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(Clockwise from lower left)
The stately Ashland Springs
Hotel is the city's crown jewel,
and home to fine dining at
Larks Restaurant. Many
restaurants set up tables along
Lithia Creek in season for al
fresco dining. Mäs chefs Josh
Dorcak and Luke VanCampen
are creating a new cuisine
that celebrates the beautiful
bioregion of Cascadia.

PLAN A WEEKEND EXPLORING ASHLAND, OREGON

written by KIM COOPER FINDLING

In Southern Oregon, the weather is balmy, the landscape lush, and the cities alive with activity. Local foods abound, the wine culture is booming, and art and theatre are around every corner. Ashland, home to the world-famous Oregon Shakespeare Festival, is the cultural epicenter of this region. A beautiful small college town with great dining, lodging and outdoor opportunities, Ashland makes a great multi-day getaway. Here are some of our favorite destinations and adventures to be found in beautiful Southern Oregon.

WHAT TO DO

Over 80 years ago, a teacher named Angus L. Bowmer proposed a festival of Elizabethan-era plays penned by William Shakespeare. Today, the highly acclaimed **Oregon Shakespeare Festival**

osfashland.org runs February through October, with a dozen plays running in three theatres up to seven days a week. While the festival was founded as a Shakespeare-only troupe, today OSF presents plays of all eras and genres. This season features Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, as well as *Hairspray* and *Alice in Wonderland*. Summer is the most popular season, and savvy visitors buy their play tickets months in advance. Still, it's often possible to pick up tickets at the box office the day of a performance; rush tickets are sold at a discount an hour before curtain times. Off-season tickets are even easier to come by.

Requiring no tickets is the **Green Show**, entertainment presented six nights a week at 6:45 p.m. on the bricks, a public courtyard adjacent to the box office. These fun, short shows range in style from

acapella singing to taiko drumming and are free to the public. Another OSF don't-miss experience is a **backstage tour**, led by a company member nearly every morning of the week. These walking tours are a great way to learn more about festival history, the amazing effort that goes into productions, and get a glimpse behind the curtain, from the dressing rooms to the set. These aren't free, but at \$20 each are well worth the price.

The theatre culture extends beyond Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Southern Oregon. Check out the **Craterian**, **Oregon Cabaret** or the **Camelot Theaters** for more live performance options.

Make a side-trip to **Jacksonville**, which began as a gold rush town in the 1850s and is home to the **Britt Festival** *brittfest.org* a summer-long lineup



of concerts in a very pretty and unique outdoor venue in the hills just to the west of downtown. Jacksonville is also a fun destination for shopping, history and wine.

WHERE TO EAT

Packed into the downtown blocks surrounding the Oregon Shakespeare Festival are dozens of delightful dining destinations. Standbys like **Greenleaf** greenleafrestaurant.com which has been serving excellent sandwiches and salads since the 1980s, are joined by celebrated new arrivals like **Mäs** masashland.com, which offers a changing menu based on as many locally grown ingredients as possible. The owners of Mäs gather foods from the forest, the farms and the markets, drawing inspiration from the landscape and local purveyors to shape each day's meals.

Hither hithermarket.com, is another newcomer, serving a small menu of breakfast and lunch that also changes with the flavors of the season. Look for dishes from hash to Coho salmon to a fried egg biscuit sandwich at this spot on Main Street. And don't forget the coffee—this is Oregon, and we love our cup of joe, even when the weather is warm and the sun is shining. Hither is known for its rotating resident coffee roaster, specializing in a high-quality, low-production roast.

More great coffee can be found within walking distance of downtown. In 2006, **Mix Bakeshop**

came to town, serving Stumptown coffee and a delightful array of baked treats from croissants to cookies. **Case Coffee Roasters** casecoffee.com is newer, with two locations—one near Southern Oregon University and the other downtown. Coffee is roasted in small batches and served with savory treats that range from indulgent to healthful. Vegan donut, anyone?

The best Bloody Marys in town are found at **Brothers** brothersrestaurant.net, which serves breakfast and lunch only. This cozy place is always packed and is known for large plates of super-homemade quiches, omelettes, triple chocolate pancakes, barbecue brisket and much more.

Larks larksrestaurant.com at Ashland Springs Hotel is as light and lovely as it is a reliable source for delicious meals. Illustrations of flora and fauna line the walls of this well-lit urban diner, which serves fresh fine dining focusing on local products and accompanied by great cocktails and an extensive, Oregon-based wine list.

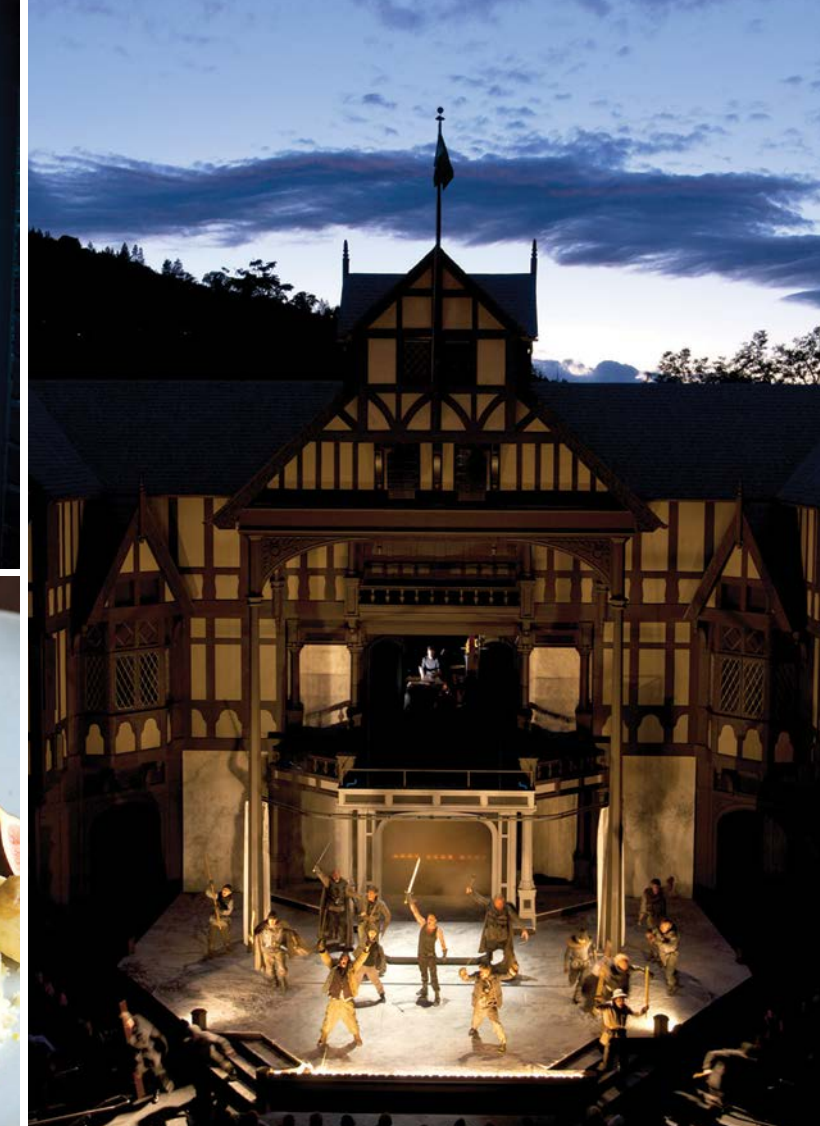
On balmy days, don't miss the chance to eat outside along Lithia Creek. **Louie's of Ashland** louiesofashland.com, **Greenleaf Restaurant** and **Sesame Asian Kitchen** sesameasiankitchen.com all set up tables outside during summer months. The atmosphere is festive and fun in the breezeway along the creek, where guests dine al fresco near the colors and wares of the **Lithia Artisans Market** lithiaartisansmarket.com.

WINERIES, WINERIES, WINERIES!

Southern Oregon's wine footprint is growing like mad. The region is gaining up to 10 new wineries a year, and it's easy to day trip your way to dozens of vineyards and wineries in the region. Wine Trails such as the **Bear Creek Winery Trail** bearcreekwineries.com and the **Applegate Valley Wine Trail** applegatewinetrail.com have sprung up to help guide visitors, and small tasting shops are found within the city blocks of Ashland, Jacksonville and Medford, too.

Four miles south of Ashland is **Weisinger Family Vineyards** weisingers.com, where winemaker Eric Weisinger believes in a hands-off approach to wines, letting the land and the grapes speak for themselves. The result is delicious voigniers and sauvignon blancs to be enjoyed in a classy tasting room and outdoor patio. North of Ashland, en route to Jacksonville, is **DANCIN Vineyards** dancinvineyards.com on the Bear Creek Winery Trail. The 2017 Oregon Winery of the Year sits on lush grounds with a tasting room and piazza. Sip on a zinfandel and nosh on a fresh artisan pizza on the patio under the walnut tree.

Venture into the Applegate Valley and the **Applegate Valley Wine Trail** for more scenic wine tasting. Red Lily hosts live music on the banks of the river in the summertime, enjoyed with a glass of tempranillo and a small antipasti platter. **Longsword Vineyard** longswordvineyard.com serves



The delights of Ashland come in tastes and sips and experiences. Hither serves a small menu of breakfast and lunch. A long, gentle cold-smoking over shells from Oregon hazelnuts infuses Rogue Creamery's Smokey Blue cheese with an added layer of rich flavor and terroir. Grab tickets for evening outdoor performances of Shakespearean and contemporary works at the Allen Elizabethan Theatre. Sip on fresh roasted coffee from Case Coffee Roasters before your stroll in Lithia Park. Afternoon sips are at DANCIN Vineyards, en route to Jacksonville.





Getting out of town from Ashland means venturing into the great outdoors. Crater Lake, Oregon's only national park, is just two hours away. The Oregon Outback is just over the mountains in the sunny high desert. The majestic Rogue river flows from mountain to sea through the region—raft, fish or camp along its waters.



amazing sparkling chardonnays and syrahs, as well as offers hang gliding and paragliding off of nearby **Woodrat Mountain** for the brave and adventuresome. **Schmidt Family Vineyards** sfvineyards.com is down the road and worth a visit just to see its campus. Wander the grounds, visit the rose garden, venture into the greenhouse, and check out the huge lawn, on which you might wish to host your next event.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

Step out of town, and nature surrounds you. Southern Oregon is lush and rich with natural grandeur. Two hours north of Ashland, **Crater Lake National Park** nationalparks.org/explore-parks/crater-lake-national-park is Oregon's only national park, and a must-visit if you've never seen it. The cerulean blue bowl of water—the deepest lake in North America—will amaze with its beauty and leave lasting memories. The road from the south doesn't open until summer season, but a stop is well worth the effort in season.

The **Rogue River** southernoregon.org/places-to-go/rogue-valley/rogue-river/ is a terrific waterway for

white water rafting, fishing and hiking—a 40-mile trail follows its wild waters. If just a stroll is more your style, visit the **Rogue Gorge**, which offers a paved trail to an overlook. For adventure, book a one-day or multi-day white-water rafting trip with a guide.

Back in Ashland, **Lithia Park** is 93 acres natural wonder right in the heart of town. The park is situated on Ashland Creek and includes both undeveloped woods and landscaped acreage. Stroll by a Japanese garden, two duck ponds, a formal rose garden, groves of sycamore trees and a children's playground.

WHERE TO STAY

Ashland Springs Hotel ashlandspringshotel.com is Ashland's crown jewel. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this lovely, luxurious landmark first opened in 1925 and underwent a restoration and reopening in 2000. Rooms are modest in size but beautiful and comfortable; the lobby is a little natural history museum, with bird taxidermy, eggs and seashells on display; views from upper stories take in the landscape of the valley.

The **Peerless** peerlesshotel.com is off the beaten track—or on the other side of the tracks, depending on how you look at it. The historic hotel was built in 1904 and offers six rooms and a renowned restaurant. Vintage décor, an award-winning menu and an oversize outdoor patio make this place especially appealing.

Lithia Springs Resort lithiaspringsresort.com is three miles from downtown Ashland, located on a natural springs that provides waters for the soaking pools and spa onsite. Bungalows, suites and studios are available for overnight guests, and come with a complimentary hot breakfast buffet.

Bard's Inn is another great lodging option, located within easy walking distance of Ashland theaters. With many rooms including suites, and a swimming pool, this is a great destination for families. **Jacksonville Inn** jacksonvilleinn.com built in 1861 during the gold rush, is a good choice for extremely charming lodging and dining in Jacksonville.

Three days in Ashland will go by in a flash, leaving you longing for more of Southern Oregon's delights. Find more great travel adventures in Southern Oregon at www.southernoregon.org

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Aburi Shime Saba with Ponzu and Koji oil

recipe by Exceutive Chef /Owner Joshua Dorcak
MÄS www.masashland.com

DASHI

3 sheet kombu
5 cup water

Method – Wash kombu in tap water until soft, you could soak it to conserve water as well. It is best to use filtered water for dashi like from a Brita or a bottled water that is very pure. Combine kombu and water and heat to 140 degrees F. Hold around this temperature for 1 hour. Strain and repeat 2 more times so you get as much out of kombu as possible, its not cheap. You end up with Dashi A, Dashi B, Dashi C. its ok to combine them but they each have different flavors so its nice to freeze some and have it around.

MACKEREL

4 fillets from two fish
Salt
Sugar
Sake (to rinse)

Method – Mix equal parts salt and sugar (enough to cover the fillets). Sprinkle salt and sugar over the fillets and let cure for 30 minutes in a cooler. Rinse with sake to wash off the cure, pat dry and keep cold.

FISH PICKLE

1 cup dashi
½ cup rice vinegar
Pinch sugar
A nice pour of light shoyu
handful katsuobushi

Method – Combine all in a sauce pot. Bring to 180 degrees and let cool completely, 34 degrees.

In a food container pour the liquid over the fish and let sit for 45 minutes. Remove and pat dry, use tweezers to remove the pin bones and pinch the skin to peel off.

PONZU

¾ cup dashi
¼ cup lemon juice
¼ cup dark shoyu
handful katsuobushi
1/8 cup mirin

Method – Combine all ingredients and bring to a simmer. Strain. Let cool.

TO FINISH

Slice a portion of fish and using a grill or a torch, heavily char the skin. Place in a desired bowl. Pour the ponzu over the fish and garnish with olive oil and any other herb you prefer. Its nice to serve a slice of lemon with the fish.

RESERVATIONS

MÄS
141 Will Dodge Way, Ashland, OR
541.581.0090
www.masashland.com



recipe by Exceutive Chef /Owner Joshua Dorcak
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Greta Oglesby, *How to Catch Creation* Katy Geraghty, *Hairspray* Daisuke Tsuji, *Cambodian Rock Band*

INGREDIENTS

Slice of Crusty Bread
1 ball of Burrata, such as Di Stefano
1 ripe Peach
1 clove Garlic
Mint leaves
Basil leaves
Finishing Olive Oil, such as Katz Olive Oil
High quality Balsamic Vinegar
Salt Flakes, such as Jacobsen Finishing Salt
Black Pepper

PREPARE

Toast bread.
Once toasted, scrape with garlic clove.
Tear burrata into chunks and place on garlic side of bread.
Cut peach into thick slices and place strategically on top of the burrata.
Season with salt flakes and pepper.
Grab a handful of mint and basil, throw it at the tartine and whatever sticks is correct.
Finish with olive oil and balsamic vinegar.
Eat!



Peach & Burrata Tartine

photography by David L. Reamer

recipes by Executive Chefs /Owners Corrie and Wesley Reimer

HITHER
376 E. Main St. Ashland, OR
541.625.4090
www.hithermarket.com

recipe by Executive Chef /Owner Joshua Dorcak
MÄS www.masashland.com

AGED BUTTER

1 pound butter
Pinch salt

Method – Leave the butter out to temper overnight. Fold in a pinch of salt. Pack into a ceramic crock or plastic container. Let the butter age in a dark cool place. This should take 2 weeks or longer. The aroma should be of blue cheese.

PEA POWDER

Hand full of sugar snap peas

Method – Split the peas in half and lay out on a dehydrator tray. Set the dehydrator to 125 degrees and let peas dry overnight. Once the peas are dry pulverise them in a vitamix and sift. Store in an airtight container

POTATOES

1 lb. very small potatoes like fingerling
½ cup salt
½ cup All purpose flour
Water
425 degree oven pre heated

Method – Mix the salt, flour together and add a little water at a time while you mix the dough. The end consistency should be like play dough. Its ok if you need to add more flour to fix the dough if you add too much water.

Pack the dough around the potatoes individually. Place on a sheet pan, bake until the dough is golden and hard. Let them cool and crack them out.

TO FINISH

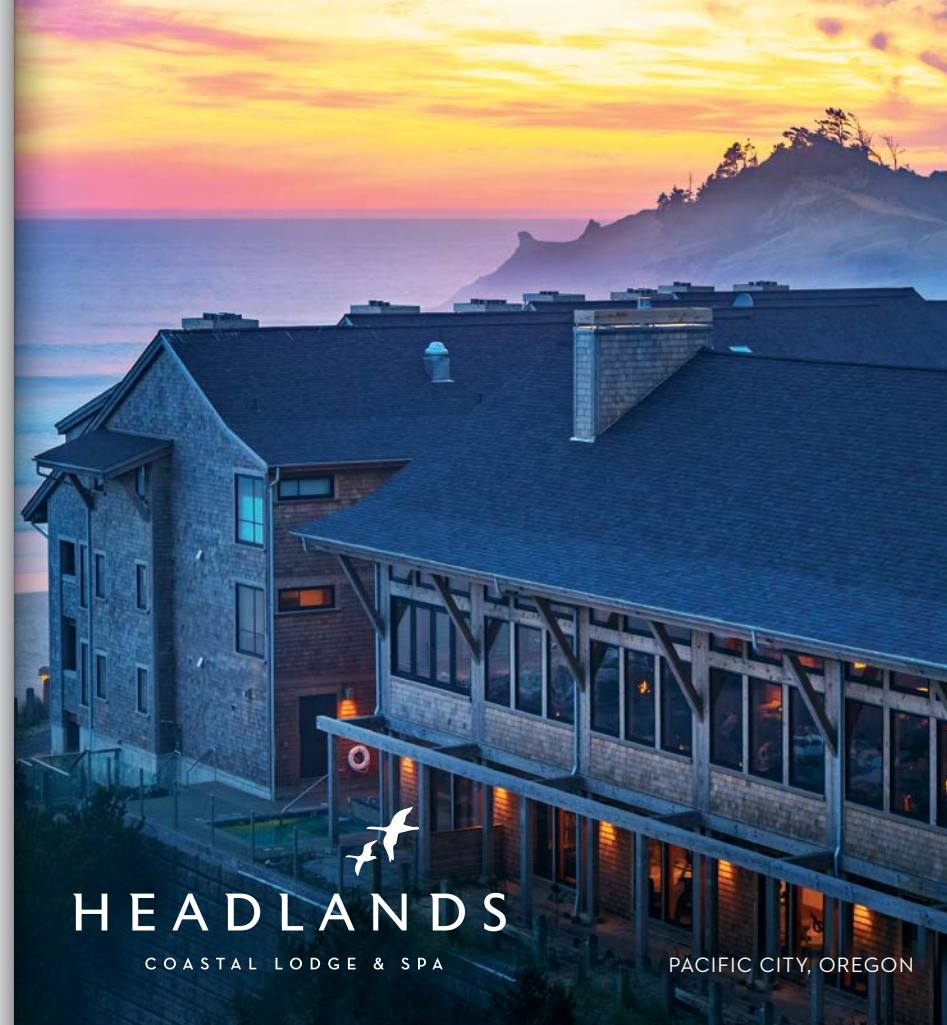
Warm the Aged butter in a saucepot, add the potatoes to coat them in the butter. Season with salt and place in a warm bowl. Sprinkle the pea powder over the top, garnish with pea tendrils and marigold flowers.

RESERVATIONS

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