

Vista House
 40700 Historic Columbia River Hwy
 Corbett, OR 97019
 503-344-1368
 oregonstateparks.org
 vistahouse.com

Vista House is open daily in the summer with limited hours in the winter, weather permitting.



oregonstateparks.org



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63400-1653 (04/18)



Vista House at Crown Point State Scenic Corridor



COMFORT & SPLENDOR ATOP CROWN POINT

In 1916, construction began on a “comfort station” for motorists traveling the new 75-mile Columbia River Highway—the European-style road that traced a winding path through the perilous Columbia River Gorge to link Portland and The Dalles. Below an open-air viewing deck, the main level would provide drinking fountains and space to stretch the legs; the lower level, ladies’ and gentlemen’s restrooms.

This would be no ordinary roadside rest stop, however. In the words of *The Oregonian*, it was “intended to be the finishing achievement for the greatest highway in America” and to “grace the highest spot on that wonderway.” The spot was Crown Point, a rocky promontory 693 feet above the Columbia River and the site of the highway’s dedication in 1916.

A CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT

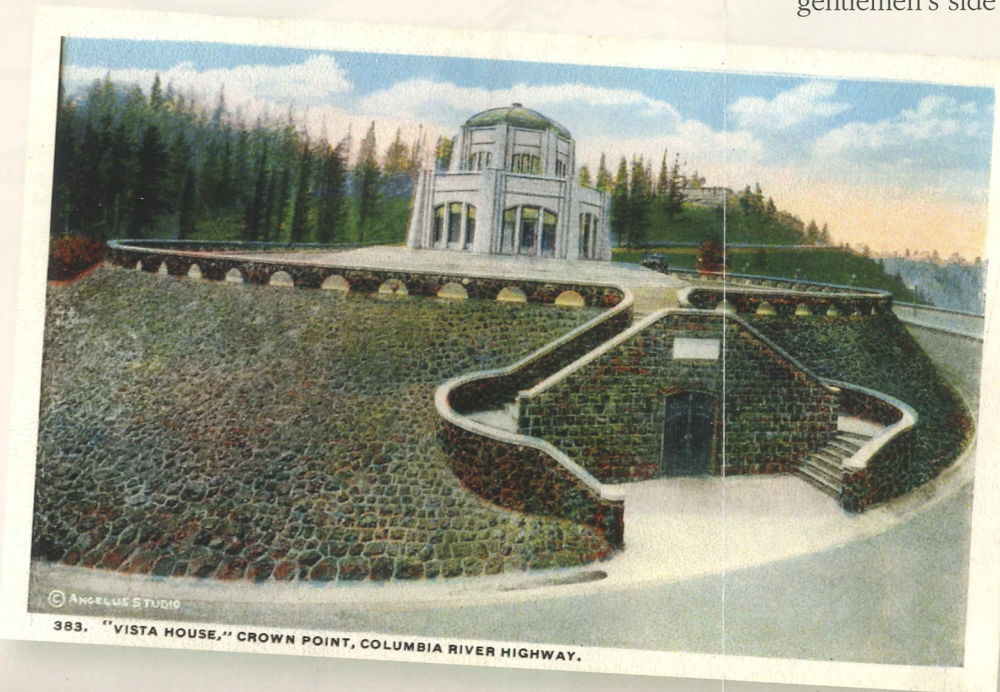
Aware of the building’s potential prominence, architect Edgar M. Lazarus seized the opportunity to turn a functional need for facilities into a grand architectural vision. He designed the building to be “a temple to the natural beauty of the Gorge” and a memorial to the settlers who had made their own trek along the Columbia River, venturing westward on the Oregon Trail.

Under the direction of the Columbia River Highway’s roadmaster, John B. Yeon, the structure’s foundation was laid by the same Italian artisans who had built the highway’s retaining walls and bridges. When construction was completed in May

1918, a 55-foot-high structure of gray sandstone and glazed green tiles sat atop one of Oregon’s most inspiring vantage points, allowing visitors’ eyes to travel from the lights of Portland to a faraway bend in the river 12 miles to the east.

Inside, rare Alaskan marble formed the floors and stairs of the rotunda, where light shone in through amber-green-colored glass onto walls of creamy limestone and stone panels carved with the names of settler families. In the words of highway engineer Samuel Lancaster, the structure gave “shelter and comfort to all who come to look on the splendor of the scene presented here.” It was he who gave it the name Vista House.

By 1926, the Columbia River Highway had joined with other regional highways to become U.S. 30, the third-longest route in the country. U.S. 30 now stretches coast-to-coast, from Astoria in the west all the way to Atlantic City, New Jersey.



EXTENSIVE RESTORATION

In honor of its significance to the history of the Columbia Gorge and American road travel, as well as its architectural distinction, Vista House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. In 2001, the need to address years of weathering led the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department along with several partners to undertake an extensive multi-million dollar restoration project. The building’s interior was refurbished, the tile roof and windows were replaced, and an inclined walkway and interior lift were added to increase accessibility. Vista House was rededicated on May 5, 2006, its 88th anniversary, with an antique automobile parade and brass band.

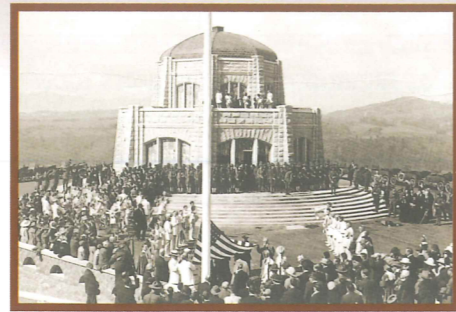
Most recently, Vista House’s lower level was updated to offer visitors some modern comforts and diversions. What was once the ladies’ outer lounge has become an espresso bar, and the gentlemen’s side now houses interpretive displays

and a gift shop. Today, the renewed Vista House stands proudly, serving as a beacon for both drivers and cyclists along the Historic Columbia River Highway and inviting them—as it has for the last century—to stop, refresh, and take in the view atop Crown Point.

Vista House opened in 1918 as a glamorous rest stop and observatory for those traveling the new Columbia River Highway.



Designed to be "a temple to the natural beauty of the Gorge," the building's interior features marble floors and stained glass windows.



HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY

An engineering marvel of the early 20th Century, the Historic Columbia River Highway takes drivers on a scenic route that passes orchards, viewpoints, quaint communities and a series of scenic waterfalls.



VISIT 8 WATERFALLS

	Driving distance from Vista House	Hiking distance to falls (from parking area)
1 Latourell Falls	2.4 mi.	250 ft.
2 Shepperd's Dell	3.6 mi.	50 ft.
3 Bridal Veil Falls	4.5 mi.	0.3 mi.
4 Wahkeena Falls	7.8 mi.	0.2 mi.
5 Multnomah Falls	8.3 mi.	0.25 mi. (to Lower Falls)
6 Oneonta Falls	10.5 mi.	1.0 mi.
7 Horsetail Falls	10.8 mi.	0.2 mi.
8 Elowah Falls	12.5 mi.	0.6 mi.

VISIT HISTORIC VISTA HOUSE

Vista House includes historical displays and a gift shop with an espresso bar. The landmark is open daily, weather permitting. Hours and weather closures are posted at vistahouse.com, or by calling 503-344-1368.

VOLUNTEER

The Friends of Vista House has partnered with Oregon State Parks since 1982 to help preserve the building and share its story with the public. Volunteers greet visitors, conduct tours and operate the gift shop. You can learn more online at vistahouse.com, or by calling 503-695-2230.

