

So You Are Visiting Seattle...

Having spent 22 years in the greater Seattle area (I grew up about 4 miles from the city limits, though I did spend ages 18-22 in Seattle proper), I'd like to pretend to speak with some authority on where to go and what to do in Seattle. I'm working under the assumption that people won't have access to a car, so most suggestions will be near the conference or on a bus line. Use <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/> to find your route.

The most important piece of advice is that you should do your best to get out of the immediate downtown area. There isn't a ton going on downtown at night and the best parts of the city are in the other neighborhoods. Staying downtown for the entire conference is kind of like going to New York and never leaving Midtown. There's enough to see, but you also miss a ton.

What to see

You absolutely should go to [Pike Place Market](#). Yes, it is touristy as all get-up and there will be hundreds of people waiting around to see people throw fish (note: somebody actually has to purchase fish for any fish to be thrown, so there can be long periods of waiting around like a goon), but the market is a really neat place, tourist or otherwise. Vendors are aggressively pushing samples of great local fruits and vegetables, and there are quite a few good shops (though plenty of tourist traps as well). Metsker Maps is a particularly good one, though I tend to just think that maps are cool. If you find yourself there at lunchtime you should drop by [Piroshky Piroshky](#) or [Michou](#) for cheap eats. You can drop by and see the first Starbucks, but there's frankly not much to see. Imagine your local Starbucks with wooden floors and you've got the picture.

If you're looking for a good panoramic view, you should go to the [Columbia Tower](#). YOU SHOULD NOT GO TO THE SPACE NEEDLE! The Columbia Tower is taller, cheaper, and has a view that is less obstructed by the rest of the skyline. In addition, Seattle Center (which includes the Space Needle) will be hosting Bumbershoot, the annual Seattle arts festival, meaning that you need to pay \$35 admission for the privilege to pay \$18 to go to the top of the Needle.

Speaking of Bumbershoot, it is worth checking out if you're sick of conference stuff or are just feeling the need for some Hall & Oats. Music gets most of the press, but it also has comedy and literary arts. <http://bumbershoot.org/>.

If the weather is nice, you might consider taking a ferry somewhere. There's not a ton to do on the other side, but the ride itself is nice. Good views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains. <http://maps.google.com/maps?q=alaskan+way+ferry+terminal&oe=utf-8&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&hl=en&tab=wl>

I've gotten some questions about plane related activities. The Boeing plant does do tours, but it's about an hour north by car and 3 hours by public transit. The better option may be to go to the [Museum of Flight](#), which is easily accessible with a bus

The [Hiram M. Chittenden Locks](#) in Ballard are a nice place to hang out on a sunny day. You can watch the ships go back and forth from Lake Union (fresh water) to Puget Sound (salt water) and watch the salmon go up the fish ladder.

Finally, the Mariners will be playing on Thursday of APSA weekend (and Felix pitches on

Wednesday!). Safeco Field is much too nice a stadium to host such an awful team, but that's the way it is. For your own sake and the sake of everyone around you, do not order the garlic fries. If you're on the third deck, go check out the views from anyplace along the third base line.

Coffee

There is a ton of good coffee in Seattle, but Espresso Vivace is the best by far. Employees at Vivace are not allowed to touch the espresso machines for their first 6 months there. They just sit there and learn how it's done. Note that they only do espresso drinks (no drip). The nicest location is up on Capitol Hill, but the closest to the hotel is near the Stewart Street exit off of I-5. Probably a 10-15 minute walk from where most of you will be staying. <http://www.espressovivace.com/retail.html>

If you find yourself too far south on Capitol Hill to hit Vivace, [Stumptown](#), a Portland (BOOOOOOO!!!!!!) chain, has a couple of Capitol Hill locations and both [Victrola](#) and [Vita](#) make a pretty solid cup of coffee.

In terms of things really near the conference, you can try [Monorail Espresso](#), but beware that there is no indoor seating. [Top Pot Doughnuts](#) is also near the conference and has a good amount of seating.

Food

I rarely, if ever, eat downtown. A big part of that is that Downtown was a bit out of my undergrad price range. But now that I'm a big fancy grad student...actually not much has changed. There are a lot of places that serve various "fusion" cuisines, but I can't tell you much. One tip would be to go north of Downtown a bit into Belltown, which has quite a few higher end restaurants.

There are two very good and completely different neighborhoods for food nearby downtown: Capitol Hill and the International District. For as long as I can remember, Capitol Hill has been the coolest neighborhood in Seattle and the restaurants are more or less in line with that. It's real foodie stuff up there. The area between Pike and Pine is kind of the heart of Capitol Hill these days, and a Yelp search will give you a thousand different places to go in a relatively small area. Again, these spots have largely been out of my price range, so I don't have a ton of specifics, but this is a good place to look if you are looking for a cool spot to have dinner. This is also one of the better places to go for your vegetarian/vegan needs (the U district is good too).

The International District is south of Downtown, and is my favorite neighborhood in which to eat. In terms of deliciousness per \$, this is your place. Another nice thing is that this area is covered by the free ride area on the buses, so you can hop on any bus going south and get off right there for free. If you've never a banh mi sandwich, you need to march yourself over to [Sub Sand](#) and grab one. The best part is that they will only run you about \$4. Another great lunch spot is [Thai Curry Simple](#), which runs a \$5 dollar curry special every day. Finally, [Uwajimaya](#) is the biggest and best Asian market around. Go see the [geoducks](#) in the seafood tanks or grab lunch at one of the food stands.

If you need to eat downtown, one dependably popular spot is [The Pink Door](#), which is an Italian restaurant right by Pike Place. There is no sign, making it tough to find, but follow the directions until you see a pink door. Enter that pink door. You will find yourself in The Pink Door.

This is completely out of the way and I'm sure that none of you will make it, but I can't avoid mentioning my favorite place in the entire world, [Paseo](#). They serve both lunch and dinner, so you

should make your way out there if you're able. Get the Cuban Roast and an ear of corn.

The hot new restaurant in town is [The Walrus and the Carpenter](#), which specializes in oysters and high-end cocktails. If you're really into knowing exactly where your food came from and you want the freshest seafood that you can find, this is your spot.

Drinking:

There are plenty of good local brews. I would especially recommend anything made by Georgetown Brewing, but Rainier is the cheap beer of choice in these parts and is pretty tasty on tap.

Downtown: I wouldn't bother. If you must, try [Feirabend](#). They specialize in German beers and it's a good place to hoist a liter or two.

Belltown: Gets taken over by the striped-shirt brigade as it has a high concentration of "lounges," but it close to the conference and has a couple of good bars. I've heard good things about [Bathtun Gin & Co.](#) and I've always enjoyed [Zig Zag Cafe](#). Each are cocktail places, as I don't think there's much of a beer scene down there. [Crocodile Cafe](#) may also be of interest, as it was the center of the grunge world once upon a time.

Capitol Hill: This is where the cool kids go on Friday and Saturday nights. It's also the center of the LGBT scene in Seattle. Again, you'll find most stuff around Pike/Pine. Try [Linda's](#) if you're looking for more of a dive (though it's a very self-aware dive). The [Stumbling Monk](#) has a good beer selection and is closer to downtown. [Cafe Presse](#) is highly recommended for wine and late-night snacks.

Ballard: Ballard is one of my favorite neighborhoods. It's a total pain in the ass to get to from downtown, but I think it's worth it. [The Noble Fir](#) is a particularly good beer/wine bar, and the [Tractor Tavern](#) is the spot to have a cheap beer and get in touch with what is a pretty good alt-country scene in town.

Fremont: This was once a pretty out-there neighborhood, but it's since been taken over by kids coming down from Seattle Pacific University. It's also not particularly close to downtown. [Brouwer's](#) probably has the best beer selection in the city, and [George & Dragon](#) is good for beer and soccer.

Queen Anne: I'm not nuts about Queen Anne, but you can find [Shawn Kemp](#) hanging around [Oskar's Kitchen](#) (he's part owner) on Friday nights.

University District: Meh. If you like drinking on South U in Ann Arbor, go right ahead.

Conclusion: Try to get out of downtown and don't bother with the Space Needle. Have fun, everyone!