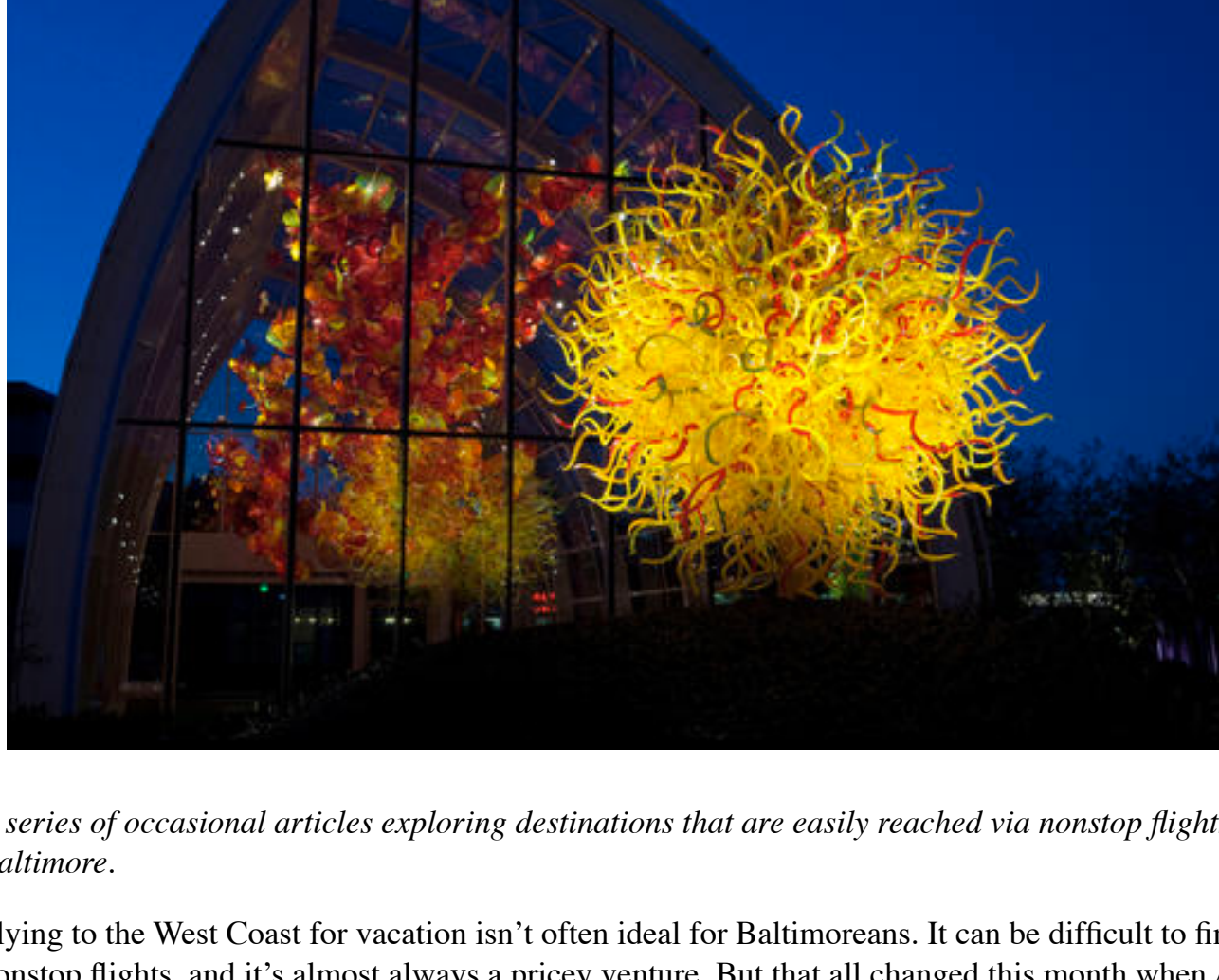


Travel: Nonstop

Pacific jewel: touring Seattle’s brilliant landscape

By Stephanie Citron

September 19, 2014



A series of occasional articles exploring destinations that are easily reached via nonstop flights from Baltimore.

Flying to the West Coast for vacation isn’t often ideal for Baltimoreans. It can be difficult to find nonstop flights, and it’s almost always a pricey venture. But that all changed this month when Alaska Airlines launched reasonably priced, nonstop service from BWI-Marshall to Seattle.

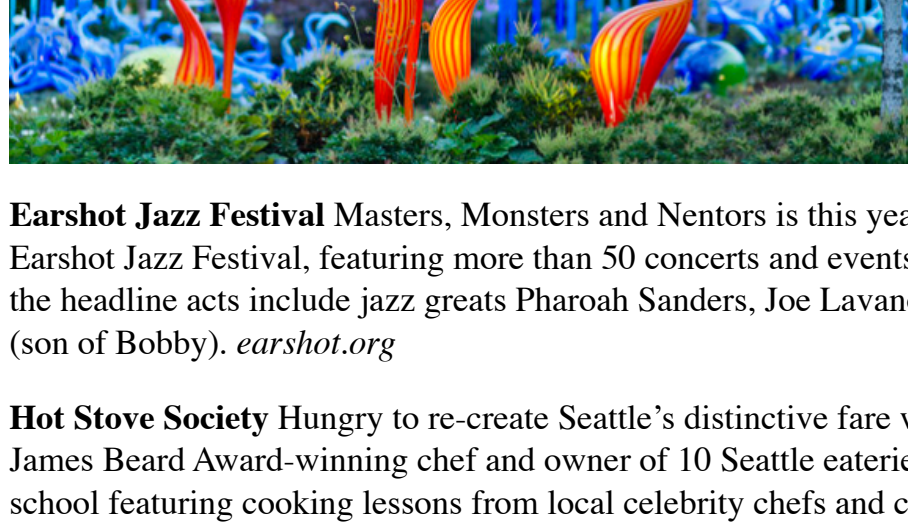
Despite its rainy reputation, Seattle is an ideal destination during the months of September and October, when the summer crowds have dissipated and chances for sunshine remain high. Visitors can see the city’s magnificent oaks, elms and ginkgos blaze rippling orange, yellow and crimson reflections across the Puget Sound while basking in daytime temperatures that hover at a pleasant 60-70 degrees.

Seattle, nicknamed Emerald City for its lush landscape, is blessed with some of the most dramatic topography in the United States, creating an exciting outdoor playground to explore. The city is snugly tucked between the Cascade and Olympic ranges, in the shadow of Mount Rainier and Mount St. Helens, on a strip of land serenely floating between the saltwater Puget Sound and freshwater Lake Washington. It is an outdoor enthusiast’s dream.

The city’s prime Pacific seaport setting has long attracted adventurers and entrepreneurs. Beginning in the mid-19th century, gold prospectors and loggers ventured here seeking their fortunes. They were soon joined by commercial fishermen, who earn their living braving its brisk waterways year-round. Then masses of Asian immigrants arrived to help build the railways.

That original diverse society, brimming with an intrepid, optimistic spirit, is the essence of present-day Seattle, with its enterprising population of techies, artisans, musicians and chefs. Seattle residents are a culture unto themselves, a little outdoorsy (REI’s headquarters are here), a little artsy and a little hipster.

Here’s what to see, do and eat this fall in Seattle.



Fall fun events

Queen Anne Farmers’ Market You can sample the autumn harvest of the Pacific Northwest at the Queen Anne Farmers’ Market, featuring items from 50 Washington farms, procurers of artisan food and cooking demonstrations. Thursdays through mid-October. *West Crockett Street at Queen Anne Avenue, qafma.net*

Earshot Jazz Festival Masters, Monsters and Nentors is this year’s theme for Seattle’s citywide Earshot Jazz Festival, featuring more than 50 concerts and events from Oct. 10 to Nov. 11. Some of the headline acts include jazz greats Pharoah Sanders, Joe Lavano, Joey Baron and Taylor McFerrin (son of Bobby). *earshot.org*

Hot Stove Society Hungry to re-create Seattle’s distinctive fare when you get home? Tom Douglas, James Beard Award-winning chef and owner of 10 Seattle eateries, just launched a new cooking school featuring cooking lessons from local celebrity chefs and cookbook authors. The hands-on classes at the Hot Stove Society include a meal. *hotstovesociety.com*

The Seattle International Comedy Competition claims to be the original “Last Comic Standing.” Thirty-three shows feature top comedians from around the world competing for the title from Nov. 5 to Nov. 30. Audiences and judges render votes until a champion is declared at the final show. *seattlecomedycompetition.com*

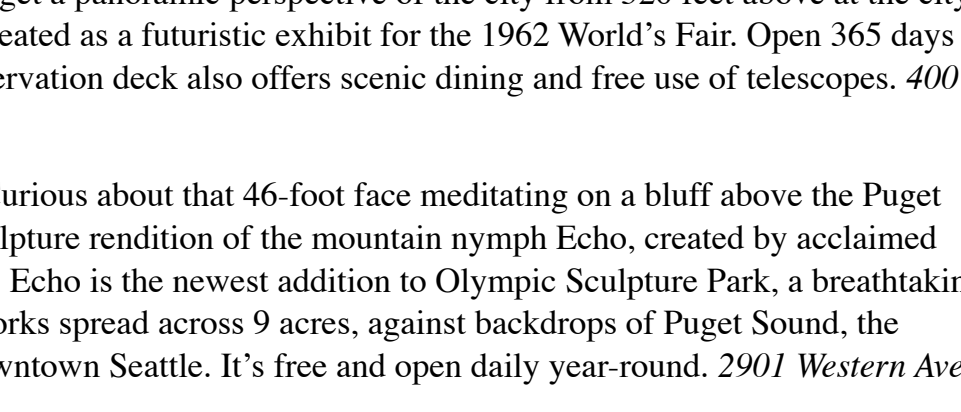
Don’t-miss attractions

Museum of History and Industry Considered Washington state’s Smithsonian, the newish MOHAI exhibits millions of artifacts representing the cultural and industrial evolution of this region. Don’t miss seeing Boeing’s first commercial aircraft and the evolution of local corporations like Amazon, Microsoft and Starbucks. *860 Terry Ave N., mohai.org*

Pike Place Market Local residents particularly love the Pike Place Market in autumn, when it’s full of fall produce and the summer tourists have departed. Famed for the “flying fish” tossed by vendors in its Fish Market, this circa-1907 bazaar is a hodgepodge of practically everything, from crafts to flowers to food to boutiques. It’s also home to the original Starbucks. *First and Pike streets, pikeplacemarket.org*

Distillery tours

There’s always a new craft distillery popping up in Seattle. With so many great choices, how to choose? Hop aboard a 10-passenger Mercedes-Benz Sprinter, a speakeasy on wheels, for distillery tours and tastings guided by local mixologists. Along the way, guests are treated to



handcrafted cocktails, artisan snacks and intriguing tales about Seattle’s colorful spirits history. The Downtown Brown tour is the newest offering, celebrating the city’s craft whiskey and bourbon purveyors. *localcrafttours.com*

Chihuly Garden and Glass If it’s raining, you can still find the Seattle Sun at the Chihuly Garden and Glass, a museum and environment showcasing the kaleidoscopic works of glass artist Dale Chihuly. Gleaming above the museum’s prismatic Glass House, the brilliant orange and yellow rendition of the earth’s largest star is but one of the colorful installations spread across indoor and outdoor gallery spaces. *305 Harrison St., chihulygardenandglass.com*

The Space Needle You can get a panoramic perspective of the city from 520 feet above at the city’s Space Needle, which was created as a futuristic exhibit for the 1962 World’s Fair. Open 365 days a year until midnight, the observation deck also offers scenic dining and free use of telescopes. *400 Broad St., spaceneedle.com*

Olympic Sculpture Park Curious about that 46-foot face meditating on a bluff above the Puget Sound? That would be a sculpture rendition of the mountain nymph Echo, created by acclaimed Spanish artist Jaume Plensa. Echo is the newest addition to Olympic Sculpture Park, a breathtaking environment of sculpture works spread across 9 acres, against backdrops of Puget Sound, the Olympic Mountains and downtown Seattle. It’s free and open daily year-round. *2901 Western Ave., seattleartmuseum.org*

EMP Museum Perhaps the best reflection of Seattle’s creative culture is represented in this avant-garde museum, a collection celebrating leading edge music, sci-fi and pop culture. Visitors can jam with state-of-the-art musical instruments, visit interactive galleries dedicated to science fiction, monsters and aliens, and check out the latest videos in the Sky Church, a concert venue which claims to have the world’s largest LED screen. *325 Fifth Ave. N., empmuseum.org*

Neighborhoods

Fall is a fabulous time to explore Seattle’s 12 distinctive and friendly neighborhoods, all within walking or biking distance from the city’s center. Each bears unique sights, tastes and vibes. Belltown, for example, is home to famous attractions like Pike Place Market and Olympic Sculpture Park. The International District is famed for its fascinating origins and tantalizing aromas streaming from an endless array of Asian eateries. If you think coffee is Seattle’s only celebrated brewed beverage, wake up. SODO, home to the distillery district, is just one example of the city’s exploding craft brewery, cidery and spirits scene. And where can you kayak and fish without leaving the city? The freshwater Lake Union in South Lake Union is smack in the middle of Seattle, with a recreational lake and a pond for racing miniature wooden boats (you can rent them).

Coffee

Stop and smell the coffee beans. It’s no secret that the America’s modern-day coffee craze was born in Seattle. In a city with more than 50 independent coffeehouses, you can expand your java taste sensors beyond Starbucks to a newer breed of boutique coffeehouses, self-roasting bean cafes that elevate their brews to the level of artisanal beverages. You can find many at *seattlecoffee.com*, the city’s dedicated website. Here are two standout choices worth a special trip:

Slate Coffee Bar The award-winning baristas here elevate their beverages to the status of a fine libation — and serve it in stemware. The beans are “exposure roasted,” a method that promises to preserve the seasonality and unique character notes of each type of bean. Its small menu reinforces the owners’ dedication to the select variety of beans they deem worth brewing. *5413 Sixth Ave. N.W., slatecoffee.com*

Espresso Vivace A trailblazer of handcrafted espresso, Espresso Vivace is credited with launching the movement in this country. Its milder bean varieties are roasted “Northern Italian style” to expand the sweeter tastes. The foam atop a latte is also renowned for expressing rosetta latte art, a design that graces the foam boutique espresso. *Three locations around town, espressovivace.com*

Dining

Seattle has so many award-winning chefs, it’s practically impossible not to have a great meal. Even better, there are always new places popping up. Speaking of which, be certain to check out some of the city’s high-end pop-up restaurants and food trucks.

Mamnoon Recently ranked one of Seattle’s top restaurants, this tantalizing Middle Eastern eatery was conceived by two former Microsoft execs waxing nostalgic about their native flavors. Small plates carry big-flavored traditional dishes, like baba ghanoush and lamb kababs, burst with authentic spices. *1508 Melrose Avenue, mamnoonrestaurant.com.*

Rain Shadow Meats Squared. Part butcher shop, part butcher counter in a hipster warehouse setting, the restaurant is a great lunch spot. The outrageous sandwiches are flanked by French bread or sourdough and stuffed with savory fresh-cut and cured meats, homemade spreads, and adorned with local provisions. *404 Occidental Ave. South, rainshadowmeats.com*



The Whale Wins. Named one of Bon Appetit’s 2013 “10 Best New Restaurants in America,” The Whale Wins specializes in rustic European recipes fused with local Pacific Northwest provisions, incorporating unique preparation methods from around the world. Even vegetarians will be content with the outstanding variety of inventive seasonable vegetable dishes prepared in the wood-fired oven. *3506 Stone Way N., thewhalewins.com*

If you go

Getting there

Seattle is 2,771 miles from Baltimore, about a 5 1/2-hour flight. Alaska Airlines launched BWI’s only nonstop service to Seattle this month, offering one nonstop flight a day with rates beginning at \$168 one-way. Go to *alaskairlines.com*.

You’ll experience Seattle’s unique rhythm shortly after you touch down at Sea-Tac Airport. Three times a day, local musicians perform in the airport’s public spaces, and their music is broadcast on speakers and monitors in common areas. It’s all part of the Sea-Tac’s partnership with the Seattle Music Commission and PlayNetwork. Can it get any cooler? It does: a collection of famous Northwestern performers like Quincy Jones, Brandi Carlile and Jerry Cantrell have recorded the airport’s welcome, security and informational announcements.

Lodging

Hotel Vintage, 1100 Fifth Ave., *hotelvintage-seattle.com*. You won’t need to leave your lodging for a nightcap or happy hour when you stay at the Hotel Vintage. Last March, Kimpton transformed this hotel into a wine-lovers’ abode. Each of the rooms, decorated in vineyard hues — burgundy, taupe and green — is named for a Washington state winery. A dedicated wine hour features nightly pours by one of the hotel’s local winery partners, and the concierge can organize wine-themed day trips. Rates start around \$269 per night.

Hotel 1000, 1000 First Ave., *hotel1000seattle.com*. Seattle’s hippest and highest-tech digs, Hotel 1000 is surprisingly warm and fuzzy, with a convivial welcome, giant tubs that fill by water, cascading from the ceiling, complimentary Cadillac rides to destinations around town, “smart” room phone that gives restaurant suggestions and a golf club that offers virtual playtime on dozens of the world’s most exclusive greens. Rates start around \$209 per night.

Information

For more information about Seattle, go to *visitseattle.org*.