

EARN MILES logging long distance



PORTLAND, MAINE

Water works for these two cool northern towns, so dive right in.

BY MEREDITH STANTON

—ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN



Wet Start	In 1632, the British established Portland as a trading and fishing settlement. The town never lost its sea legs, though. It's still New England's largest seaport and second largest fishing port.	Hot Nights	The Mercury (416 Fore St.; 207/879-4007) is the city's "it" destination for carefully mastered martinis and great sounds from Portland's hottest DJ, Nicotine, plus local and regional bands. The island-inspired Iguana (52 Wharf St.; 207/871-5886) will quench your thirst for icy margaritas.
Cool Digs	Old world Portland meets modern luxury in the city's most buzzed-about accommodations, Portland Harbor Hotel (468 Fore St.; 207/775-9090; www.portlandharborhotel.com; standard double rooms for \$269). Located in the town center, suites have unique views of the cityscape, the hotel garden and Casco Bay. Dine at the hotel in style at Eve's , which serves up classic American fare in a casually elegant setting.	Funky Town	Historic "Old Port," once a warehouse district, now features a mix of New Millennium attractions, from Big Easy Blues Club (55 Market St.; 207/871-8817) and the popular AleHouse (30 Market St.; 207/253-5100) to an "art film" lovers' haven, Movies On Exchange Street (10 Exchange St.; 207/772-9600) for a dark, cool escape on hot days.
Fresh Catch	Mussels are the Maine thing at Five Fifty-Five Restaurant (555 Congress St.; 207/761-0555), an airy and elegant place for the catch of the day. Rising and falling with the tides in the Portland Harbor, DiMillo's Floating Restaurant (25 Long Wharf; 207/772-2216) is a classic standby for both travelers and locals alike, dishing up the best cuts of beef and world-class Maine lobster.	Summer Fun	Don't miss the MS Regatta Harborfest , Maine's biggest sailing race. What to expect: sailboat regatta, tugboat competitions, waterfront displays and a shore-side festival at the Maine State Pier in Portland. Held August 20, rain or shine, free admission. For information: 207/761-5815, ext 110.
Getting There	Daily nonstop flights to Portland, Maine, from Dulles Airport on Independence Air and United Airlines, and from Reagan National on US Airways.		

BURN MILES weekend escapes



MINNEAPOLIS



St. Anthony Falls provided the juice to make Minneapolis the world's flour milling capital from the 1880s to 1920s. The river winds through the city, as does its "Chain of Lakes"—Calhoun, Harriet and Lake of the Isles.

Hot? You ain't seen nothin' yet. **Chino Latino** (2916 Hennepin Ave.; 612/824-7878) serves up fireworks-blazing delights from Thailand, Jamaica, Polynesia, Korea and Mexico in this hip Uptown bar and restaurant that attracts the young, the trendy and the thirsty.

When you've tired of admiring the etched-glass headboard and commissioned art in the Art + Tech rooms at **Le Meridien** (601 First Ave.; 612/677-1100; www.minneapolis.lemeridien.com; standard doubles, \$300), turn your gaze to the 42-inch plasma television screen. Or, check into the luxury downtown **Chambers Hotel**, opening with 30 luxury suites in early '06—the talk of in-the-know travelers.

The 30 blocks of the historic Minneapolis Warehouse District will keep you hopping after the sun sets, from live music at **Fine Line Music Café** (318 First Ave. N.; 612/338-8100) to spectacular productions at **Theatre de la Jeune Lune** (105 North First St.; 612/333-6200). Cap off the evening at **Bev's Wine Bar** (250 Third Ave. N.; 612/337-0102).

Little dishes, big flavor. That's the word at Spanish-inspired **Solera** (900 Hennepin Ave. S.; 612/338-0062; www.solera-restaurant.com), which offers a selection of more than 40 hot and cold tapas. For the morning after, when you're feeling devilish, grab breakfast downtown at **Hell's Kitchen** (89 S. 10th St.; 612/332-4700). Order the crabcakes with red pepper Hollandaise sauce.

The annual "Aquatennial" (www.aquatennial.org), July 15–24, is a 10-day celebration with fireworks, live music, parades and even a triathlon to celebrate the city's beautiful bodies of water. Or tour the **Uptown Art Fair** (www.uptownminneapolis.com) Aug. 5–7 for fine art, crafts, jewelry and live local bands.

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