SundayTrave

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

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KARI BODNARCHUK FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

CITIES IN THE STATES | SEATTLE

16 places to see, rain or shine

Emerald City or coffee capital, Boeing home or seaport, Seattle has a slew of fun, historical, delicious attractions

BY KARI BODNARCHUK | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Third in a series highlighting cities to which you can fly nonstop from Boston.

rom the moment you arrive here you can be on the move, whether you are exploring the city underground by foot, kayaking along freshwater lakes or sheltered Puget Sound, or being whisked up the Space Needle, over the area by seaplane, or along bike-friendly streets aboard the new Emerald City Trolley.

As the country's fifth-largest port, and the home of Boeing aviation for more than 100 years, Seattle has established itself as an important transportation hub. Enter the city on a new light rail service that links Seattle-Tacoma International Airport to downtown, and then get out and explore this vibrant city of 4 million people and learn about the evolution of transportation here over the past century.

DAY ONE

1. 8 a.m. Start your adventure at **Pike Place Market** (First Avenue and Pike Street, 206-682-7453, www.pikeplacemarket.org), where you can grab a coffee and a breakfast sandwich from the original Starbucks (opened 42 years ago), and then poke around shops selling fresh flowers,

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Seattle fills your plate with 3 days of variety

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flying fish, magic tricks, and more. Buy everything from elephant garlic and homemade pasta to Caribbean papaya from food stalls, and say hi to former Boston-area resident Howard Chapman, who uses real spices, seeds, grains, and flowers to make miniature Pike Place Market-themed crafts that fit inside an open walnut shell. The market, started with six farmers in 1907, now has more than 200 vendors and is open

20 hours a day, 362 days a year.

2. 10 a.m. The 75-minute Bill **Speidel's Underground Tour** (608 First Ave., 206-682-4646, www.undergroundtour.com, \$9-\$17, free under age 7) in historic Pioneer Square will take you through three of the city's 30 blocks of subterranean passageways. Wander through tunnels of basalt stone and boardwalk, and by debris from the area's colorful past: dusty couches, weathered signs, bed frames from an old hotel, and remnants from a seedy saloon. Learn about the Great Seattle Fire, started in a nearby woodworking shop in 1889, and the failed attempts to extinguish it, the site of the original "skid row," and the city's slow attempt to elevate itself by moving street level one story up.

3. 1 p.m. Grab a sandwich (\$6.95-\$8.95) and bowl of Northwest clam chowder (\$4.95-\$7.95) from the **Alaskan** Sourdough Bakery (Pier 57, 1301 Alaskan Way, 206-838-5313, www.alaskansourdough bakery.com) at Miners Landing. Then hop on an informative one-hour harbor tour with Argosy Cruises (Pier 55, 1101 Alaskan Way, 888-623-1445, www.argosycruises.com, \$12-\$23.50, under 4 free), during which you learn about Seattle icons, new and old, and see the city's industrial heart from a unique angle. The 200-passenger boat takes you past several locally berthed Coast Guard ice-

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breakers and alongside massive container ships, giving close-up views of these floating behemoths, many of which stretch more than 1,000 feet, making them longer than Seattle's tallest building is high.

4. 4:30 p.m. Rise more than 175 feet above Elliott Bay on the **Se**attle Great Wheel (Pier 57, 1301 Alaskan Way, 206-623-8600, www.seattegreatwheel .com, \$8.50-\$13), the West Coast's tallest observation wheel, which opened last June. The wheel spins year-round, and the 42 fully-enclosed gondolas stay dry even on rainy days. Choose the lone VIP gondola (\$50) and enjoy cushy leather bucket seats, views through the glass floor, a Tshirt, and priority boarding.

5. 7 p.m. Elliott's Oyster House (Pier 56, 1201 Alaskan Way, 206-623-4340, www.elliottsovs terhouse.com, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. daily) next to the giant Ferris wheel serves some of the most mouthwatering locally sourced seafood in the city. More than 30 varieties of oysters arrive daily from local growers in Puget Sound north to British Columbia. Some would say the king crab rivals any East Coast lobster, but you decide. Other top picks include the wild salmon and Dungeness crab cakes.

6. 10 p.m. Top the night with a stop at Radiator Whiskey (94 Pike St., Suite 30, 206-467-4268, www.radiatorwhiskey .com), a hip new bar and restaurant that's known for its barrel-aged whiskey, cocktails, and creative menu items, which include fried beef lips and barrelaged Manhattan and pork cheek stew. Open Mon-Sat 4 p.m.-midnight.

DAY TWO

7.8 a.m. Cofounders and brothers Mark and Michael Klebeck came up with the name of their popular doughnut shop when the "s" fell off an old Top Spot

sign they found while antiquing. In the past 13 years Top Pot Doughnuts (2124 5th Ave., 206-728-1966, www.toppot doughnuts.com, \$.99-\$2.49) has grown so popular, it has appeared on the Food Network twice and even caught the eye — and tastebuds — of President Obama when he stopped to try the pumpkin doughnuts. The shop makes up to 42 kinds of "hand-forged" doughnuts and its own hand-roasted coffee. Try the salty caramel doughnut and chocolate eclair. This branch has floor-to-ceiling bookshelves and a great coffeehouse vibe.

8. 10 a.m. Take a 20-minute float plane tour around Seattle with Kenmore Air (950 Westlake Ave. North, 866-435-9524, www.kenmoreair.com, \$99) and enjoy aerial views of the Space Needle, the city's sports stadiums, Lakes Union and Washington, ferries crossing Puget Sound, and the area's abundance of green space, made dense and lush by the region's plentiful rain (to be fair, Seattle gets less rain than New York, but it is one of the country's top five cloudiest cities). On a clear day, you'll see the snow-capped Olympic Mountains to the west, the Cascade Mountains to the east and, if you're lucky, Mount Rainier, which emerges from its cloudy veil just south of Seattle about 90 days a year, according to one tour guide.





9. 10 a.m. Not a fan of six-seat single-engine planes that take off and land on the water? Remain at sea level, rent a kayak or standup paddleboard from the Northwest Outdoor Center (2100 Westlake Ave. North, Suite 1, 800-683-0637, www .nwoc.com) on Lake Union, and go for a paddle around the area's houseboats, including the one featured in the movie "Sleepless in Seattle." Just keep an eye out for the seaplanes. Full-moon tours and paddling instruction available.

10. 12:30 p.m. Refuel at the casual, sustainability-minded Portage Bay Cafe (391 Terry Ave. North, 206-462-6400, www.portagebaycafe.com), located on South Lake Union. All sandwiches, from the Reuben to the mushroom barley garden burger, are served on homebaked bread. All meat and seafood is smoked and cured inhouse, and the ricotta and sausages are homemade. Try the dandelion green salad or the organic prawn and chicken salad. Open daily until 2:30 p.m.

11. 2:30 p.m. At the southern tip of Lake Union, the newly relocated Museum of History and **Industry** (860 Terry Ave North, 206-324-1126, www.mohai.org, \$12-\$14, free under 15 and on the first Thursday of every month) has exhibits on the history of Seattle's houseboats, ferry system, cable cars, and canneries, and the introduction of the northern railway. See a Seattle-built record-setting hydroplane, an early wooden mail plane, and the quirky and renowned Lincoln's Toe Truck, a pink foot-shaped tow truck that was once an iconic marker at a local towing business.

12. 3:30 p.m. Jump on the new **Emerald City Trolley** (trolley stop at corner of Harrison and 5th streets, 855-313-3456, www.emeraldcitytrolley.com, adults \$45, 12 and under \$20, under 2 free, a two-day hop-on, hop-off service that makes two different loops around the city, taking in the downtown attractions from Pioneer Square to the Space Needle, and linking hot spots in the northern part of the city including Lake Union and Freemont. A third route runs down to the nearby Museum of Flight in south Seattle. All trolleys stop at the funky-shaped EMP Museum.

13. and **14.** 6 p.m. Rise 520 feet above street level to the **Space** Needle's observation deck (400 Broad St., 206-905-2100, www.spaceneedle.com, \$12-\$19, free under 4; two tickets included in Seattle Cit-

vPASS), where you can enjoy

From the top: Clouds 360-degree views. Then drop down to 500 feet to dine at the in Seattle do not

slowly revolving **SkyCity Res**taurant (206-905-2180, www.spaceneedle.com/ skycity-restaurant) with its cozy upscale decor and relaxed atmosphere. Enjoy fabulous city views through the tall glass windows, and a menu that highlights Pacific Northwest cuisine (entrees \$38-\$58).

DAY THREE

15. 10 a.m. Visit the mothership for outdoor equipment and sporting goods giant Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI) (222 Yale Ave. North, 206-223-1944, www.rei.com/seattle), where you will find one of the country's tallest climbing walls, the Pinnacle, which looms 65 feet over the pebbly floor, a three-story kids' tree house with slides and bridges, and three levels of outdoor gear (head for the basement for the permanent ongoing garage sale). Grab a bite at World Wrapps (206-233-0222) on level two, which offers a tasty selection of internationally-flavored wraps, (\$5.49-\$8.29).

16. 1 p.m. Leave several hours to tour the fascinating Museum of Flight (9404 East Marginal Way South, 206-764-5720, www.museumofflight.org, \$10-\$18, under 5 free), a sprawling treasure trove of aviation history, where you can wander through the first Air Force One presidential jet and one of only 20 Concorde planes ever built. See the original Boeing factory building, known as the Red Barn, and the only Viking Mars lander on earth (the other two are on Mars). Then crawl into the museum's new Space Shuttle Trainer, a simulator with more than 2,000 dials and switches where all astronauts have trained for their Space Shuttle missions. Volunteer docents, from former pilots and flight attendants to Boeing engineers, share information on the museum's many exhibits.

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always bring rain; kayakers on South Lake Union pass houseboats; and Pacific salmon at Elliott's Oyster House on the waterfront.

IF YOU GO ...

Getting there

Alaska Airlines and JetBlue Airways fly direct between Boston and Seattle.

Where to stay **Hotel FIVE** 2200 Fifth Ave., Seattle 866-866-7977 www.hotelfiveseattle.com Rates: \$115-\$235 per room, includes access to fitness center, complimentary use of cruiser bikes. and a new free shuttle ser-

vice to downtown destina-

tions.

What to do **Seattle CityPASS** 888-330-5008 www.citypass.com/seattle Gets you two visits to the Space Needle, and admission to Pacific Science Center. Argosy Cruises harbor tour. Seattle Aguarium. EMP Museum, and the Woodland Park Zoo or the Museum of Flight. \$49-\$74.

Information **Visit Seattle**

866-732-2695 www.visitseattle.org **Seattle Visitors Center** and Concierge Services **Washington State Convention Center lobby** Seventh Avenue and Pike Street 866-732-2695 Provides visitor information, makes dining reservations, and books tours and transportation.

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