

Things to See in Seattle

Seattle Underground

In 1889, a fire raged through the city, razing much of the wood buildings in the business district. The fire began in a glue pot next door to a distillery and did not stop until it destroyed 31 city blocks.

Part way through the rebuilding process, the city decided it would be prudent to raise the streets above the tide level to help prevent near constant flooding in the downtown core. However, some buildings had already been rebuilt. Retaining walls were added alongside the streets and filled to make new roads. Shops and businesses that had already rebuilt found the first and sometimes second stories of their buildings facing a concrete wall, the new street several feet above with ladders used to get down to storefronts.

Eventually, new sidewalks were added at street height. That left the underground to left those who preferred darkness until the underground was closed for safety reasons in the 1920s-1930s.

In the 1950s Seattle local Bill Speidel began a campaign to save the neglected Pioneer Square area, largely on the strength of the story of the underground city. He began giving guided tours in 1965, and his company today.

Visitors can join a guided walking tour beneath Seattle's sidewalks and streets, exploring the subterranean passages that once were the main roadways and first-floor storefronts of old downtown Seattle.

Tour Information:

You're sitting in cobblestoned Pioneer Place Park, with its famous glass and cast iron pergola, when you enjoy outdoor seating at Doc Maynard's Public House. The striking pergola was a cable-car stop built for the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle's first world's fair.

Here you'll also see a huge authentic Native American totem pole in a one-of-a-kind little city park preserved in large part because of the efforts of the founder of the Underground Tour, historian and writer Bill Speidel.

Near the pergola, note the bronze commemorative manhole cover celebrating the Underground Tour's anniversary and sporting a famous quote by Mr. Speidel.

The Underground Tour makes its home in the heart of the city's oldest neighborhood, Pioneer Square. Explore cobblestoned parks, Victorian-era buildings, tiny Waterfall Park, art galleries,

outdoor performance art and games, restaurants, boutique shops, and Smith Tower, Seattle's most beloved skyscraper and once the tallest building outside New York.

"Skid Row," originally "Skid Road," was coined to describe Pioneer Square, where huge logs shoved from the highlands east of town skidded downhill and came to rest at Henry Yesler's waterfront lumberyard, ready to be shipped around the nation and world. ---

Seattle Underground Tour, www.undergroundtour.com

614 1st Avenue

Pioneer Place Park, Pioneer Square

Between Cherry and James Street.

206-682-4646

The Seattle Troll

An 18-ft. tall troll made of cement clutches an old VW car underneath this Seattle overpass. The car is an actual Volkswagen encased in concrete; it bears a California license plate.

The Troll was constructed in 1990 after winning a Fremont Arts Council competition for designs to improve the freeway underpass that was a dumping ground.

*3405 Troll Ave N
Seattle, Washington
98103 USA*

The Troll is located on N. 36th Street at Troll Avenue N., under the north end of the Aurora Bridge.

The Gum Wall

In Post Alley right next to the Pike Place Market is a hidden work of art dubbed the Gum Wall or the Wall of Gum.

Started in the 1990s when local patrons in line for an improv show at Post Alley's Market Theater stuck their used gum on the wall, the Gum Wall has grown piece by piece to cover an enormous expanse of brick wall and continues to expand down the alleyway. The resulting colors and overall imagery are fascinating.

1428 Post Alley

Starbucks Reserve Roastery

It has been described as Starbucks meets Willy Wonka. If you want to see how much this town loves coffee, you need to visit the Starbucks Roastery

1124 Pike St, Seattle, WA 98101

The Museum of Flight

Walk the aisle of JFK's Air Force One and climb aboard the West Coast's only Concorde. Revel in the history and heroics of WWI and WWII. Barrel-roll a Mustang, land on the moon, and soar over Puget Sound in a simulator. Experience the excitement of the space race and sit at the controls of the world's fastest jet. From the Wright brothers to the exploration of Mars, you'll find it at The Museum of Flight!

9404 East Marginal Way South, Seattle, WA 98108-4046
206-764-5700
www.museumofflight.org

Space Needle

No visit to Seattle is complete without a visit to the Space Needle. Originally constructed for the 1962 World's Fair, the Space Needle just underwent the largest renovation in its history. Renovations include the world's only rotating glass floor and open-air glass walls and benches.

Hours: 8a – 12a
400 Broad Street
Seattle Center
Spaceneedle.com

Pike Place Market

Pike Place Market is a special community within the heart of Seattle's downtown. More than the city's beloved public market, Pike Place Market is a vibrant neighborhood comprised of hundreds of farmers, craftspeople, small businesses and residents. Each group is an important and vital makeup of the Pike Place Neighborhood

The Smith Tower

One of the world's first skyscrapers constructed by Lyman Cornelius Smith, the Smith Tower opened on July 4, 1914. At the time, it was the fourth tallest building in the world and weighed 48,650 tons. It remained the tallest building west of the Mississippi River for almost 50 years.

The Smith Tower
506 2nd Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104.
Phone: 206-622-4004.