

# **A deep dive into the sneakerhead scene in Portland**

**Where to go if you're new to the game or a seasoned pro.**

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For Travel Portland

Nestled primarily between the folds of Chinatown lies a sneakerhead oasis consisting of boutiques, a coffee shop and a shoe-design academy where you can get learned on the ins and outs of the biz. Here's where to go to check out the sneaker landscape in the Rose City.

## COMPOUND GALLERY

Compound Gallery, the granddad sneaker boutique of the scene, has been around for over a decade and continues to bring it with their kicks, apparel, toys and random ephemera that make up the culture. For your feet they offer a curated selection of Swooshes along with rare sneakers from cult streetwear outfitters. Looking for some threads? Compound stashes the trendiest brands to complete your look – also don't forget to view their eccentric art gallery upstairs.

## DEADSTOCK COFFEE

After hitting up Compound, cross the street to nearby Deadstock Coffee. Ever wondered where to get your caffeine fix while in a barbershop-style atmosphere rife with retro basketball décor? Deadstock is the answer to your question. The modest space is oozing with personality – friendly staff make drink suggestions as they chat with anyone and everyone about – you guessed it – sneakers. They have rare, not-for-sale kicks on display and feature a small selection of apparel and vintage sports mugs for sale. As far as what to sip, try their LeBronald Palmer, a hyper version of the classic iced tea and lemonade beverage, but combined with local coffee. In a city known for bacon-maple bars and fusion restaurants, the unorthodox concoction that is the LeBronald is everything you'd expect from a sneaker-themed coffee shop in Portland.

## INDEXPDX

Now that your thirst has been quenched, make the short walk to the aptly named IndexPDX and prepare for a sensory overload of rare, plastic-wrapped kicks. The consignment shop is basically a large room lined with new and gently used sneakers, sneakers, sneakers and more sneakers – of the hard-to-find and pricey variety. It's a sneakerhead's dream, but don't be intimidated if you're new to the game. The staff is helpful and informative, catering to locals and tourists alike. So coveted are their gems that there are even shoes you can't try on, for fear of creasing. They don't mess around.

## PENSOLE FOOTWEAR DESIGN ACADEMY

Head back toward Deadstock and around the corner you'll find PENSOLE Footwear Design Academy, which lives in a discreet building with minimal branding. The ultra-competitive design school got its start in 2010 and has had pupils from over 35 different countries, with many of them ultimately gaining employment in the desirable footwear industry. The academy has grown every year, and alumni have gone on to not only design sneakers, but high heels as well.

## BAIT

After you've experienced the Chinatown-area sneaker showcase, BAIT is an excellent destination to peep to complete your Portland sneakerhead tour. About eight blocks away from PENSOLE in the heart of downtown PDX, they spin '90s hip-hop and offer a heaping helping of the newest kicks, clothes and other collectibles including figurines and a unique selection of jewelry. In the predominantly male culture that is sneakers, BAIT also has an assortment of goods for the ladies too, to keep everyone happy.