

# Travel Seattle

[Link](#)

## Getting In

You'll probably come in through the SeaTac (Seattle Tacoma) airport, SEA. The best way into the city, assuming you're not renting a car, is via the light rail. Once you get to Arrivals, just follow the signs (go up one floor from baggage claim) to the light rail- it's about a ten minute walk through the parking lot to get to the station. Grab a single-use ticket from the machines (it should run you just over \$3) and hop on. Get on the train headed for Lynnwood (north), not Angle Lake (south).

## Transit, generally

Rideshare is relatively available in Seattle, but more expensive than other cities of similar size. Bike rental is available in Seattle, but do note that Seattle is quite hilly: there aren't too many steep hills, but there also aren't many flat sections of the city. Consider a bike with pedal assist.

The light rail is a great service but is very constrained - there is only the one north-south line active currently. There's a lot to do in that space but you'll miss out on several interesting neighborhoods if you only stick to the light rail.

The Seattle bus system is well laid-out, but is slow, so plan accordingly. If you are going to bus, use [OneBusAway](#) to check real-time bus arrival information.

Both the buses and LightRail operate off of the [Orca Card](#). You can pick these up at any light rail station — grab one before you leave the airport if you think you'll be using transit at all! It beats carrying cash for the buses by a long shot.

## Sightseeing

Three to four days is probably appropriate to see everything around Seattle. Here are some of the highlights:

## University of Washington

The large university campus is really beautiful. There's gothic architecture everywhere, and in the spring (mid-March) the cherry blossoms in the quad bloom. I recommend making sure to check out:

- Red Square. Originally the "Suzzallo Quadrangle" but renamed after a successful sociological experiment.
- The Quad. All of the cherry blossoms are here!
- Harry Potter Reading Room. Second floor of Suzzallo Library, from Red Square.
- Rainier Vista View. Start from Red Square and look toward Drumheller Fountain. If it's a nice day, you'll catch Mt. Rainier in the background.
- Sylvan Grove. Four Greek columns sit here from the original campus.

## Downtown

There's several main areas to downtown, largely demarcated by the LightRail stops: Belltown, Pike Place, Convention Center, Westlake, University Street, Pioneer Square, Chinatown, and the Stadium area.

Belltown is a rapidly gentrifying area. It's interesting to walk through as the streets will literally alternate between gentrified and not. 3rd Ave through Belltown is one of the sketchier parts of Seattle proper at night. The Space Needle is sort of in this area. Be sure to check out the Chihuly Glass Museum. The Pacific Science Center and the Museum of Pop Culture can be worth checking out if those are your things, and iMax movies are great experiences. Seattle Art Museum is worth a run-through as well. Their special exhibits can be quite cool.

Pike Place is a fantastic small-shop commerce area. There's a lot around it, like the Ferris Wheel, gum wall, and fish market (wait for someone to buy fish — that's when they throw the fish around). There's also the "first" Starbucks and some great unique Seattle shops here. I recommend coming through earlier in the day, before 2pm or so. All the stalls will close up by early evening.

Convention Center doesn't have much going on around it, most of the time. If you come on a convention weekend, it can make for a fun people-watching experience.

Westlake Center is a larger shopping+business area. Same with University Street.

Pioneer Square has a few attractions but is also probably the sketchiest part of the city. You can stop by the Firefighter's Memorial but the real attraction is the Seattle Underground Tour. Don't miss this, I think it's legitimately the best part of Seattle tourism. The long and the short of it is that Seattle once burned down and they rebuilt the city on top of itself. The Underground Tour takes you beneath Seattle streets to tour around and see the old city. Highly highly recommend.

Chinatown has great boba/desserts. Definitely swing through. Check out the Chinatown gate on the west side of the district by the light rail station.

You can try to catch a Mariners/Seahawks/Sounders game! Otherwise avoid the area on game nights as it will be packed!

## Views

To get a great view of the Seattle skyline, head up the Columbia Tower. The Space Needle won't get you as high but the observatory can be fun. The classic Seattle skyline can be seen from Kerry Park, so if you want a good photo, head over there. There's not much else to see there though — the park itself is quite small. Also check out the Ferris Wheel or try to slide into a condo rooftop.

## Parks

Seattle has a ton of great greenery. My thoughts on some parks:

- Madison Park isn't the most amazing park but the sunset is great from here if you're seeking out some peace/quiet.
- The Seattle Arboretum is a beautiful walk.
- Golden Gardens is a classic park/beach for locals. There's often beach bonfires, and can have great sunset views.
- Volunteer Park is very cute, and there's an old water tower you can explore.
- Gasworks Park is great. Great view of South Lake Union and a nice large hill to (try to) stargaze from.
- Greenlake is a classic park for runs/walks. Lots of dogs.

# Neighborhoods



## Fremont

Fremont has a bunch of interesting quirks, like the Fremont Troll and Statue of Lenin. It's a quiet tech hub but also has a bunch of great breweries. Run by the canal and watch the Fremont bridge; and check out Gasworks park too.

## Ballard

Very hipstery/young part of town. Good breweries and Portland-ish food scene. Check out Cafe Mox for a board game cafe experience. The Ballard locks are also very cool — you can watch ships be raised/lowered and during salmon mating season the salmon should come through as well.

## Capitol Hill

Also a very youthful part of town. Neighborhood is split into two areas, the northern rich+bougie part (not much to see beyond Volunteer Park) and the southern bars/restaurants part that is a little divier. You'll know when you've moved from one part to the other because the property size will octuple. Check out the Starbucks roastery here!

## Central Seattle

The northern half of this neighborhood feels like the rest of Seattle, but the southern side is a little less developed. It starts to intersect with the Chinatown area of Seattle too.

## Northgate/Lake City

Not a whole lot to see here tourism-wise. Lots of strip malls, and Northgate Mall is currently being remodeled. It's mostly quiet neighborhoods that you can walk around. Would skip.

## University District

The Ave (University Ave) can be pretty lively and is right next to the University of Washington. Consider catching a show at the Neptune. Beyond that, you can go kayaking by the Husky stadium, and there's a nearby driving range. The University Village is homey mall.

## Rainier Valley/Beacon Hill

A little sketchy, not many sights.

## West Seattle

Main reason you'd go here is for Alki beach. Great view of Seattle.

## Greater Seattle

There's a lot to do outside of Seattle too!

There are a bunch of nearby cities. Everett and Federal Way have some really good Korean food. Bellevue has got excellent Chinese food. Redmond is where the Microsoft campuses are. Kirkland is mainly rich old people.

I'd recommend going out for a day hike if you can. Mailbox Peak and Rattlesnake Ridge are both fairly accessible. If you have more time and are up for a tougher hike, the Enchantments is

probably the most scenic hike around. It's also worth making a day trip out to Mt. Rainier to see the mountain up close! A lot of the beauty of Seattle is the surrounding nature.

## Food

Seattle has a pretty great food scene. You have to dig a little to find the great eats, but they're there (and boba is very prevalent). A few favorites you should consider:

- Dick's Burgers. Local In-n-Out analogue. Great at 1am. [Even Bill Gates lines up](#)
- Sushi Kashiba. Omakase. The chef here is one of Jiro's apprentices from Jiro Dreams of Sushi. Shiro's is his other restaurant but he doesn't work the counter there any more. Stop by at 4pm or so when they open to snag a res for later that night at the counter, preferably in front of Chef Shiro.
- 45th Stop & Shop. Poke to go. It's absolutely the best poke in Seattle. Yes it's a sketchy gas-station-looking place. They now have a second joint in South Lake Union and it's as good as the original.
- Paseo. Caribbean sandwiches. Un Bien is its sibling restaurant. Go to Paseo for a softer, juicier sandwich and Un Bien for a (slightly) more refined, less-sticky experience.
- Szechuan Fish. Hot pot meets shuizhuyu. If you like mala (numbing spice) I cannot recommend this place enough.
- Chengdu Memory. Spicy hot pot with an aesthetic [meat wheel](#). Extremely tasty.
- Pipa Mountain Hot Pot. Better broths than Chengdu Memory but I think Chengdu Memory's meats are better.
- Pie Bar. Good late-night hangout spot. Their sweet pies are fantastic (savory pies found wanting). There's a larger selection in Ballard than in Cap Hill.
- Hai di lao. This is a Chinese chain known for their exemplary service. Their service here isn't quite as good though.
- Dolar shop. Also very good hot pot, but will have to make the trek to Bellevue for this. (Rent a car)
- Gorditos. Get their baby burrito. It's a burrito the size of a baby. Free if you bring a baby to pose it next to.
- Looking for Chai. Not strictly in Seattle but it's great eastside Taiwanese food.
- TNT Taqueria. Their churros are amazing. Get their churros.
- Ramen Man. Spicy ramen here is great.
- Thai Tom. Great thai food. Spice levels are legit, take care.
- Kraken Congee.
- Crepe de France.
- 19Gold Taiwanese.
- Lionhead. Sichuan restaurant. A little westernized/made bougie but in a good way. Not that spicy. Their sister restaurant, Poppy, was a COVID casualty, sadly.
- Mongolian Little Sheep. AYCE chain hotpot. Great for groups.
- Boiling Point. Individual hot pot. Not as good as Little Sheep IMHO but popular.
- Ooink. Ramen with a focus on the pig.

- Molly Moon's. Local creative ice cream shop.
- Fainting Goat. As above, but gelato.
- La Cocina Oaxaquena. Out in Ballard but absolutely worth going over for. Closed Mondays!
- La Carta de Oaxaca. If you want Oaxacan cuisine but don't want to venture further than Capital Hill (it'll do in a pinch)
- Xi'an Noodle House. On 55th and the Ave. Better than Xi'an Famous Foods in NYC (I will die on this hill)
- Korean Bamboo. Maybe the most decent Korean you'll get in Seattle city limits? Korean in Seattle is in general just ok - go to Federal Way for better Korean food.
- Maximilien. French duck + seafood place.
- Buerjia Chinese Sauerkraut Fish. Absolutely delicious. Get a smaller portion than you think you'll need; it's a lot.
- Enat Ethiopian. This place is very legit. NB their cottage cheese is a little more crumbly than most other Ethiopian places.
- Ishoni Yakiniku. Fantastic JBBQ.
- Mas Cafe. Simple + cheap Mexican food.
- Rasai Progressive Indian. Modernized Indian food; get the pomegranate raita.
- Hui Lau Shan. HK-style mango-based desserts. Just fantastic.
- Milkie milkie dessert cafe. Probably the best bingsoo in Seattle.
- Wa'z. Needs a reservation well in advance; delicious Japanese kaiseki.
- Taneda. The most hyped omakase here - reserve a month in advance. I hear their winter menus are better than their summer menus. (I went in the summer and was whelmed. It was tasty but not mindblowing)
- The Herbfarm. It's out of the way and I haven't been, but I hear good things.
- Tacos Chukis. My favorite tacos joint in Seattle.
- Carmelos Tacos. Also good tacos. Some people say this place is better than Chukis, but they're wrong. (The nopale is better here though)
- Bateau. I haven't been but I hear it's tasty.
- Boba
  - Young Tea is a local favorite. They're not super sweet.
  - The Moo Bar. Cute decals on mason jars; just ok boba-wise
  - Nana's Green Tea.
  - Blackball. Not boba - great grass jelly dessert.
  - Ding Tea.
  - 20oz.
  - Looking for Chai.
  - Rabbit rabbit. Japanese buckwheat with almond pudding is fantastic.
  - Hey! I am Yogost! Rice drinks, pretty tasty
  - I'd skip Heytea. They opened recently in Bellevue and they don't compare to their HK locations at all :(
- [Check out this list](#): there's some other good-looking options in there!
- If you're in a particular neighborhood and need a restaurant recommendation, hit me up.

The above applies in general!! Text me at (206) 853-2688 whenever and I'm happy to answer questions / send recommendations about what to do/see/eat.

- King