

FROM PORTLAND TO THE POORHOUSE

At the beginning of August, I went on a rhino junket to sunny Portland. Yes, contrary to common belief, there was no rain for the week I was there. Perhaps it was beginner's luck to have such nice weather. Regardless, I hit the motherlode thanks to Jane Kenney, rhinophile extraordinaire.

If you are ever in the Portland area, you must contact Jane and get a map of the official rhino tour. Coming from the desert, I was gawking at the blue water and the green grass on the outside and all the wonderful rhinos on the inside. Then there was the Washington Park Zoo in which Pete resides. Petey is a young black rhino who thoughtfully obliged us by getting as close to the fence as possible so we could "shoot" him. Another day we drove six hours round trip (yes we are dedicated) to visit Jack, a white rhino at Winston Safari Park. The first time around the park we saw lovely cheetahs and yaks and ostriches but no rhino. You don't drive for six hours and go away empty-handed. So we went around a second time and just as we came 'round the bend, as in all good melodrama, Jack appeared at the waterhole. Fortunately, our screaming and shrieking did not chase him away and we sat as close

to a live rhino as is possible without getting thrown out of a reserve. Added to this excitement was a very aggressive ostrich who delighted in pecking at me through the window and spitting all over the windshield. Two rolls of film later, Jack took off beyond our sight and we left the park very tired but very happy. We even tried to preserve the spit!

When you visit Portland, besides seeing the usual tourist sights, visiting Pete and Jack, you will want to check out the following stores. Be sure to bring at least one extra suitcase. Trust me!

Every weekend, under the Burnside Bridge, Saturday Market thrives. Many artisans probably come weekend after weekend, but I am sure that there are always new people there. At the market, I found a wonderful music box with a white rhino mother and baby AND the artist actually crafted the baby for me from a color photocopy. She uses the lost wax casting method and you get to choose the music and type of wood you want. It is beautiful and unique and not terribly pricey. (\$65) Write to: M.A. Dobritz, CAST OF CHARACTERS, 1631 SE Main Street, Portland, OR 97214. (503) 234-3851.

If you need a ceramic rhino toothbrush holder, contact George & Truth Sickles who own Turn N' Burn, Skidmore Fountain Bldg., 28 SW First Avenue, Portland, OR

97204. (503) 760-6499. Jane and I are having them make us each a rhino cookie jar too. Just make sure you ask for the rhino WITHOUT TEETH.

When you feel the need to embrace nature, head for the beautiful Oregon coast, namely Cannon Beach. It's the only Oregon beach I have seen but believe it is probably the loveliest. Haystack Rock is there. The water is cold, the homes are beautiful and yes, friends, they have rhinos!! The best and most expensive rhino find of my beach trip was at Rare Discovery. They offer a replica of decorative Chinese roof ceramics. Each is quite heavy on a wooden base. Rhinos were either greenish blue (I bought that one) or white and black. Rhinos are black. They each have a Chinese rider on the back. Very different, a great conversation piece. An article on the ceramics comes with the rhino. Cost is (take deep breath) \$300. But hey, no tax! Write to Rare Discovery, 148 N. Hemlock Street, Cannon Beach, OR 97110. (503) 436-0119.

If puppets are your game, contact Bill Walther who offers a variety of puppets, some handmade. He has a ready-made rhino puppet (not the World Wildlife Fund one) and he is making me finger puppets for only a few bucks. Write to A Handful of Surprises Puppet Co., PO Box 954, Cannon Beach, OR 97110-0954. (503) 325-1984.

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