

# Oregon

By Tom Kirvan

## A LAND OF NATURAL WONDERS AND COASTAL ADVENTURES

Nicknamed the Beaver State, Oregon is located in the U.S.'s Pacific Northwest and is home to approximately 4.3 million people. The state is known for its diverse population, with residents hailing from various cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Oregon's population is concentrated in urban areas, particularly in the Willamette Valley, which includes the cities of Portland, Eugene, and Salem. Portland, the state's largest city, is known for its progressive culture, vibrant arts scene, and environmental consciousness.

Oregon is renowned for its stunning and diverse landscapes, ranging from the rugged Pacific Ocean coastline to the dense forests of the Cascade Range and the arid deserts of the eastern part of the state. The state covers an area of 98,381 square miles, offering a wide variety of natural environments. The Oregon Coast is famous for its dramatic cliffs, sandy beaches, and iconic lighthouses, while the Cascade Range is home to towering volcanoes like Mount Hood and Crater Lake, the deepest lake in the United States. The Columbia River Gorge, a major geographic feature, forms part of the state's northern border with Washington and boasts breathtaking waterfalls and windsurfing spots.

Oregon has a rich history, as the first Europeans to explore the region were the Spanish and British in the 18th century, followed by American explorers like Lewis and Clark, who arrived in the early 19th century. The Oregon Trail, a major route for settlers moving westward in the mid-1800s, brought thousands of pioneers to the region, leading to the establishment of Oregon as a U.S. territory in 1848 and state in 1859. Oregon's history is also marked by its role in the timber industry, which played a significant part in its economic development, as well as its environmental movement, shaping the state's identity as a leader in conservation and sustainability.

Oregon's economy is diverse and dynamic, with key sectors including technology, agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. The state is a major player in the high-tech industry, particularly in the Portland metropolitan area, which has earned the nickname "Silicon Forest" due to the presence of numerous tech companies, including Intel and Tektronix. Agriculture is another cornerstone of Oregon's economy, with the state being a leading producer of products like hazelnuts, wine, and nursery plants. The timber industry, once the backbone of the state's economy, remains significant, though it has been surpassed by other sectors. Tourism is also a major contributor, with visitors flocking to Oregon for its natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, and cultural attractions.

STATE OF OREGON



1859



## Fast Facts

Capital: Salem

Population: 4.3 million

Highest point: Mt. Hood (11,249 feet)

Economic engines: Technology, agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism

Must-See destination: Crater Lake National Park

**Primerus Member: Haglund Kelley, LLP**

Haglund Kelley, LLP, a litigation law firm located in Portland.



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Salem, located in the heart of the Willamette Valley, is the capital of Oregon and serves as the political and administrative center of the state. With a population of about 175,000, Salem is known for its historic buildings, parks, and the Oregon State Capitol, which features a distinctive gold-leaf statue of the Oregon Pioneer atop its dome. Portland, the largest city in Oregon, is a cultural and economic hub, with a population topping 650,000. Known for its eclectic culture, progressive values, and commitment to sustainability, Portland is famous for its food scene, microbreweries, and numerous parks, including Forest Park, one of the largest urban forests in the United States.

## Top 5 Must-See Tourist Destinations

- **Crater Lake National Park:** Crater Lake National Park, located in southern Oregon, is home to the deepest lake in the United States, Crater Lake. Formed by the collapse of a volcano more than 7,000 years ago, Crater Lake is renowned for its stunning blue water, which is among the clearest in the world. The park offers a variety of activities, including hiking, boat tours, and scenic drives along Rim Drive, which encircles the lake and provides breathtaking views. In the winter, visitors can enjoy snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- **Columbia River Gorge:** The Columbia River Gorge, a dramatic canyon carved by the Columbia River, is one of Oregon's most iconic natural attractions. Stretching more than 80 miles along the Oregon-Washington border, the gorge is known for its stunning waterfalls, including Multnomah Falls, the tallest waterfall in Oregon. The area is a paradise for hikers, with numerous trails offering views of the river, waterfalls, and lush forests. The gorge is also a popular destination for windsurfing and kiteboarding, thanks to the strong winds that funnel through the canyon. Scenic drives, including the Historic Columbia River Highway, provide easy access to the area's natural beauty and historic landmarks.
- **Oregon Coast:** The Oregon Coast, stretching more than 360 miles along the Pacific Ocean, is famous for its rugged beauty, sandy beaches, and charming coastal towns. Visitors can explore iconic landmarks such as Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach, the historic Yaquina Head Lighthouse in Newport, and the dramatic cliffs of Cape Perpetua. The coast offers a wide range of activities, including exploring tide pools, whale watching, and riding dune buggies in the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area. The scenic Highway 101 runs the length of the coast, providing breathtaking views and access to numerous state parks, beaches, and quaint seaside villages.
- **Mount Hood:** Mount Hood, Oregon's highest peak, is a year-round destination for outdoor recreation. Located about 50 miles east of Portland, this dormant volcano offers something for every season. In the winter, Mount Hood is a popular destination for skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing, with several ski resorts, including Timberline Lodge and Mount Hood Meadows. In the summer, visitors can hike the Timberline Trail, which circles the mountain, or explore the many alpine lakes, forests, and wildflower meadows surrounding the peak. Timberline Lodge, a historic WPA-era lodge located on the southern slopes of Mount Hood, is a must-visit for its stunning architecture and panoramic views.
- **Bend and the High Desert:** Bend, located in central Oregon, is a gateway to the state's high desert region and a haven for outdoor enthusiasts. The area is known for its unique landscapes, including the towering rock formations of Smith Rock State Park, the volcanic landscapes of Newberry National Volcanic Monument, and the serene waters of the Deschutes River. Bend itself is a vibrant town with a thriving arts scene, excellent craft breweries, and a strong sense of community. Visitors can enjoy a wide range of activities, including hiking, rock climbing, mountain biking, and river rafting. In the winter, nearby Mount Bachelor offers some of the best skiing and snowboarding in the Pacific Northwest.