

I was about 7-8 years old when I entered Pike Place Market for the first time in my life

I was like any other kid, checked out, in my own world, bored out of my mind.

Why? Well, I had just ridden in a car for an hour, then searched for parking for another half hour.

For what? An old market?

Well, as I would soon find out, Pike Place wasn't any old market.

Now, where were we?

Oh, yeah. I was bored out of my mind, wandering behind my parents, when I heard a voice

A voice that said HEY KID!

I looked up,

and that's when I saw him,

a fish vendor with the widest grin on his face.

Catch! He said, throwing a giant 2-foot-long fish at me. Something half my size.

I looked at him, then back at the fish

And I knew, it was going to hit me.

I expected it to hit me in the face

So I stared at the fish and took 2 steps back.

Then thwack, the fish hit me, right in the middle of the chest

I brought my arms up and I had caught it.

That memory, almost 15 years ago now, is when I realized how special Pike Place really is

Pike Place is more than just a tourist attraction though
Its a symbol of Seattle.

For over 115 years, it has been a symbol of resilience
A symbol of community, A symbol of hope for the needy.
Today, I want to celebrate what makes Pike Place special.

Its resilience

Its community

Its charity

Let's Start with its history.

Pike Place was founded in 1907 in downtown Seattle overlooking the
Elliott Bay.

That means Its survived the first Great War,
the Great Depression,
the Second Great war,
and a great many attempts of urban redevelopment.

It goes to show that Pike Place is a great place.

A major example of Pike Place's resilience through history is in the
1960s

Where it was nearly demolished by the City of Seattle

But the Citizens of Seattle rallied! They voted! They saved the market.

More recently, as COVID ransacked the world Pike Place endured.

Some vendors (like Piroshky Piroshky and Indi Chocolate) went online

Other smaller vendors relied on the community.

Pike Place stood strong like it has for over a century.

Proof of our determination to preserve our history.

Pike Place isn't just a market or just a farmer's market.

It isn't a place known just for its history.

It's a community.

Community has been at its foundation since its foundation.

In the early 1900s, farmers were struggling to sell their goods to the people

Because wholesalers, middlemen, and brokers were fixing prices.

Imagine, a pound of onions in 1906 was 10 cents

And in 1907, it was a dollar. A 10x price increase.

The farmers needed to sell their produce to make a living

And the people needed produce to live

So the farmers and the people rallied.

They joined together

And on August 17th, 1907, Pike Place Market opened its doors

The farmers now had direct access to their community

To get to know them and to sell to the people they know and care about

Thus marking a new beginning for local commerce.

Pike Place still shows its community heart by

Providing a stage for musicians to play

Local businesses to sell

And a place for locals and tourists to gather.

Truly, the people make Pike Place special

Commerce is just one aspect of Pike Place Market.

Pike Place is also known for its charity.

Since 1982, the Pike Place Market Foundation has been more than an organization

It's been a pillar of support, a beacon of hope, a lifeline for the community.

For over 40 years, it has provided

housing for the unhoused, healthcare for the unwell

Food for the hungry, and childcare for working families.

Now, I want to talk stats:

In 2020, the foundation invested 1.2 Million in community Programs.

In 2020, it granted another Million in Funds for businesses.

In 2020, it gave over 2.2 Million back to its community

The end of one program is the start of another. A dollar given is a meal served. A meal served is a life changed.

Pike Place isn't just a market, it isn't just a landmark.

Its an institution of giving.

Because Pike Place doesn't just sell goods, it builds good.

It isn't just a place to serve customers. It serves people.

Pike Place is more than a place to shop,
a place to eat,
a place to wander
it's a place where history is honored,
people find belonging
and generosity thrives.

It has stood the test of time, not just because of its buildings or its vendors

But because of its resilience, its community, and its charitable heart.

Next time you visit,
pause for a moment.

Take a breath.

Maybe keep an ear out for the music echoing through the streets.

Watch the hands that bring fresh produce to the tables.

See the passion behind each craft, every smile.

Because They are what make Pike Place Special.

And Thanks to them, Pike Place isn't just surviving. it's thriving.