SEA

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THE PACIFIC COAST & BEYOND

Greetings from SEATTLE

48 hours, solo, at your own pace

POCKET EDITION · 2027

48-HOUR GUIDE · SAFETY GUIDE · PLANNING CALENDAR
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Welcome to Seattle

Seattle sits between Puget Sound and Lake Washington, with the Cascades to the east and the Olympics to the west, and on a clear day the mountains seem to float over the skyline. The city is known for coffee, rain, and a culture of tech and music, but its heart is a working waterfront and a public market that has been feeding people for more than a century.

Traveling alone here is easy. Seattle is a city of readers, hikers, and commuters, and a single traveler at a coffee counter, a fish stand, or a ferry rail is the most ordinary sight in town. The rain is lighter than its reputation, and when it clears, the view is worth the wait.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read through once before you go. Day One covers Pike Place Market, the waterfront, and Pioneer Square's Underground. Day Two covers Seattle Center, the ferry to Bainbridge Island, and Capitol Hill. Section 03 is the new-for-2027 story of the Seattle Underground. Bring a light waterproof jacket; layers beat an umbrella here.

ESSENTIAL QUICK FACTS

CURRENCY
US dollar (cards accepted nearly everywhere)

TRANSIT
Link light rail and buses · about $3 a ride on rail

TIME ZONE
Pacific (UTC–8; UTC–7 in summer)

EMERGENCY
911 · city services 311

TIPPING
18–20% in restaurants

WEATHER
Pack layers and a light rain jacket

01 DAY ONE

Pike Place · The Waterfront · The Underground

The first day starts at the market, follows the waterfront, and ends beneath Pioneer Square's streets.

MORNING · 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

8:00 AM

Pike Place Market

One of the oldest continuously operating public markets in the country, with fish stalls, flower stands, and craft vendors. Arrive early, before the crowds.

Ask a fishmonger what is freshest; they enjoy the question.

9:30 AM

The Original Starbucks

The first Starbucks storefront near the market draws long lines. A short stroll away are local roasters with shorter ones.

Skip the line and try a local roaster instead.

11:30 AM

Lunch — chowder

Seattle chowder is rich and creamy. Order a bowl at a market counter and eat it standing or sitting at the bar.

Try a small sampler if you cannot decide.

AFTERNOON · 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

1:00 PM

The Waterfront and the Seattle Aquarium

The waterfront has been rebuilt as a park-like promenade with views across Elliott Bay. The aquarium is a short walk from the market.

A good option if it rains.

3:00 PM

Pioneer Square and the Underground

After the Great Seattle Fire of 1889, the city raised its streets. A tour takes you through the old storefronts and sidewalks beneath the current ones. Section 03 tells the story.

Book a tour ahead; the stairs are steep.

5:30 PM

Sunset at Kerry Park

A small park on Queen Anne Hill with the classic view of the skyline, the Space Needle, and, on a clear day, Mount Rainier.

Rideshare up the hill, and bring a layer.

EVENING · 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

7:00 PM

Dinner on Capitol Hill or Ballard

Both neighborhoods have restaurants with counters and bar seats, from Pacific Northwest seafood to ramen.

Reserve ahead on weekends.

9:00 PM

A coffee or a craft beer

Seattle has some of the best coffee in the country, and a long list of breweries. Pick a quiet spot for a late cup or pint.

Many cafés close early, so check hours.

02 DAY TWO

Seattle Center · The Ferry · Capitol Hill

The second day mixes the city's icons with a short ferry ride across the Sound.

MORNING · 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

9:00 AM

Space Needle and Chihuly Garden and Glass

The 1962 World's Fair landmark has a rotating glass floor at the top. Next door, a garden and gallery show glass art by Dale Chihuly.

Book timed tickets and go early for clearer views.

11:00 AM

MoPOP

The Museum of Pop Culture, in a Frank Gehry building, covers music, film, and science fiction. Seattle's music history is well represented.

Allow a couple of hours.

12:30 PM

Lunch at the Center

Seattle Center has cafés and a food hall, and benches on a fountain lawn. A good place to rest.

Ride the Monorail back downtown for fun.

AFTERNOON · 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM

2:00 PM

Ferry to Bainbridge Island

A Washington State ferry takes about 35 minutes each way from Colman Dock, with views of the skyline and the Olympic Mountains. Walk-on passengers pay a modest fare.

Stand on the open deck, and bring a jacket.

4:30 PM

Winslow on Bainbridge

A small waterfront town near the ferry dock with cafés, shops, and a harbor path.

Time your return so you can catch the sunset from the ferry.

EVENING · 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

7:00 PM

Dinner on Capitol Hill

The city's liveliest neighborhood for bars, restaurants, and music venues.

Choose a spot with bar seating.

9:00 PM

A live music venue

Seattle's music scene has deep roots. Check the calendar for a small show at a local club.

Buy tickets ahead for popular acts.

03 1889

The Seattle Underground

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know Seattle once raised its streets by a full story after a fire?

On June 6, 1889, a fire that started in a carpentry shop destroyed much of the city's downtown. When Seattle rebuilt, it regraded its streets, filling them with soil and raising them about 12 feet, and in places nearly 30 feet. The old ground-floor storefronts were left below, and sidewalks were built on top.

WHY THEY DID IT

Seattle's downtown was built on tidal flats, and its sewers backed up at high tide. After the fire, the city used the rebuild to fix the problem by raising the streets above the flood level.

WHAT YOU CAN SEE

Only a small part of the underground has been restored for visitors. Look for the small glass skylights, called vault lights, that are still set into some Pioneer Square sidewalks.

HOW TO VISIT

Guided tours run from Pioneer Square. Bill Speidel's Underground Tour has operated since 1965, and other companies offer themed tours. Book ahead, and wear shoes with grip.

04 WHERE TO EAT

Seafood, coffee, and Pacific Northwest flavor

Seattle's food is fresh and informal. Many of these places have counters or bar seats, which make eating alone easy.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Pike Place Chowder
PIKE PLACE · $10–18
A famous chowder counter with several award-winning recipes.

Beecher's Handmade Cheese
PIKE PLACE · $8–15
Watch cheese being made and order a mac and cheese.

Piroshky Piroshky
PIKE PLACE · $6–10
Hand pies, sweet and savory, from a busy market bakery.

A local roaster
VARIOUS · $4–8
A well-made coffee and a pastry at a neighborhood café.

DINNER & LATE NIGHT

Local Seattle seafood
WATERFRONT · $25–55
Fresh oysters, salmon, and Dungeness crab in season.

A ramen bar
CAPITOL HILL · $14–22
A quick, warm meal for a rainy evening.

Brewery taprooms
BALLARD · $8–15
Flights of local beer in a relaxed setting.

Capitol Hill late-night
CAPITOL HILL · $8–18
Food trucks, pizza, and a lively street scene.

05 GETTING AROUND

Navigating Seattle

Seattle is hilly and spread out, but the central neighborhoods are linked by light rail, buses, and ferries.

Link light rail	about $3	Connects the airport, downtown, Capitol Hill, and the University. Check current fares.
Airport (SEA)	Link light rail	About 40 minutes to downtown by rail.
Buses	about $2.75	Local buses run frequently across the city; check current fares.
Ferries	by trip	Washington State ferries depart from Colman Dock for Bainbridge Island and Bremerton.
Monorail	by trip	A short ride between Westlake Center and Seattle Center.
Rideshare	by trip	Useful for hills and evenings.

Seattle's hills are steep. Plan to use buses or rail for uphill routes, and wear shoes with grip.

06 BACKUP PLANS

Seattle on a rainy afternoon

Rain is common from fall through spring. These are good indoor options.

SEATTLE CENTER
MoPOP
Music, film, and pop culture.

DOWNTOWN
Seattle Art Museum
A major collection in the middle of the city.

WATERFRONT
Seattle Aquarium
A good place for an hour on a wet day.

SEATTLE CENTER
Chihuly Garden and Glass
Glass art, much of it indoors.

BOEING FIELD
Museum of Flight
A big aviation museum a short ride south.

PIKE PLACE
The market itself
Much of it is covered, and it is warm and busy.

07 NEIGHBORHOODS

Know your neighborhoods

MARKET & PIERS
Pike Place
The market, the waterfront, and the aquarium.

BRICK STREETS
Pioneer Square
Historic buildings, galleries, and the Underground.

NIGHTLIFE
Capitol Hill
Bars, restaurants, and live music.

MARITIME
Ballard
A Scandinavian heritage, breweries, and a Sunday market.

ICONS
Seattle Center
The Space Needle, MoPOP, and the Chihuly gallery.

VIEW
Queen Anne
Kerry Park and a classic view of the skyline.

08 GOOD TO KNOW

What nobody tells you

- Layers beat umbrellas. Seattleites carry a light waterproof jacket and keep walking.
- Go to Pike Place early. Most of the crowds arrive by mid-morning.
- Book the Underground tour ahead, and wear shoes with grip on the stairs.
- The best views come on clear days. Check the forecast and take a ferry or visit Kerry Park when it is clear.
- Tip 18–20% in restaurants. Sales tax is added at the register.
- Never leave valuables visible in a parked car. Break-ins are a common problem.

WHEN TO GO

Jun–Sep	Best overall	Long, dry days, clear mountain views, and outdoor festivals.
Apr–May	Second best	Mild weather, spring blooms, and fewer crowds.
Oct–Nov	Fall	Rainy but atmospheric, with cozy cafés.
Dec–Mar	Off-season	Gray, wet, and quiet, with lower hotel prices.

09 SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY

Is Seattle safe?

Safe in most visitor areas, with standard city awareness. Pike Place, the waterfront, Capitol Hill, and Ballard are busy and lively. Some downtown blocks, including parts of Third Avenue and areas of Pioneer Square, can feel rougher, especially at night. The main risks are car break-ins and petty theft.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AT A GLANCE

Pike Place (daytime)	●●●●○
Seattle Center	●●●●●
Capitol Hill	●●●●○
Ballard	●●●●●
Pioneer Square (daytime)	●●●●○
Pioneer Square late at night	●●○○○
Third Avenue downtown at night	●●○○○

COMMON SCAMS

Street sellers and petitioners may approach you downtown. Decline politely and keep walking. Never leave valuables visible in a parked car.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

Harborview Medical Center is the major trauma hospital downtown. Carry a light jacket, and pack travel insurance.

SOLO TRAVELERS

Share your plan with someone back home, keep your phone charged, and use rideshare late at night. Stay on busy, lit streets after dark.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police, fire, medical	911
City services and non-emergency	311
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
Nearest ER (Downtown)	Harborview Medical Center · 325 9th Ave.

10 PLANNING CALENDAR

Seattle, month by month

Exact dates shift each year, so confirm before booking.

APR SKAGIT VALLEY TULIPS

- Fields of tulips bloom an hour north of the city in April.

JUL SUMMER

- Clear days, long light, and outdoor concerts across the city.

AUG SEAFAIR

- Seafair weekend brings hydroplane racing and an air show on Lake Washington.

OCT FALL

- Salmon return to the ship canal, and the rainy season begins.

NOV–DEC HOLIDAYS

- Lights across the city, and a big tree at Westlake Center.

DEC 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE

- Fireworks launch from the Space Needle.

SEA

Every Stop, Mapped

Scan the code to open the free interactive Seattle map — every stop in this guide, filterable by day, food, and transport.

goingsolo.life/maps/seattle

TRAVEL ALONE. LIVE FULLY.
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