

# MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

Coast Weekend's local  
restaurant review

## Part Two: Rogue offers familiar pub fare with fine ingredients

Review and photos  
by MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA  
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*This is the second of a two-part column about Rogue Ales Public House in Astoria. Last week's column focused on the beer; this week's column focuses on the food.*

"Which way?" my companion asked.

"Straight ahead," I said, pointing towards the wooden, one-lane bridge to Pier 39.

"Whoa, this is cool," he said, as the wheels tumbled over the planks. Indeed, the approach to Astoria's Rogue Ales Public House is transportive. The Cannery Museum glowed, sea lions barked across the water and the lights of downtown Astoria twinkled in the distance.

Unlike more recent industrial conversions, Rogue's nearly decade-old repurposing of Pier 39 maintains history without an overly glossy, modern facade. It's not lined with stainless steel or glimmering industrial chic. It's heavy, wooden and worn, with high ceilings and plenty of headspace — though the floor is stocked full of Rogue product and memorabilia. Above a tall, compact bar near the entrance, chalkboards abound, listing the 25-odd beers currently on tap. (For a beer-centric column, see last week's.)

Since the Newport-based brewery's origin in the late 1980s, Rogue has expanded beyond beer. The company also operates two farms that grow all manner of produce, including hops, barley, nuts, berries, peppers and more. Rogue also raises chickens, pigs and turkeys. Beer is used in conjunction with the produce to create accoutrements, including sauces, dressings and so on. Something like a culinary/agricultural laboratory, Rogue Farms has contributed to nearly an all-encompassing ethic. (They don't call the fan/membership club "Rogue Nation" for nothing.) On one of the Astoria pub's busily



decorated walls I came across something like a manifesto.

"The Creed" begins: "Rogue is a small revolution... The spirit of the Rogue brand, even the name, suggests doing things differently, a desire and a willingness to change the status quo." While partly fun and cheeky branding, the self-determination stuff strikes a chord — were Rogue nation to secede, you'd be hard-pressed to find more satiating sustenance. Whilst remaining a part of our good ol' capitalist USA, though, Rogue Ales' fresh, traditional, well-sourced pub fare largely meets the company's stated goal of "working with the best."

My companion and I began

with a pair of appetizers (and tasting trays). The pair of Scotch Eggs (\$7), hard boiled, rolled in Olympic Provisions sausage, breaded and deep fried, were cut in half and served with a side of house-made mustard. Powerful little protein balls with contrasting textures, they were warming — the crust kept the heat in. The Kimchi Crab Sliders (\$9) came as a trio. The sweet, acidic slaw and Sriracha mayo were fine twists to the Dungeness crab patties, though the slider buns overwhelmed. The spongy white bread was one of the few ingredients in multiple trips to Rogue that dipped near average. Perhaps instead of sliders, crab

**Above:** The Scotch egg appetizer features two Scotch eggs rolled in sausage, breaded, deep fried and cut in half.

**Left:** The Meat, Cheese, Beer pizza featured sausage, pepperoni, salami, bacon, mozzarella and white cheddar.

cakes — still topped with kimchi — would be preferable.

For dinner, my companion had the Albacore Fish N' Chips (\$14), which, naturally, was beer battered. Made with Rogue Farms Good Chit Pilsner batter, the crust was thick, not too oily and crunchy. Our server called the tuna "sushi grade." I can say it was clean, but what struck me about the fish wasn't so much the flavor as the abundance — the four pieces were like steaks. Wallet-sized and bigger, it was nearly twice the amount of fish offered by the average North Coast order. Rogue's was reasonably priced, too.

I had the Brutal Reuben (\$11), which was absolutely tantalizing — so delectable that when I shared it with my companion I had to fight to get it back. It was just that good — melty, briny, a tad sweet,

### ROUGE ALES PUBLIC HOUSE

**Rating:** ★ ★ ★ ★

**100 39th St., Astoria**

**PHONE:** 503-468-0923

**HOURS:** 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Sunday to Thursday; 11 a.m.  
to 10 p.m. Friday and Satur-  
day.

**PRICE:** \$\$ – Reasonable for  
quality ingredients.

**VEGETARIAN / VEGAN OP-  
TIONS:** Vegetarians should  
do well.

**SERVICE:** Casual and capa-  
ble.

**DRINKS:** Beer and house-  
made spirits.

#### KEY TO STAR RATING SYSTEM

★ Poor

★★ Below average

★★★ Good

★★★★ Excellent

★★★★★ Best in region

just perfect. Unlike the Jewish deli towers of meat with sides of bread, this sandwich was — as all excellent sandwiches are — a golden ratio, a song where all singers are heard. The hearty marble rye was just slightly toasted, the kraut sharp (and marinated in Shakespear Stout), the thousand island dressing coy, the Swiss melted, the pastrami thick — and with just a whisper of being steeped in Rogue's Brutal IPA. In terms of doing something traditional with excellence — just like Rogue does with beer — the reuben was outstanding.

So was the burger (\$13). I enjoyed it even more. One of Rogue's increasingly rare out-sourced ingredients, the Kobe beef comes from Snake River Farms.

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