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Drink Up History at Seattle's Smith Tower

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The Yesler Old Fashioned is made with Mischief Rye, vanilla simple syrup, and black walnut bitters.

Seattle's original skyscraper serves up stellar cocktails, sweeping views, and a slice of history

Before the Space Needle became the star of **Seattle's** skyline, Smith Tower was the city's architectural darling. This gleaming white terracotta landmark has lit up Seattle skies since 1914. The then-tallest building west of the Mississippi was known as the "skyscraper that put Seattle on the map." Now, the neoclassical stunner is a destination in its own right, thanks to the new **Smith Tower Visitor Experience**: a revamped observation deck, Prohibition-themed bar, and historical exhibit. Here's why it's worth checking it out the inside.

The ultimate room with a view

Perched on the 35th floor, the Observatory houses a craft **cocktail bar**, historic memorabilia, and a wrap-around observation deck. This room, formerly known as the Chinese Room, is decorated with leather chairs, small tables for snacking and imbibing, and ornate carved wood ceiling tiles. Single ladies should rest a moment in the opulent Wishing Chair, whose legend promises marriage within the year to unwed women who sit in it.



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Part bar/part booze laboratory, Smith Tower's bartenders concoct infused spirits, shrubs, simple syrups, and bitters in house.

Cocktails and Bites

Inspired by the Smith Tower's Prohibition history, the **speakeasy**-style bar is a hidden treat after an observation deck tour. Bunches of fresh herbs, bottles from small-batch distilleries, and jars of liquid concoctions—cilantro-infused gin, apricot **shrub**—indicate the care that goes into each cocktail. On a summer day, try the refreshing Dry Squad—vodka, muddled cucumber, lemon shrub and soda. Cool eyes call for the Yesler Old Fashioned, made with rye from local distillery **Mischief**. The rotating food menu includes shareable plates: deviled eggs, oysters on the half shell,

flatbread pizzas, and King salmon poke.

Observation Deck

Alongside the bar, the open-air observation deck offers breathtaking 360-degree views. Get a bird's-eye view of Seattle's ever-expanding downtown, ferries traversing Elliot Bay, colorful shipping containers and cranes along the port, and the nearby stadiums. On clear days, get postcard-worthy shots of Mount Rainier and the Olympic Mountains. Views of both I-90, which travels all the way to Boston, and I-5, which reaches along the entire West Coast, provide a sense of the vastness of the States.

Walk through history

Work up a thirst meandering through the Legends of Smith Tower, a self-guided tour spread over two floors. Learn about the building's most prominent tenants as you wander rooms decorated with period pieces. See the radio equipment that Elisa Olmstead used to broadcast shows on KPQX or pick up a phone on the switchboard that operators used to spy on calls between bootleggers.

Pop some tags

The lobby's gift shop is stocked with appealing treasures from Seattle and beyond. Pick up typewriter key cuff links, a wink to the machine that made Lyman Cornelius Smith rich, and tissue paper embossed with gold Seattle maps. Score gray **Ebbets Field Flannels** sweatshirts embroidered with the red Rainiers logo, the Pacific Coast League baseball team named for the Seattle's iconic mountain and **brewery**.



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360-degree views of the city come free of charge with every drink.

Going up?

Visitors to Smith Tower get to ride the iconic Otis elevators, the same models the Empire State Building and Eiffel Tower boast. These shiny brass boxes have lattice doors, letting you glimpse into the offices as they whiz by. Smith Tower is one of the last buildings on the West Coast to employ elevator operators, who sport old-timey uniforms while happily sharing historic tidbits while you ride.

Insider Tips

Time your visit to watch epic sunsets over Elliot Bay or the Friday fireworks at Safeco Field. **Seahawks** ticketholders benefit from free, same-day rides after the game. The first Mondays of each month feature Balboa, Blues, and Booze, a live jazz and blues dance party. And ask the bartenders for the \$2.50 special cans of Rainier, a secret “animal-style” price (that’s for all you In’n’Out fans) available when the volcano can be spotted from the deck.

The Smith Tower Visitor Experience welcomes tourists and locals seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with the bar serving until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays and 11 p.m. the rest of the week. The \$19 admission includes tour and ride to the observation deck. Discounts are available for seniors, kids, locals, and when tickets are purchased online. Visitors can opt for the \$59 Rum Runner’s card—benefits include unlimited rides, discounts, and a free birthday beverage.