

# REVIEWS

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### Worldclass views right in my neighborhood

*Review of Powell Butte Nature Park, Portland, OR*

There are a multitude of choices of paths you can take up and down the butte depending on your starting point, so if you're bad with cardinal directions, make sure you take a cellphone to get a ride back to your start if you get lost. There's a visitor center if you enter from the north side, but you can literally hike up or down any side of the butte which is pretty long on one side. Great shaded hike for the summer but watch out for bikers as they go pretty fast on the downhill.

### The best recommendation we had the whole trip

*Review of Arthur Mayne's Wine Bar, Cork, Ireland*

We would never have found this place if we hadn't wandered into The Bodega after 10pm one night looking for food. They gave us the "historical pubs" brochure and recommended Arthur Mayne's as they serve food until 1:30am. We didn't feel like walking that far that night, but we made sure we made it down there for dinner the next night and boy were we glad we did. Not only is it a fascinating place to look around (used to be an apothecary and still has all the old bottles on the shelves) but it was the single best waitress we've ever met. She seemed like she just loved what she does, recommended the perfect cheeses for my cheese plate, and I just can't describe how nice she made our visit. Plus French Syrah

### Best B&B of the whole vacation

*Review of Abercorn Guest House, Edinburgh, Scotland*

While Google Maps directions will not get you here, if you can find your way to Portobello High Street on your own, the Abercorn Guest House is easy to spot. Though "included parking" is not immediately available (you can pull in after you check in), on-street parking was not hard to find even on a Saturday. Our initial reaction to this place was one of despair, but not because of the place, but because Hotels.com had completely failed to book one of our rooms. Traveling as a family, we had booked two rooms and only one of the reservations was made. All the rooms were completely booked that night, and the proprietress offered to call a place down the street to check availability there. They did have one twin room that

was suitable for my sister and her son, so off they went. I was still pretty miffed at Hotels.com that we could not stay at the same location, but since my husband and I were allowed to stay (even though it was MY reservation that got lost) and the room was so big and bright I was soon pacified. Of the 4 B&Bs we stayed in on our trip, this one by far had the largest room, softest sheets and towels and nicest breakfast presentation. I would stay here again in a heartbeat, but I certainly would not trust Hotels.com with my reservation and would contact Angela directly.

### Helluva view! But make sure you know what you are getting...

*Review of Rostrevor Hotel, Barbados*

It's rare that you get exactly the room advertised, but if you ask specifically for a "Superior Ocean View Suite with A/C", that's what you get. I have never had a view quite that nice. We were on the 4th floor and the elevator was swift and always available. We were on the off season, though, so I don't know if that made a difference. I would have rated this hotel as excellent, but they were lacking in a couple little ways - there were no complimentary shampoos or anything like that, just a bar of soap. The kitchen was pretty well stocked with dishes and stuff, but no dish soap so we had to wash them with just water all week (not sure how sanitary that was).

When they tell you that it's in the middle of St. Lawrence Gap, the heart of the night-life on the island, they mean it. There is no way to drown out the noise from the street when the bars start competing around 10pm. It goes on at deafening volumes until 2am. And not even the crashing waves and the air conditioner can drown them out. So if you stay in the gap, make sure you want to party all night. Every night.

The beach was tiny, but private (important) and that time of year the waves make swimming difficult, but their pool was small but lovely.

Some of the staff were very nice and would remember our room number (you have to drop off and pick up your key everytime you leave the property) but others didn't seem to give a hoot if we were there or not. The rooms were exceptionally clean though. I very much appreciated that. It's hard to keep an all white room looking that clean.