



Photo by Matt Love

The Old Fish Trap in Chinook, Washington, is a great place to relax.

A GLIMPSE INSIDE

An occasional feature by MATT LOVE

The Old Fish Trap

I rolled into Chinook after a drive along the north-
ern side of the river. The tide was extremely low and exposed the

mud flats in the afternoon sun. They were incredibly beautiful, and I could barely take my eyes off them. I wish I could explain the appeal of mudflats to me. Perhaps it's the metaphor of revealing the bottom of something as opposed to the surface.

The Old Fish Trap beckoned, and I stopped in for a beer to begin my weekend and relax after an intense work week. When I try to relax, I don't want to try anything new or involved. I just want quiet, stasis and simplicity.

I walked in, did a quick visual inspection, noticed a piano and guitar, and ordered a lager from North Jetty Brewery. I sat down in a comfortable booth and felt contentment wash ashore in the exquisite silence of this joint. At the bar, some regulars discussed how a local "fingerless" man worked as a handyman. It sounded like great material for a short story. But I wouldn't write it — I was supposed to be relaxing.

Yes, this was my kind of somnolent place. Wood, maroon and black dominated the Old Fish Trap's décor, but there was much more to admire than colors and grainy textures. I loved the historic photographs of logging and fishing, fish-themed fine art, vintage coffee can collection, crab pot and propeller blade. I especially loved the fake kitten asleep near the front window.

Not a single customer was on a phone. People were talking.

I visit these places because they don't hustle or exude a shred of irony. They are exactly as they appear. I will never understand why people visit the coast and then patronize the same kind of establishments that they frequent at home, like the power couple from Seattle who go to the Seattle bar in Astoria. What's the point? Can't you drink your fancy liquorless drinks at home?

A quasi old timer walked in. The female bartender said, "Art, do you want a PBR?"

Art said, "Yes." He said it slowly.

The bartender brought over the beer and told Art about the upcoming April weekend in Chinook. "It's going to be super rowdy, and everybody is going to be turning up."

"I hope not," said Art.

I'm with Art. The Old Fish Trap is the best place around to turn it down, not up. Up is overrated.

Matt Love is the author/editor of 14 books, including "A Nice Piece of Astoria." His books are available through all coastal bookstores (except one) or his website, nestuccaspitpress.com

word nerd

By RYAN HUME

Natatorium

[næt•ə•tɔːr•i•əm]

noun
plural, natatoria

1. arch. an indoor pool for swimming, esp. a free-standing building that houses an indoor swimming pool. The pool buildings that littered the Oregon Coast in the early 20th Century, from Nye Beach to Seaside, relied on pumping in heated seawater from the nearby Pacific Ocean, and offered concessions and entertainment, such as nickelodeons and live music

Origin:

First recorded in 1890 and arising in New England from the Late Latin verb, *natāre* (meaning "to swim") + *-atorium* (a loaned suffix from Latin denoting a place). Natatorium literally means, "a place to swim."

The term was at its height of popularity in the U.S. around the 1920s, just as many of the buildings along the Oregon Coast were being constructed. The term fell steeply out



Photo courtesy Cannon Beach History Center
Riders rest on horses in front of the Cannon Beach Natatorium circa 1926-28.

of fashion in the early 1960s, around the same time the last one on the North Coast, the Seaside Natatorium, closed.

"Cannon Beach's natatorium was built in 1924 by William Mahon and was often referred to as 'The Nat.'"

— Elaine Trucke, "Historic photos: Natatorium was more than a place to swim," *The Daily Astorian*, Friday, March 27, 2015, P. 2C

"The building that now houses the aquarium opened as Seaside Baths, a natatorium, in August 1924, and it offered warm saltwater swimming."

— Katherine Lacaze, "History and Hops' educates with frosty pints of craft beer," *The Daily Astorian*, Thursday, Nov. 12, 2015, P. 3A

"SEASIDE, Or., Oct. 18.—(Special.)—Work will be commenced about January 1 on a \$30,000 natatorium in this city by J. E. Oates, who owns the site opposite the Moore Hotel."

—"Natatorium is Planned," *The Morning Oregonian*, Sunday, Oct. 19, 1913, P. 11

Hi Casual Cannabis

We are a recreational and medical cannabis dispensary. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff is dedicated to helping you find the quality medicine that suits your needs. With over 25 strains ranging from high CBD to high THC and everything in between.

Located on 193 Marine Dr. in Astoria.

503-741-3119

Bring in this ad today and get

10% OFF

*limit one per customer

COTTONMOUTH

COMEDY TOUR 2016

w/Ngalo Bealum

5TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY!

SAT 4/23 - \$15

DOORS @ 8P

ASTORIA ARMORY

407 17TH STREET | ASTORIA, OR

RECREATIONAL & MEDICAL MARIJUANA SALES
503-325-8570 nature'schoice420.com

ADDITIONAL parking AROUND BACK