

Itinerary: Kidding Around



This day is all about the kids and a sampling of the fun activities the Emerald City offers for the little ones. Of course, the **1 Space Needle** is the perfect starting place for this and will get the kids literally soaring above the city. It's the closest thing to flying and without wings!

All right, let's start easy by staying in the kid friendly confines of the Seattle Center. Walk from the Space Needle west on the grounds till you come to the Center House. There is a lot to do here food- and shop-wise, but an even cooler place for the whole family is The **2 Children's Museum** located downstairs. Here you will find educational, hands on, dress up, climb-ready exhibits. There is so much to discover for kids of all ages. Be sure to check out the theater in the back complete with a script for a show and costumes to boot.

For the inquisitive kids you can walk south across the lawn at the mural amphitheater and find your family enjoying the **3 Pacific Science Center**. With an array of permanent and changing exhibits there're always so many activities. Be sure to check out the Butterfly House and the Imax movies. A test tube of fun around every corner.

Two activities that fall under the radar of most tourists are a visit to **4 Kerry Park** with its famous view of Seattle and the Needle. Donated to the city in 1927, every newscast you've seen broadcast from Seattle has come from here. The park is a well known look out spot on Queen Anne Hill; what's unique family fun is the bottom part of the park, which has a small ball field and a brand-new gorgeous play structure for the young ones to burn calories while you get those priceless shots of the Needle, Elliott Bay, and Mount Rainier.

Another fun outdoor activity that requires a bit of planning but is well worth it is to go **5 kayaking on Lake Union**. We suggest renting your kayaks at Aqua Verde Café and Paddling Club. This is a good place to get reasonable rates on kayaks. Have a lunch or dinner in the Mexican Café, and be sure to use the bathroom. Once you are on the water, there's a great deal of aquatic adventure waiting.

From Aqua Verde, paddle west to Gas Works Park at the north end with its great views and a terrific hill for kite flying if you are so inclined. Keep paddling along the western edge of the lake and soon you will spot the houseboats along the western edge (including the Sleepless in Seattle houseboat). Paddle around the lake and even under the bridges. Once you have had enough, paddle back and think about getting a massage.

To get a bit further out and explore a neighborhood to boot, you can hit **6 Ballard**. This is the old Scandinavian neighborhood and in some places you can still see the small clapboard houses built about a hundred years ago that fishermen used to call home. There are a number of kid activities. First, if you have a skilled skateboarder in the family, there is a new skateboard bowl located across from the recently opened Ballard Branch of the Seattle Public Library (good bathroom stop). This is also a great location to pick up a free copy of Parent Map magazine, which lists hundreds of other activities around the area. Walk down Market Street until you come to the Secret Garden Bookshop, which specializes in children's books. They're all your old favorites and a few new discoveries to be had for intrepid browsers. Some games, toys, and activities are also for sale.

Once you are done continue for about three blocks down and you will find Archie McPhee. By the way, talk like a local and say "McPhee," not "McPhee's"! This is a temple of nothing you need and everything you want. They sell all kinds of one-of-a-kind toys, novelties and kitsch such as the Smoking Baby figure, a Pirate Bag, and their famous line of action figures including Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, and local celebs J.P. Patches and librarian Nancy Pearl. Pop in to look around and you will be there for hours!

You can continue down Market and experience the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks with a salmon fish ladder. Watch the fish as they take the literal leap to return for spawning. There are many informative signs about how the locks work and the salmon life cycle. Here you can learn about the waterways of Seattle and spot more than few boats that will make you a boatnik!

Whew, now head back for a well-needed soak and bubble bath for the kids!

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The Details

Seattle Children's Museum

LOCATION: 305 Harrison St Seattle, WA
 HOURS: Mon- Fri 10am- 5pm, Weekends 10am- 6pm
 FEES: Adults and Children \$7.50, Grandparents \$6.50,
 Children under the age of one are free. Group rates are available.
 CONTACT: (206) 441-1768

Pacific Science Center

LOCATION: 200 2nd Ave N, Seattle, WA
 HOURS: Mon- Fri 10am- 5pm, Sat & Sun 10am- 6pm
 FEES: Adults \$11, Youth 6-12 \$7, Youth 3-5 \$6, Seniors \$9.50
 CONTACT: (206) 443-2001

Kerry Park

LOCATION: 211 W Highland Drive
 HOURS: Open 24 hours

Secret Garden Bookstore

LOCATION: 2214 NW Market St, Seattle, WA
 HOURS: Open most days 10am- 8pm
 CONTACT: (206) 789-5006

Archie McPhee

LOCATION: 1300 N 45th Street
 HOURS: Mon- Sat 10am- 7pm, Sun 11am- 6pm
 CONTACT: (206) 297-0240

Agua Verde Cafe & Paddle Club

LOCATION: 1303 NE Boat St, Seattle, WA 98105
 HOURS:
 Café: Mon- Sat 11am- 9pm, Sun 12pm- 6pm
 Kayak Rentals: 10am to last rental between 5:30pm and 7:45pm
 CONTACT: (206) 545-8570

