

**LOVIN'
THAT
LATTE**

The art of foam

Storm Watching
Seats are available along
a coast near you

**Terminal
Treasures**
Long layover?
Canceled flight?
Perfect!

journey

western

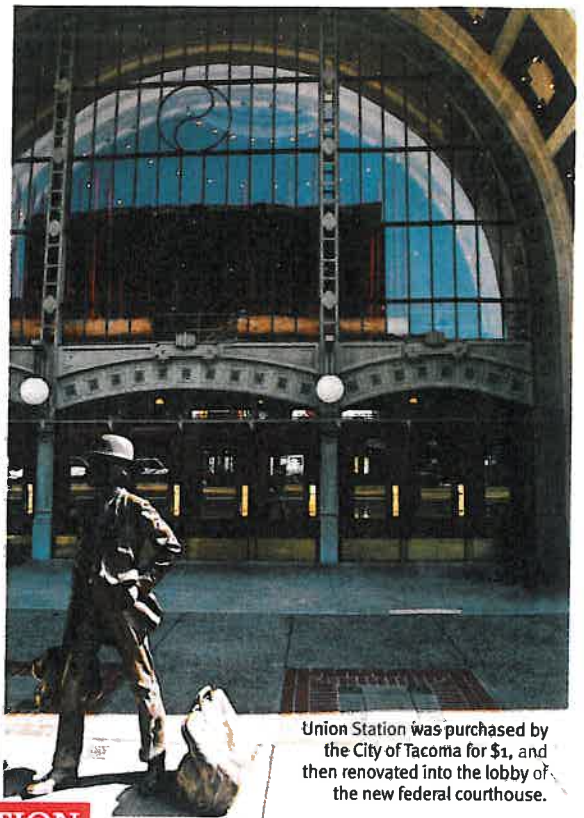


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next stop



Dale Chihuly's *Bridge of Glass* links the Washington State History Museum with the Museum of Glass.



Union Station was purchased by the City of Tacoma for \$1, and then renovated into the lobby of the new federal courthouse.

DESTINATION

Tacoma

A West Coast diamond in the not-so-rough by Crai S. Bower

T rue, it's still a blast to take a transcontinental journey or discover a Buddhist temple in a Thai rainforest, but it's also delightful to happen upon Wenatchee's Ohme Gardens, the Tasting Room Yakima winery or Tacoma. Yes, Tacoma. It's blossoming with new eateries, and a plethora of museums and attractions for the whole family.

Saddled with decades of derision from its glossy northern neighbor, Tacoma has quietly undertaken a makeover unlike any on the West Coast. Check out the **Working Waterfront Maritime Museum** at the Foss Waterway Seaport. Exhibits allow all hands on deck and activities. Kids can also climb, construct and question at the **Children's**

Museum of Tacoma. The **Washington State History Museum** is well worth a visit for all ages, as is the **Museum of Glass**, the original catalyst for the city's makeover.

Light rail (aka "the Link")? Check. **Innovative restaurants?** Check. **Lofts converted into condos?** Check. Still, nothing says new urbanism like a **boutique hotel**. Check.

Located just five blocks from the museums and in the heart of restaurant row, the **Hotel Murano** offers **Bite**, its chill restaurant; a down-tempo lobby bar; and rooms reflective of a Soho hot spot. Perhaps Tiger Woods will choose the Murano when he arrives in Tacoma for the U.S. **Open at Chambers Bay in 2015**.

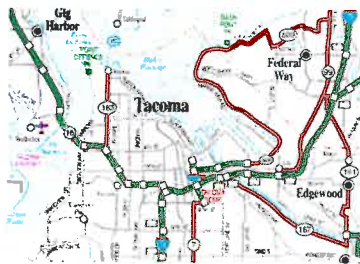
Like Chambers Bay, *Golf* magazine's Top New Course of the Year in 2007, Tacoma's core is pedestrian friendly. Restaurants including **Pacific Grill** and **Indochine** line **Pacific Avenue** a couple of blocks from the museums. Galleries and casual cafés are sprouting up all over the downtown core, especially on **Dock Street**, where you'll find **William Traver**, one of the first galleries to recognize glass sculpture as high art.

Spending a night or a weekend in Tacoma offers a glimpse into the urban aesthetic revolution that has stretched straight across the country. People are realizing that some of the best urban experiences really can come in smaller packages—located just around the corner. **U**

THE BASICS: Pick up the *Oregon & Washington TourBook®* from any AAA office (see page 43 for locations). Or visit the Tacoma Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau at www.traveltacoma.com.

WHERE TO STAY: The **Hotel Murano** provides a boutique hotel experience; 1320 Broadway Plaza, (253) 238-8000. **Courtyard Tacoma Downtown** is an unassuming option in the downtown core; 1515 Commerce St., (251) 591-9100.

WHERE TO DINE: **Pacific Grill**, contemporary Northwest cuisine; 1502 Pacific Ave., (253) 627-3535. **Stanley & Seafort's Steak, Chop & Fish House**; 115 E. 34th, (253) 473-7300. **Indochine Asian Dining Lounge**, creative Thai with strong influences from Chinese, Indian, Japanese and Vietnamese cuisines; 1924 Pacific Ave., (253) 272-8200.



FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF TACOMA REGIONAL CONVENTION • VISITOR BUREAU; CRAI S. BOWER; COURTESY OF HOTEL MURANO