

Dear Colleagues, welcome to Portland!

I am excited to share with you what there is to see and do in Portland and the surrounding area and why you should make plans to attend the ASCE 2016 Convention. My wife and I are native Oregonians, in fact my ancestors on my mother's side came to Oregon from Germany in the 1870's and on my father's side from Italy over 100 years ago. I have traveled all over the world, mostly for ASCE, and have visited every state but one (you can ask me which one at the convention) and have not found a better place to call home.

Portland is a city of number one rankings and it begins when you arrive at Portland International Airport, or PDX, which was recently ranked the number one airport in the country by Travel and Leisure magazine. The Port of Portland, which owns and operates the airport, is celebrating their 125th anniversary this year and they are actively involved in our convention. Take Portland's recognized light rail from the airport to the convention hotel, it drops you off right there. Light rail, street cars and buses can take you anywhere you wish to go during your stay.

Portland's downtown is an exciting and vibrant place. From major department stores to unique boutiques. Remember, Oregon DOES NOT HAVE A SALES TAX, so bring an extra suitcase and load up. Stop at Tiffany's downtown and pick up a bauble for that special someone, and pay no tax. Or visit the Apple store, with more street side glass than any Apple store outside New York City, and pick up a new iPad.

Portland is a foodie's paradise, ranked internationally for its restaurants. PETA just ranked Portland number one for vegans. If your tastes run more to meat, then its boutique steak houses have been ranked as best by the Wall Street Journal, although reservations can be hard to come by. If you don't like sitting in a restaurant then visit our world renowned food cart scene. Between that there are restaurants of every type for you to enjoy.

Of course if you are a beer lover then Portland is the place to come. With more microbreweries than any other city in the world you are sure to find a beer you like. Of course no one can keep up with them as it seems a new one opens every few hours. Hops are a key ingredient in beer and Oregon is the number one hops producing state.

Oregon's recognized wine scene brings people from all over the world to taste our award winning pinot noirs and other varietals. I could shamelessly plug the winery that my wife and I recently become shareholders in but see me at the convention and I will tell you which one. World winning wines can be tasted within Portland and the vast majority of wineries are only a short 45 minutes to one hour drive away.

If you will be here on a Saturday, be sure to take in the Portland Saturday Market located downtown. It is the oldest and one of the largest outdoor craft markets in the country.

If you like the great outdoors then Oregon is for you. Portland is only an hour and a half from the beaches of the Oregon coast and an hour away from Mt. Hood, with year round skiing, although I cannot judge the quality of skiing at the end of September. The scenic Columbia Gorge to the east is worth the drive if you have the time.

Of course I know you are coming for the convention and my colleague, longtime friend and local chair of our convention, Larry Magura, will tell you about that.

So come to Portland, bring your family and see how Portland has earned its reputation for food, beer, wine and outdoor fun.

I will see you in September and if you want my personalized list of recommended restaurants and wineries, email me at gdiloreto@hotmail.com.

Greg DiLoreto, P.E., P.L.S., D.WRE., Pres. 13, ASCE