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BY MEG DALY

Salt Lick City

Summer is here, and so is the frequency of working up a sweat and dispensing precious bodily fluids—without even disrobing. You need lots of water in this season of sunny delights, but did you know your salt levels might need a boost, too? Here are a few spots around town to replenish your inner salinity (and quench your thirst).

Colosso • 1932 N.E. Broadway

This queer-friendly tapas bar is darker and moodier than the sunny Mediterranean, but it sure is sexy. The cocktails are divine: Try the Kirkpatrick, a pomegranate margarita made with black pepper-infused tequila (rimmed with salt, of course). For more salt fix, start with the acetunas (mixed olives) or the Ensalada Manchego, made with the best cheese ever invented. Meal-size tapas include the exquisite Berenjena con Granada (seared eggplant and goat cheese) and Pollo Marroqui (Moroccan chicken tangine on couscous)—order either or both with Arroz con Verde.

Tuscany Grill • 811 N.W. 21st Ave.

This romantic dining room on Italian Restaurant Row is for only the most hardcore salt lovers. Despite repeated customer complaints, the chefs are inured to liberal salt shaking. I once ordered Spaghettini Puttanesca that made my mouth pucker up like a slug. Even the nightly fish special can be risky. For a safer bet, stick with the Spinaci Ravioli or Risotto del Giorno. Or, wiser still, drop by for dessert. The tiramisu is by far the best I've ever tasted: The ladyfingers are arranged like petals around a champagne glassful of cream and espresso, just begging (like so many things) to be dipped and devoured.

Lum Yuen • 28 N.W. Fourth Ave.

Dim sum is the perfect salt lover's meal because you control your own soy saucing. And there's no better place in Portland for this Chinese tradition than at Lum Yuen. Try the shrimp and greens dumpling, the sweet pork-filled bun, ginger shrimp dumpling and Chinese Broccoli. Sunday brunches are crazy here; try a relaxed weekday lunch when Portland's diversity is evident in the mingling of Asian families, downtown hipsters, business-people and the occasional feminist journalist.

AND BEWARE!

Acapulco's Gold • 2610 N.W. Vaughn St.

This place tries so hard to be a hip version of white trash that it's just trash. Overly salty yet weirdly flavorless enchiladas coupled with syrupy sour-mix margaritas are enough to give you a headache just inhaling the vapors. But try ingesting one of each and you'll go directly from sober and hungry to dehydrated and hung over with no in-between.



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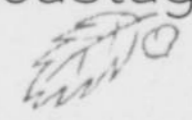


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