

# where

GUIDE TO SEATTLE

## EXPLORE

THE ICONS  
OF SEATTLE'S  
CHANGING  
SKYLINE

## PLAY

THE MOISTURE  
FESTIVAL MAKES  
A SPLASH

## DRINK

DISCOVER THE  
CITY'S COOLEST  
HIDDEN BARS

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# Skyline Icons

Get to know Seattle's most eye-catching architecture, old and new.

SEATTLE IS GROWING rapidly. For the last few years, the city has led the nation in the number of construction cranes seen on the horizon—as of February, there are 45. The need for new office and residential space, driven largely by the tech industry, has led to an abundance of high-rise projects. More than a dozen are currently on the boards or under construction. Will any of them become icons of the city's skyline? Take a peek at some of Seattle's most significant architecture to see what it takes.



to be torn down after the six-month-long exposition. Instead, it reopened under its current moniker the day after the fair ended. The Pacific Science Center ([pacific-sciencecenter.org](http://pacific-sciencecenter.org)) was the country's first museum dedicated to science and technology, and continues to exhibit the latest advances in those fields along with displays commemorating its own history. Architect Minoru Yamasaki's soaring white arches and courtyard pool were inspired by those on Gothic cathedrals and Islamic temples, but pared back to their basic structure, reflecting the midcentury era's appreciation of simplicity and function.

#### MUSEUM OF POP CULTURE

One of Seattle Center's more recent—but every bit as striking—structures, this Frank O. Gehry design, financed by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, opened in 2000 as the Experience Music Project. Gehry, who wanted the facade to capture the energy of rock-n-roll music, said an image of Seattle native Jimi Hendrix's smashed guitar inspired the design, composed of undulating stainless steel and iridescent metal sheets with colored glass features. The museum's programming has evolved over the years to explore pop culture beyond music, prompting a rebranding to MoPOP in 2016, but the avant-garde design continues to divide critics. Love it or hate it, there's no arguing that it's a uniquely eye-catching part of Seattle's landscape.

#### SEATTLE CENTRAL LIBRARY

The flagship of the Seattle Public Library system ([spl.oeg](http://spl.oeg)), this 11-story asymmetrical glass building designed by the renowned Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas opened to the city's book lovers in 2004. The light and airy design includes an expansive two-level atrium—accessed by a day-glow green escalator—with lounge-style seating and garden. Above it, the "book spiral," where four-levels of bookshelves can be explored by following the gently sloped ramp that lines the floors' perimeter. City views are excellent throughout—and best of all, as a public facility, this contemporary design gem is open to all.



#### SMITH TOWER

No survey of Seattle's skyline would be complete without mentioning one of its earliest icons. At 38 stories, Smith Tower ([smithtower.com](http://smithtower.com)) was the city's first skyscraper—and at the time of its completion in 1914 it was the tallest building west of the Mississippi, a distinction it held on to for more than 15 years. Although the neo-classical tower is today dwarfed by at least half a dozen newer constructions, it's still a beloved landmark. A renovation project in 2016 added a Prohibition era-themed cocktail bar to the observation floor, offering a glimpse into the glamour and elegance of the age when the tower first inspired Seattleites to reach for the skies.

#### PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

(Clockwise) Amazon's newly opened project, The Spheres; a rendering of how the Space Needle's observation deck will look when the renovation is completed this summer; Pacific Science Center's "midcentury-Gothic"