



## 8 Airport Diversions That Might Actually Make You Happy About Your Layover

Think whisky tasting, movie screenings, museums, yoga, and more.

by Aly Walansky    May 9, 2017 • 12:02 PM ET



It's no fun to be stuck in an airport on a layover for a few hours or more... *or is it?*

Airports around the country are upping their game when it comes to activities and entertainment that are truly worthy of your time — think movie theaters, yoga, and museum hopping. Here are eight inventive ways airports around the U.S. actually make layovers fun.

## 1. Movies in Portland



Usually, the only screen you have the hope of enjoying in an airport is showing news or a ball game in the terminal bar. Portland International Airport has recently kicked things up a fun notch though, by adding a free small theater to one of its terminals. A branch of **Portland's historic Hollywood Theatre**, it has seating for 17 and plays a variety of G-rated short indie films. Portland is not the first airport to do this either: **Minneapolis-St. Paul airport** also has a small screening room post security.

## 2. Whiskey while you wait

Portland's airport also is home to **House Spirits Distillery**, a tasting room in Terminal C. "Open daily, 365 days a year, the new tasting room offers the airport's 18 million annual visitors a spot to sample handmade, artisanal spirits or try a mini cocktail flight," says Michaela Guzy, founder of the sustainable travel site **Oh The People You Meet**.

## 3. Tech, pigs, and museum hopping at SFO

SFO boasts all kinds of fun ways to pass the time, from bonding with **Lilou the therapy pig**, who roams the terminals calming (and charming) harried travelers, to a library and aviation museum. Not so shockingly perhaps, there's also an area made for

brainstorming tech ideas. “[#Converge@flySFO](#) is a space for guests to exchange ideas about technology, start-ups, the sharing economy, travel, politics, and ways to change the world,” says Guzy. The lounge, is for ideating and offers free Wi-Fi, tables, chairs, power outlets, a white board, and a magnetic chalkboard. There's also the Berman Reflection room for quiet meditation, so you can ponder the feasibility of that great idea you just had.

#### 4. Ice skating and photo booths in Denver



“During the month of December, the Denver International Airport has outdoor ice skating,” says Elizabeth Avery, founder of [Solo Trekker 4 U](#), “and skate rentals are free.”

Forgot to send those postcards? If you’re departing from the Denver Airport, you can take your pic in a life-sized photo op. “For those humble-travel-brag folks, you can email it to friends or post it on social media. After you take your pic, you can take part in the Mile High City’s chill-out vibe by participating in an interactive light display, stroll through the art walk, or gander at arguably the best view of the Rocky Mountains from the airport windows,” says Guzy.

## 5. Sweating it out and exploring gardens in Chicago



Chicago's O'Hare keeps things fresh with a aeroponic garden in Terminal 3. The plants grown there — such as cilantro and oregano — are used to provide a lot of the on-site restaurants with fresh ingredients. It's a nice escape from the hustle and bustle of the airport if you have time to kill during a layover. But that's not all: “Travelers who want to work up a sweat can purchase day access to the Hilton Athletic Club inside the **Hilton Chicago O’Hare Airport Hotel**, accessible by underground walkways connected to each of the domestic terminals (1, 2, 3) or from International Terminal 5 via the **Airport Transit System**. For pure relaxation, there are Terminal Getaway Spas in Terminals 1 and 3,” says Guzy.

## 6. Take a yoga break in Dallas



After a long flight, we really need a good stretch. “There is a yoga space in the Dallas airport that I came across recently during a long layover. While it was small, it was functional and would be an excellent way to pass the time — and stretch out bodies cramped up in tiny airplane seats!” says Rebecca Garland, Founder, Fit & Fly Girl. SFO also has a yoga room.



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## 7. Live music in Seattle, Nashville, and Austin



Live music and a beer can really help to perk anyone up. Catch a **live show by a local musician** at Austin-Bergstrom. The terminal has multiple venues that feature rotating artists during weekday afternoons. But that's not the only airport in America to catch a great band. Also known for an incredible music scene, the Seattle airport maintains the city's reputation with live music performances seven days a week. But that's not all. "Grab a bowl of chowder from the famous chain Boudin's Bakery then check out one of 100-plus international art exhibits. The airport is less than half an hour outside the city, which allows visitors with ample time a chance to see the Space Needle," says Jessica Bisesto, senior editor at TravelPirates.com. Nashville is another airport where you can catch live music. Nashville International Airport pays tribute to its Music City reputation and puts on regular live concerts for travelers and music enthusiasts alike — to the tune of 100 free events every year.

## 8. Gaming in Las Vegas



You don't have to leave the McCarren airport to get a taste of Sin City's slot machines as there are many conveniently located throughout the terminals. Lost all your cash? (That didn't take long.)

Head for a museum: The Howard W. Cannon Aviation Museum is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week (an appropriate timeline for Las Vegas).

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