

## The Best of Philadelphia

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**C**liché-sounding statement number one: Philadelphia is a lovely city. I live here, in a tiny fifth-floor walk-up studio on 8th Street, between Pine and Lombard. When I look out my back window, I can see the steeple of the old Pine Street church George Washington attended. Beyond the steeple are shiny-windowed high-rise apartments. Beyond them are blipping lights of planes coasting over the Delaware River into Philadelphia International Airport. The view from the front of my apartment is of 19th-century rooftops, rising skyscrapers—and a single roof deck with a pair of sunbathing poodles.

The nation's oldest hospital is a half a block from my home: I pass it every time I head out to shop in Old City, or to work in my office near Rittenhouse Square. Both are about a 15-minute walk, provided I don't stop in any of the dozen or so amazing little cafes along the way. About once a week, folks passing my apartment ask for directions to Pat's and Geno's, South Philly's famous cheesesteak stands.

These tiny details of my daily life make me hometown-proud ( cliché number two). To me, a reformed suburbanite, Philadelphia is the perfect American city. I love that it surrounds me with some of our country's most important historic monuments. I love that its buildings are a blend of the extremely old and the super-new. I love the mistakenly planted ginkgo trees, the Rocky footprints at the top of the Art Museum steps (although I'm not sure about the statute), the fresh mozzarella cheese at Claudio's in the Italian Market, New Year's Day's debauched Two Street party after the annual Mummers Parade (which I also love). And I love that in 20 minutes I can walk anywhere in Center City.

I haven't always gone weak in the knees for Philly, though. My crush came about gradually. When I moved back 10 years ago, I thought I was stopping over on my way to New York. But something strange happened: Philadelphia kept my attention. Every time I turned around, there was another great place to eat dinner, another incredible art opening, another amazing boutique, bar, band, exhibit, or event. As Philadelphia blossomed, so did my feelings for it.

And I'm not the only one who feels this way about Philadelphia. While other cities have seen small hardware stores and haberdasheries and independent coffee shops giving way to chains and big-box stores, here, people hung in, roasting their own coffee beans and defiantly creating their own art. The result: In 2005, *National Geographic Traveler* lauded Philadelphia as the "Next Great City." Just before that, the *New York Times* called us the "sixth borough."

Of course, my City of Brotherly Love still has a long way to go. Not all Philadelphians live on a block as safe as mine. Beyond Center City, beyond University City and Chestnut Hill, are pockets—giant pockets—riddled with serious poverty and unspeakable violence. And, in the very near future, massive, 24-hour casinos will set

up their depressing, addictive trade around town. To my mind, this change can only make matters worse.

If I had to choose one inspiring must-do for visitors, I'd recommend a **Mural Arts Tour** (☎ 215/685-0754; [www.muralarts.org](http://www.muralarts.org)). Mural Arts guides take you into Philly's other neighborhoods, the ones that don't appear in guidebooks. You'll cruise by smooth walls blanketed in brilliant colors. You'll learn how beautifying communities, working with one paintbrush, one child at a time, can bring about positive transformation. The experience is moving, restorative, and educational. It re-teaches you the classic lesson of the city, and America itself: One small step, one giant leap. Right here, on earth, in Philadelphia: a generally lovely place to be.

## 1 Frommer's Favorite Philadelphia Experiences

- **Taking Afternoon Tea at Nineteen:**

The 19th-floor cafe-in-the-round at the grand Park Hyatt at the Bellevue recently reinstituted tea service, and little girls and their mommies are getting out their white gloves in anticipation. The bird's-eye view from the cafe's impossibly tall windows is spectacular—enhancing the jambon royal sandwiches and chocolate shortbread. See p. 101.

- **Visiting the Barnes Foundation:**

The Barnes Foundation Gallery in Merion houses the most important private collection of Impressionist and early French modern paintings in the world, displaying more Cézannes than all the museums of France put together. The building was designed by Paul Philippe Cret, and is amazing, not only for its lovely design, but also because Albert Barnes was meticulous about displaying the works, often juxtaposing them with *objets* such as antique iron locks or African tribal masks. It appears the museum will move to Center City Philadelphia in the coming years, so schedule your visit to the current location now: You may not get another chance. See p. 130.

- **Wandering Through Fairmount Park:**

It would take dozens of outings to fully explore the 100 miles of trails in this 8,900-acre giant of an urban

park—some of them are virtually unchanged since Revolutionary times. We'll settle for gazing at the hundreds of flame azaleas that bloom behind the Art Museum in spring, special visits to Shofuso Japanese tea-house, and winter strolls along the Wissahickon Creek. See p. 151.

- **Gallery Hopping on First Friday:**

On the first Friday of every month, the galleries, stores, and studios of Old City—just north of Independence National Historical Park—remain open with refreshments and artists on hand until 9pm. Wander along the cobblestone streets, popping in where you fancy, before a night out in this happening part of town. See p. 177.

- **Stepping Back in Time in Historic Philadelphia:**

The reclamation of this country's Colonial capital has been nearly miraculous, from the Liberty Bell's gleaming new home to the renovation of hundreds of row houses with their distinctive brickwork and 18th-century formal gardens (and welcoming benches). But the costumed town criers with free maps and the Revolutionary War-era street theater really bring the experience to life. Just wander; they'll find you. See "Independence National Historical Park: America's Most Historic Square Mile," in chapter 7.

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### **Fun Fact A Central City**

Thirty-eight percent of the nation's population lives within a 4½-hour drive of Philadelphia.

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- **Eating the Sandwich:** We all love history, art, a great jazz solo, and a swanky night on the town. But the craving for Philly's number-one fast food somehow surpasses all other desires. It's primal, an urge that comes over you the moment you enter city limits. The inimitable cheesesteak, spelled in one word, available with sharp Provolone or gooey Cheez Whiz and "wid" or "widout" sautéed onions, is, to many a traveler, worth the trip alone. Find it, along with some of the city's other unsung culinary heroes (pun intended), in chapter 6.
- **Strolling Around Rittenhouse Square at Night:** When the rest of Philadelphia's city squares grow quiet at night, this one twinkles with activity. Patrons toast each other at bistro sidewalk tables. Couples cross the park, hand-in-hand. On a summer night, you're likely to come upon a free musical performance in the square's center. In winter, you'll be dazzled by the bright balls of lights in the treetops. See p. 201.
- **Enjoying the Lights at Night:** The William Penn statue atop City Hall, the Ben Franklin Bridge, and seven Schuylkill River bridges are permanently lighted, joining the beautiful white pin lights that outline the boat-houses along the Schuylkill River.
- **Touring an Open House:** If you're in the city at the right time, don't miss the tours of restored mansions in Society Hill, Rittenhouse Square, or Fairmount Park for a delightful lesson in Colonial-era interior design and Americana. The open houses are scattered throughout the year, but during the pre-Christmas season, with their period decorations, they are especially lovely. See the "Philadelphia Calendar of Events," in chapter 2.
- **Breathing Deeply at the Philadelphia Flower Show:** In early March, the Flower Show—the largest and most prestigious indoor exhibition of its kind in the world—descends on the Pennsylvania Convention Center, with acres of orchids and traditional and exotic displays. See p. 19.
- **Exploring the Philadelphia Museum of Art:** It has a stupendous collection of masterpieces, period rooms, and crafts, and is becoming one of the hottest museums in the country for special exhibitions. Look for more blockbusters like the recent exhibits of works by Eakins and Degas: "Renoir Landscapes" is scheduled for fall 2007. Wednesday and Friday evening hours have become convivial social scenes, with cocktails and live music. See p. 130.
- **Cheering the Regattas along the Schuylkill:** On any spring weekend, stand along Boathouse Row just north of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and get ready to cheer. Crews race each other every 5 minutes or so, with friends lining the riverbanks rooting for them. See p. 163.
- **Getting Lost in the Reading Terminal Market:** You'll never go completely missing, but you will definitely get caught up in the maze of stalls at this historic market. And when you stumble upon an Amish food counter, artisan baker, local

## The Eastern Seaboard



farmer, or elegant cake display, suddenly finding your way out doesn't seem so essential. See p. 102.

- **Exploring South Philly:** Exuberant attitude punctuates every interchange you'll have, whether strolling (with ample tastings) through the Italian Market or seeking out the area's great pizzas, cannoli, or famed cheesesteaks farther south. See p. 54 for a description of the neighborhood and p. 106 for info on where to eat.
- **Drinking Local Beer:** One hundred years ago, Philadelphia was known as the greatest brewing city in the Western Hemisphere. It's not quite that anymore, but it's regaining ground. Bars like **Standard Tap** (p. 211), **McGillin's** (p. 211), **Good Dog Bar and Restaurant** (p. 210), **Royal Tavern** (p. 211), and, especially, **Monk's** (p. 211) feature delicious craft brews, many of them by Yards, Flying Fish,

Dogfishhead, Victory, Stour's, and other area brewers.

- **Catching a Phillies Game at the Ballpark:** A summer night at the new Citizens Bank Park means great views from every seat in this old-fashioned-style stadium, with its amazing local foods such as Tony Luke's cheesesteaks. If you sit on the third level, you'll also see a perfectly framed view of the Center City skyline. When Ryan Howard homers, watch the giant Liberty Bell light up and ring. See p. 163.
- **Taking in the Mummer's Parade:** Grown men dancing in feathers, sequins, and spandex mark the annual New Year's Day Mummer's Parade ([www.mummers.com](http://www.mummers.com)), in which thousands strut their way up Broad Street. The music is loud and antiquated, but the experience is festive and fun. Bundle up. See p. 145.

## 2 The Best Hotel Bets

- **Best Historic Hotel:** Well, it's only the "lite" version of what it used to be, when Thomas Edison designed the fixtures and the ballroom defined swank. But the top floor of the **Park Hyatt Philadelphia at the Bellevue**, Broad and Walnut streets, or 1415 Chancellor Ct., between Walnut and Locust streets (☎ 800/223-1234), with its Library Lounge bar and pastel-painted, domed Barrymore tea-room, retains traces of a century's worth of history. See p. 78.
- **Best for Business Travelers:** **Hotel Sofitel**, 120 S. 17th St. (☎ 800/SOFITEL), has a convenient location and rooms that are large and elegant, with easy access to plugs and modem jacks at a handsome desk. The delicious French coffee doesn't hurt either. The service staff is efficient and courteous. See p. 77.
- **Best for a Romantic Getaway:** The **Penn's View Hotel**, Front and Market streets (☎ 800/331-7634), feels like an exquisite club, with views over the Delaware River. And how could you not like what the *New York Times* hails as "the mother of all wine bars" downstairs? See p. 74.
- **Best Hotel Lobby for Pretending You're Rich:** There's no place like the cool, plush **Four Seasons Hotel**, 1 Logan Sq. (☎ 800/332-3442), for rubbing elbows with the moneyed elite (it's also a great place to stay if you *are* the moneyed elite). The Swann Lounge overlooking Logan Circle is a constant stream of chic outfits, custom suits, and the frequent black tie. See p. 76.
- **Best for Families:** The **Hilton Inn at Penn**, in West Philadelphia at 3600 Sansom St. (☎ 800/445-8667), is a

cross-town ride from the historical sights, but offers the whole family space to roam among spacious corridors, ever-present fruit to munch on and tea to sip in a comfortable library lounge, plus TV for children to watch while parents exercise. The campus of U. Penn across the street is perfect for throwing a Frisbee or playing tag. See p. 82. In Center City, **Loews Philadelphia Hotel**, 1200 Market St. (☎ 215/627-1200), doesn't have the biggest rooms in town, but it's got a great game closet. See p. 72.

- **Best Moderately Priced Hotel:** The **Hotel Windsor**, 1700 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy. near Rittenhouse Square and City Hall (☎ 877/784-8379), is the best choice in its price range. A one-room suite with two double beds and full kitchen goes for \$150. A generous continental breakfast is included in the rate. See p. 80.
- **Best B&B:** **Shippen Way Inn**, 418 Bainbridge St. (☎ 800/245-4873 or 215/627-7266), has nine rooms in two Queen Village row houses built around 1750 and lovingly maintained. You might also try **Ten Eleven Clinton**, 1011 Clinton St. (☎ 215/923-8144), an elegant 1836 Federal town house on a quiet tree-lined street. See "A Historic Bed & Breakfast" on p. 78.
- **Best Service:** The staff at the **Four Seasons Hotel**, 1 Logan Sq. (☎ 215/963-1500), knows the number-one secret of flawless service: Be nice. (They know the second secret, too: Always keep your cool.) No matter how many NBA players are in their exquisite **Fountain Restaurant**, no matter which rock-'n'-roll giants are taking tea in the Swann Lounge, or who turned up in the whirlpool at 4am, these employees take it in stride, getting their jobs done efficiently and

courteously—and appearing to have fun all the while. See p. 76.

- **Best Hotel for Historic District Hopping:** If you're here to see Independence Park, why not wake up looking at it through the floral chintz curtains at the **Omni Hotel at Independence Park**, 4th and Chestnut streets (☎ 800/843-6664)? All 150 guest rooms have views of the Greek Revival Second Bank of the U.S. and a half-dozen of America's Georgian jewels. And the clip-clopping of horses and carriages below maintains the historical feel. See p. 69.
- **Best Hotel Health Club:** The **Sporting Club at the Bellevue**, on Broad Street between Walnut and Locust streets (☎ 215/985-9867), counts Governor Rendell, Dr. J., and most of the city's movers and shakers among its members. Honorary membership is given to guests of the **Park Hyatt Philadelphia at the Bellevue**. The gym facilities are the best in town, and classes are top-notch. See p. 78.
- **Best Hotel Pool:** Splashing around the glassed-in pool of the **Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn's Landing**, 201 S. Columbus Blvd. (☎ 215/928-1234), is doubly fun, because just beyond the pool is the Delaware River. See p. 69. For exercise and a skyscraper city view, however, the skinny lap pool at the **Loews Philadelphia Hotel**, 1200 Market St. (☎ 215/627-1200) is well worth the \$10 per-visit charge. See p. 72.
- **Best Views:** In Center City, all the rooms at the **Rittenhouse Hotel**, 210 W. Rittenhouse Sq. (☎ 800/635-1042), have wonderful views of the Philly landscape, from the leafy park below on the east to the western view of the Schuylkill and the Parkway. See p. 78.

- **Best Hotel Restaurants:** The Zagat guide to restaurants has listed the **Fountain Restaurant** in the **Four Seasons**, 1 Logan Sq. (☎ 215/963-1500), as one of the country's top 10 dining spots. A meal here is virtually perfect, with high prices to match the high quality. See p. 98. A worthy rival is **Lacroix** at the **Rittenhouse Hotel**, 210 W. Rittenhouse Sq. (☎ 215/546-9000). This haute-meets-modern French restaurant is soothing and sleek, with park views, limestone accents, and elegant green-velvet seating; it has received great acclaim from *Esquire's* John Mariani, among others. See p. 98.
- **Best Splurge Hotel:** The **Ritz-Carlton Philadelphia**, 10 Avenue of the Arts (☎ 215/523-8000), delivers an overwhelming dose of luxury, with its massive domed lobby, lavish furnishings, and clubby bars. Upgrade to the Club Level for less than \$50 and experience a lounge spread of champagne and endless hors d'oeuvres. See p. 79.
- **Best Trendy Hotel:** Philly's luxuriously hip **Hotel Sofitel**, 120 S. 17th St. (☎ 800/SOFITEL), has modern decor, a groovy long bar, and lots of French people swanning around, plus Deco-contemporary furniture and a great location for shopping near Walnut Street. (We're expecting some tough competition in this category when the W Hotel opens in 2009.) See p. 77.
- **Best Hostel:** Centrally located near all the historical and nightlife attractions, the **Bank Street Hostel**, 32 S. Bank St. (☎ 800/392-4678 or 215/922-0222), is smack in the Old City/Society Hill nexus; it's perfect for budget or adventurous travelers. See p. 86.
- **Best Country Getaway:** Plush lodgings scattered throughout a picturesque hamlet, proximity to the gorgeous Brandywine Valley's fine attractions, plus an on-site spa and deliciously eclectic restaurant make the **Inn at Montchanin Village**, Route 100 and Kirk Road, Montchanin, DE (☎ 800/269-2473 or 302/888-2133; [www.montchanin.com](http://www.montchanin.com)) an incomparable weekend retreat. See p. 233.

### 3 The Best Restaurant Bets

- **Best Spot for a Romantic Dinner:** **Friday Saturday Sunday**, 261 S. 21st St. (☎ 215/546-4232), has long been a top spot for couples. The bistro's modest decor, menu, and prices (especially for wine) keep distractions to a minimum. See p. 100.
- **Best Spot for a Business Lunch:** **Lacroix** at the Rittenhouse Hotel, 210 W. Rittenhouse Sq. (☎ 215/546-9000), offers a stunningly good three-course, \$26 prix-fixe lunch in its ethereal yet unstuffy dining room. Your dining partners will be the city's power brokers, and the menu of the day might include ragout of lobster and white asparagus. See p. 98.
- **Best Spot for a Celebration:** If you want to celebrate a special occasion in a lavish setting, opulent **Le Bec-Fin**, 1523 Walnut St. (☎ 215/567-1000), is the way to go. Georges Perrier's prix-fixe menu has an international reputation, and the dessert cart is unforgettable. See p. 98.
- **Best Decor:** The spaceship-like decor at **Morimoto** at 723 Chestnut St. (☎ 215/413-9070) will take your breath away, but order a meal here and you'll see that interior design is just the beginning: Masahuru Morimoto's delicious fare is downright sculptural. See p. 88.

- **Best View:** Sitting on the deck of the **Moshulu**, 411 S. Columbus Blvd. (☎ 215/923-2500), a 1904 “tall ship” that’s been converted into a roomy, luxe French-Asian restaurant, might sound touristy, but in reality, it’s delightful. Even in the winter, the ship’s indoor dining rooms offer lovely Delaware River and Society Hill views. And in summer, the breeze is as cooling as one of its 20 wines by the glass. See p. 94.
- **Best Wine List:** Two restaurants owned by the Sena family offer impressive wine selections: **La Famiglia**, 8 S. Front St. (☎ 215/922-2803; p. 92), has one of the finest cellars in the world according to *Wine Spectator* magazine. One block north, the **Ristorante Panorama**, in the Penn’s View Hotel at Front and Market streets (☎ 215/922-7800; p. 95), is a charming Italian trattoria that has 120 different bottles available by the glass, or as a 3-ounce “taste.” Order a “flight”—five glasses grouped around a theme. Flights fall in the \$14-to-\$50 range.
- **Best Value:** Dining at the mod-Deco bar at **Brasserie Perrier**, 1619 Walnut St. (☎ 215/568-3000), with its \$16 steak frites or incomparable roasted chicken (also \$16), means savoring cuisine overseen by the city’s most famous chef, Georges Perrier of Le Bec-Fin. The restaurant behind this colorful lounge offers haute-bistro food at higher prices, with entrees in the \$35 range. See p. 99.
- **Best Value on a Fixed-Price Meal:** There’s nothing like **Le Bec-Fin**’s \$45 lunch, at 1523 Walnut St. (☎ 215/567-1000), for classic French. See p. 98.
- **Best for Kids:** Kids love the burgers, grilled cheeses, soups, and other classic American fare at the upscale **Marathon Grill**, 1839 Spruce St. (☎ 215/731-0800), a former diner turned into a stylish modern space that serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner (plus snacks all afternoon). Parents also love the casual, romping-permitted vibe, plus the full bar and upscale side of the menu, with its grilled fish and savory pastas. See p. 105.
- **Best Date Restaurant:** For a classy bistro with contemporary fare in Old City, reserve a deuce at **Fork**, 306 Market St. (☎ 215/625-9425). See p. 89. **Friday Saturday Sunday**, 261 S. 21st St. (☎ 215/546-4232), has been a classic, intimate date spot since the 1970s, and boasts consistent fare, glowing lighting, and great value. See p. 100.
- **Best American Cuisine:** Using local ingredients from Amish and Bucks County boutique farmers, and incorporating the worthier elements of new American cuisine without the annoying flourishes, **Fork**, at 306 Market St. (☎ 215/625-9425), is as popular for brunch as it is for a late-night snack. In this warm, sophisticated dining room, you can dine on pan-seared salmon or spicy hanger steak. See p. 89.
- **Best Chinese Cuisine:** Sure, there are fancier places in town, but none are as straightforward and note-perfect as Chinatown’s **Lee How Fook**, 219 N. 11th St. (☎ 215/925-7266). The simple, handsome space—one of the city’s hundreds of BYOBs—does a beautiful job with everything they touch: hot pots, noodle soups, salt-baked seafood, and more. See p. 112.
- **Best Continental Cuisine:** The **Fountain Restaurant** at the Four Seasons Hotel, 1 Logan Sq., between 18th Street and Franklin Parkway (☎ 215/963-1500), is consistently rated best in town for understated, complex versions of classic Continental dishes. Because the food is so

uniformly excellent, my advice is to go with the chef's choices on the fixed-price menu. See p. 98.

- **Best French Cuisine:** Right now, it's the serene **Lacroix** in the Rittenhouse Hotel, 210 W. Rittenhouse Sq. (☎ 215/546-9000), where the exquisite menu is rooted in classical French cooking, but benefits from Chef Jean-Marie Lacroix's modern technique. See p. 98.
- **Best Steakhouse:** With a half-dozen great choices, including the Capital Grille and the Palm, the top choice is **The Prime Rib**, 1701 Locust St. (☎ 215/772-1701), offering tender porterhouse served with fresh shredded horseradish. The ambience is a timeless 1940s-style place—jazz combos and formally clad waiters included. See p. 101.
- **Best Burgers and Beer:** Discerning *Philadelphia Inquirer* restaurant critic Craig La Ban recently wrote a laudatory haiku about the blue cheese-stuffed burger at **Good Dog Bar and Restaurant**, 224 S. 15th St. (☎ 215/985-9600), a youthful Center City gastro-pub. There's a trick to it, though: You have to order it medium or rarer; otherwise, the cheese bakes out. See p. 210.
- **Best Pizza:** **Marra's**, 1734 E. Passyunk Ave., between Morris and Moore streets (☎ 215/463-9249), in South Philadelphia, has pies with thin crusts and delicious, spicy toppings, baked in brick ovens; enjoy them in old wooden booths. See p. 107.
- **Best Cheesesteak:** There's no going wrong at the big guys (Par's, Geno's, and Jim's), but there's something just a bit better about the composition of the steak at South Philly's tiny **John's**

**Roast Pork** (p. 118). Learn about this spot, and all the rest of 'em in "The Ultimate Cheesesteak Taste Test" on p. 116.

- **Best Hoagies:** Using seeded Italian bread made a couple doors down, **Sarcone's Deli**, 9th and Fitzwater streets (☎ 215/922-1717), comes up with the best Italian sandwiches in the city. (A bold statement, I know.) Choose from classic cold cuts, or specialty sandwiches that combine roasted red peppers, sharp Provolone, long hot's, and whole cloves of garlic.
- **Best Desserts:** Weekends, **The Ritz-Carlton Hotel**, 10 Avenue of the Arts (☎ 215/523-8000), offers a dessert buffet in its grand lobby, and this wonderfully excessive spread of 40 desserts, priced at \$19 per person, has become a popular way to end a Friday or Saturday evening downtown. You may even want to skip dinner altogether and save room for tarte Tatin and chocolate gâteau. See p. 79.
- **Best Breakfast:** At **Sam's Morning Glory**, 10th and Fitzwater streets (☎ 215/413-3999), the coffee comes in big, steely mugs; doughy biscuits are cut square; and the pancakes are the best you'll eat, anywhere, ever. See p. 108.
- **Best Brunch:** Nearly every restaurant offers Sunday brunch, ranging from standard bagels with spreads to a full breakfast menu. The **White Dog Café**, 3420 Sansom St. (☎ 215/386-9224), in West Philadelphia, swings both ways, serving everything from simple breakfast dishes to elaborate late-morning feasts in a completely comfortable, unpretentious setting. See p. 109.

- **Best People-Watching:** **Rouge**, 205 S. 18th St. (☎ 215/732-6622), a bistro with alfresco cafe tables, has become the city's most sought-after real estate from May through September. See p. 101. If you want to spot a celebrity (J. Lo, Cameron Diaz, and Justin Timberlake have all dined here), your favorite NBA player, or an aging rocker, head to the **Swann Lounge at the Four Seasons**, 1 Logan Square (on 18th St.; ☎ 215/963-1500) where you can pretend not to stare while perching on a plush couch. See p. 212.
- **Best Afternoon Tea:** The advent of true luxury hotels in Philadelphia has also brought exquisite afternoon teas served all over town. The Cassatt Lounge at the **Rittenhouse Hotel**, 210 W. Rittenhouse Sq. (☎ 215/546-9000), has muted, lovely decor, a garden, and Mary Cassatt's drawings commemorating her brother's house, which once stood on the site. See p. 78.
- **Best for Pre-Theater Dinner:** At sleek **Bliss**, 220 S. Broad St. (☎ 215/731-1100), the eclectic menu features pastas, Asian-inspired dishes, and grilled fare. **Ernesto's 1521 Café**, 1521 Spruce St. (☎ 215/546-1521), is an affordable, modern Italian trattoria with handmade pasta. See p. 104.
- **Best Outdoor Dining:** Just off the park that bears its name, stylish **Washington Square**, 210 S. Washington Sq. (☎ 215/592-7787), offers a prime, Palm Beach-y setting for noshing interesting international fare while sipping cocktails. For the best outdoor dining with a view, however, head over to the **Water Works Restaurant and Lounge**, located behind the Philadelphia Museum of Art, off Kelly Drive (☎ 215/236-9000). Ask for a table by the river, and watch the sun set over the Schuylkill River as the lights on Boathouse Row come up. See p. 101.
- **Best Late-Night Dining:** Follow the post-bar crowd to **Pat's** and **Geno's**, the dueling cheesesteak vendors of South Philly, and you'll experience a culinary phenomenon: A greasy steak sandwich tastes much, much better at 3am. See p. 115.
- **Best Ice Cream:** For the old-fashioned: Although **Franklin Fountain**, 116 Market St. (☎ 215/627-1899), is a relatively new addition to Old City, it feels as though it's been here for about 50 years. Come here for sloppy sundaes, egg creams, ice-cream sodas, and other back-in-the-day treats. See p. 105.