

# Eating Out in Eugene

The online version (with maps): <http://atomoptics.uoregon.edu/~dsteck/PRACQSYS/food.html>

Eugene has many, many good restaurants, and the prices are fairly cheap compared to similar restaurants in larger cities. The list below is by no means comprehensive, but are a few suggestions of places that are noteworthy, convenient, or both. Restaurants listed in the campus area are an easy walk from campus (duh), and most downtown restaurants (west of campus) are also walkable (some walking can be saved by taking the free EmX bus downtown). Other areas are best visited by car. Call to verify hours, as they change often; the area code is 541 for all listed numbers.

## Breakfast

For a good start, try **Studio One Café**, which is justifiably popular for their eggs benedict (try the “northern lights”) and their french toast, which comes slathered in almond sauce and berry compote.

You can also find a wide selection of pancakes **Original Pancake House**, a national chain but a good one; the swedish pancakes with lingonberries are interesting, and if you have an hour to kill (and you want to ingest a few thousand calories), order the apple pancake.

A true campus institution is the **Glenwood Restaurant**, which serves breakfasts in the “healthy diner” style, including omelettes, scrambles, pancakes, etc., but all nicely done and reasonably priced. They’re a good choice for lunch and dinner too, with a good sandwich selection. All three of these places tend to be crowded, so take this into account before you stagger off to one of them in your morning pre-coffee haze.

One place that deserves special mention is **Barry’s Espresso Bakery and Deli**, a deli in the true New-York style. Their lox and cream cheese on a bialy is incredible. A good place for a quick, simple breakfast (I’m not even quite sure what else they have there for breakfast, since I order the same thing for breakfast). Also an excellent choice for lunch, their soups, sandwiches, quiches,

cookies, cakes, challah, and everything else are consistently spectacular. Highly recommended.

**Barry’s Espresso Bakery and Deli** - 804 E. 12th Ave. 343-1141 (northwest campus) - 6:30 am-7 pm M-F, 8 am-5 pm Sa

**Glenwood Restaurant** - 1340 Alder St. 687-0355 - 7am to 10pm daily

**Original Pancake House** - 782 E. Broadway Ave. 343-7523 (northwest campus) - 6 am-2 pm M-F, 6 am-3 pm Sa-Su

**Studio One Café** - 1473 E 19th Ave. 342-8596 (southeast campus) - 7 am-4 pm daily

## Pizza

Pizza in Eugene is somewhat problematic, with the Northwest focus on unusual toppings, instead of the crust, the pizza’s critical foundation. I personally am a pizza purist: regardless of the style, the crust should have excellent, yeasty, long-fermented flavor, a crackling crisp surface, and good chew. In this regard, **Sy’s New York Pizza** has a respectable pie, the medium-thickness kind that’s best folded over before being crammed into your mouth for some light protection from the incendiary cheese. They’re fast, open late, sell by the slice, and have a Sicilian deep-dish style as well.

Being a purist and pizza minimalist, I usually shudder when strange things like pineapple go cavorting across my slice. Then why do I love **Pizza Research Institute**, which reigns as the king of put-everything-in-the-produce-section-on-the-pizza? Because masters with a true passion for pizza can get away with damn near anything. Put yourself in their hands with the “chef’s choice” and you may find anything from corn to marinated eggplant to peaches (gasp) on your pizza, but it will all be impeccably fresh, each topping meticulously arranged in its proper place, and

astoundingly good. This place tends to be popular, so be prepared to wait for your masterpiece to arrive.

One last pizza joint that deserves mention is **Pegasus Smokehouse Pizza**, which is popular for beer and respectable pizza (try the barbecue chicken pizza). This is your best bet for accommodating a large crowd.

For similar stuff with a different topology, check out **The Dough Co.**, which has a huge selection of calzones. Good fresh-baked cookies, too.

**The Dough Co.** - 1337 Hilyard St. 485-7459 (west campus) - 11 am-3 am daily

**Pegasus Smokehouse Pizza** - 790 E. 14th Ave. 344-4471 (west campus) - 4 pm-10 pm M, 11:30 am-10 pm Tu, 11:30 am-11 pm W-Fr, 12 pm-11 pm Sa, 12 pm-10 pm Su

**Pizza Research Institute** - 1328 Lawrence St. 343-1307 (west downtown) - 5:30 pm-9:30 pm every day

**Sy's New York Pizza** - 1211 Alder St, 686-9598 (northwest campus) - 11 am-midnight Su-Th, 11 am-1 am F-Sa

## Asian

First, let me warn you about one of Eugene's dark secrets: chinese food in Eugene can be seriously awful. *Seriously* awful. It's sad when **Panda Express** and **P. F. Chang's** are among the best options available. So don't do it, man. However, if you feel you absolutely must slake your mu shu craving, then **Ocean Sky** is your best bet for reasonably good food.

By stark but happy contrast, Thai food is plentiful, inexpensive, and almost universally excellent in Eugene. **Mekala's** is close to campus and pretty good though not especially speedy (try the peanut sauce curry); other good choices around town are **Ring of Fire** (they pass the "pad thai test" with flying colors) and **Tasty Thai kitchen** (with excellent white pad thai and pumpkin curry).

Other good Asian options abound as well. Japanese restaurants in Eugene are reasonably good; both **Sakura** and **Sushi**

**Station** (the former being more convenient, the latter being a better deal) have reasonably decent sushi and many non-raw-fish choices. For Korean cuisine, **Korea House** makes a good dolsot bi bim bap. Indian food is rather sparse in Eugene, but **Bombay Palace** is pretty good for dinner (you should opt for the menu, not the buffet).

**Bombay Palace** - 880 E. 13th Ave. 343-1443 (west campus) - 11 am-9 pm M-F, 2 pm-9 pm Sa, 4:30 pm-8:45 pm Su,

**Korea House** - 1306 Hilyard St. 345-9555 (west campus) - 11 am-9 pm M-F

**Mekala's** - 1769 Franklin Blvd. 342-4872 (northeast campus) - 11 am-9 pm M-Th, noon-10 pm Sa, 4 pm-9 pm Su

**Ocean Sky** - 1601 Chambers St. 342-4848 (west Eugene) - 11 am-9:30 pm M, W-Th, closed Tu, 11 am-10:30 pm F, noon-10:30 pm Sa, noon-9:30 pm Su.

**Ring of Fire** - 1099 Chambers St. 344-6475 (west Eugene) - 11 am-midnight M-Th, 11 am-1 am F-Sa, noon-midnight Su

**Sakura Japanese Restaurant** - 844 E. 13th Ave. 343-6817 (west campus) - 10 am-9:30 pm M-Th, 10 am-10 pm F, noon-10 pm Sa, noon-9 pm Su

**Sushi Station** - 199 E. 5th Ave. #7 484-1334 (downtown) - 11:30 am-10 pm M-F, 4 pm-10 pm Sa, closed Su

## Continental/Bistro/Eclectic

Eugene is blessed by a number of truly excellent high-end restaurants, including **Koho Bistro**, **Café Zenon**, **Bel Ami**, and **Marché**. All have excellent food, top-notch service, nice ambience, good wine lists, and reasonable prices (not cheap, but good for the quality). Their menus rotate constantly, and it's difficult to capture their essences in a few words, so check them out online. However, in general you can expect good braised and roasted meats, fowl, fish, and vegetarian foods rooted in France and Italy

but with eclectic nods towards the Middle East, India, and South-east Asia. Zenon is particularly good for dessert, but you can't go wrong at any of these places.

There are also many options for more focused international menus. **Café Soriah** has an excellent pan-Mediterranean menu; order the prawns or a dessert flambé and you may find the owner himself finishing it for you tableside. **El Vaquero** is the place to go for tapas. Many of the tapas sound humdrum as presented on the menu (fish tacos, macaroni and cheese), but when they arrive the quality, flavor, and presentation are consistently outstanding, and their minimalist approach makes delicious sense. Choose two or three tapas per person or order a larger entree. Be prepared for tapas to arrive at random times (and keep track of what your ordered to avoid mixups at delivery time), but the quality here far outweighs the quirky service.

**Bel Ami** - 1591 Willamette St. 485-6242 (south downtown)  
- 4:30 pm-11 pm M-W, 4:30 pm-1 am Th-Sa

**Café Soriah** - 384 W 13th Ave. 342-4410 (west downtown)  
- lunch 11 am-2 pm M-F, dinner 5 pm-10 pm Su-Th, 5 pm-11 pm F-Sa

**El Vaquero** - 296 E 5th St. 434-8272 (north downtown, 5th Street Market) - lunch 11:30 am-3 pm daily, dinner 5:30 pm-10 pm daily

**Café Zenon** - 898 Pearl St. 343-3005 (downtown) - 8 am-11 pm Su-Th, 8 am-midnight F-Sa

**Koho Bistro** - 2101 Bailey Hill Rd. 681-9335 (far west Eugene) - 11:30 am-2 pm and 5 pm-9 pm M-Th, 11:30 am-2 pm and 5-10 F, 5 pm-10 pm Sa

**Marché** - 296 East Fifth Ave. 342-3612 (downtown, 5th Street Market) - lunch 11:30 am-2:30 pm daily, dinner 5:30 pm-10 pm F-Sa, 5:30 pm-9 pm Su-Th

## Italian

The best of the Italian options in Eugene are also spectacular. My preferred gastronomic center in this category is **Beppe and Gianni's Trattoria**, where everything is done absolutely impeccably. Try any of several pasta frescas or one of the daily risotto, fish, or ravioli specials, but make sure to start with the roasted garlic with cambozola cheese appetizer—warm, comforting, velvety, and intensely flavored, assuming you can tolerate the accompanying arterial clogging—and a bottle of wine. They only take reservations for large parties, so get there by 6 or be prepared for a long wait: this place is popular. Stop at **Prince Pücklers** across the street (see the Desserts section) for a post-gorging ice cream. It's usually easier to get a table at the **Excelsior Inn**, and the quality there is also very good. The seasonally changing menu includes Soups, pastas, and heavier braised and roasted meat dishes that are consistently excellent.

**Beppe and Gianni's Trattoria** - 1646 E. 19th Ave. 683-6661  
(southeast campus) - 5-10 pm daily

**Excelsior Inn** - 754 E. 13th Ave. 342-6963 (west campus) - breakfast 7 am-10 am daily, lunch 11:30 am-2 pm daily, dinner 5 pm-10 pm daily (bistro until 11 pm Su-Th, midnight F-Sa)

## Mexican

Mexican food this far north of the border can be problematic. In particular, some locally popular hippie renditions of the classic burrito seem uninspired at best. Though the selection here will probably never match what can be found in Austin or Santa Fe, with some judicious choosing, decent Mexican food can be had. **El Pato Verde** is one of the better choices for lunch and one of the better places to get a fish taco. But even better are their toasted burritos. And the owner is always pleasantly friendly. **Burrito Boy Taqueria** has better hours and also respectable burritos (especially

the wet burritos). **Las Brasas** is one of the more authentic joints in town, and they have a long menu including huge, tasty burritos the size of a small cat (gatitos?). **Muchas Gracias** is a Northwest chain and one of the grittier places around (and not necessarily in a good way). People report spotty luck with menu items; however, they're one of the few 24-hour options around, and their carnitas plate is quite respectable.

**Burrito Boy Taqueria** - 510 E. Broadway 344-8070 (northwest campus) - 7 am-11 pm daily

**El Pato Verde** - 682 E. 13th Ave. 686-9700 (west campus) - 11 am-8 pm M-F, 11 am-4 pm Sa

**Las Brasas** - 541 Blair Blvd. 338-0807 (northwest downtown) - 10:30 am-8 pm daily

**Muchas Gracias** - 1535 Franklin Blvd. 344-5254 (north campus) - 24 hours daily

## Seafood

Being only an hour away from the Oregon coast, you might expect a plethora of great restaurants specializing in seafood. This is surprisingly not the case. However, decent seafood can be had at any of the restaurants listed under Continental or Italian. Fish and chips is a dish that is particularly problematic—many joints in Eugene do it, but only a few do it well. Fortunately, two local joints make life-changing fish and chips: **Newman's Fish & Chips** and **Fisherman's Market**. **Newman's** is pretty straightforward: everything you is deep-fried, and you can get some of the best thick-cut, potatoey french fries here. The large, breaded chunks of cod, halibut, and salmon are all good, as are the daily specials, which can include oysters and calamari. The sauces include a horseradish-laced tartar sauce, a shrimp-cocktail sauce, ketchup, and malt vinegar sauce. All seating is outdoor and the line can be long; clever locals call their orders in before they arrive. **Fisherman's Market** goes towards smaller chunks of fish and criss-cut waffle

fries, and more options, including an array of different tartar sauces, dungeness crab, oyster shooters, and other entrees. It is noteworthy that both places can do a masterful salmon-based fish and chips, since salmon when deep-fried by unskilled hands can be quite nasty (here it's light and perfectly cooked).

**Fisherman's Market** - 830 W. 7th Ave. 484-CRAB (west downtown) - 11 am-8 pm daily

**Newman's Fish & Chips** 1545 Willamette St. 344-2371 (south downtown) - 11 am-7 pm M-F, 11 am-6:30 pm Sa

## Comfort Food

Comforting, anyway, until after you ingest excessive quantities of it. **Papa's Soul Food Kitchen** is a famous local joint for its barbecue (pulled pork, brisket, ribs, chicken), cajun specialties (jambalaya, gumbo), southern catfish and snapper, and any side you can think of to go with them. Great stuff. They have desserts, but keep in mind that **Sweet Life** (see the Desserts section) is within staggering distance.

An even better choice for straight barbecue is **Howling Coyote BBQ**, which has the most authentic barbecue in town (by Texas standards, anyway). The brisket and fries are particularly good, try out the Texas Sampler if you've remembered to starve yourself for 24 hours beforehand or try out the brisket Philly cheesesteak.

**Howling Coyote BBQ** - 435 E. Broadway 485-8864 (northwest campus) - 11 am-8 pm daily

**Papa's Soul Food Kitchen** - 400 Blair Blvd. 342-7500 (northwest downtown) -12-2 and 5-9 T-F, 2-9 Sa, closed Su-M

## Quintessentially Eugene

Eugene has its own distinct, hippie/counterculture personality, sparked by Ken Kesey's presence beginning in the 60's. This influence pervades numerous restaurants in Eugene. **Café Yumm!** (a

Eugene chain) is one of the more unique restaurants in this vein. Their signature is the Yumm! bowl, which comes in a number of variations but at its core is a rice bowl with cheese, beans, salsa, sour cream, avocados, olives, and other good stuff, plus the aptly named Yumm! sauce—a mysterious but tangy and tasty concoction that pulls everything together into something wonderful.

**Three Forks Wok & Grill** lets you choose from a bunch of different fresh, local ingredients to go in your rice stir-fry. The optional marinated grilled chicken has fantastic flavor and chew (it has an interesting fibrous texture), and get a strawberry lemonade to wash it down. Plus, **Three Forks** was founded by a former UO physics undergrad. Both of these restaurants are good choices for vegans, if that's your thing, but very highly recommended for the true Eugene experience even if you're not.

**Café Yumm!**- 730 East Broadway 344-9866 (northwest campus) - 10 am-9 pm daily

**Three Forks Wok & Grill** - 2560 Willamette St. 485-8489 (south Eugene) - 11 am-9 pm M-Th, 11 am-9:30 pm F, 11:30 am-9 pm Sa-Su

## Dessert

Any of the Continental or Italian places will have an impressive dessert selection; **Café Zenon** and the **Excelsior Inn** (try the pot de creme) are particularly good. However, there are two dessert specialists you should know about. **Prince Pücklers** is a popular stop for ice cream—on summer evenings, the line is often out the door. They make their own ice creams, and they're great: the fruit flavors actually taste like fruit, and their chocolate flavors are intensely good. Speaking of chocolate, you can gild the lily by having them pour Euphoria chocolate sauce (ask for it by name) over the top. A good stop after dinner at Beppe and Gianni's.

**Sweet Life Patisserie** has a big selection of desserts, including gelati, pies, cakes, and cheesecakes. The fresh berry tart in summertime is devastatingly good, but all the desserts are excellent. Many vegan-friendly options as well (you wouldn't know they were vegan if they didn't tell you, so don't shy away from them).

**Prince Pücklers** - 1605 E 19th Ave 344-4418 (southeast campus) - noon-11 pm daily

**Sweet Life Patisserie** - 755 Monroe St. 683-5676 (west downtown) - 7 am-11 pm M-F, 8 am-11 pm Sa-Su

## Beer/Pub Food/Nightcap/Music

The Pacific Northwest is a region with a long microbrew tradition, and Eugene is a good place for microbrew fans. **McMenamins** is a famous northwest chain with interesting atmosphere and good northwest-style pub food. They brew a variety of beers, make a number of good wines, and distill their own brandy and gin! There are three Eugene locations: **McMenamins East 19th Street Café** is near campus and has pool tables; **McMenamins High Street Brewery and Café** is also near campus and has more outdoor seating; and **McMenamins North Bank** is the nicest for sitting outdoors, with a nice river view (you can in principle walk there by heading west on the river bike path north of Franklin Blvd., though most locals would just drive there from campus). Another upscale, northwest-style pub is the **Eugene City Brewery**, part of the **Rogue Ales** chain based in Newport, Oregon. Their impressive menu (basically bar food on steroids, the Kobe beef burger is transcendent) and huge selection of beers, including the famous Dead Guy Ale (not to mention distilled spirits), make this a very worthwhile stop. A more comfort-food-oriented bar with plenty of character and a good microbrew selection is the **Horsehead BBQ**, which has tasty items ranging from huge piles of ribs to great fries to collard greens and mac and cheese. For the largest selection of beers in Eugene **The Bier Stein** wins hands down, with 10 beers on tap, and many, many bottled beers. Good food, too—mostly sandwiches, and anything on the menu involving beer and cheese is bound to be good.

As far as the live-music scene goes, the heart of the Eugene jazz scene is **Jo Federigo's**. Upstairs, you'll find a restaurant with decent Italian fare, but you'll generally find more music and alcohol in the lounge downstairs. Another good venue with more

eclectic music and also reasonably priced, good (vaguely) Italian food is the **Oak Street Speakeasy**, which is a bit harder to find (look for Prohibition-era-costumed people hanging out near a stairwell at the corner of Oak and Broadway). Another interesting venue with good food, microbrews, mead, and a variety of live music is the venerable **Sam Bond's Garage**, very much a place with local Eugene color. See also **Papa's Soul Food Kitchen** in the Comfort Food section; they have regular live blues shows.

If noisier nightclub-type places are your thing, you may want to check out **Indigo District** or **Diablo's Downtown Lounge**. New **Max's Tavern** is also an interesting bar as the inspiration for Moe's Tavern on The Simpsons. On the way there you can walk by the Pioneer Father statue (on 13th just west of the EMU), which is supposedly the inspiration for the statue of Jebediah Springfield.

**The Bier Stein** - 345 E 11th Ave. 485-2437 (west campus) - 11 am-11 pm M-Sa, 4 pm-11 pm Su

**Diablo's Downtown Lounge** - 959 Pearl St. 343-2346 (downtown) - 11 am-2:30 am M-F, 1 pm-2:30 am Sa-Su

**Eugene City Brewery** - 844 Olive St. 345-4155 (downtown) - 11 am-11 pm Su-Th, 11 am-midnight F-Sa

**Horsehead BBQ** - 99 W. Broadway 683-3154 (downtown) - 11:30 am-2 am daily

**Jo Federigo's** - 259 E 5th Ave. 343-8488 (downtown) - 5-10 pm daily, downstairs jazz till 1 am

**Indigo District** - 1290 Oak Street 434-6553 (downtown) - 9 pm-2:30 am Tu-Sa

**McMenamins East 19th Street Café** - 1485 E. 19th Ave. 342-4025 (southeast campus) - 11 am-1 am M-Sa, noon-midnight Su

**McMenamins High Street Brewery and Café** - 1243 High Street 345-4905 (west campus) - 11 am-1 am M-Sa, noon-midnight Su

**McMenamins North Bank** - 22 Club Rd. 343-5622 (north of campus/downtown) - 11 am-11 pm M-Th, 11 am-midnight F-Sa, noon-11 pm Su

**New Max's Tavern** - 550 East 13th Avenue 349-8986 (west campus) - 1 pm-2:30 pm daily

**Oak Street Speakeasy** - 915 Oak St. (basement at SW corner of Broadway and Oak). 284-4000 (downtown) - 11 am-2 am M-F, 4 pm-2 am Sa

**Sam Bond's Garage** - 407 Blair Blvd. 431-6603 (west downtown area) - 4 pm-late daily