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Pitch Perfect

ALL-STAR MLS GOALIE KASEY KELLER FEELS LIKE HE'S ON TOP OF THE WORLD LIVING IN SEATTLE.



OUTSTANDING IN HIS FIELD Seattle Sounders goalie Kasey Keller atop Qwest Field.

Kasey Keller is arguably the greatest goalkeeper in US soccer history,

having starred in the world's top soccer leagues in England, Germany and Spain for more than 15 years. In 2009, Keller returned to his native Washington to lead Major League Soccer's new franchise, Seattle Sounders FC, which welcomed an average of 30,943 fans per game—an MLS record—in its inaugural season. Here, Keller—one of the league's elder statesmen—shares a few tips on how visitors can get their kicks in and around Emerald City.



What should first-time visitors do when they land in Seattle? “Go to a Sounders game, of course. Even if you’ve never been to a soccer game before, you’ll have a great time. We have the best fans in North America, and you’ll see people on their feet chanting, singing and cheering from start to finish. The good thing about soccer, too, is that it’s easy to schedule because you know each game is going to be a two-hour outing. If you know you’re going to be in Seattle, get tickets well in advance.”

If you can’t get tickets, are there any energetic local pubs where you can catch a game on TV? “There are a lot of fun places in Pioneer Square, near Qwest Field, which is where we play our home games. Fuel is where the Emerald City Supporters [the team’s unofficial supporters club] hang out before and after games. They’re the most vocal and loyal fans we have. Fuel is definitely for die-hard soccer fans that want a rowdier experience. E.X. McRory’s is another good option. E.X. gets lots of Sounders fans on game day, but it’s a little more relaxed—more of a sit-down place where you can also get a good meal.”

Speaking of meals, where do you like to eat with your wife when you’re done making spectacular saves? “If we want to be right downtown, we love going to ART at the Four

“We have the best fans in North America, and you’ll see people on their feet chanting, singing and cheering from start to finish.”

SEATTLE’S BEST (above) Sounders fans get rowdy; (below) Fine dining at ART Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel Seattle.

Seasons. They’ve got everything from delicious mini burgers to great seafood. We also love going to Canlis, which is beautiful inside and has incredible views of Lake Union and the city. It’s really nice in the evening as the sun’s going down; it has floor-to-ceiling windows that [showcase the views]. Both places are definitely on the high-end, fine-dining side of things.”

How do you spend downtime? “I live right on Lake Washington, which is amazing. It’s part of the reason we moved from Europe back to the US: We wanted to be in a place where we could walk out the front door, have trees and parks around, and head down to the water. My wife and kids love it.”

Is there public access on Lake Washington? “Of course. It’s really [a centerpiece] for the city and has a bunch of public parks [that offer] boating, waterskiing—pretty much anything you can do on the water. If my MLS contract allowed, I’d probably do a lot of waterskiing—but that’ll have to wait a few years.”

What exciting things can people do in your home state just beyond Seattle? “Some people don’t realize how much the Pacific Northwest has to offer. Within a few hours’ drive, you can go surfing, skiing or snowboarding, then maybe head back to the Four Seasons for a spa treatment—all in the same day if you want. It’s a beautiful place to live and visit.”

—Bryce Hubner

QWEST FIELD / SEATTLE SOUNDERS
800 Occidental Ave S, #100; 206-682-2800; soundersfc.com

FUEL 164 S Washington St; 206-405-3835; fuelseattle.com

E.X. MCRORY’S STEAK CHOP & OYSTER HOUSE 419 Occidental Ave S; 206-623-4800; fxmcrorys.com

ART RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE
Four Seasons Hotel Seattle; 99 Union St; 206-749-7000; fourseasons.com

CANLIS RESTAURANT 2576 Aurora Ave N; 206-283-3313; canlis.com

SEATTLE PARKS & RECREATION
206-684-4075; seattle.gov/parks

TO LEARN more about what to do, where to eat and where to shop in Seattle, turn to page 154 in the Go Guides.