



Ultimate Alumni Itinerary

Ask any University of Wisconsin-Madison alum for their favorite haunts on campus and be prepared to settle in for a long litany of “you-have-to” recommendations. Nice thing about the ultimate alumni itinerary below is that it works just as wonderfully for Madison grads as for anyone who loves the Madison experience, and who doesn’t love Madison?

Where to Stay

Campus digs are the best, but what’s even better is that they come in all styles, from actual UW properties to swanky boutique hotels.

If you’re an alum or attending a campus event, you’re likely eligible to stay at:

- **The Lowell Center** on Langdon Street. Comfy rooms, outdoor patios with views to Lake Mendota, fitness center, the area’s largest indoor pool, and complimentary breakfast buffet define the experience here.
- The eco-conscious **Wisconsin Union Hotel** at Union South on West Dayton Street. Enjoy views to Camp Randall stadium and downtown Madison. Spa-inspired bathrooms and custom crafted furniture are nice touches too.
- The **Club Suites at Memorial Union** welcome you to the heart of campus. Six elegantly appointed and updated rooms have stunning views of Lake Mendota, the Memorial Union Terrace and iconic UW-Madison landmarks.
- **The Fluno Center** on University Avenue. The 100 guest rooms here continue the Prairie Style design of the rest of the Center.

Here are three more options, all offering a nod to UW life:

- Ultra-contemporary **HotelRED**. Located kitty-corner from Camp Randall Stadium with balcony views to the neighborhood, this independent boutique hotel has been likened to hip offerings in Manhattan. The staff here are all Madison devotees.
- The aptly named **Graduate** hotel. Billed as a place to welcome back the glory days of college only this time around with comforts you didn’t have as an undergrad. Enjoy dinner on the rooftop overlooking the Capital and Lake Mendota.
- Prairie-style B&B **Buckingham Inn**. The innkeepers have lived in Madison since 1975 when both were enrolled at the UW. The Varsity Suite is the largest and most luxe.

Being in the heart of the city, there are lots of other choices, from high-end to budget-friendly. The Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau has complete listings at VisitMadison.com.

What to Experience

Now we get to the part that makes a warm weather weekend in Madison like no other experience in the country. Clearly, this campus and this city believe in doing things big, as in really big.

- Start at **Alumni Park** and be inspired every step of the way. Drop-in tours of the park and its exhibits are offered on a seasonal basis. See AlumniPark.com for schedule.
- Let's call them "twinning" fountains. We're speaking of the newly (finally) refurbished **Library Mall** fountain and the new **Alumni Park** fountain just across the street at the entrance to the park's green space.
- Head next door to **Memorial Union Terrace** where you'll want to pull up an iconic sunburst chair and watch the sailboats and people glide by.
- Hike up **Bascom Hill** and snap a photo with Abe, as in the Abe Lincoln statue.
- Hike down the hill and to the opposite end of State Street where you'll find the **State Capitol**, marking its centennial in 2017. The mural restoration in the dome of the rotunda will take your breath away.
- On Saturdays from spring through fall, shop the **Dane County Farmers' Market**, which fills the entire perimeter of the Capitol Square. It is the largest producers-only farmers' market in the country.
- Head back to campus, stopping midway at the **Madison Museum of Contemporary Art**, with architecture as striking as the exhibits it houses. Back on campus, make time for the **Chazen Museum of Art** with the second largest art collection in the state.
- On a football Saturday, tailgate at the **Badger Bash** at **Union South**, where brats and beer are always on the menu and where the strains of "On, Wisconsin!" and "Varsity" come courtesy of the full UW Marching Band. Make **Badgerville** part of your gameday experience too. This tailgate event featuring appearances by the marching band and Bucky Badger and activities for the whole family is adjacent to the stadium.
- With football tickets in hand, make your way in to **Camp Randall Stadium**, turning 100 this year. Enter through the **Camp Randall Memorial Arch**, pausing to take a close look at the imagery carved in the Arch honoring the troops that trained at Camp Randall during the Civil War.
- Did You Know: Full tours of the **UW-Madison campus** are offered on a regular basis. Check out the tour list and schedule at wisc.edu/visit.
- Bring the Kids: Dig into rocks and fossils at the **University of Wisconsin Geology Museum** or take in a Science Saturday on the first Saturday of the month for hands-on fun at the **Discovery Building** on campus.
- Get out on the water by renting paddling equipment from **Outdoor UW** on Lake Mendota, Brittingham Boats on Lake Monona or Wingra Boats on Lake Wingra.

Go Green While Wearing Red

Along with Alumni Park, connect with nature at other notable green spaces on campus:

- Stroll the **Allen Centennial Garden**, the **Lakeshore Nature Preserve with Muir Woods**, the **Lakeshore Path**, and **Picnic Point** peninsula along Lake Mendota's south shore.
- Trek the 20+ miles of trails at the **UW Arboretum**, taking time to appreciate the distinct ecological communities and effigy mounds found here.

Where to Eat

The foodie scene in Madison is well documented, much lauded, and supremely delicious. No one will fault you if you spend a good portion of your visit enjoying good portions of classic cuisine washed down with famous libations.

On campus:

- Restaurants in Memorial Union and Union South stand on their own, nostalgia or no.
- Babcock Hall Dairy Store is the oldest university dairy plant in the U.S. Get a scoop or two of ice cream, sample some cheese, and watch dairy plant operations from the second floor observation deck.
- Inside Scoop: The **campus Dairy Cattle Center** is open weekdays to walk-in visitors. Time your visit to late afternoon to view the cows being milked. Wisconsin is the Dairy State, after all.
- The **Discovery Building** has a café and a full-service restaurant.
- Fun Fact: During the school year, guests are welcome to **dine in the Residence Halls**, including at Carson's Market, Gordon Avenue Market, Liz's Market, and more. Talk about a throwback moment!
- The **food carts** on the Library Mall provide enough culinary diversity to keep taste buds very happy.

Surrounding area:

- Quintessential Wisconsin: **State Street Brats, The Old Fashioned, The Coopers Tavern, Nitty Gritty** (a must if it's your birthday)
- For brunch: **Marigold Kitchen, Mickies Dairy Bar, Daisy Café and Cupcakery, Weary Traveler**
- For lunch: **Great Dane, Topsy Cow**
- Delish burgers: **Dotty Dumpling's Dowry**
- Field to fork: **Graze, Harvest**
- Rooftop view: **Fresco**
- Sophisticated night out, unlike when you were a student: **Tornado Steakhouse, Sardine Avenue Club and the Bubble Up Bar**, formerly Avenue Bar, for a Friday fish fry

Food tours:

- **Madison Eats Food Tours** shines a light on local chefs, food artisans and producers in the Atwood, Willy Street, and Capitol Square neighborhoods. Choose walking or biking.
- Insider Tip: Book a cruise through **Betty Lou Cruises**, running tours on both Lake Mendota and Lake Monona from mid-June through mid-October with lots of festive menu options.

What to Buy

No one should leave empty handed after a visit to their alma mater. Honestly, at least one new addition to your red and white wardrobe is in order.

- A stop at the **University Book Store** is a requirement. Stock up on the latest Badger apparel and gear, including the annual limited edition Red Shirt created by the Wisconsin Alumni Association. Half of the proceeds from the sale of the shirt go to student financial aid and scholarships.
- Pick up a little something for yourself or your home at **The Soap Opera** and **Little Luxuries**, both on State Street, then head over to Monroe Street to shop **Art Gecko** (they have a location on State Street as well) and **Orange Tree Imports**.
- The gift shops at the **Madison Museum of Contemporary Art**, the **Chazen Museum of Art** and the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed **Monona Terrace** are each remarkably artful in their own way.
- Independent local bookseller, **A Room of One's Own**, has a strong selection of current and classic fiction and local interest titles, plus women's studies and LGBT sections.
- For cheese lovers (and who isn't?), **Fromagination** on the Capitol Square has a wonderful array of artisanal cheeses and accompaniments.
- **Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier** in the Atwood neighborhood specializes in single-origin dark chocolate.
- Don't leave town without a sampling of craft beers from **Wisconsin Brewing Co.** in the Madison suburb of Verona where the owners source ingredients from local growers whenever possible. They get extra credit for their **Campus Craft Brewery**, a collaboration with UW-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. This formal fermentation science program includes an annual student contest with the winning recipe put into commercial production.

Time Your Visit

- The Badger faithful will always look to time their visit to fall **Homecoming** weekend.
- Parents and family of UW-Madison students won't want to miss the fall **Family Weekend** and **Parent and Family Day** at the UW Football Game, or **Sibs Day** in April.
- Any home hockey or basketball game at the **Kohl Center** offers a spirited reason to visit. Browse **Bucky's Locker Room** to stock up on all things UW.
- The **UW Varsity Band Concert**, **Wisconsin Spring Football Game**, and the **Crazylegs Classic Run/Walk** provide a traditional kick-off to spring.
- The **Wisconsin Film Festival**, staged in April by the UW-Madison Arts Institute, presents an average of 150 film screenings over eight days, making it the largest university-produced film fest in the nation.
- **Art Fair on the Square**, a juried art show put on by the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art each July, features fine art from hundreds of artists.
- **Maxwell Street Days**, State Street's summer sidewalk sale, offers great bargains and fabulous food. It's held the third weekend of July.

Getting Around

- The campus and State Street pedestrian mall are immensely walkable.
- **Madison BCycle** is the city's urban bike-sharing program, with 40 stations across the city. Some of those sites are even open during the winter months.
- **The campus buses**, 80, 81, 82, and 84, are free for everyone and their routes can be found on map.wisc.edu.

Personal Touch

For assistance, maps, answers to questions, and more information on what to see and do in Madison:

- Pop in to **One Alumni Place** on the lakefront adjacent to Alumni Park (724 Langdon Street to be exact), and visit the Welcome Desk. Hours are seasonal; check AlumniPark.com for current schedule.
- Stop by **Campus and Visitor Relations** Campus and Community Information Welcome Desks at Memorial Union (800 Langdon Street) and Union South (1308 W. Dayton Street), open 7 days a week, and the Town Center Welcome Desk at the Discovery Building (330 N. Orchard St.), open Monday through Saturday.
- Stop by the **Downtown Visitor Center** at 452 State Street or seasonal **Information Booth on the Capitol Square**.
- If you can't make it in person but still have questions, **AskBucky** is here to answer your questions about the campus and community – no question is too big or too small! Email askbucky@uwmad.wisc.edu.

Bookmark

- AlumniPark.com
- wisc.edu/visit
- visitdowntownmadison.com
- visitmadison.com
- info.wisc.edu

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Carbine, Director, Alumni Park, mary.carbine@supportuw.org, 608-308-5142
Tod Pritchard, Media Relations, tod.pritchard@supportuw.org, 608-609-5217, @WisAlumni