

# Summer In Seattle



**T**O THE UNINITIATED, the Emerald City is perhaps best known for drizzly weather, double-tall lattes, Jimi Hendrix, Kurt Cobain, Microsoft and *Grey's Anatomy*. But perhaps what's most surprising to first-time visitors is that, these days, Seattle is more "glam" than "grunge." June to September is the ideal time to visit, when the sun is out in full force and temperatures hit the 70s and 80s — summer visitors often begin to believe that it never rains in Seattle. To maximize your visit, here's some insider tips that the guidebooks won't tell you:

#### Best ways to visit the "tourist traps"

**PIKE PLACE MARKET** This granddaddy of farmer's markets turned 100 last year, and the flying fish are a must-see for any visitor. However, the Market is also the ideal place for buying a hostess gift of giant, affordable bouquets of fresh flowers, artisan cheeses, wines or just-picked produce. On your way out, stop by Michou (1904 Pike Place) to pick up a picnic of delicious, Italian-

style focaccia sandwiches, gourmet salads or pizzas to escape the crowds and enjoy the sun and sea views at the new, nearby 8.5-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (2901 Western Ave.)

**SPACE NEEDLE** Parking is pricey and difficult near the Seattle Center. If you're staying downtown, instead opt to walk to the Monorail station at Westlake Center (400 Pine St.; [seattlemonorail.com](http://seattlemonorail.com)) for a quick and scenic ride that takes you through the Experience Music Project, directly to the Seattle Center grounds. In addition, forego an overpriced meal at the Space Needle's SkyCity restaurant and opt for the chic \$5 food-and-wine tastings instead.

**SEATTLE ART MUSEUM** Along with SAM's recent expansion came the opening of TASTE, a bustling cafe that makes a perfect lunch, coffee or happy hour spot. Get free admission for everyone the first Thursday of the month, for seniors every first Friday, and for teens (ages 13-19) every second Friday from 5 to 9 p.m.

**WATERFRONT** Much as it is in other cities, the



Not just flying fish, Pike Place Market is the granddaddy of all farmers markets.

waterfront is overly touristy. However, the best way to enjoy the views, sun and salty air is to catch a state ferry at Colman Dock/Pier 52 for a 35-minute scenic cruise to Bainbridge Island (\$6.70 round trip for walk-ons; [wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](http://wsdot.wa.gov/ferries)). Or, hop aboard the Elliott Bay Water Taxi ([transit.metrokc.gov](http://transit.metrokc.gov)), which runs daily through October 31 between Pier 55 to the Seacrest dock in West Seattle. The 12-minute ride costs \$3 one way, and includes complimentary shuttle service to various points around West Seattle, including Alki Beach.

### Location, location

A hotel search will likely turn up more budget-friendly deals near Sea-Tac, but don't be fooled. These spartan airport hotels run along a seedy stretch that is, at minimum, a 40-minute cab ride downtown. Visitors are much better off staying in the downtown area (a.k.a. the "Belltown" nightlife-and-restaurant district), the heart of the city with easy access to local attractions and amenities, the waterfront and freeways.

For those traveling with furry friends, the Alexis Hotel is the place to be. There are no pet weight restrictions; special amenities include designer pet beds, private grooming sessions, pet-sitting and in-room dining services. This stylish, ultra-modern hotel recently underwent a multi-million-dollar restoration and displays ever-changing artwork curated by SAM. Receive a \$25 gas card and "road snacks" with a two-night stay through September 1; or, rent a hybrid and park for free anytime.

Located in the heart of the downtown retail district, the Mayflower Park Hotel is a shopper's oasis. Built in 1927, the beautifully renovated, European-

style hotel is historic, but decidedly un-stuffy. The hotel offers frequent visitor packages and is home to the award-winning martini bar, Oliver's.

With a trendy, boho vibe and great location, the Ace Hotel is the best deal downtown for hip urbanites. All rooms have a fresh, minimalist decor, some with "Green Hornet-type secret invisible doors, blended into the white tiled walls."

You can't fish out of the windows anymore like The Beatles did from Room 272, but the infamous, luxurious Edgewater Hotel on the waterfront has more than just a colorful rock 'n' roll history, it also boasts one of the best views of the Olympic mountain range, Seattle skyline and Elliott Bay. **H**

TIFFANY OWENS is a freelance writer and former Seattle resident, now living in mid-coast Maine.

### if you go

#### Alexis Hotel

1007 First Ave. (at Madison Street)  
206-624-4844; 888-850-1155  
[alexishotel.com](http://alexishotel.com)

#### Mayflower Park Hotel

405 Olive Way  
206-623-8700; 800-426-5100  
[mayflowerpark.com](http://mayflowerpark.com)

#### Ace Hotel

2423 First Ave.  
206-448-4721  
[acehotel.com](http://acehotel.com)

#### Edgewater Hotel

2411 Alaskan Way, Pier 67  
206-728-7000  
[edgewaterhotel.com](http://edgewaterhotel.com)

#### Pike Place Market

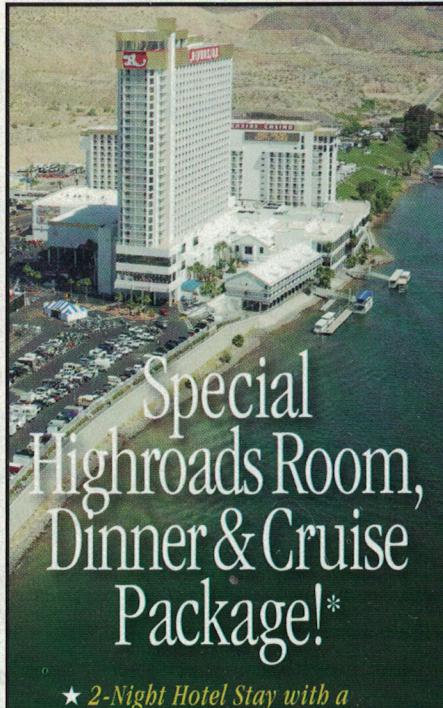
1501 Pike Pl.  
206-622-6198  
[pikeplacemarket.org](http://pikeplacemarket.org)

#### Seattle Art Museum

1300 First Ave.  
206-344-5275  
[seattleartmuseum.org](http://seattleartmuseum.org)

#### Space Needle

203 6th Ave. N  
206-905-2180  
[spaceneedle.com](http://spaceneedle.com)



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