

The CD, Madrona & Madison Park

MADISON PARK | MADRONA | THE CD



Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Madison Park Beach** (p124) Following the old trolley route down E Madison St to original Seattle seaside resort Madison Park Beach for a game of Frisbee, a brave dip in the lake and some wholesome restaurant food.
- 2 Northwest African American Museum** (p124) Learning about Seattle's little-known African American heritage in this Central District museum.
- 3 European Food** (p125) Finding French, Italian and other European flavors on the taste-heavy commercial strip of 34th Ave in Madrona.
- 4 Washington Park Arboretum** (p124) Tree-spotting and bird-watching in this wild and lovely park.
- 5 Little Ethiopia** (p125) Seeking out great African food in the CD's 'Little Ethiopia,' especially along E Cherry St.

For more detail of this area see Map p246 →

Explore: The CD, Madrona & Madison Park

The three neighborhoods sandwiched between Capitol Hill and Lake Washington are somewhat spread out and, while individually distinct, don't really form a coherent whole. Although they can be explored together, most non-residents come here for a specific reason: eg the beach at Madison Park, brunch in Madrona, or French food in Madison Valley.

Running down the east slope of First Hill, the Central District (CD) represents the heart of Seattle's African American community and is relatively easy to reach from downtown. The neighborhood's sometimes scruffy, but rejuvenated arteries are 23rd Ave and Martin Luther King Jr Way, but it lacks any real nexus and can feel semi-abandoned after Capitol Hill. You can take a stroll of its streets starting from the top of the Pike-Pine corridor.

Keep walking east through the CD and you'll hit Madrona, one of Seattle's more ethnically diverse neighborhoods that is being quickly gentrified with some positively opulent mansions overlooking Lake Washington. Madrona is worth a trip to indulge in some imaginative Europhile food along its unofficial 'main street,' 34th Ave, followed by a walk along the lakefront.

If the weather's good, Madison Park merits a separate visit for its cute beach and short strip of glass-fronted cafes and restaurants. It is best reached on bus 11 along E Madison St, following an old trolley line that once bussed in knackered lumber workers for some weekend R and R. About a mile before you reach the beach it's worth stopping in tree-lined Madison Valley, aka 'Little France,' for buttery croissants and a quiet stroll in the Washington Park Arboretum.

Local Life

- ➔ **Beach play** Some say Madison Park Beach (p124), aka 'the Park,' is snooty, but it ain't true, at least not on sunny days, when the whole neighborhood hits the small lakeside beach.
- ➔ **Community coffee** Tougo Coffee (p130) is the ultimate CD coffee bar, which locals once rallied to save.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Bus** Metro bus 11 runs from downtown along Pike and E Pine Sts to Capitol Hill and then along E Madison St all the way to Madison Park. Bus 8 goes from the Seattle Center via Capitol Hill to the CD, where it runs north-south through the neighborhood along Martin Luther King Jr Way. Buses 2 and 3 connect downtown with Madrona Beach via Capitol Hill.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Madison Valley, the 'other' (fourth) neighborhood in this rather disparate grouping, is worth a visit in its own right. Enjoy some fine French, vegetarian or Southern soul food from one of several eating places before taking a peek at the tree collection in the Washington Park Arboretum (p124).

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Vendemmia (p128)
- ➔ Simply Soulful (p125)
- ➔ Voila! (p125)
- ➔ Cafe Soleil (p128)

For reviews, see p125 ➔

Best Drinking & Nightlife

- ➔ Tougo Coffee (p130)
- ➔ Madrona Arms (p130)
- ➔ Attic Alehouse & Eatery (p129)
- ➔ McGilvra's (p130)

For reviews, see p129 ➔