

26

Mid-Willamette Valley Food Trail

PHOTOS AND STORY BY TAMARA MULDOON



The Mid-Willamette Valley Food Trail showcases farms, restaurants, beverage producers and shops centered around the Oregon communities of Albany and Corvallis. One thing quickly becomes apparent when visiting these businesses—the pride they have in their products. And with good reason; the emphasis here is quality, local and sustainable. Treat yourself to a self-guided tour of this bountiful region of the fertile Willamette Valley.

Farms and Ranches

Pick up organic produce, house-made breads and pastries, or sit down to a meal at Gathering Together Farm. Midway Farm specializes in all gluten-free products, both produced there and made by other local businesses. Its roadside store is fun to browse. Bryant Family Farm, Kiger Island Blues and Fairfield Farm offer U-pick berries in season. Catch an event at Iron Water Ranch, where they raise sheep for wool, a popular destination for knitters and hand-spinners.

Take a scenic drive to The Thyme Garden in Alsea. This family-owned farm grows an astounding variety of herbs. Stroll the demonstration garden and wooded creek-side paths. Browse the store for herb blends, seeds, teas, herbal body care products and to-go food items. Better yet, plan ahead and reserve space for a luncheon and tour.

Artisan Products

Shop one of the weekly Farmers' Markets in Albany, Corvallis, Lebanon or Sweet Home. Urban Ag Supply in Albany stocks local teas, honey and candies along with gardening supplies and a broad selection of houseplants. Put together a gourmet picnic lunch from the offerings at Honeybrine Market in Albany or First Alternative Cooperative in Corvallis.

Eateries

Seek out Frankie's in Albany for a hearty breakfast, or pick up a pastry at Natural Sprinkles bakery. In Philomath, try The Dizzy Hen or Eats and Treats Café. For lunch, take your pick from the many pubs featuring locally sourced, casual fare such as Block 15 Restaurant or FireWorks Pub and Pizza.

Dinner at Sybaris Bistro is a must-do experience, where Chef Matt prepares eclectic Northwest-focused meals from house-made and locally-sourced, sustainable ingredients. Castor Kitchen and Bar is another option, featuring Southern-inspired dishes crafted from fresh, local products.

Craft Beverages

There is no shortage of wineries, breweries, distilleries and cideries here. The difficulty is in choosing which ones to visit. Many breweries offer outdoor seating including Calapooia Brewing, Deluxe Brewing,

Sky High Brewing, Block 15 Brewing and Conversion Brewing.

Taste craft spirits at Sinister Distilling, Vivacity Fine Spirits, Spiritopia or 4 Spirits Distillery. In Corvallis, 2 Town Ciderhouse has a pet-friendly taproom and patio.

Relax and taste wines at one of the nine wineries along the Trail. Many boast pastoral Willamette Valley settings. Plan an end-of-day visit to Springhill Cellars winery in Albany. Select your favorite wine, order a cheese plate and pull up some chairs to enjoy the sunset. The winery's hilltop location offers a panoramic view of the coastal mountains and Mary's Peak.

Experiences

Allow some time to visit Thompson's Mills State Heritage Site, a historic water-powered mill dating from the mid-1800s, where grain was ground into flour. Take a guided tour to see the mill in action. The scenic grounds along the millrace make an excellent picnic location.

At Albany's Historic Carousel & Museum, see its collection of historic carousel artifacts and watch volunteers carving and painting animals. Then, take a spin on the restored carousel, which includes a fanciful unicorn named Marcy.

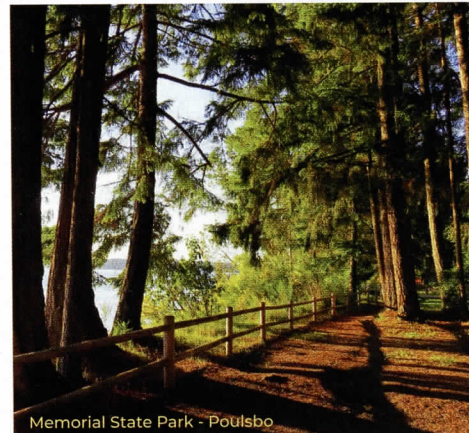
And don't miss this chance to tour some of Oregon's remaining historic Covered Bridges. Six of them can be seen along a loop drive near Scio, just north of Lebanon.

For more information, download the Mid-Willamette Valley Food Trail brochure at MidWillametteValleyFoodTrail.com. Or pick up a copy at the Visit Corvallis (VisitCorvallis.com) or Albany Visitors Association (AlbanyVisitors.com) information centers. 📍

The perfect place for a winter getaway



kitsapbites.com

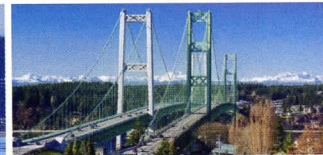


Memorial State Park - Poulsbo



Collective Visions Gallery - Bremerton

Easy to get to by Ferry, Bridge, Boat, or Auto



Find Things to Do, Places to Eat, Drink, Play and Stay

VisitKitsap.com