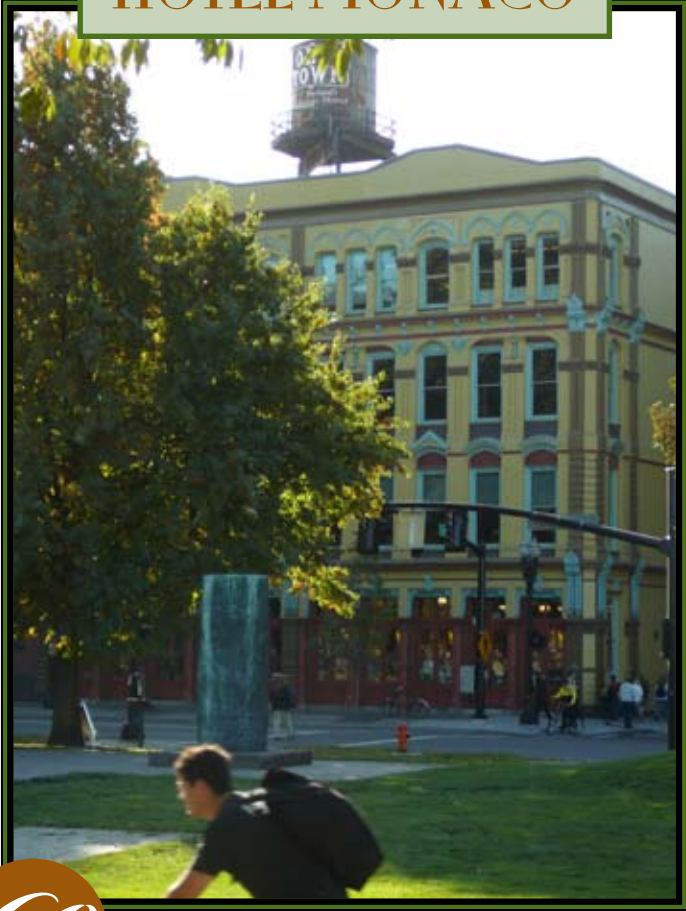


HOTEL MONACO



This walk explores the oldest streets and buildings in Portland, dating from the days the city's waterfront was a warren of wharves, and streets flooded regularly as the Willamette River swelled with spring runoff. One two-block stretch (adjacent the Burnside Bridge) is a bit edgy-feeling if one is walking alone or in the evening, but can be avoided as described in the text. As with any city walk, be aware of your surroundings and use your discretion. With the many great old cast-iron buildings and its riverside stroll, this is a delightful walk, especially on weekends when Portlanders and visitors crowd the Saturday (and Sundays too) Market, a craft and food bazaar at the base of the Burnside Bridge.

60

Minute Walk

Create a longer walk by adding the 3-mile Waterfront Park/Eastbank Esplanade loop, which the route intersects.

- ◆ **BEGIN at the Hotel Monaco, SW 5th Avenue and Washington Street. Turn right out of the door. At the intersection of 5th and Washington, turn left to walk north on 5th.**

Portland's newest light rail line opens here in fall 2009. As you approach Stark Street, on the left is the Bank of the West; it was built in 1916 as the First National Bank. The bank president instructed his architect to make it look like the Parthenon.

- ◆ **From 5th, turn right on Stark and cross 4th. On the right is the Oregon Pioneer Building;**

the plaque next to door explains its Chicago-style architectural roots. Inside is Huber's, the city's oldest restaurant, dating from 1879. It has been here since 1910, when this building went up. (Access Huber's, famous for turkey sandwiches and Spanish coffee, on 3rd Avenue.) Cross 3rd. On the left is the Gothic-style Bishop's House, built in 1879 for a Catholic archbishop, who lived here while overseeing the doings at the cathedral (now gone) next door. As you approach 2nd, on the right is Mother's Bistro and Bar, a great restaurant, in the lovely Concord Building.

- ◆ **From Stark, turn left on 2nd.**

Ahead, visible beyond the parking lot, is the Portland Police Block, headquarters for Portland cops until 1984. It dates from 1912. Beyond it the twin black spires of the Steel Bridge are visible. Cross Oak; the next block is the only one on the walk without much to look at. For the remainder of the walk, you're mostly in the Skidmore Fountain/Old Town Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The district was the center of Portland life until about the 1890s, when commerce began moving uphill, away from the river, in part to avoid frequent floods.

Still on 2nd, cross Pine. At the beautiful Haseltine Building on the left, note the sign at the main door that marks the high water mark from the 1894 and 1948 floods. Across from it is Kell's Irish Pub in a beautiful 1889 cast-iron fronted building. Cross Ash. In the northeast corner is the New Market West Block Annex from 1889 with some really wonderful iron and stonework, handiwork of long-gone craftsmen. Next to it is the spectacular white cast iron and red brick New Market Theatre from 1872. Inside were 28 marble-lined produce stalls. 2nd Avenue at one time was lined with these cast-iron buildings. If you have a magnet on you, you can give it a workout here.

- ◆ **From 2nd, turn right at Ankeny at a marked crosswalk (no light). In one block are the MAX tracks in 1st Avenue.**

Beyond is Ankeny Square. Carefully cross the tracks to the Skidmore Fountain, the city's oldest public art, from 1888. It was built to refresh not just people (it once had drinking cups hanging from chains) but horses and dogs too. On it is inscribed "Good citizens are the riches of the city" from C. E. S. Wood, a Portland lawyer, painter, poet, and defender of women's rights; he recorded Chief Joseph's words on his surrender to U.S. troops in 1879: "I will fight no more forever."

- ◆ **Turn left at 1st Avenue, walking north along the MAX tracks, and under the Burnside Bridge.**

(If it looks unpleasant to you [street people hang out along here], continue straight on Ankeny to Naito Parkway, cross it, and you'll be in Waterfront Park.) On 1st, after passing under the Burnside Bridge, look right to some spectacularly painted Italianate buildings from the mid 1880s, all fronted in cast iron.

This block was bought in the early 2000s by the University of Oregon. Based in Eugene, U of O wanted to expand its Portland presence, and this block is its new Portland base. The buildings' rich details may be best seen from the west side of 1st. Don't miss the second building, signed "Blagen Block" with gilded roaring lions and placidly gazing Miss Liberties.

◆ **From 1st, turn right on Couch**

(pronounced Cooch). In half a block is the entrance to U of O's Duck Store, where you can buy Oregon tee shirts and souvenirs for folks back home.

◆ **Continue on Couch to Naito Parkway. Cross it at the light to enter Governor Tom McCall Waterfront Park,**

which runs 24 blocks along the Willamette River. The land here has been massaged by nature and humans into several incarnations. In Portland's earliest days, it was a natural, swampy bottomland; warehouses, docks, and mills were built on pilings set into the river and its bank. After floods in which the entire first floors of buildings were under water, a seawall was built here in 1929 and the land backfilled to form a level plane. From 1943 to 1974, a highway ran along the seawall. In 1974, Portland Mayor Tom McCall had the freeway torn out and the park was dedicated in 1978. Three decades later, Waterfront Park has seen thousands of events, from national political rallies to celebrations of Northwest craft brewers to annual blues festivals; its grass is in a perpetual state of recovery from the feet that trample it at these events.

In Waterfront Park, the first area you'll encounter is the Japanese American Historical Plaza, which memorializes nearby Japantown (at one time located a few blocks directly west), an area inhabited by Portland's first Japanese immigrants, who came in the 1880s. It also memorializes the forced relocation of Japanese-Americans during World War II. In 1942, 110,000 American citizens of Japanese descent were forced to leave their homes and businesses in California, Washington and Oregon and move for three years to internment camps in the inland West because the U. S. government questioned their loyalty after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Don't miss the two beautiful bronze sculptures in the plaza, "Songs of Innocence" and "Songs of Experience." Rows of Japanese flowering cherries turn the air pink in spring.

◆ **From the plaza, walk toward the riverside sidewalk.**

Before crossing the sidewalk, beware of bikers and skaters. Look across the river to a multi-use path, the Eastbank Esplanade, and its walkway that floats on the river. Walkers on this side of the river can access the Esplanade via the lower deck of the Steel Bridge (the black bridge to your left) and the Hawthorne Bridge (three bridges upstream to your right). Opened in 1998, the Eastbank Esplanade parallels Waterfront Park, creating a three mile loop around the downtown riverfront that is enormously popular with walkers, bikers, bike-commuters, rollerbladers, and skateboarders.

The 187-mile long Willamette is the thirteenth largest river, by volume, in the United States, and unusual in that it flows from south to north. The Willamette Valley, ending just south of Portland and extending beyond Eugene, contains some of the world's richest farmland, courtesy of ancient floods that scoured soils from Montana and Washington and deposited them in Oregon. The river is affected by tides here, 12 miles upstream from its confluence with the mighty Columbia River, and more than 100 miles from the Pacific Ocean. In February 1996 the river threatened to overtop this wall. Warm rains prompted a massive meltdown of the Cascade snowpack and the river swelled to near the top of the wall. Citizens, in an emergency mobilization, sheathed the wall's railing in plywood; the river crested just below it, and Portlanders cheered. The large bollards here are for tying up ocean-going ships, which still use this deepwater port, especially during the June Rose Festival when Navy ships tie up, though the city's commercial port facilities have moved further downriver.

◆ **Walk south on the walkway and pass under the Burnside Bridge. Just before the riverside Oregon Maritime Museum ramp on your left (and the mast for the Battleship Oregon on the right), turn right onto a sidewalk that leads to the Pine Street/Naito Parkway intersection. Cross Naito and turn left onto Naito.**

The 1885 Fehheimer and White building is on the right, a forlorn remnant of the once-thriving commercial scene on what was once called Front Avenue. Most of its neighbors were torn down for road expansion or parking lots before the city became more preservation-minded in the 1970s. Note the sign at its base: "Willamette Iron Works Portland, OR." The iron in the building's facade likely came from a smelter in Oswego, seven miles south of Portland. Iron ore was mined there from about 1865 to 1894, with plans that the area would become the "Pittsburgh of the West." Smelting ore was not a successful venture, as East Coast iron could be shipped here at less cost. Today, the old mining town of Oswego is Lake Oswego, one of the Portland area's most beautiful (and expensive) suburbs.

◆ **From Naito Parkway, turn right on Oak Street.**

The oldest commercial building in town sits at the northwest corner of this intersection. Dating from 1857, the origins of the stucco covered building are hard to see, with its cast iron columns and facade removed. More satisfying is the Dielschneider building a bit further down on the right side of Oak. It dates from 1859 and was built as an iron and brass works. It was beautifully restored in the 1970s. On Oak, cross 1st Avenue. At the corner in an 1886 warehouse is McCormick and Schmick's, a great place to eat, part of a chain founded in Portland in the 1970s.

◆ **From Oak, turn left on 1st, and then walk to Stark Street.**

Before Portland was called Bridgetown, ferries plied the Willamette. The Stark Street Ferry landing was just a few feet east of here; it was the main access into town for people living in the hinterlands across the river.

◆ **Turn right onto Stark, and then left on 2nd Avenue.**

Pass a few more great old cast iron buildings like the Grand Stable and Carriage Company, from the mid 1880s, where you could rent a carriage or have yours fixed. Turn right on Washington and walk three blocks to the HOTEL MONACO.

