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Spokane Night Market: August 2025 Undersea Fantasy

Through May to October, every 2nd Friday, the college district in Spokane lights up and is inundated with rows of theme driven tents, vendors, and food trucks. People are dancing, showing their wares, sitting back and watching, drinking in a safe manner, and overall relaxing and chatting. The vibe that flows from the market is relaxed and artistic, as people walk around in theme driven garb, while laughing and interacting.

As we walked into the August Friday Market, we were greeted by a person in a Hawaiian styled shirt who was full of energy and a welcoming attitude. People came from all over Spokane to check out the market. While it's not the largest market within Spokane, and not farm based, it is one of the better ones I have seen. It is a reminder of Pike Place Market or even Portland's Saturday market, though on a much smaller scale. This particular market is art based and housed at 508 E Riverside Ave, in the parking lot of Spokane's Catalyst building.

When we first got there, people were just starting to trickle in. The theme for this month was An Undersea Fantasy. Booths were selling wares that matched the theme, such as crocodile skulls, Crocodile feet, stuffed crotched animals, and sea-based paintings. The DJ played music from a brightly colored tent in the corner. An SCA attendant showed people rapiers and heavy armor, educating others on a historical society meant to teach and involve others. Across from the SCA display, people rolled on skates, advertising Roller Derby. The market wasn't just meant to sell wares, but sell an experience.

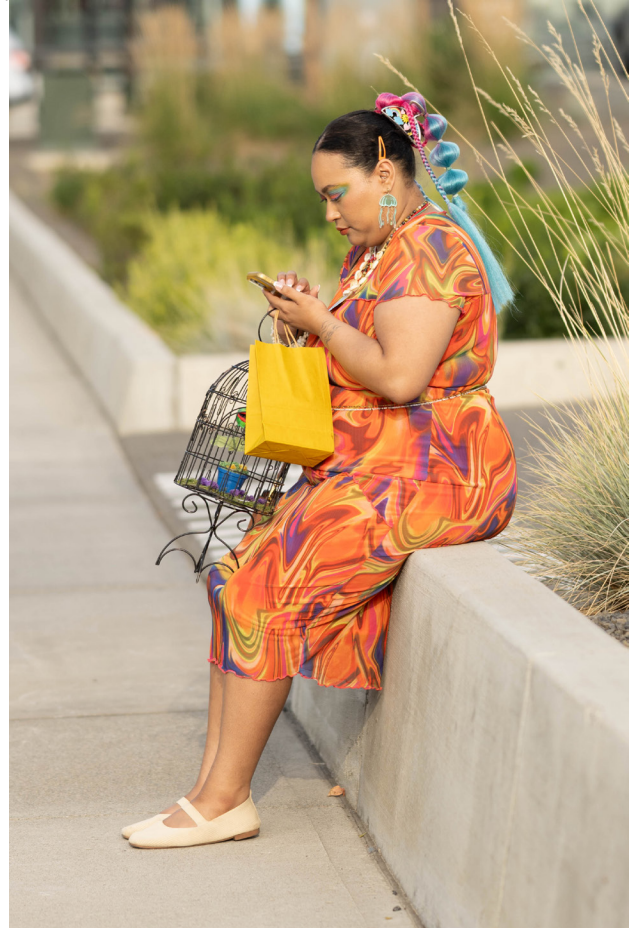
As we walked around, a mermaid sat next to her treasure, allowing the kids to sit next to her, and take pictures. Streamers in a seafoam color hung from tent covers, and one tent even held a kids

Action photo of two people dancing at Spokane Night Market August 9, 2025 taken by Charlee Kyser



mystery game, making kids critically think and determine the outcome, while fishing for answers.

The atmosphere was one you wouldn't expect from Spokane. It felt artistic and community driven. Participation and attendance started to grow as the sun went down. Lights came to life within the market, and people started dancing to the music while chatting at the table and sitting in a comfortable beer garden atmosphere. Fortune tellers and tarot readers sat at the edge of their booth, interacting with passersby's. A hoola hooper danced near the DJ's booth while children watched, fascinated.



Portrait of attendant at Mermaid Spokane Night Market August 9, 2025 taken by Charlee Kyser

While walking the event was beautiful, there is a near by bridge that connects the different parts of the college district. The bridge is unique, within Spokane, and feels more like a suspension bridge with large cables over head. At night, it's lit up in a manner that pulls attention and makes it look ethereal.

While the market was happening behind us, we took a walk up the bridge and watched the market from afar, while exploring the beauty attached to it. On the other side, there is a park like area, also beautifully lit at night.

While on the bridge, you can look down and



Portrait of attendant at Mermaid Spokane Night Market August 9, 2025 taken by Charlee Kyser

watch the coming and goings of trains and cars. The trains rumble along the tracks right below the center, making the bridge shake. It's also a really unique place to do night photography, as you get the lights of downtown a little bit further off and the nearby buildings lit with lights from apartments above shops and restaurants.

This adds to the feel of the monthly markets, as it brings in a sense of community and togetherness. The overall bridge between populations and people is real, within this area, and no longer metaphorical.

As we returned to the market, a gal sat on the side walk, awaiting a ride. She held a little bird cage and was dressed in bright makeup, fitting the mermaid theme. Something about this stood out as unique and culturally significant. The idea of bridging people even more apparent, as she did not fit into what feels like a norm for Spokane. It brought to the forefront the fact that this market was about community and art. It was more than a place to sell, but also a place to live and thrive with like minded people. This particular market is a place to tell stories, and live stories. It's about bringing people together and creating a common area for people to mingle, talk, draw together, and just enjoy



Action Shot of artists at Mermaid Spokane Night Market August 9, 2025 taken by Charlee Kyser

the human experience. Having been to many markets, I can say that this one is my favorite, for the community aspect and the feeling of belonging, it brings. It's an experience, not a market.

Action photo of hoola hooper at Spokane Night Market August 9, 2025 taken by Charlee Kyser





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