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FROM FARMER TO DISPENSARY

FOLLOWING THE LEGALIZATION

of recreational cannabis in Washington and Oregon in 2014 and 2015, respectively, tourists exploring the Pacific Northwest's artisan products can now savor craft cannabis alongside other locally sourced items such as wine, beer, cider, mead, spirits and, oh yes, food.

Carrie Solomon of the cannabis edible company Leif Goods notes how craft cannabis fits into the Pacific Northwest's heritage of pioneers and makers. "This lineage of quality and self-determination is still present in everything from food to fashion to furniture. It stands to reason that cannabis would be a natural part of this culture."



EXPLORING CRAFT CANNABIS IN THE NW

BY BECKY GARRISON





© Drip Sweets



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Connoisseurs accustomed to savoring local organic fare culled from Willapa Bay to the Willamette Valley will appreciate how cannabis cultivation ties into this longstanding craft tradition spurred on by multigenerational farmers. As Jesse Peters, CEO of Eco Firma Farms notes, “Oregon’s rich history of craft cannabis cultivation can be seen in the care Oregon farmers have taken, as an industry, to advocate for the strictest pesticide laws in the country surrounding cannabis cultivation and ensuring consumers receive a high quality, pesticide-free and, in many cases, organically grown product.”

Stephen Gold, cofounder of The Daily Leaf online newsletter concurs. “We have the benefit of being able to consume cannabis grown to be cleaner than some of the vegetables bought in the produce section of a grocery store.” One can find similarly minded farmers in Washington State among growers like Trail Blazin’ Productions and Farmer Tom Organics.

Walking into a cannabis dispensary bears many similarities to venturing into a brewery, distillery or winery. Different cannabis strains possess aromas, intensities and flavor profiles similar to the properties found in beer, wine and spirits. There are also a few notable differences. While one can taste products containing alcohol before making a purchase, sampling of cannabis products is prohibited by law. And federal laws prohibit cannabis companies from marketing products as “USDA Organic” or “Fair Trade Certified.”

However, those working in dispensaries can help consumers select products that are organic, pesticide-free and grown using sustainable practices, among other things. These individuals, nicknamed budtenders, function similarly to bartenders by offering recommendations to help those new to cannabis culture achieve the effects they desire. For example, for those seeking a non-intoxicating experience, they can suggest a CBD-only product, while offering products containing various levels of THC to those seeking a higher feeling.

Also, they can aid customers in selecting a method of consuming cannabis that works for their needs. For example, a portable vape pen offers a discrete means of savoring cannabis without needing to purchase additional paraphernalia. Some companies, such as Select Oil (OR, CA and NV), have begun to

Want to know more?

CHECK OUT THESE FOUR ONLINE CANNABIS RESOURCES

- >> **Travel Portland: Legal Marijuana in Portland and Oregon**
travelportland.com/article/legal-marijuana
- >> **Visit Seattle: Marijuana in Seattle**
visitseattle.org/visitor-information/marijuana-in-seattle
- >> **Essential Guide for a First-Time Cannabis Tourist**
alternet.org/drugs/essential-guide-first-time-cannabis-tourist
- >> **Glossary of Cannabis Terms**
sativascienceclub.com/science/2017/3/24/the-ganja-glossary-of-cannabis-terms



offer limited-edition products, like a peppermint holiday vape pen, affording an experience for the cannabis consumer that's similar to seasonal ales for the beer consumer.

Those who partake in the Pacific Northwest craft food scene will appreciate the rise of gourmet cannabis edibles on the market. For example, Drip Sweets (OR) offers ice cream and hard candies that start with the lure of the sweet, then move into flavor exploration, with a cannabis sensation that will follow usually within the hour. Jill Trincherro, Founder/She E.O. of She Don't Know, an edibles company based in Oregon, recommends starting small. "Begin with a microdose (5mg) and you should have a wonderful experience. You can always add more, but once you eat it you can't go back."

People unsatisfied with consuming cannabis internally can try cannabis infused topicals, such as the products made by Empower BodyCare (WA and OR). Check out their hemp-derived Empower® White Label Topical Relief Oil or Topical Relief Lotion. These products are legal in all 50 states, so they're an excellent way to take home a functional souvenir without breaking the law.

Even though one can purchase cannabis legally, laws prohibit smoking of any product in bars, restaurants, rental cars, hotels and public spaces. However, tourists can smoke cannabis in their rooms if they book their accommodations at cannabis-friendly lodgings such as those promoted on Kush Tourism's website. Bill Stewart, proprietor of the Doctor's House, a Portland-based Bud & Breakfast, states how establishments like his offer several benefits. "We provide a friendly, non-judgmental atmosphere where you are welcome to consume in the house, and even in your room. We also have a glass library, so that you can borrow a pipe, bong or vaporizer."

Also, while one cannot smoke in hotels, Portland-based Jupiter Hotel offers its visitors the opportunity to purchase a 420 kit. These kits, named after a slang term used to designate cannabis users, contain an assortment of items including munchies, cannabis paraphernalia, coupons for use at local dispensaries and invitations to select cannabis events.

For those seeking out craft beer and cannabis, Coalition Brewing in Portland has established itself as one of the few breweries in the U.S. offering a CBD-only beer. Their Two Flowers CBD IPA and seasonal CBD beers showcase the natural synergy of hops and cannabis, and are available on draft.

Tourists looking to socialize with like-minded individuals can seek out a variety of events ranging from upscale CBD dinners offered by companies such as Arcane Revelry and Feastly to yoga classes like Marijuasana. A simple online search will retrieve cannabis-centric events.

Finally, prior to traveling to a cannabis-legal state, read up on the latest cannabis laws and remember that, except for CBD topicals, any cannabis products purchased at a dispensary cannot leave the state where they were purchased. If you are a cannabis tourist, the key to staying safe is to stay legal. 🍪



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