If you’re wondering where your sculptor friend from college wound up, it’s probably Portland, Oregon. The sketch-comedy series Portlandia dubbed this laid-back city the place “where young people go to retire,” but from the looks of things, folks are keeping pretty busy here: Local chefs dream up innovative new dining destinations, fashion designers exhibit the city’s breezy sartorial style on runways, the 60-strong brewery scene shows no signs of slowing, and coffee innovations are leading to spectacular morning brews.
The Classics

Where to stay, shop, and play in Portland.

The Nines (Luxury Collection)

Opened in 2008, this hotel in the glazed terra-cotta Meier & Frank Building—a former flagship department store—is in "a perfect downtown location." Blending modern and traditional elements, the artwork and fashion-influenced design are a nod to its retail past. Corridors with crystal chandeliers lead to "Hollywood-glam rooms" with ivory leather headboards and mercury glass lamps. Guests "love the interior atrium" soaring seven stories above a lobby with espresso-colored hardwood floors and gold-foil-like walls. With a 20-foot communal table and "second-to-none staff" the modern steak house Urban Farmer highlights local organic produce. Departure's coastal cuisine includes sushi, dim sum, and a milk chocolate cream with ginger dessert.