



Gay-owned Astoria Coffeehouse is a local favorite.

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coffee shop offers Portland's popular Stumptown Coffee, a fantastic and casual menu and an exciting lineup of live music most evenings. It is an urban oasis in the midst of a small coastal town.

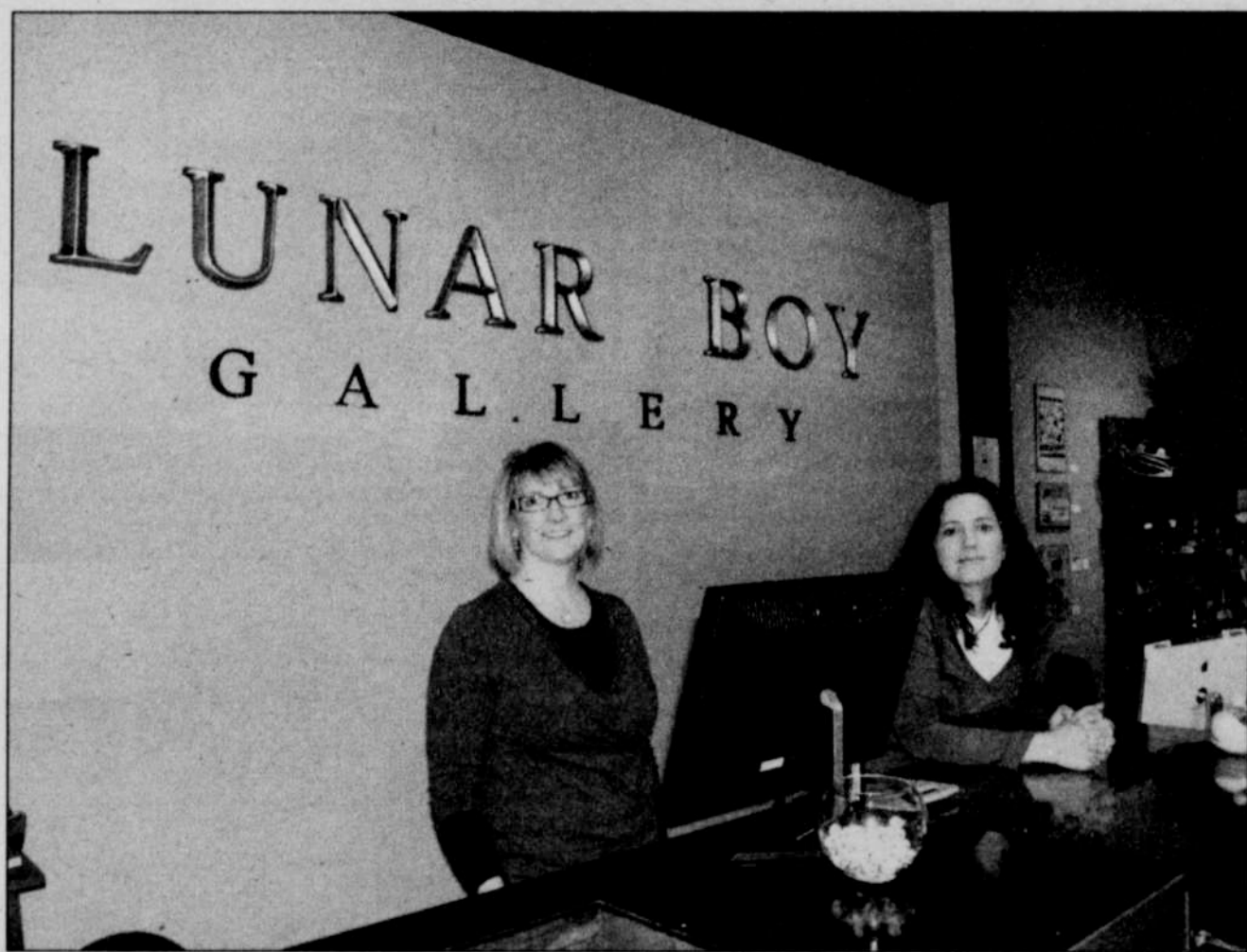
Compared to its coastal neighbors, Astoria is also a mecca for arts and culture. With the soon-to-be-completed remodel of Liberty Theater downtown, it is obvious that the town has realized its potential as a magnet for regional and national attention. With a burgeoning arts scene, Astoria is quickly becoming a venue for local and national talent. Nothing complements a romantic weekend better than a day of gallery visits.

Lunar Boy Gallery, owned by former Portland resident Deborah Starr, showcases an eclectic blend of contemporary art that infuses modern design with nostalgic whimsy. The artists offer a wide array of media and subject matter. In addition to a gallery space, Lunar Boy also features books, jewelry, toys and handbags perfect for a vacation souvenir. If visiting the gallery in February, make sure to check out the beautiful photograph "Palio" by U.K. photographer Pete Kelley.

Lunar Boy Gallery, Astoria Coffeehouse and soon-to-close Shenahan Gallery sponsor a sporadic event they have dubbed Q Night. Past Q Nights have featured social events at the galleries and late-night live music at the coffeehouse; entertainers have included Portland's favorite bear band, Sneakin' Out. Generally attracting up to 200 people, the success of the evenings is evidence of the quiet yet present queer community in Astoria.

Although Seaside is farther down the coast, a Valentine's Day trip is incomplete without visiting perhaps one of the best gay-owned bistros in the area. Yummy Wine Bar and Bistro is a sophisticated yet comfortable restaurant featuring a menu full of flavor and passion. Yummy owner (pun intended) Corey Albert prides himself on the welcoming environment at his bistro. The Valentine's Day dinner menu features filet mignon with lobster sauce. Designed for a couple to share, the dish will force intimacy. After all, it is nearly impossible not to touch while eating off the same plate. For a reasonable price of \$65 a couple, the menu will surely ignite passion suitable for Valentine's Day. The food is so fantastic that an entire trip could be planned around the menu. This is a rewarding alternative to the usual deep-fried fare (i.e., fish and chips) that haunts most coastal towns and most tourists' stomachs.

While dining in Seaside, make sure to hit lesbian-owned DragonFire Studio and Gallery in Cannon Beach. Dedicated to original works of contemporary art from local, national and regional talent, DragonFire brings a breath of fresh air to the tired seascapes found in most coastal galleries. In addition to the gallery space, DragonFire also offers seasonal two- and three-day workshops with topics ranging from design composition to watercolor technique. DragonFire will participate in the Cannon Beach Spring Unveiling, an annual festival designed to showcase gallery talent, from May 5 to 7. It will include live music, refreshments and, of course, artwork.



Jane Thanner (left) and Deborah Starr own Lunar Boy Gallery.



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