



# Further Afield

## from Philadelphia

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Philadelphia, Cradle of Liberty, is also "The City That Loves You Back." So, after you've experienced all of the history and culture that our city offers, there are still plenty of other diversions. Step out the door of the **Convention Center** and head East, to **Chinatown**. The official gateway to Asian culture and cuisine is at 10th and Arch Streets.

For history to go, browse the shops of **Antiques Row** on Pine Street, between 9th and 12th Streets. Be sure to take some time during the week, as many shop owners close on weekends to exhibit at shows. Seeking some local color? Stroll down to **South Street**, where "all the hippies meet." Not for the faint of heart, there are some truly wild and weird shops, bars and tattoo parlors (for a permanent souvenir). The height of the action is between Front and Seventh Streets. Comb the area just to the south of South for additional unusual shops and a mix of small restaurants offering unique cuisine.

A brisk walk from South Street to the area of Ninth Street between Catharine and Christian Streets will place you at the colorful, slightly rough **Italian Market**, where South Philadelphians gather to shop and shmooze. The delis and shops offer serious old-world fare for gourmets.

Heading West on Walnut Street, seek refuge at **Rittenhouse Square** at 18th and Walnut, a green oasis where mothers push strollers and spontaneous picnics happen in the shadows of high-rise condominiums. Stop along Walnut to shop in this upscale neighborhood. For the bookish, **Borders** and **Barnes & Noble** are just steps away from each other at 1727 and 1805 Walnut, respectively.

The Center City environs offer numerous theatrical diversions, ranging from Film Festivals at the recently restored Prince Theater on Chestnut Street to regular showings of Independent and Art Films at the **Ritz Theatre** Empire in Olde City. The newly renovated Avenue of the Arts (a/k/a/ South Broad Street) stretches several blocks southward from City Hall and includes a variety of performance venues, from the historic **Academy of Music** and **Merriam Theater** to the recently-constructed, neon-decorated **Wilma Theater**. Companies that perform in those sites during the year include the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Pennsylvania Ballet, Broadway touring companies, the 99-year-old Gilbert & Sullivan troupe (the Savoy Company), and the innovative Wilma Theater Company, headed by the dynamic Jiri and Blanka Zizka.

The Orchestra and Ballet make their summer homes at the **Mann Performing Arts Center** in Fairmount Park, which schedules a wide variety of popular concerts from classical to world music to folk. Other more eclectic performing spaces include **The Tin Angel** on 2nd Street ("Two Street" in local parlance,) the **Trocadero** on Arch, and the **TLA** on South Street.

In "town" but not "downtown" are several other great places to browse, shop, and eat. **Manayunk** and **Chestnut Hill** are two. Then there's **University City**. To reach Manayunk by public transit (parking is difficult, at best) take an R6 Norristown train from **Septa's** Suburban Station, underground at 15th and Market, or the #61 bus. Block after block of boutiques, bars and dining establishments hover around Main Street, just downhill from the train station. The R8 Chestnut Hill West train will get you to (where else?) Chestnut Hill, where more distinctive shops and restaurants traipse down the hill around Germantown



Avenue. If you have a car at your disposal and crave the great outdoors, you can take a short drive to the **Wissahickon Valley**, which features a five-mile gravel and dirt path suitable for walking, jogging and horseback riding. You won't believe you're still in the city! If you need a more organized version of open spaces, head out towards the **Morris Arboretum** of the University of Pennsylvania and experience a small world of plantings including a formal rose garden, a grove of dawn redwoods, an Asian Hill and Cloud garden, and sundry landscaped vistas.



The new shuttle, *LUCY*, loops through **University City** from 30th Street. Stroll around the grounds of University of Pennsylvania or visit the Institute of Contemporary Art. The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology offers archaeological treasures from over a century's worth of expeditions sponsored by the University.

And speaking of museums, glance up the Ben Franklin Parkway (starting northwest of City Hall) to the famed **Philadelphia Museum of Art**, which crowns a hill at the end of the Parkway. It offers everything from European Art to Asian and Near Eastern objects; its collection of 20th century art is especially notable. Before you get to the Museum and climb the "Rocky" steps, expand your artistic experience with a brief stop at **The Rodin Museum** at N. 22nd Street and the Parkway—look for "The Thinker" at the front gate. After all the art, take a short stroll east of the museums into the neighborhood around Fairmount Avenue to seek more of Philadelphia's famed local bistros.

The official convention excursions will take you to the historic and culturally diverse Brandywine Valley among other locations, but if you have some time to head in a northerly direction to Bucks County, you will find some beckoning sites as well. In addition to one of William Penn's original estates at **Pennsbury Manor** and **Washington Crossing Park** on the Delaware River, the county seat of **Doylestown** offers a compelling mixture of old and new. You can even take a Philadelphia Regional Rail Line directly to this eclectic spot, which features everything from browsable antique stores, gift shops, and Kenny's Newstand and Bookstore, to a Starbucks and the County Theatre, showing the best in Independent Films plus summertime outdoor viewings of Classic movies.

Bed and Breakfasts abound in this bucolic locale, the former home of assorted artists, from Edward Hicks (painter of *The Peaceable Kingdom*) to James Michener, from Oscar Hammerstein to Pearl S. Buck. The **Michener Museum** in Doylestown is located behind the impressive remains of the former Bucks County Jail, and is quickly becoming an artistic collection of note. Nearby is the home of the eccentric Henry Mercer, who fostered the development of a local tileworks, compiled a fascinating museum of American agricultural artifacts and machinery, and constructed a concrete "castle" built to his rather peculiar specifications in the heart of Doylestown.



Finally, a few miles northeast of Doylestown on the banks of the scenic Delaware River, you will encounter the entertaining town of **New Hope**, which offers lots of unusual shopping venues, the Bucks County Playhouse, and an eclectic mix of restaurants and sights to rival those of South Street.

**Escape from the Heat.** Philadelphia's occasional heat waves have haunted residents for centuries. Before air conditioning, two options for relief were the mountains and the sea (later known as "the shore"), leaving Philadelphians with a long-time tradition of retreating to summer resorts. One of many outstanding shore areas is the Victorian resort town of **Cape May** at the far southern tip of New Jersey. The center of Cape May is a National Historic Landmark; take a walking tour of its ornate gingerbreaded residences, and eat fudge and salt-water taffy to your heart's content!

As for the mountains, the **Pocono** resort country, while well known for winter skiing activities, also offers year-round activities featuring nature, sports and outdoor recreational options. Spread over a four-county area in Northeastern Pennsylvania, this region has attracted vacationers since the early 19th century.

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## Some Web Sites:

Cape May  
[www.capemay.com](http://www.capemay.com)  
[www.capemaychamber.com](http://www.capemaychamber.com)

Chestnut Hill  
[www.chestnuthillpa.com](http://www.chestnuthillpa.com)  
Mercer Museum  
<http://www.mercermuseum.org/MMuseum.htm>

James A. Michener Art Museum  
<http://www.michenerartmuseum.org/>

Morris Arboretum  
[www.upenn.edu/morris](http://www.upenn.edu/morris)

New Hope, Pennsylvania  
<http://www.newhopepa.com/>

Pennsbury Manor  
<http://www.libertynet.org/pensbury/index.html>

Pennsylvania Convention Center  
[www.paconvention.com](http://www.paconvention.com)

Pennsylvania Visitors' Bureau  
[www.experiencepa.com](http://www.experiencepa.com)

Philadelphia Convention and Visitors' Bureau  
[www.libertynet.org/phila-visitor](http://www.libertynet.org/phila-visitor)

Philadelphia Museum of Art  
[www.philamuseum.org](http://www.philamuseum.org)

Poconos  
<http://www.poconos.org/>

University City District  
[www.universitycitydistrict.org](http://www.universitycitydistrict.org)

Washington Crossing State Park  
<http://www.spiritof76.com/wchp/index.html>

Wilma Theater Company  
[www.wilmatheater.org](http://www.wilmatheater.org)