

Soaking in Seattle

SPEND SATURDAY SEEING THE CITY FROM A HOT TUB

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Are you feeling the dreaded burnout? The imbalance of life and work is about to bring you down, but you don't know how to counteract it with only having a weekend to escape?

While it may not be the most exostic of places to go, Seattle can provide a quick change of scenery. Just a simple three-hour drive north, the sleepless city awaits you. From sports to parks to Pike Place to the Space Needle, you can do the typical Seattle views, or try to do something more unique.

Four of my friends and I decided to do just that. We planned a few months ahead, which allowed us to better find the things we wanted to do. Half of the group hadn't been to the city before, so we made sure to include a few of the must-do activities. Of course we had to make sure our plans were flexible due to the unpredictable weather in the Pacific Northwest.

Our weekend kicked off with breakfast and coffee at the Starbucks Reserve. If you have never heard of it, imagine your typical Starbucks experience, but elevated beyond just coffee and pre-packaged pastries. The store, located at 1124 Pike St. has an entire area dedicated to the preparation of coffee beans, an area for fresh baked pastries and even a coffee-inspired cocktail bar for the adults. As tempting as it was to try their espresso martini, it was far too early in the morning, so an oat milk latte and a few samples off my cousin's coffee flight was a fair substitute. While the experience and design of the building with its rustic interior was very elevating and different from the cafe experience, it really could just be a one-time experience.

Next was the walk down to the well known Pike Place Market and waterfront. My previous and only experience was back in December 2020, so the anticipation was high that much more life would be present.

In the market, the fish tossing was also back in full swing, many stands handing out samples again and even street performers in action. The waterfront area was just as insane. We spent a few hours walking around the many small shops and enjoying the warm blue sky, a rare occurrence for spring.

Really, we were just killing time, as our main reason for the weekend visit was to give a try at the Lake Union Hot Tub Boats a unique opportunity to enjoy a leisure float around Lake Union while enjoying the comfort of a hot tub.

Operating on an electric engine, the boats are simple to navigate by the use of a joystick. Every hot tub is filled with fresh water for each use and maintained at 104 F with the option to add in a scented epsom salt.

For an added experience, a built-in Bluetooth speaker and water bottles are provided. Once you check in, the helpful owners take

you to a changing area that includes a bathroom and locked storage. Rentals are for two hours and cost \$400 for up to six people. Renter must be at least 21 years of age, but because the boats operate at a low speed, no boaters license is required.

After you and your group are situated, you are given a dry lock box for safe keeping of any valuable items and then given a very thorough rundown on how the boat works and a map of the lake. We were also provided with emergency safety equipment including a first aid kit, a paddle and a phone number in case there were any kind issues that would impact our experience.

We stayed close by to Lake Union at the Staybridge Suites-South Lake Union. Located in close driving distance to everything, it was a great place to stay. The room included a kitchenette and private bathroom. The check in process was smooth, however parking costs \$40 a night and the parking garage has limited space so if you don't arrive early enough, be prepared to locate a nearby parking garage or seek out free street parking. Because the hotel is so close to everything, we were able to leave the car parked and either walk or take an Uber to get to where we needed.

There's something very relaxing about not only soaking in a relaxing hot tub, but getting to take in the Seattle skyline from a different perspective. I can't recommend this experience enough, it's a perfect way to just let go and be in the moment. If you are fortunate enough and book far enough in advance, you may even get to have the sunset to add to the overall experience. Find yourself a group of up to six and book your hot tub boat.



Katie Skibba takes in the sights from the Seattle Great Wheel.