



Eastern Oregon

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Best Places to Sleep

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Why Go?

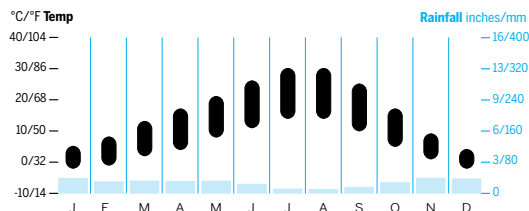
Eastern Oregon is sure to amaze. Among its extensive farmlands and desert plateaus are stunning attractions: the gorgeous snowy peaks of the Wallowa Mountains; Hells Canyon, which dips deeper than the Grand Canyon; the John Day Fossil Beds, with their eerily colorful hills and rock formations; and the incredible glacier-carved valleys of the Steens Mountain range.

This slice of Oregon was the last arduous passage the pioneers traversed on their journey west; in some places you can see where their wagon ruts carved out the Oregon Trail. Gold was discovered in the region in the 1860s – making and breaking dozens of towns and cities – and there's also rich Native American history in towns like Joseph.

With a rodeo in every town and the Old West still palpable in spots, visiting Eastern Oregon is like a trip back in time – but forget the covered wagons and bring the digital camera instead.

When to Go

Pendleton



Jul–Oct Drive the stunning Steens Mountain Loop or hike in high Wallowas.

Mar–Apr & Sep–Oct Avoid the high-summer heat, and enjoy the desert in comfort.

Nov–Mar Colder weather makes hot springs more decadent, and there are ski resorts too.

Pendleton

☎ 541 / POP 16,935

Eastern Oregon's largest city, 'wild and woolly' Pendleton is a handsome old town famous for its wool shirts and big-name rodeo. It has managed to retain its old-time atmosphere and cow-poking past, with large cowboy-boot sculptures on the sidewalks and lots of historic brick buildings downtown.

The city nestles between steep hills along the Umatilla River, surrounded by farms and ranchlands. With art galleries, rodeo-themed antique shops and fancy Western stores, not to mention some good places to eat and drink, Pendleton has become one of Eastern Oregon's most popular destinations.

👁️ Sights

Umatilla County Historical Museum

MUSEUM

☎ 541-276-0012; www.heritagestationmuseum.org; 108 SW Frazer Ave; adult/family \$5/10; ☎ 10am-4pm Tue-Sat) The worthwhile Umatilla County Historical Museum is in Pendleton's old railroad station. There are pioneer exhibits and Native American artifacts; check out the caboose and one-room schoolhouse. Guided tours are available.

Round-Up Hall of Fame

MUSEUM

☎ 541-278-0815; 1114 SW Court Ave; adult/child \$5/2; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Sat, Sat only in winter) If you miss the Pendleton Round-Up, you can still visit the Round-Up Hall of Fame. Here you can see the evidence of past round-ups via photographs, saddles won in competitions and other memorabilia.

Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute

MUSEUM

☎ 541-429-7700; www.tamastslíkt.org; 47106 Wild Horse Blvd; adult/child \$10/6; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat) Witness Oregon's past from a Native American perspective at the spacious Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute, east of Pendleton off I-84 exit 216. State-of-the-art exhibits weave voices, memories and artifacts through an evolving history of the region. There's a cafe on the premises.

Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon

MUSEUM

☎ 541-276-1066; www.cmeo.org; 400 S Main St; \$4; ☎ 10am-5pm; 🧑👦) Kids and their parents should make a beeline to the Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon. It's more like an activities center, boasting an art room, playground and classes.

👤 Tours

Pendleton Underground Tours

TOURS

☎ 800-226-6398, 541-276-0730; www.pendletonundergroundtours.org; 37 SW Emigrant Ave; per person \$15; ☎ dates vary) At the end of the 19th century, a shady network of businesses boomed beneath Pendleton's storefronts, driven underground by Prohibition and social tensions: saloons, Chinese laundries, opium dens, card rooms. Pendleton Underground Tours lets you explore the town's infamous underground past, as well as an above-ground early-1900s brothel. Tours last 1½ hours; reservations required. Children under six are not allowed.

Pendleton Woolen Mills

TOURS

☎ 541-276-6911; www.pendleton-usa.com; 1307 SE Court Pl; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm Sun) **FREE** World-famous Pendleton Woolen Mills has been weaving blankets for more than 100 years, and is especially known for Native American designs. Free, short factory tours are given at 9am, 11am, 1:30pm and 3pm Monday to Friday year-round.

★ Festivals & Events

Pendleton Round-Up

RODEO

☎ 800-457-6336; www.pendletonroundup.com; 1205 SW Court Ave; tickets \$15-28; ☎ mid-Sep) The Pendleton Round-Up is held the second full week in September. There are cowboy breakfasts, dances and a big-name music concert. Tickets and lodging sell out months in advance.

The rodeo features calf roping and steer wrestling. Animal welfare groups say these events involve significant risk of injury to animals.

🛏 Sleeping

There are several chain motels and hotels off I-84 and on Dorion Ave.

Rugged Country Lodge

MOTEL \$

☎ 541-966-6800, 877-778-4433; www.rugged-countrylodge.com; 1807 SE Court Ave; s/ste/d from \$64/69/75; 🍷🍷🍷) On the eastern edge of town is this out-of-the-ordinary, great-deal motel featuring stylish rooms with personal touches such as down pillows, quality linens and Pendleton blankets. Most rooms line inside hallways, making them quiet and giving them a homelike quality. A good breakfast and homemade cookies are included.