

Space Needle, Columbia Center and Smith Tower All Have New Summer-Ready Views

Seattle's best views have all been spruced up just in time for the sunny season



Image Credit: Photo by Mike Reid

Seattle's most iconic observation viewpoints have all received major makeovers in the last few years. And now, they're all open just in time for the beautiful and sunny days (and the tourists). Here's what's new and improved at these emblematic buildings:

Sky View Observatory

The most recent renovation reveal was Columbia Center's Sky View Observatory. The space received a \$25 million renovation that now includes a dedicated entrance on Fourth Avenue, a full-fledged gift shop on the ground floor, two dedicated elevators that zip you up 73 stories in 70 seconds, and, of course, stunning 360-degree views (including a mesmerizing look at the comings and goings of our working waterfront, the Port of Seattle). This is the tallest building in Seattle, so on a clear day, you can see 100 miles in every direction. Plus, now you can enjoy a cocktail and a bite, 902 feet in the air, at the newly expanded bar and eatery. *Admission: \$22 adults, \$16 children ages 5–13. Open daily 10 a.m.–10 p.m. this summer. Downtown. 700 Fourth Ave. skyviewobservatory.com*



Photo via Space Needle Facebook page

Space Needle's Observation Deck

Nothing (okay, other than Pike Place Market) screams Seattle more than the iconic Space Needle. Recently, the landmark received a whopping \$100 million renovation. The unveiling of the new makeover has been doled out piece-by-piece to the public, with the rotating glass floor restaurant still closed for renovations. For now, you can enjoy the observation deck, 520 feet in the air, which features exterior glass barriers and glass benches that are slightly tilted, giving the illusion you're floating in the air. Plus, the views aren't bad either. There is food for purchase available on the observation deck level while the restaurant is being renovated. *Admission: \$29 adults, \$19 children ages 5–12. Open daily 8 a.m.–10 p.m. Seattle Center. 400 Broad St. spaceneedle.com*



Photo by Daria Kroupoderova

Smith Tower's Observatory

When Seattle's oldest skyscraper was purchased by Unico Properties in early 2015, it quickly went into remodel mode and opened its doors to the public in late August of 2016. As you walk in, you're sent back to the roaring '20s. Before you make your way up to enjoy the views, walk through the exhibit showcasing the history of the building, which was completed in 1914. To get up to the 35th-floor observation deck, take the original brass Otis elevators, where an operator will zip you up to your destination. (The operator that took me up, Dick Phillips, was a wealth of knowledge, and knew not only the history of the building, but that the 13th U.S. president, Millard Fillmore, looks like Alec Baldwin.) The elevator drops you at The Observatory, formerly known as the Chinese Room, which, while updated, still features much of the space's original artwork. There is a speakeasy-style bar where you can get food and drinks. While Smith Tower doesn't offer the sweeping views as the other two observation decks, its 35th-floor deck is an architecture-lover's perch—and there is an amazing view of the Space Needle, straight down Second Avenue through the skyscrapers that is truly unique. *Admissions: \$19 adults, \$15 children ages 6–12. Open Sun.–Wed. 10 a.m.–11 p.m., Thurs.–Sat. 10 a.m.–12 a.m. Pioneer Square. 506 Second Ave. smithtower.com*