

The West's best city parks

From Phoenix to Seattle, these alluring outdoor spaces offer more than a breath of fresh air, with amazing art and beautiful blooms, shady trails and stargazing.



SALT LAKE CITY

Liberty Park

Not far from the city's lively Ninth and Ninth neighborhood, Liberty Park feels like a leafy exhale. Here, you'll find the Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts, an airy building filled with kachinas, crochet work, and pop culture-inspired piñatas made by American Indians, Anglo homesteaders, and global artists who have lived in Utah. In Tracy Aviary in the corner of the park, flamingos sunbathe; at midday, pelicans jockey into position for lunch. You might head to the nearby Park Café, a diner that serves all-American standards. The French toast is justifiably beloved.



LAS VEGAS

Springs Preserve

The three rivulets that gave birth to Las Vegas have dried up, but the oasis that contained them persists in the form of Springs Preserve. The 180-acre site is home to succulent gardens, a seasonal butterfly habitat, and cottonwood-shaded trails. Refuel at the Divine Cafe, a sunny lunch spot near the entrance with incredible views of the Vegas skyline.



SEATTLE

Volunteer Park

In the midst of this Capitol Hill park, a century-old conservatory stands tall, its glass panes filtering sunlight onto showy ferns and flame-pink azaleas. Nearby, outside the Seattle Asian Art Museum, Isamu Noguchi's ring-shaped *Black Sun* sculpture frames the distant Space Needle. The museum is slated to reopen in February 2020 following renovations.

LOS ANGELES

Griffith Park

It doesn't get much more L.A. than Griffith Park: The 4,310-acre wildland offers dreamy views of the city skyline, yet it unfolds across rugged canyons and chaparral-laced peaks including Mount Lee, home of the HOLLYWOOD sign. The park also contains the famous Griffith Observatory and the Greek Theatre, where Elton John, Carlos Santana, and countless other icons have performed under the stars.

SAN FRANCISCO

Golden Gate Park

Back in 1870, two intrepid San Franciscans set to work transforming 1,017 acres along their city's sandy western edge into a lush Northern California Eden, verdant with redwoods, conifers, and camellias. Those acres contain a parade of wonders: 10 lakes, two windmills, two top-notch museums, and a bison herd—plus, a swing dance class so infectious, passersby often stop to join the fun.

PHOENIX

Papago Park

Saguaros, mesquite trees, and sandstone buttes with otherworldly shapes set a striking backdrop for hiking and mountain biking in this 1,500-acre park. Along with the showstoppers (Phoenix Zoo and Desert Botanical Garden), you'll find surprises such as the Hall of Flame. Here, horse-drawn water wagons, smoke-jumper displays, and photos of heroes honor all those who battle blazes. —RENEE BRINCKS