



Terminally Hip

Has hell frozen over? Because Sea-Tac Airport's new Pacific Marketplace just might have you hankering for flight delays

Clockwise from top: Pacific Marketplace's wooden rocking chairs are the best seats in the house; fish and chips from Anthony's at Sea-Tac; the handshaken lemonades from Dish D'Lish are sealed to prevent take-off mishaps; a massive, curved wall of windows encircles the Pacific Northwest-themed atrium; bestsellers at Borders' airport bookstore; one of Sea-Tac's nine mosaic tile columns looms like a western red cedar; the terminal's new display screen is a one-stop shop for all of the airport's departures and arrivals; colorful paper lanterns at eclectic local favorite, Fireworks

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE HIPPLE

TO THE ADAGE that only two things are certain (death and taxes), we hereby add a third: If you plan to travel by air during the holidays (and that's an estimated 4 million of you), you will spend more time than you anticipated at Sea-Tac Airport. But buck up, weary traveler—and watch out for those flying pigs—because Sea-Tac Airport is actually, *finally* cool.

Remember the days when Sea-Tac looked like a generic sitcom airport set? They're over! The Port of Seattle recently spent \$126 million to spiff up the central terminal (we're talking extreme makeover), adding an airy Northwest-themed food and retail hub, the Pacific Marketplace. Not only is the new terminal unequivocally Seattle, it's enclosed on one side by a 350-foot-long, 60-foot-high wall of windows with a fabulous view of the runway action.

And the bliss doesn't end there. The airport has added a cell phone waiting lot (at the Doug Fox parking lot on Airport Expressway at S 170th Street) so that your family members who are too cheap to pay for parking can stop circling the terminal while they wait for you. Just give 'em a buzz when you land, and they'll be waiting at the curb. And if they're not, so what? Just head back inside to spend more time in the airport.

● ● ● EAT

Situated between concourses B and C and accessible only to ticketed passengers, the Pacific Marketplace couldn't pull off a Northwest theme without including a stalwart of Northwest cuisine. Which is why **Anthony's at Sea-Tac** (206.431.3000; anthonys.com) anchors the dining scene, with a sit-down



restaurant and a more moderately priced fish'n'chips bar. On the other side of the Pacific Marketplace is our region's other seafood staple, **Ivar's** (206.248.0012; *ivars.net*), serving its satisfying tried-and-true cod and chowder.

Local celebrity chef Kathy Casey has taken the airport by storm with **Dish D'Lish**, (206.433.5121; *kathycasey.com*), her upscale "food t' go go" deli, a great take-out option now that airlines are increasingly cutting in-flight meals. Travelers are crazy about the double apple with smoked bacon breakfast sandwich. Grounded in the evening? Take comfort in the Ultimate 4-Cheese Mac. Be sure to order a hand-shaken lemonade to go; they're custom sealed with a Japanese bubble-tea sealer to survive takeoff and come with a giant pointy straw. Need a pick-me-up after a long day of travel? Coffee, schmoffee, we say; go for the decadent Ephemere Dark⁵²—that little 52 refers to the percentage of cacao in the chocolate—and order it with a shot of caramel, at **Dilettante Chocolates' Mocha Café** (206.433.7476; *dilettante.com*). Outside the mecca that is Pacific Marketplace, beer joints celebrate our microbrewing prowess: **Africa Lounge** in Concourse A (serving Mac

& Jack's) and two located in the pre-security area, **Seattle Tap Room** and **Destination Bar** (serving Pyramid brews).

● ● ● SHOP

The Pacific Marketplace's Northwest flavor is reflected in its shops, too, most notably **Fireworks** (206.244.5380; *fireworksgallery.net*), the city's favorite destination for eclectic and funky gifts by local artists. Jetting off on an exotic backpack tour? Duck into Seattle adventure apparel store **Ex Officio** (206.242.9696; *exofficio.com*) for "Buzz Off" insect-repellant shirts and pants, as well as bactericide-treated underwear. Long flights mean uninterrupted time to read; at **Borders** (206.444.4414; *borders.com*) you can pick up more than just the latest John Grisham book. Too tense to read on the plane? Save the book for your destination, where you can enjoy it in a scented and bubbled bath courtesy of products from **The Body Shop** (206.243.1606; *thebodyshop.com*). And if you're traveling during the holidays, chances are your kids are, too, so give them a break from the grown-up grind with a trip to **National Geographic/Kids Works** (206.243.1705), a fun place to pass the time or pick up a toy on the fly.

● ● ● DISCOVER

Suspended from the Pacific Marketplace's 60-foot-tall atrium is **Landing**, a fanciful art installation made up of hundreds of tiny pewter salmon and local-icon figurines (Jimi Hendrix's guitar, Pike Place Market's Rachel the pig) that make up the form of a snow goose and its reflected image. Why a snow goose? No idea, but this wacky-sounding piece is surprisingly beautiful. (And how many times have you been able to say *that* about something at Sea-Tac?)

The new central terminal includes a centralized security checkpoint, so once you're cleared you can walk to any concourse to view the airport's impressive art collection. In Concourse A, don't miss the nine mosaic columns, most designed by a local artist (at a distance, one looks exactly like a western red cedar), or local artist Cappy Thompson's riveting window mural, **I Was Dreaming of Spirit Animals**. And, of course, there is the train-wreck-hypnotic "kinetic sculpture" piece **On: Matter, Monkeys and the King**, from the ubiquitous Trimpin. It's a little weird and a tad disturbing (electric monkeys usually are), but your kids will love it. **S**