

Yo! A Visitor's Guide to Philadelphia

See more at www.discoverphl.com or www.visitphilly.com

*Starred museums are pretty small: you could see a few in one day.

Editorial comments by Karen Stern, lifelong resident of Philadelphia.

Art Museums and Exhibits

- Philadelphia Museum of Art: Be sure to see the Rocky Statue at the bottom of the steps on Eakins Oval before you head in, and then run up the stairs if you dare. They have a great art collection inside too! Also they have live music and events on Friday nights.
<https://www.philamuseum.org>
- *Rodin Museum: The largest collection of Rodin's work outside of France, in a small and manageable museum.
<http://www.rodinmuseum.org>
- Barnes Foundation: This is a private teaching collection that is open to the public and has many works that the Art Museum doesn't. Check what's on display before you go, and **make a reservation**.
<https://www.barnesfoundation.org>
- Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (Museum): "Rina Banerjee: Make Me a Summary of the World: Reflections upon the splintered experience of identity, tradition, and culture within diasporic communities."
<https://www.pafa.org/museum>
- *Magic Gardens: This is an amazing collection of one artist's mosaics. Most of it is outside, so it's not really worth going if the weather is bad. About half is wheelchair accessible. Make a reservation for a timed entry.
<https://www.phillymagicgardens.org>

Other Museums

- The Franklin Institute: Learn about Ben Franklin's inventions and modern science, walk through a giant human heart. They have rotating exhibits, an observatory, planetarium and IMAX movies. Fun for all ages.
<https://www.fi.edu>
- *African American Museum in Philadelphia: "Experience the richness and vibrancy of African American heritage and culture come alive in four magnificent exhibition galleries filled with exciting history and fascinating art."
<http://www.aampmuseum.org>
- Penn Museum: Has an exhibit on Native Americans, including the Lenape, original inhabitants of the Delaware Valley (Delaware was what the colonists called them), and other exhibits too.
<https://www.penn.museum/sites/nativeamericanvoices/exhibition.php>
- *National Museum of American Jewish History: An exhibit on Rube Goldberg will be running.
<https://www.nmajh.org>
- National Liberty Museum: "The NLM brings liberty to life through stories of people whose character and courage have expanded liberty for all. The Museum's exhibits, educational experiences and public programs inspire visitors to think about liberty as an ongoing human quest that we all share."
<http://www.libertymuseum.org>
- *The Museum of the American Revolution: Mostly geared toward kids but interesting for history buffs.
- *Mummers Museum: See what this unique Philly New Year's Day tradition is all about.
<http://mummersmuseum.com>
- Independence Seaport Museum: "Discover the history of the US Navy as you climb aboard life-sized model Schooner *Diligence* and National Historic Landmark ships Cruiser *Olympia* and Submarine *Becuna*."
<http://www.phillyseaport.org>
- The Mütter Museum: This is not for the squeamish! If you like odd medical exhibits, it's the place for you. Seriously only click on the website and visit if you don't mind looking at body parts in jars, etc.
<http://muttermuseum.org>

More History (all free except the Constitution Center and Betsy Ross House)

- *The Liberty Bell: See the Bell up close, and read about liberation movements around the world while you're waiting in line. Note: You have to go through a metal detector and bag search at security.
<https://www.nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/libertybellcenter.htm>
- *Independence Hall: "See the room where the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were both signed. Entrance to Independence Hall is by timed entry ticket only." Same security as the Bell.
<https://www.nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/independencehall.htm>

- *Carpenter's Hall: "Hosted the First Continental Congress in 1774... Franklin's Library Company, The American Philosophical Society, and the First and Second Banks of the United States."
<http://www.carpentershall.org>
- *The National Constitution Center: They have an exhibit on Hamilton! And interactive exhibits on the Constitution.
<https://constitutioncenter.org>
- *Betsy Ross House: She sewed our first flag.
<http://historicphiladelphia.org/betsy-ross-house/what-to-see/>
- *Elfreth's Alley: The oldest residential street in the U.S. Note it is cobblestone and brick– can be hard to walk or roll on. Museum may not be open in November.
<http://www.elfrethsalley.org>

Other Places of Interest

Philadelphia is home to some amazing neighborhoods with long histories. Here are few, and other things to see.

- City Hall – William Penn Statue: This is right across the street from the hotel. You can go up to the observation deck and get a great view of the city. Dilworth Park, on the other side of City Hall, offers ice skating, a cabin to warm up and other winter events.
<https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/tour/city-hall-tower-tour>
<https://centercityphila.org/parks/dilworth-park/wintergarden>
- Reading Terminal Market: Great indoor place to get lunch or do a little shopping. A microcosm of the cultural groups that make up Philadelphia and Pennsylvania.
<https://readingterminalmarket.org/merchants/>
- Macy's/Wanamaker's Organ light show: Wanamaker's was a department store that had organ concerts and Christmas light shows every winter. Now it's a Macy's but they have continued this tradition. It is on the corner of 13th and Market, just a few buildings south of the Courtyard. See the website for times. The organ is played live only during certain concerts. Fun for all ages.
<http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/xmas.php#hours>
- Eastern State Penitentiary: By day, you can tour this historic prison in ruins. By night, there is an amazing haunted house in the dark, *Terror Behind the Walls*. Buy your tickets for the haunted house in advance.
<https://www.easternstate.org>
<https://www.easternstate.org/halloween/schedule>
- Chinatown: Located just northeast of City Hall, this vibrant neighborhood offers many Asian restaurants and shops and the historic Friendship Gate. See Restaurants page for some recommendations.
<https://www.visitphilly.com/areas/philadelphia-neighborhoods/chinatown/>
- Taller Puertorriqueño: The cultural heart of the Puerto Rican community in Philly. The website also has suggestions for places to visit in the "Barrio."
<http://tallerpr.org>
- The "Gayborhood": This is a nice area to walk around during the day and it has great nightlife and restaurants, shops and bookstores. The Philly AIDS Thriftstore/bookstore is the former Giovanni's Room.
<https://www.visitphilly.com/lgbt/>
<https://www.queerbooks.com>
William Way LGBT Community Center <http://www.waygay.org>
- South Street: Used to be the haunt of punks and misfits, but has become more commercialized. Check out the Wooden Shoe bookstore for all of your radical reading. Many unique restaurants and shops, and the Theater of the Living Arts has live concerts.
<http://southstreet.com/visitors/hub/>
<http://woodenshoebooks.com/home.html>
<http://venue.tlaphilly.com>
- Italian Market: This open-air market was originally the heart of the Italian community but has expanded to include Mexican, Korean and Vietnamese immigrants. The place to go for gourmet food, lunch, etc. This is an old-world style market, so you will see entire chickens, pigs, etc. Not a great place for vegetarians.
<https://italianmarketphilly.org>
- University City/West Philadelphia: Just west across the Schuylkill River, University City is the site of Drexel University, the University of Pennsylvania, and a student neighborhood. West Philadelphia, a bit farther west, is an African American and immigrant neighborhood with a lot of cultural resources and restaurants.
<https://www.universitycity.org/restaurants>
<https://www.universitycity.org/arts-and-culture>

Nightlife

- Fishtown is Hipster Paradise. There are usually concerts and comedy shows at The Fillmore, as well as bars and a bowling alley.
<https://www.visitphilly.com/areas/philadelphia-neighborhoods/fishtown/>
- Music: Philadelphia has all kinds of live music from the Philadelphia Orchestra, ballet and opera to jazz, rap, hip hop, folk, rock/pop and international offerings (World Café Live, International House).
<http://www.philadelphiaweekly.com/music/>

Parks

- LOVE park: Newly redesigned and close to the hotel. 15th & Arch St.
<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/attractions/love-park/>
- Kelly Drive: Nice for walking, running or biking. You can loop around to Martin Luther King Drive on the other side of the river. You may see rowers if the season is still on.
<https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/things-to-do/kelly-drive>
- Fairmount Park: One of the world's largest urban parks.
<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/attractions/fairmount-park/>

Sports

See the Super Bowl Champion Eagles play, or the 76ers, or the Flyers.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/sports/>

It's easy to take the Broad Street Line subway south to the sports complex. Get on at City Hall and get off at the last stop, AT&T station, and proceed to the Wells Fargo Center or Lincoln Financial Field.

Kids

- Philadelphia Zoo: The country's oldest zoo. It may not be too cold in November and it's a good time to see the animals. There are plenty of indoor exhibits too.
<https://www.philadelphiazoo.org>
- Franklin Square. There is a carousel, mini golf and rolled ice cream. The free holiday light show starts in November.
<http://historicphiladelphia.org/franklin-square/what-to-see/>
<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/events/electrical-spectacle-holiday-light-show-at-franklin-square/>
- The Franklin Institute (see above)
- The Philadelphia Museum of Art (see above): They have an amazing armor collection.
- Adventure Aquarium: Just over the river in Camden, NJ. You can pet sharks and rays.
<https://www.adventureaquarium.com>
- Independence Seaport Museum (see above)
- Wanamaker's light show and organ concert (see above)

Speaking the Language

We have some unique ways of talking in Philly. Here's a jawn (universal word, thing) that explains it all.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpTM2gXnJYI>