

Welcome to Seattle

*Seattle is America's Cinderella city.
Founded in 1851 and overlooked
until the 1960s, it's been making up
for lost time ever since.*

A Confederation of Neighborhoods

Since it's less a city and more a loose alliance of jostling neighborhoods, getting to know Seattle is like hanging out with a family of affectionate but sometimes errant siblings. There's the aloof, elegant one (Queen Anne), the cool, edgy one (Capitol Hill), the weird, bearded one (Fremont), the independently minded Scandinavian one (Ballard), the bruised, weather-beaten one (Pioneer Square) and the precocious adolescent still carving out its identity (South Lake Union). You'll never fully understand Seattle until you've had a microbrew in all of them.

Going Local

Make a beeline for Seattle's proverbial pantry: Pike Place Market. It was founded in 1907 to ply locals with fresh Northwest produce, and its long-held mantra of 'meet the producer' is still echoed enthusiastically around a city where every restaurateur worth their salt knows the first name of their fishmonger and the biography of the cow that made yesterday's burgers. Welcome to a city of well-educated palates and experimental chefs who are willing to fuse American cuisine with just about anything – as long as the ingredients are local.

Coffee & Beer

The city that invented Starbucks coffee and Rainier beer has gone back to the drawing board in recent years and come up with an interesting alternative – a new wave of small, independent micro-businesses that are determined to put taste over global reach. Imbibe the nuances of a home-roasted Guatemalan coffee and check out the latest in nano-breweries in the city that has put a coffee shop on every street corner and created a different craft beer for every night of the year.

Music & Art

Imagine: a rocket sticking out of a shoe shop and a museum built to resemble a smashed-up electric guitar; wooden boats stacked with glass orbs and a statue of Lenin caught in a vengeful Bolshevik-era grimace; a waterside sculpture park and a Saturday-evening art walk through a blue-collar warehouse district; indie bands playing in grungy pubs and hip-hop artists eschewing bling for thrift shops. No, you haven't just over-indulged in some powerful (legal) marijuana. The city that inspired Dale Chihuly, Kurt Cobain, Jimi Hendrix and Macklemore has a lot to offer in the way of music and art – and it's never remotely dull.



Why I Love Seattle

By Brendan Sainsbury, Author

Since I grew up in England, Seattle lured me from afar. For a brief period in the early 1990s it was – to me at least – the center of the musical universe. When I had the chance to visit for the first time in the early 2000s, I discovered a city of diverse neighborhoods and shifting moods that inspired me with its arty subcultures and appetite for innovation. The atmosphere was infectious; and, as a Nirvana-loving, craft-beer-appreciating, outdoors-embracing, art-admiring, bus-utilizing coffee addict, I've never had a problem fitting in.

For more about our authors, see p248.