

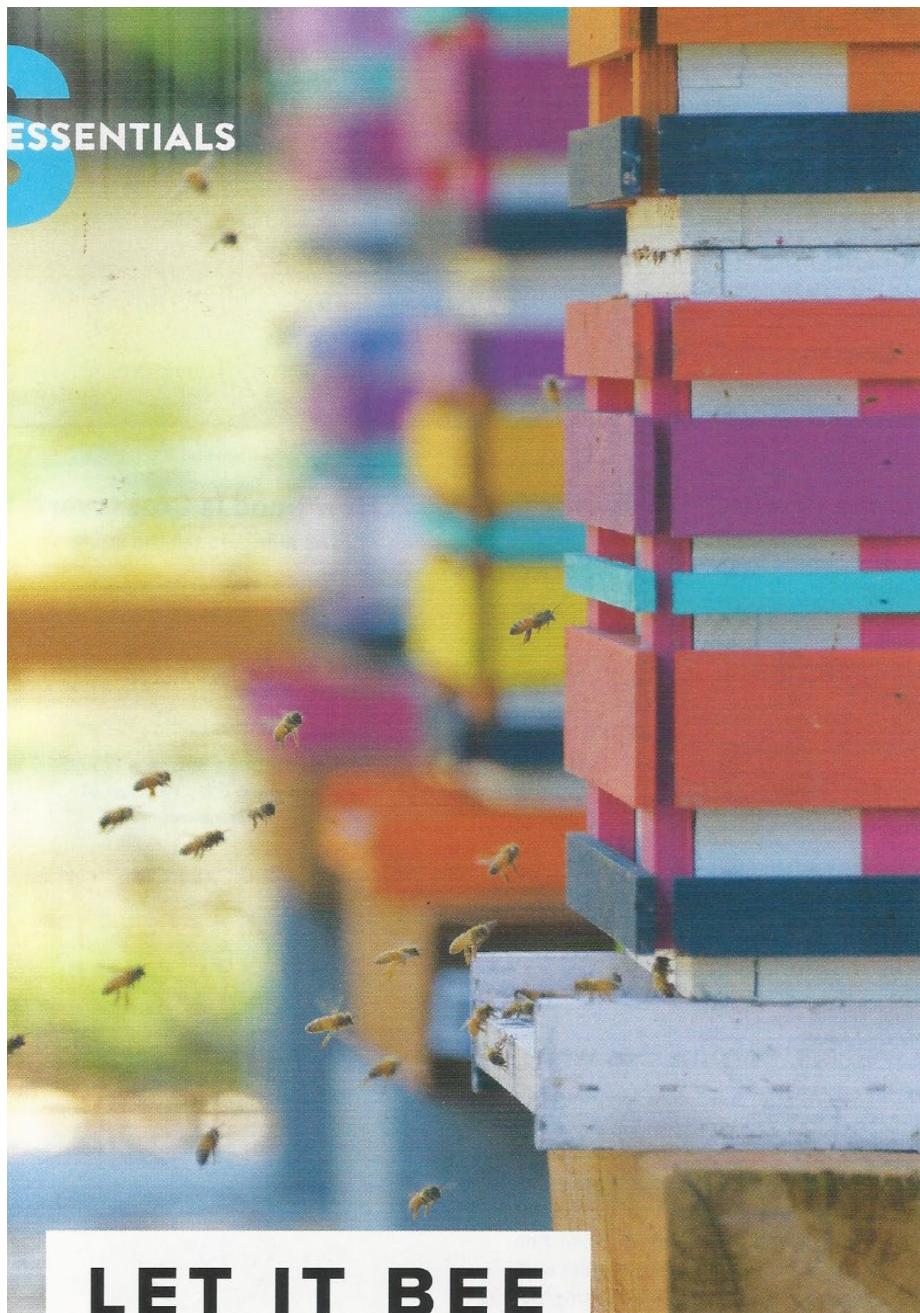
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LET IT BEE

THERE'S A BUZZ HAPPENING THROUGHOUT THE REGION

BY ROB SMITH

You know Smith Tower as Seattle's original skyscraper. You know that the 108-year-old, 38-floor tower was once the tallest building west of the Mississippi. You may not be aware that the 22nd floor is now home to an apiary containing a thriving colony of thousands of honeybees. It is one of several apiaries located in unexpected locations across the region.

The Salish Lodge & Spa in Snoqualmie features servers who drizzle honey from an onsite apiary onto freshly made biscuits. Depending on the season, there are honey scrubs, lotions and even honey-infused cocktails.

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The Lodge at St. Edward State Park in Kenmore boasts an apiary just steps away from the Cedar & Elm Restaurant. At the seven-story Watershed Building in Seattle's Fremont neighborhood, a collection of pollinator plants provides habitat for four honeybee hives located on the roof.

Beekeeping, clearly, is going corporate, and not just in Seattle. It's a global phenomenon. The rise in urban beekeeping stems in no small part from a growing concern over the fate of bees, which are responsible for pollinating everything from fruits to vegetables to nuts.

That's partially driving the new apiary at Smith Tower.

"In addition to providing delicious honey for our cocktails and food in an environmentally sustainable manner, it gives our residents and guests a new and unexpected way to connect with nature," says Shane James, director of food and beverage at Columbia Hospitality, which owns Smith Tower. "The bees create food while also doing their part to pollinate the local Seattle flowers and spread ecological awareness among their visitors." ■

[From left] The Lodge at St. Edward State Park and Smith Tower are just two of the unusual places across the region that you'll find apiaries.



FROM LEFT: GENE FAUGHT, MEGHAN KAUFFMAN