altituderestaurant.com



Beef strip with romesco sauce, asparagus, garlic and lemon—H5O Bistro & Bar. Photo by Laurin Thielen.

H5O Bistro & Bar

PORTLAND

Though dedicated individuals with talent and drive are the darlings of the restaurant world, never underestimate the ability of a corporation to put together an outstanding dining establishment.

Coastal Hotel Group of Seattle specializes in the luxury end of overnight accommodations and they apparently pay particular attention to the industry's hospitality side. Their H5O Bistro & Bar, opened just this July, reflects that mindset.

To enhance the 7-million-dollar makeover of the Hotel Fifty property in Portland, management committed to creating a new restaurant designed to showcase the considerable culinary talents of a Western Culinary Institute graduate.

After completing his training at WCI, Nicholas Yanes (YAW-nez) went to Texas where he served as executive chef at Coyote Country Club in Carrollton and chef de cuisine/pastry chef at Dallas Fish Market.

Returning to the Rose City to command the kitchen at H5O, Yanes has crafted a wide-ranging menu that, according to the company, spans the spectrum "from miso to gumbo, green papaya to arugula and escarol to shrimp roll."

An à la carte dinner can easily set you back \$50 per person before drinks. But the "morsels" on the bar menu look tempting at \$6 to \$9.

The restaurant's muted toned and art-filled interior reflects the professional design touches that can emerge when a corporate budget is available. The same can be said of the wine list, which is deep, impressive and pricey, with numerous three-figure offerings.

There are Pinots, Cabs and Bordeaux blends aplenty, as well as several big name Northwest wines in magnums. A total of 21 wines by the glass go from \$7

to \$12.75. Obviously, we're not talking bargain beanery, but, after all, this is downtown Portland.

50 S.W. Morrison Street • Portland
503-484-1415 • www.h5obistro.com