Ballard is an up and coming neighborhood in the northwest corner of Seattle. Home to trendy restaurants and indie shops, the neighborhood is a popular tourist destination. In addition to the superb food and shopping experiences, Ballard also has one of the largest fishing and boating industries which makes the Ballard Locks a popular location for a nice afternoon picnic. For outdoor enthusiast, the Golden Gardens Park offers sandy beaches for sunbathers and volleyball players alike. If the weather is rough, the Nordic Heritage Museum offers protection from the rain while sharing the rich Scandinavian background of Ballard.
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Ballard’s historically prosperous business industry previously granted the neighborhood city status. Because of the communities prime location for timber mills, Captain Ballard convinced Mr. Stimson to build Stimson’s Mill on Salmon Bay. Soon after, The Seattle Cedar Company followed suit. Ballard’s production of lumber and shingles quickly multiplied, so much so that Ballards 10 shingle mills were producing more red cedar shingles than any other community nationwide. As a result, Ballard quickly established itself as the “Shingle Capital of America.” In addition to the thriving shingles industry, Ballards fishing and boating business also expanded. The development of the Ballard Locks, the Ship Canal project, and the Fisherman’s Terminal helped create one of the largest fishing fleets on the West Coast. Furthermore, a bustling commercial district developed along Ballard Avenue which is still intact today. Due to Ballard’s prosperity in business, Ballard was incorporated into a city. However, like many other small cities, Ballard quickly outgrew its resources. As a result, residents voted to be annexed to Seattle and Ballard lost its city status.

The economy in Ballard is centered around the Farmer’s Market. With thousands of people visiting and vending every Sunday, the Farmer’s Market is the talk of the town. The entire town gathers to either spend money supporting their fellow neighbors or selling various goods to one another. The small market circulates over 75,000 dollars on an average Sunday. This high rate of monetary circulation stimulates their economy and produces tons of tax dollars that go back into further developing Ballard. The Farmer’s Market in Ballard serves as the backbone for the city of Ballard.

A major hook of Ballard’s business industry are the beer pubs that line its streets. With 11 breweries in only 5 square miles, Ballard has become the spot for a bar crawl. The city offers several brewery tours and is a major tourist attraction. The oldest brewery in the Ballard Brewery District is Maritime Pacific Brewing and was built in 1990 by George and Jane Hancock. Back in 1982, Redhook was the first brewery established in Ballard, however, it has relocated. An activity unique to Ballard is known as the Cycle Saloon, a passenger-pedal-powered vehicle in which people can sit and pedal their way through the breweries of Ballard all while sitting and chatting with their friends! The activity is recommended for bachelor/bachelorette parties, fun team building events, or just a Saturday. With so many breweries in such a small area, it’s no surprise that this is a major source of revenue for the Ballard district.
HISTORY

The neighborhood of Ballard, located in the northwest corner of Seattle provides a unique heritage based on its Scandinavian roots. Although the land was originally inhabited by Native Americans, Ira Utter and Osbourne Hall filed a homestead claim in 1852. Around 20 years later, Ballard observed its first wave of development when the land was sold and divided, the resulting neighborhood was granted the name “Farmdale Homestead.” Later William Rankin Ballard, or Captain Ballard, obtained about 160 acres of land from a lost coin toss. Although the land was thought to be worthless, his losing bet began to yield a fine profit. In 1890, when the city was incorporated, it was granted the name Ballard for Captain Ballard.

Ballard quickly established itself through the expansion of railroad and streetcar services. It even developed tourist and homeowner attractions such as private ferries to nearby towns and an amusement park for entertainment.

Meanwhile, a mass migration from Scandinavian countries to the United States was beginning. The abundance of jobs in Puget Sound and fishery mills attracted the Scandinavian foreigners to settle in Ballard. Although the population of Scandinavians in Ballard never reached majority, the immigrants spread their rich ethnic identity throughout the entire community.

WEATHER

Ballard is above of Seattle and to the West on the coast of Shilshole Bay. Due to its location near the water, it can get windy at times. Not too long ago, a rare cloud formation formed called a funnel cloud. This rare formation occurs only 3 times a year in the United States and is a product of high winds which produce a tornado that does not reach the ground. All in all, Ballard’s geography creates unique weather conditions ranging from rain to sun and windy to still.
DEMOGRAPHICS

Ballard, like Seattle, is comprised of mainly Caucasians, as you may be able to see from the chart on the right. Relative population of minorities in comparison to Seattle, however, is much lower in Ballard. According to US Census Bureau Data from 2016, there are 17.3% more whites in Ballard than in Seattle and 7.3% less Asians. All other minorities are also less in Ballard than Seattle.

In terms of gender, the county is pretty evenly split with about 50% males and 50% females. The median age of Ballard rests at an unsurprising 35. These statistics are all fairly valid.

The median household income in Ballard is about 78,000. This number is about 11,000 dollars higher than the average household income in the United States. This fact, however, is not surprising as the Seattle area houses some of the largest employers in the United States and, as a result, has an extremely high cost of living. Conversely, Ballard also houses a significant homeless population, and the high cost of living forces more and more people into this situation yearly. The state of Washington is instituting many policies in attempt to decrease this population but homelessness and poverty in the state persists and increases year after year.

The environment is competitive and may lead to a high stress environment, decreasing overall population health in Ballard and Seattle.

Khaira: "I found that the neighborhood was extremely family friendly while also having an exciting nightlife for young adults. Although the combination was surprising, it showed the diversity of lifestyles that I observed through my background research."

Shalon: "What surprised me the most was the abundance of families that were experiencing the city. I had expected to see younger people that worked in industry in Seattle and wanted to have a cheaper place to live than inside the city."

Jagathesan: "The ethnicities we saw in the farmers market very much matched the information I read online. What surprised me, however, was also the coexisting large homeless population. I never expected to see two starkly different groups in the same community."

Victors: "I was happy to see all the families and dogs at the farmers market. As expected, the population was majority white and we saw an abundance of coffee shops and small coffee stands"


