

Harriet Baskas

111 Places
in Seattle
That You Must
Not Miss

Photographs by Courtney Kelley



emons:

Foreword

For my brothers, David and Elliot. (Finally, right?)
Harriet Baskas



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Sure, Seattle is known for having lots of rain, more than 800 coffee shops, and, some might say, too many tech workers. But “The Emerald City” is also green year-round. It is the birthplace of innovation and creativity – Jimi Hendrix, grunge music, the cordless phone, not to mention Amazon, Boeing, and Starbucks. You’ll find mention of all these stories on these pages, so I won’t go on about the creativity and inventiveness inspired by the weather, the caffeine, and proximity to breathtaking nature.

I will take a moment, however, to highlight some of the places I hope this guidebook will entice you to visit or, as it did for me, to revisit with fresh eyes. I knew, for example, that hilly Seattle has hundreds of public stairways, but I didn’t know one was haunted, or that beside another is a hidden garden with a fairytale founding story. Over the years, I watched the topiary dinosaurs in Fremont take shape, but I didn’t know there were official “dino wranglers.” Or that the world headquarters of geocaching was nearby, just past the bronze statue honoring Seattle’s favorite clown, J. P. Patches, and his pal, Gertrude.

I’d heard of the Silent Reading Party at the Hotel Sorrento, but I didn’t know we could yell and scream all we want while taking a sledgehammer to bottles, TVs, toilets, and more at Rage Industry. I know cooking and dancing classes are popular in Seattle, but not that we could sign up for one-off classes in curling, trapeze art, and forging – even on a date. Or that we could learn fun facts about poop and farts from the Pacific Science Center’s *Grossology*-themed bathrooms.

Here you’ll find 111 places in Seattle that I don’t want you to miss, each with a bonus tip of someplace cool nearby or somehow related. There wasn’t room to include every place on my list, but I hope you discover new corners of the city and that you’ll share great tips of your own.

11 Capitol Hill Wishing Tree

Leaves of wishes left by passersby

Wishing trees are a folk tradition in many parts of the world. In some countries, people hammer coins into the bark of living or fallen trees to wish for good health. Elsewhere, people seek good fortune by leaving offerings near the base of trees with spiritual or historic importance.

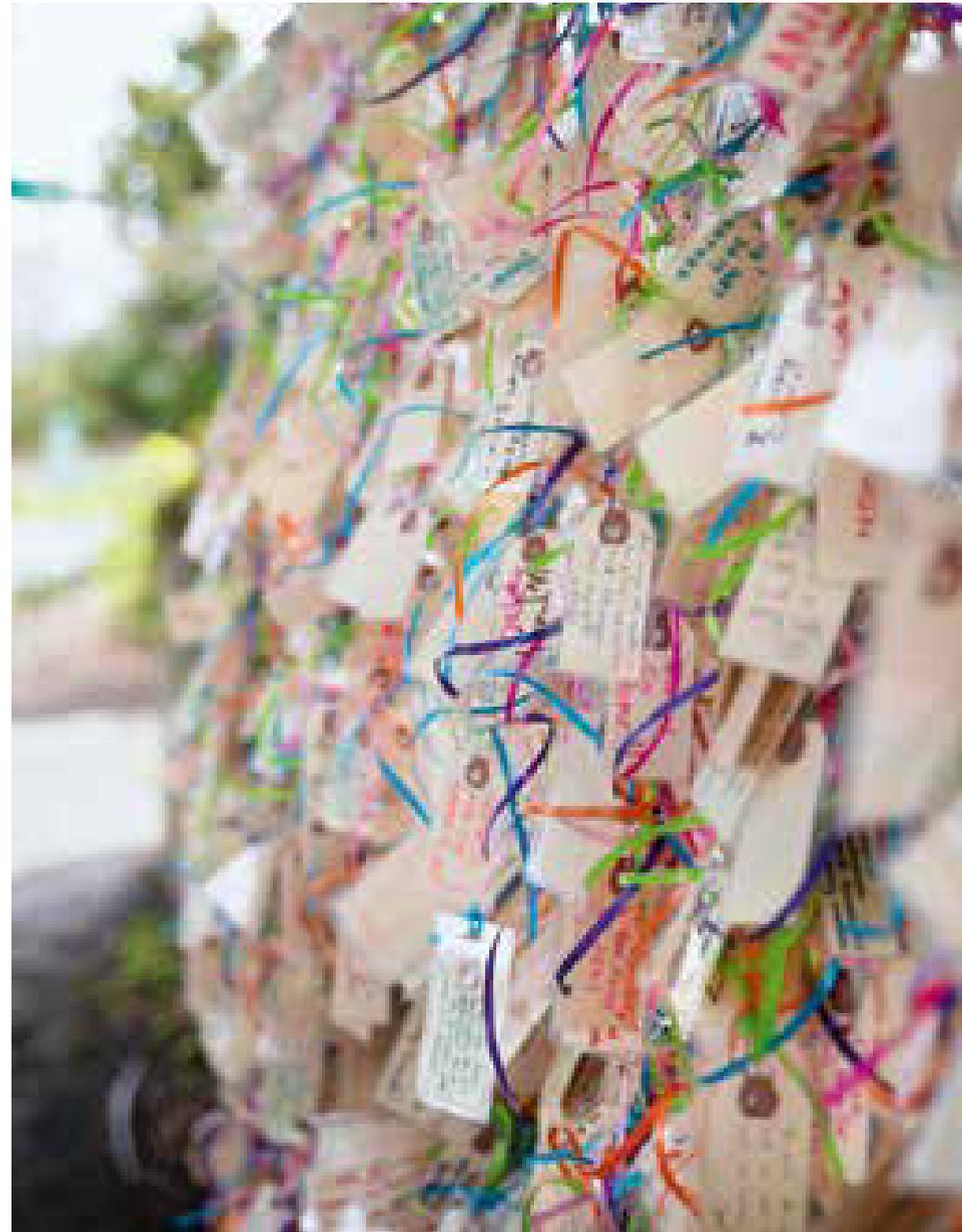
In the United States, wishing trees often have messages scrawled on bits of paper or on tags hanging like leaves from the branches. Portland, Oregon has several wishing trees. And at Yoko Ono's *Wish Tree for Washington, DC*, in the Hirshhorn Museum's sculpture garden, people may tie on written wishes or lean in and whisper them to the branches.

Here in Seattle, a wishing tree in the leafy Capitol Hill neighborhood grants both shade and, it is believed, wishes. Jane Hamel started this wishing tree in November 2014 when she set out some paper and markers by a great old cedar tree on her property. Seattle's soggy weather ruined the early wishes, but today, thousands of laminated wishes scrawled on small manila tags dangle on colorful ribbons from a framework of wires strung below the tree. A hand-drawn sign on a bench below the tree invites passersby to deposit wishes in the painted coffee can dubbed the "golden jar."

If you have not brought your own pre-written wish, you can choose from a supply of note tags and markers that sit on a table nearby. Fill one out and, *over the next few days your wish will be on the tree*, the sign promises, adding that words of gratitude are welcome, in addition to wishes. The sign ends with the declaration, *Something magical happens when we all wish in one place*.

After you've left your wish, read some of the others there. You'll find wishes for a chance to fall in love, a healthy baby, acceptance, housing for all, more travel, inner peace, world peace, the courage to show up, an end to sickness, and the ability to fly.

Address 1251 21st Avenue E, Seattle, WA 98112 | **Getting there** Bus 12 to 19th Avenue E & E Galer Street | **Hours** Unrestricted | **Tip** Double down on your wishes. There is another, less elaborate Wishing Tree in Dearborn Park in South Seattle (2919 S Brandon Street, www.seattlewishingtree.org).



15 Colman Pool

Swim in a saltwater pool with Puget Sound views

Forest trails and a paved beach walkway make West Seattle's 135-acre Lincoln Park on Puget Sound a popular destination year-round. In summer, though, the big draw is Colman Pool, a public, outdoor, saltwater swimming pool.

The pool, on the park's point on the shoreline, has been a favorite recreation spot since 1925, when a natural lagoon was transformed into a dirt-sided pool filled with salt water from the sound at high tide, with the help of a wooden sluice gate. In the early 1940s, it was replaced with an Olympic-sized, concrete-and-tile pool donated to the city by the Colman family in honor of civic leader Laurence Colman.

Dedicated July 4, 1941, with an aquatic party that included diving demonstrations and a canoe ballet, the pool is still filled with Puget Sound saltwater. "Each April, the pool is cleaned and repaired," says Wendy Van De Sompele, the aquatic coordinator. "Then, 500,000 gallons of water are pulled into the pool via three wells on the beach." The water is filtered and then heated and maintained at 84 degrees Fahrenheit by high-efficiency, gas-fired boilers. "Some water evaporates and is replaced, but that's the water that stays all summer," says Van De Sompele, who notes that because saltwater adds some buoyancy, Colman Pool is not certified for setting swimming records. The pool has regularly scheduled lap swims, family swims, and recreational swims, so plan your visits accordingly.

For many visitors, the main attraction is the view. A glass wall separates the pool from the beach. "You can see Vashon and Blake Islands, the Kitsap Peninsula, and, on a clear day, the Olympic Mountains," says Van De Sompele. "A parade of wildlife goes by. Sea lions and orcas are pretty regular, but we also see gray whales and humpbacks." And, she adds, one of the best views of all is from the top of the pool's 50-foot-long corkscrew slide.



Address 8602 Fautleroy Way SW, Seattle, WA 98136, +1 (206) 684-7494, www.seattle.gov/parks/find/pools/colman-pool | **Getting there** Bus C to Fautleroy Way SW & SW Rose Street | **Hours** See website | **Tip** The outdoor public Mounger Pool in the Magnolia neighborhood features a corkscrew slide and a toddler pool (2535 32nd Avenue W, www.seattle.gov/parks/find/pools/mounger-pool).

44 Green Lake Murder Site

Enjoy your picnic, but remember Sylvia

Seattle's Green Lake Park is one of the most popular and pleasant recreation sites in the city. Designed by the Olmsted Brothers Firm between 1907 and 1912, the park is an urban oasis of trees, plants, birds, and waterfowl. It offers facilities for swimming, boating, playing sports, picnicking, or attending theater in a converted bathhouse. On sunny days, the 2.8-mile path encircling the 259-acre lake teems with people running, walking, skating, and biking.

Just off that path, on the north end of the park between the wading pool and the boathouse, is Gaines Point. With benches and a picnic table, it is a lovely spot to stop for a rest. But back in the 1920s, this was the site of a brutal and sensational murder.

On the morning of June 17, 1926, a pair of women's shoes and then the nearly naked body of 22-year-old Sylvia Gaines were discovered near the water. Police determined that she had been murdered the night before by being choked and hit on the head with the bloody rock found nearby. The prime suspect: her father, Wallace C. "Bob" Gaines.

During a scandalous trial, the public learned that Sylvia's parents had split when she was five. In 1925, after graduating from Smith College, Sylvia came to Seattle and moved in with her dad and his second wife. The motive for murder, the prosecution claimed, was that after months of an incestuous relationship between father and daughter, Sylvia was determined to leave. After a quarrel, her father followed Sylvia to Green Lake and killed her in a jealous, alcohol-induced rage that he tried to make look like a random sexual attack by tearing her clothes and dragging the body. Bob Gaines was found guilty and hanged for the crime in Walla Walla on August 31, 1928. Sylvia's cremated ashes were sent to her mother in Massachusetts. And the unmarked point of land on Green Lake was dubbed Gaines Point in Sylvia's honor.

Address v7201 E Green Lake Drive N, Seattle, WA 98115, www.seattle.gov/parks/find/parks/green-lake-park | **Getting there** Bus to 45 E Greenlake Drive N & Meridian Avenue N | **Hours** Unrestricted | **Tip** On a more pleasant note, the two benches at Gaines Point are in memory of Florence and Harry McIntyre. The plaques give their birth and death dates (Harry lived to be 100) but neglect to mention that the couple was married for 50 years.

