



The Gum Wall

Field Review by
the Team at
RoadsideAmerica.com

Seattle, Washington

Patrons of the Market Theater in Seattle took the warning, "no gum under the seats," seriously, and in the early 1990s began affixing their chewed gum to the theater's outside brick wall instead. The novelty caught on, and people were soon visiting -- not to see a show, but to stick gum on the wall. Early attempts to discourage the practice by cleaning the wall proved fruitless -- people just stuck gum back on the clean wall -- so in 1999 it was declared an official Seattle attraction.

Similar visitor-participation accumulations exist elsewhere, such as **Bubble Gum Alley** in California and **Bottle Cap Alley** in Texas, but none is as famous as The Gum Wall. It can be covered in spots several inches thick, and stretches 50 feet long and up to 15 feet high. Some people obviously travel with ladders.

You can smell the gum before you round the corner into the alley: the minty, sugary scent of massed mastication. Purists affix only gum, but some accessorize their wads with coins or business cards. Others mold their moist wads into letters and faces. We saw one young man pointing out his old contributions to his date, who was clearly smitten.



Much press was generated in November 2015 when The Gum Wall was steamed and scraped entirely clean, removing **over a ton of build-up**. But in fact the wall is routinely de-gummed (usually after Labor Day) to slow the erosion of the old bricks from the sugar. It doesn't matter; the wads quickly return, and the purges ensure that The Gum Wall always presents a colorful crop of freshly-chewed gum for the next summer season.

The Gum Wall

Address: 1530 Post Alley, Seattle, WA

Directions: Just south of Pike Place Market, in a back alley, coating the exterior of the Market Theater.

Admission: Free

RA Rates: Worth a Detour



Nearby Offbeat Places



Giant Shoe Museum, Seattle, WA - < 1 mi.



Parking Squid, Seattle, WA - < 1 mi.



Hammering Man, Seattle, WA - < 1 mi.

In the region:

Archie McPhee Catalog Store, Seattle, WA - 4 mi.

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