

# SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOURS



## Introduction:

Many regard the Pike Place Market to be the seat of Seattle's "soul." It is located between 1st and Western Avenues and Pike and Virginia Streets, and a short walk from downtown Seattle's retail and hotel district. The "Pike Street Hillclimb" connects it to the Seattle Aquarium and central waterfront via a system of stairs and elevators. Ample parking can be found along Western Avenue with elevator and skybridge connections to the Market.



*Note: This tour is intended for personal use only and was prepared by HistoryLink for the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development, Tourism Division. Copyright 2001, City of Seattle. All references to contemporary businesses in this tour date from May 2001. They are cited for orientation and information purposes only and do not imply recommendation or endorsement by the City of Seattle or HistoryLink.*

To learn more about the Market's rich history, visit [www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org).

## History:

On the morning of Saturday, August 17, 1907, hundreds of shoppers mobbed a few dozen farmers' carts at the foot of downtown's Pike Street (named for Seattle pioneer and builder John Pike). This first "public market" was held to cut out greedy middlemen who drove up the

## Pike Place Market Historical Walking Tour

prices of local produce, and it was an instant hit with farmers and consumers alike. Developer Frank Goodwin, who had recently returned with a small fortune from the Klondike Gold Rush, saw money in all those greens and began construction of the permanent arcades that make up the heart of today's Market. The Market prospered during the 1920s and 1930s, and was home to a lively mix of Japanese and Italian American farmers, struggling artists such as Mark Tobey, political radicals, and miscellaneous eccentrics. Italian farmer Joe



Desimone purchased the Market's main arcades in 1941 and guided it through World War II, when 1st Avenue's "Tenderloin" attracted thousands of sailors and soldiers along with ration-book bargain hunters. As suburbs and supermarkets sprouted after World War II, the Pike Place Market fell on bad times, while still supporting an eclectic community of artists and crafts people. When the maze of aging buildings was slated for demolition in the 1960s, architect Victor Steinbrueck rallied Seattle to "Save the Market." Voters approved a 17-acre historic district on November 2, 1971, and the City of Seattle later established a Public Development Authority to rehabilitate and manage the Market's core buildings.



**1. Information Booth, 1st & Pike:** This is the site of original 1907 open-air market. The descending ramp leads to Post Alley and cafes such as Il Bistro and the Alibi Room. Read All About It is one of Seattle's busiest newspaper stands. The adjacent Economy Market building dates from 1900, and was expanded in 1916 and again in 1978. Its interior atrium houses numerous shops and cafes in addition to the venerable Delaurenti's Delicatessen, and is connected to the newer South Market arcade, home of the Pike Place brewery and other attractions.





**2. Under the Clock:** The Market's signature clock was erected during the Great Depression. The brass piggybank "Rachel" has been collecting donations for the Market Foundation's social programs since 1986. Walking west leads you past Seattle's famous "Flying Fish" mongers to the LaSalle Hotel. Once a bordello operated where Nellie Curtis' girls serviced the fleet, it now houses Market Spice and Tea, Maximilien's and the Place Pigalle.

**3. Stairs to the Lower Market:** This is the main access to the Main Market's multi-level labyrinth of cafes, shops, and studios. It also leads to a skybridge over Western Avenue and the Pike Place Hillclimb, which descends to the Seattle Aquarium and historic waterfront.

**4. Main Market:** Walking north leads you past cafes such as The Athenian and Lowell's and numerous stalls offering fresh fish, vegetables, and other delicacies. The Main Market was completed in 1916 by Frank Goodwin and restored in 1977 under the direction of city architect George Bartholick.



**5. North Arcade:** As you proceed north, farmer stalls gradually give way to tables offering crafts, flowers, and souvenirs. The Desimone Bridge honors Joe Desimone, an Italian-born farmer whose family managed the Market for decades.

**6. Victor Steinbrueck Park:** This pleasant expanse atop a large parking garage offers spectacular views of Elliott Bay and the Olympic Mountains beyond. Designed by Richard Haag and completed in 1978, its name honors the crusading architect who campaigned for the Market's preservation. The twin totems were carved by Quinault sculptor Marvin Oliver and James Bender. We will now return south along the east side of Pike Place.



**7. Pike Place and Virginia Street:** The Pike & Virginia building was designed by Olson/Walker and became the Market's first new structure in 1978. The adjacent Champion Building was built in 1928 for the Dollar Cab Company. South of it is the Soames-Dunn Building, remodeled in 1978 under the guidance of architect Arne Bystrom. It houses several shops and restaurants including Sabra Mediterranean Deli, Bavarian Meats, and Emmett Watson's Oyster House on an interior courtyard. From this you can take stairs up to Upper Post Alley and its collection of stores and eateries, including The Pink Door, Kell's Irish Pub, and The Glass Eye gallery. The newer Stewart House was designed by Ibsen Nelson in 1982.

**8. Pike Place and Stewart Street:** Arne Bystrom also guided the distinctive remodel of the Seattle Garden Center, originally built in 1908. Up the hill stands the Inn at the Market hotel, designed by Ibsen Nelson in 1985. Across Stewart is the Triangle Market,



erected in 1908 for the South Park Poultry Company. The balcony of its Copacabana Restaurant is crowded with diners on sunny days.

**9. The Sanitary Market:** Designed by Daniel Huntington in 1910 and expanded in 1942, this large complex

took its name from the fact that horse-drawn carts were not allowed inside. Architect Fred Bassetti headed up an extensive remodel in 1981. It now houses a maze of shops, delis, stalls, and diners, many of which have been in continuous operation for decades. The Three Girls Bakery, for example, has sold bread and pastries here since 1912.

**10. The Corner Market:** This landmark building was designed by Harlan Thomas and finished in 1912; Karlis Rekevics guided its rehabilitation in 1975. It houses numerous shops and restaurants, including the Pike Place Bar & Grill, Chez Shea, and Matt's in the Market. You have now come full circle to Pike Street. We suggest you retrace your steps, because this tour was just a sampling of the Market's feast of wonders and delights.

