

## Readers' choice awards

### BEST GROCERY STORE

## Astoria Co-op Grocery

Astoria, Oregon

**Runner-up:** Fred Meyer, Warrenton

**Honorable Mention:** Okie's Thriftway Market / Costco (tie)



Photo by Joshua Bessex

Matt Stanley, general manager of the Astoria Co-op Grocery, stands outside the store, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2014 by unveiling a new logo and hanging new signage in front of its location at 1355 Exchange St.

By RYAN HUME

Beyond earning this year's Readers' Choice Award for Best Grocery Store again, 2014 was a big year for the Astoria Co-op Grocery. The co-op celebrated its 40th anniversary by unveiling a new logo and hanging new signage in front of its location at 1355 Exchange St. in Astoria.

The local grocery store also expanded its organic deli selections and added fresh meat and seafood, all of which is both organic and certified humane.

"We really strive to make eating healthy, fun and easy," said General Manager Matt Stanley.

As always, the shelves remain free of preservatives, food

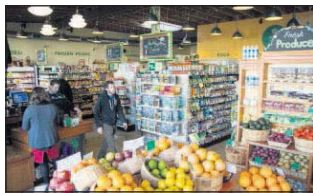


Photo by Joshua Bessex

The Astoria Co-op Grocery works with over 100 individual producers to source its unique stock of nutrient-rich foods and loves to show off the North Coast's local bounty.

coloring and hydrogenated oils, and the co-op continues to give preference to foods that are organic and without genetic modification.

"So coming into the co-op means that shoppers can trust that we've done a lot of home-

work for them," Stanley said.

The co-op works with over 100 individual producers to source its unique stock of nutrient-rich foods and loves to show off the North Coast's local bounty.

"We receive many products directly from producers in our community," Stanley said. "We define local by a 40-mile radius, so there is no confusion when it comes to whether an item is truly produced by local folks."

And if you can't find what you're looking for, ask — the co-op will try and special order it for you.

"We love that we can get to know our owners," Stanley said. "Whether they are new to the co-op or if they've been shopping there for a long time."

Besides having a friendly and knowable staff, the Astoria Co-op also offers cooking courses, health and wellness lectures, and a seasonal newsletter. Stanley hopes the new branding will mark the beginning of an exciting future for the store. He admits that the current location is small, but he would like to see the co-op expand over the new few years to include things like a full-service deli with hot food, a butcher counter and more space for deli seating.

"People can help by signing up to be owners and shopping at the co-op as much as possible," Stanley said.

*The Astoria Co-op Grocery is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. For more information on how to become an owner, board members, current sales, upcoming events and more, call 503-325-0027 or visit [www.astoria.coop](http://www.astoria.coop)*

### BEST GARDEN CENTER

## Brim's Farm & Garden

Astoria, Oregon

**Runner-up:** Dennis' 7 Dees, Seaside

**Honorable Mention:** Basket Case Greenhouse, Long Beach



Photo by Joshua Bessex

Established in 1986, Brim's Farm and Garden, owned by Linda Brim, pictured, has been voted Best Garden Center yet again in Coast Weekend's Readers' Choice Awards. This family owned and operated garden nursery and animal feed store is known for its customer service and quality products.

### BEST HOTEL

## The Cannery Pier Hotel

Astoria, Oregon

**Runner-up:** Adrift Hotel, Long Beach, Washington

**Honorable Mention:** Hotel Elliott, Astoria

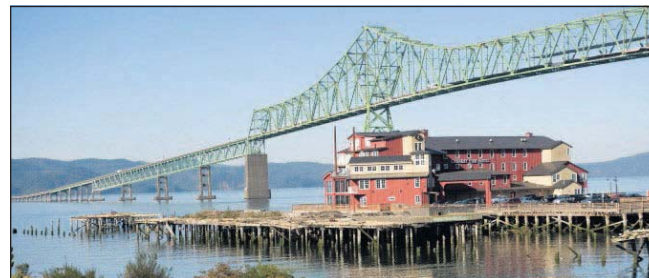


Photo by Alex Pajunas

Resting on the 100-year-old pilings of the former Union Fisherman's Cooperative Packing Co., the Cannery Pier Hotel offers front-seat views of the Columbia River, free Wi-Fi, on-site day spa, exercise room, authentic Finnish sauna, complimentary chauffeur service and bicycle rental, and much more. It's no surprise to find that Readers' Choice voters have named this luxury boutique hotel Best Hotel for the past eight years.

### BEST ASIAN FOOD

## Nisa's Thai Kitchen

Warrenton, Oregon

**Runner-up:** Himani Indian Cuisine, Astoria

**Honorable Mention:** Long Beach Thai Cuisine



Submitted photo by Bill Blackler

The flaming beef is one of Nisa's Thai Kitchen's most popular dishes.

Owned by Nisa and Bill Blackler, Nisa's Thai Kitchen opened about a year ago in the former Kim's Kitchen location in Warrenton. Though relatively new on the scene, Nisa's swept the Best Asian Food category in this year's Readers' Choice Awards in a landslide win.

The restaurant cooks up all the usual Thai favorites — pad Thai, peanut curry, Tom Yam Goong and others — and some specialties, including Three Flavors Salmon, deep-fried sockeye topped with onions, tomatoes, bell pepper, pineapple chunks and a special sauce.

You'll also find specialty beverages such as Thai iced tea and coffee.

*Nisa's can be found on Facebook and is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week at 575 E. Harbor Drive. The restaurant offers a takeout menu and can be reached at 503-861-5645.*

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