

The Mouth responds to readers

Review and photos by

THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

MOUTh@COASTWEEKEND.COM

FACEBOOK.COM/MOUTHOFTHECOLUMBIA

It's time again to share letters from readers. But first let me put out a call for more!

As we approach the end of 2017, I'll be looking at what the year meant for dining on the North Coast. Did you notice any trends? What's the best new restaurant? What was your most memorable meal? What should I be looking into in 2018?

Send those comments to mouth@coastweekend.com, and check out the Mouth's Facebook page ([facebook.com/mouthofthecolumbia](https://www.facebook.com/mouthofthecolumbia)). While it might be too early for New Year's resolutions, extending the conversation with readers on Facebook is making the list!

Now, on to your letters. Thanks for reading and taking the time to write! (That also goes for the letters that don't make the column!)

Letters have been edited for length and clarity.

High chairs, 'bye' chairs

Hello Mouth—
We are faithful readers of your column for the last 12 years and have been pleased with the information and the rating system (though I think several people have contributed to the column over time).

We eat out quite often. Keeping in mind your reviews for future "local" restaurant possibilities, and do compare our findings with some of your reports. Mostly in agreement.

The most recent review of the Salt Hotel & Pub in Ilwaco came out the same week we had visited that establishment.

Arriving on an early Sunday to give it a try, we climbed the long stairwell. Consider it good exer-



Salt Hotel & Pub

cise. Upon entering the restaurant, a very nice waitperson greeted us and offered to make us comfortable. The view from the second floor is pleasant and I would expect it to be a good addition to some good food.

But my husband and I find it most uncomfortable to sit at high tables, and sitting on the tall chairs that are pulled up to them DOES NOT WORK for us.

As I looked around, this particular restaurant has opted for no chairs of "normal" height. (As my husband calls them with humor, "closer to the ground.") No "normal" chairs were to be found in any nook of the restaurant. This DOES NOT WORK for the two of us.

I hated to leave. But leave we must.

Thanks, Sandy S.

THE MOUTH: I must admit, Sandy, that, while I'm both able-bodied and above-average-height, I despise eating at tall pub tables. It's awkward and uncomfortable.

I imagine Salt chose those tall tables to line up with their windows — it is, after all, a great view. (And rebuilding the wall to accommodate larger windows is serious business.)

Salt's seating, along with servers bounding up and down the stairs, ferrying food from the first floor kitchen, almost made my review. I just ran out of space.

That said, I overlooked what the seating configuration could mean to the alternately-abled. Salt is not especially accessible. Someone in a wheelchair might be wholly out of luck.

Thank you for bringing the issue to light. I'll do my best to keep it in mind.

Peninsula sports bars

Good morning! I finally finished reading the Coast Weekend and was laughing at your pick of the sports bars. I would agree with the Merry Time Bar and Grill being a pretty good sports bar in Astoria. The same with Bubba's in Warrenton. Haven't been in Dundee's so I can't make a judgment. Some of the others wouldn't even be called "sports bars." Just because a bar has a TV set doesn't make it a sports bar.

But you really messed up with the Long Beach Peninsula.

First of all, I should mention that we really like to stop in Ilwaco at the Salt Pub for a brew and some food, but it certainly doesn't qualify as a sports bar. It has a



The Lost Roo

magnificent view of the port, but that doesn't make it a sports bar. The Columbia River Roadhouse is a good place for food and drink but it is a stretch to call it a sports bar, although it does have a couple of TVs and a good viewing area.

If you want a GREAT sports bar, you should stop in at the Lost Roo in south Long Beach. It has channels for all the sports and is generally packed to the gills during Seahawk, Husky, Cougar, Ducks and Beaver games. The list of rotating beer taps is more than adequate and the food is delicious with a varied menu. The many TV sets are placed so one can watch the games from anywhere in the bar/restaurant. It is a huge venue and is separated into a sports bar setting and also a family dining area. The Lost Roo is probably the BEST sports bar in the Lower Columbia region.

The North Jetty Brew Pub in Seaview is another hangout for the ball games. The Jetty brews its own beer. It is small but all the seats point toward the TV set. The Long Beach Tavern at the north end of Long Beach has a decent turnout for the games. Serves good food, plus has about six rotating taps of beer.

I realize that Lost Roo doesn't

advertise in the local papers so the "Mouth" doesn't stop there, but it is so popular that it doesn't need to advertise. The owners do a lot of local fund raising and make contributions to the sports teams of Ilwaco High School. Perhaps you should stop in sometime and enjoy a brew, wine or mixed drink and sample their food.

Yours truly,
Dennis O.

THE MOUTH: Dennis, I'm going to address your concerns out of order.

Most importantly, I must disabuse anyone of the notion that advertisements dictate this column's focus. If that were true, the overwhelming majority of restaurants in the region would never be reviewed. Furthermore, I select what restaurants to review and when, without editorial influence.

Secondly, I have reviewed Lost Roo. (See "Mouth of the Columbia: Lost Roo," April 14, 2016.) I awarded three stars and noted the congruity with game-time.

"Think football foods, sports snacks," I wrote. "(It's in the red meats where Lost Roo finds its firmest footing. Delicate constructions aren't what the assembly-line, industrially sized kitchen is designed to pump out. It, along with the humongous dining room and the 40-foot-long bar, are made to suds up groups of friends watching March Madness..."

So, with all that in mind, I may have been remiss to leave Lost Roo from my sports bar roundup.

While it came after the roundup, I reviewed the Long Beach Tavern last month. Though I found the food rather flat, it's a reasonable place to watch a game.

And while I have yet to visit the North Jetty taproom, I have enjoyed a wide variety of their beers at nearby restaurants and bars. They're among the Peninsula's most inspired newcomers. 