

Visiting Seattle for Nature Lovers

Seattle, Wash. is one of the biggest cities in the United States, and its opportunities for sightseeing are numerous. The city is nicknamed “The Emerald City” due to its surrounding greenery, which includes robust evergreens and awe-inspiring mountains. If you are a nature lover, then Seattle is the perfect destination for an adventure. Below is a list of things to do and places to stay around the Seattle area. Follow this alternative itinerary, and you are bound to enjoy your visit.

What to Do

During your time in Seattle, consider visiting the Washington Park Arboretum east of downtown. It is 230 acres in size and includes the nation’s largest collection of Maples and Sorbus. There are also expansive botanical, fragrance and Japanese gardens. The arboretum is on the shores of Lake Washington, so there are bike trails, waterfront trails for walkers and kayaking. Peddle out on the lake, and spot ducks, turtles, herons and other wildlife. You also get up-close views of the wildlife of Puget Sound, and wildlife in general, at the Seattle Aquarium and Woodland Park Zoo located in the city.

Besides the attractions within Seattle, there are several other sites around the area for nature lovers to enjoy. Mt. Rainier National Park is just a short drive from Seattle. The mountain is an inactive volcano that is visited by nearly 2 million people every year. Activities include fishing, camping, hiking, mountain climbing, nature walks and horseback riding. The North Cascades National Park is another attraction to consider. It is nicknamed “The North American Alps” and features some of the same activities offered at Mt. Rainier along with stunning views and float trips on the Stehekin and Skagit rivers. If you are willing to travel a bit farther from Seattle, Olympic National Park is an option. There are also a number of islands around Seattle to explore.

Where to Stay

From the luxurious to the boutique and trendy, there are plenty of hotels in Seattle. If cost is your biggest concern, consider staying at a youth hostel. HI Seattle is one hostel that is located in the city. HI stand for Hostel International, and the organization’s website is called HIUSA.org. Go to the website, select Seattle as your destination and see the available dates and rates for your trip.

If cost is not an issue and you wish to be closer to nature, lodges and cabins are great options too. For example, the Willows Lodge is half an hour from Seattle and is located on 5 acres in the Woodinville wine country. The Suncadia Resort is 90 minutes from the city and is located on the eastern slopes of the Cascades. The Freestone Inn is also near the North Cascades National Park.

These are some tips for nature lovers planning a visit to Seattle. Be selective of how you spend

your time at these destinations, or you might exhaust yourself. For example, it's impossible to do everything at Mt. Rainier National Park in one visit. You are better off visiting multiple times to make the most of your stay. Follow these tips, and your time in Seattle is bound to be very pleasant.