

## Catch the Seattle essentials in a well-planned weekend

SEATTLE — Any seasoned Northwest traveler knows that there are three essential elements to a visit to Seattle.

You must visit the Pike Place Market. You must walk along the waterfront to historic Pioneer Square. And you must invest a few hours at Seattle Center, a tourist district surrounding the Space Needle.

But with only a weekend available for travel, a little planning is essential to get the most out of the experience. Here's what I suggest:

Interstate 5 makes the 275-mile drive from Eugene to Seattle an easy one. Head out on Friday and plan about five hours for the trip. Time your arrival before 4 p.m. or after 6 p.m. to avoid the worst of the big-city rush hour. Then check into a hotel and enjoy dinner in the vibrant Belltown district.

Start your Saturday at Pike Place Market, then walk nine blocks or hop on a free bus to Pioneer Square. A 90-minute tour of Seattle's underground begins several times a day.

Before or after, visit the Seattle Art Museum or the Seattle Aquarium on the nearby waterfront.

On Sunday, spend a few hours at the Seattle Center. The Experience Music Project and Science Fiction Museum are both worth checking out. Have brunch atop the Space Needle before driving back to Eugene.

### Stay and dine

Seattle has lodgings in all price ranges, beginning about \$79 a night and climbing to well over \$300.

My favorites include:

Hotel 1000, a cutting-edge, technology-dominated boutique property midway between Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market. Winter rates run from \$179, and Fido is welcome. Check it out at [www.hotel1000seattle.com](http://www.hotel1000seattle.com).

The Inn at the Market, a bright and contemporary European-style hotel incorporated within the market complex. The "catch and release" package allows you to toss salmon with the fishmongers and to keep what you throw. Winter rates start at \$175. Go to [www.innatthemarket.com](http://www.innatthemarket.com).

Rates at the Hotel Max, Seattle's "rock 'n' roll" hotel, begin at just \$116. The sound and rhythm of rock runs through the lobby to the 163 guest rooms, while the paintings and photographs of 39 Northwest artists are displayed in every hallway. Go to [www.hotelmaxseattle.com](http://www.hotelmaxseattle.com).

For dinner, consider Belltown. This spirited dining and nightlife area extends from the Pike Place Market area almost to Seattle Center. It is concentrated primarily along First and Second Avenues but increasingly along Third and Fourth as well. Among my favorite stops, both of them on First, are Le Pichet, a classic French bistro that could have been transplanted from the Rive Gauche, and Marco's Supperclub, an often-overlooked outpost of cool.

*John Gottberg Anderson can be reached at [johngottberg@gmail.com](mailto:johngottberg@gmail.com) or [nwpassages.wordpress.com](http://nwpassages.wordpress.com).*