

USA

# Landmark Oregon Mountain Inn Captures Bygone Era

By Ted Landphair

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Mount Hood, the peak that looms over western Oregon, was in the news, sadly, a week or so ago. Three climbers, out for just an afternoon hike, were lost in a one of the Cascade Mountains' sudden, treacherous blizzards.



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## Landmark Oregon Mountain Inn Captures Bygone Era

It seemed to come out of nowhere in what otherwise is the most picturesque time of year on the 3,400 meter(11,000 feet) high mountain, when people come to behold what looks like a dreamy snow-globe scene, and to stay in a landmark inn that dates to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Picture a three-story stone fireplace, hand-wrought ironwork and carefully crafted woodwork inside and out, as well as original artwork and handmade

rugs. Doesn't sound like a place the federal government would build and run, but that's exactly what it is.



This inlay is one of several carved masterpieces  
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This inlay is one of several carved masterpieces at Timberline Lodge

At Timberline Lodge, you quickly pick up the Native American and frontier themes in the hammered copper ashtrays, and the stairway newel posts carved from telephone poles in the shapes of bears and otters and mountain lions.

There are great mosaics and murals, too that were fashioned in the Depression years when federal programs put people to work in agencies such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, also called the C.C.C. Thousands of carpenters, bricklayers, artists and ironworkers built national parks, bridges and this grand ski lodge atop Mount Hood.

It took three months just to bulldoze crude roads up to the timber line. And that was in springtime. Workers making 90 cents an hour dragged huge Douglas fir logs off hillsides to build the lodge's framework. In wintertime blizzards, the men sometimes had to hold fast to ropes connecting the beams to their trucks to avoid being blown away.

All the work was done by hand. There was no electricity on the mountain. When it was all done, workers cried openly at the lodge's dedication in 1937, not due to President Franklin Roosevelt's words of appreciation, but at having to leave a project that had given them great pride, dignity and months of paychecks.

Each year since, the deer-shaped door knocker, giant carved Indian head inlay, rugs made from old rags and workers uniforms, the stained-glass panel of Mount Hood itself and the magnificent fireplace have drawn more than 75,000 people to Timberline Lodge.

*Read more of Ted's personal reflections and stories from the road on his blog, [Ted Landphair's America](#).*

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