

LIVING ABROAD: OREGON

An interview with someone who has visited or lived in a foreign country. This month we are talking to Michael about his time in Portland, Oregon. (US English)

CD track 8 – US woman
& Englishman

MICHAEL, WHY DID YOU GO TO PORTLAND, OREGON?

Well, I was doing an English language course at the Sorbonne in Paris and I needed to spend a year abroad. I could choose a university anywhere in the US and I chose to go to Portland. I don't know



why I chose that place because I didn't know anything about it, but probably because it was so far away and... I didn't know anything about it.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE STATE/CITY?

I thought it was a very beautiful city, and an extremely beautiful state. The people were really nice too and the surrounding mountains were **breathtaking**.

WHERE DID YOU STAY?

I stayed with a really nice family. I learnt a lot of English with them, and I helped the father with his French. He spoke a bit and he was **keen to** improve.



WHAT KIND OF WORK DID YOU DO WHILE YOU WERE THERE?

Well, at first I just studied and went to the university. But later, I **stayed on** because I got a job at a shop called Columbia Sportswear doing sales. There are lots of other jobs you can get, illegally, such as working in the ski resorts, working as a **bartender**, or at the *Nike* and *Adidas* headquarters.

AND WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT OREGON?

All the **outdoor activities** like snowboarding, **rafting**, camping, visiting the Pacific Ocean. Also, there's no **sales tax** in Oregon. Another great thing is that you aren't allowed to **pump your own gas** – the **petrol station attendants** have to do it for you, which is a real advantage when it's raining or snowing.

AND WHAT ARE THE WORST THINGS ABOUT OREGON?

All the rain on the west side of the state, but I suppose that's what makes it so beautiful.

AND WHAT WERE THE PEOPLE LIKE THERE?

Very nice, friendly, easy to **get along with** and **welcoming**.



WHAT DID YOU DO DURING THE DAY?

I liked going down to NW 21st avenue for lunch and a beer while sitting outside during the springtime. Plus, going for long drives along the Columbia River Gorge and hiking. On the weekends I liked going to this outside market called the Saturday Market for food, music and shopping.

AND WHAT DID YOU DO AT NIGHT?

My favorite bars were on NW 21st avenue, such as the *Blue Moon*, *Silver Dollar* or the *Gypsy*. Other good bars downtown were *15*, *Bar 71* or *Kells*.

AND WHAT ARE THE BEST PLACES TO EAT?

The best places to eat would be *Jakes Grill* or the *Portland City Grill*. They eat a lot of fish there and one of their favorites is fish **tacos** with fresh salmon or fresh tuna.

AND WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO GO TO OREGON?

In August when it is still warm and the **leaves are turning brown**.

WHAT IS THERE TO DO IN OREGON DURING THE SUMMER?

In the summer, people go outdoors, have picnics in many of the surrounding parks, plus you can still snowboard as the ski season **lasts** twelve months.

AND WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING OF VISITING OREGON?

It is a wonderful place to live, but getting a job is going to be hard right now. Overall Portland and the rest of Oregon is by far one of my favorite states and an **awesome** place to live.

OK, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MICHAEL.
Not at all.

GLOSSARY

- breathtaking** *adj*
incredible, amazing
- keen to do something** *exp*
very excited about doing something; with a great desire to do something
- to stay on** *phr vb*
to stay in a place after you should have left, or after everyone else has left
- a bartender** *n*
a person who works in a bar serving drinks
- outdoor activities** *n*
sports you can do outside
- rafting** *n*
a sport that involves travelling in a raft (a small, inflatable rubber or plastic boat) on a river
- sales tax** *n*
extra money you pay (that goes to the government) when you buy something – often between 15–17%
- to pump your own gas** *exp*
to put petrol into the car by yourself
- a petrol station** *n US*
a place where you can buy petrol for your car. Also known as "a garage" or "gas station"
- an attendant** *n*
a person who works in a petrol station
- to get along with someone** *exp*
to have a good relationship with someone
- welcoming** *adj*
that makes you feel comfortable and happy in a place
- a taco** *n*
a traditional Mexican dish that is like a crêpe made from corn
- a leaf** (plural: leaves) *n*
the green thing that grows on trees
- to turn brown** *exp*
to become brown (usually in the autumn)
- to last** *vb*
if something "lasts" for a certain period of time, it happens during that period of time
- awesome** *adj US*
incredible, amazing