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# The Best **Full-Day** **Tours**



This map of Philadelphia highlights three historic neighborhoods: Chinatown, Old City, and Society Hill. It shows a network of streets, including major thoroughfares like I-76 and I-95. Key landmarks such as Franklin Square, Independence National Historical Park, and the US Mint are labeled. The map also displays the SEPTA Subway and Trolley lines, as well as various religious buildings marked with cross and star symbols. Ten numbered red circles (1-10) are placed throughout the map to indicate specific points of interest, primarily concentrated in the Old City area near the US Mint and the Independence National Historical Park.

- Previous Page: A rendering of *The Thinker* from the Rodin Museum.

**T**his 1-day tour offers a glimpse of early Philadelphia, and, therefore, insight into early America—starting with the Revolution. For the next few days, the country’s “most historic square mile” will be your stomping grounds: Wear comfortable shoes, and don’t be afraid to chat up the costumed Colonials. **START: Independence Visitor Center, 6th & Market sts.**

**1 ★★ Independence Visitor Center.** This welcome center, with its self-service kiosks, concierge services, umpteen maps and brochures, and box office for tickets to Independence Hall and historic homes isn’t just a great first stop for a tour of historic Philadelphia, it’s a great first stop for *any* tour of Philadelphia. 🕒 ½ hr. 6th & Market sts. ☎ 800/537-7676. [www.independencevisitorcenter.com](http://www.independencevisitorcenter.com). Daily from 8:30am.

**2 ★★★ Independence Hall.** Where it all went down: the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution. Squeeze into the stately spaces where George Washington (1732–1799), Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), John Adams (1735–1826), Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), and their Colonial brethren conceived of a country affording its citizens “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Don’t miss

Washington’s “Rising Sun Chair,” rare maps of the 13 colonies, and the tipstaff (a wooden and brass instrument used to subdue rowdy onlookers in the courtroom). Half-hour tours are guided. 🕒 1 hr.; *includes wait in line.* Chestnut St., btw. 5th & 6th sts. ☎ 215/965-2305. [www.nps.gov/inde](http://www.nps.gov/inde). Mar 1–Dec 31, tickets are required (free at Visitor Center or \$1.50 in advance online: pick up at least one hour before tour). Daily 9am–5pm.

**3 ★★★ Liberty Bell.** The cracked, one-ton symbol of American independence and equality resides in a \$12.6-million glass gazebo across Chestnut Street from Independence Hall. Interactive exhibits aim to keep you from reaching out and ringing the bell. (Don’t even think about it.) 🕒 ½ hr. *Free admission (tickets not required; mandatory security check).* Daily 9am–5pm.

*Guided tours of Independence Hall leave every half-hour.*





*The National Constitution Center has performances and interactive exhibits dedicated to the U.S. Constitution.*

**4 ★★ kids National Constitution Center.** The newest addition to Independence Park is the world's only museum devoted to the U.S. Constitution—which is way more fun than it sounds. There are live performances-in-the-round that explain the document's history, as well as interactive exhibits that let you take the Presidential Oath of Office, don a Supreme Court robe, stand next to a Declaration signer, and examine hanging chads from the 2000 election. 🕒 1½ hr. 525 Arch St. 📞 215/409-6600. [www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org). Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$8 children 4–12. Buy tickets in advance; arrive 20 minutes early for timed theater show. Mon–Fri

*The museum at Franklin Court pays tribute to the man's many careers.*

9:30am–5pm, Sat 9:30am–6pm, Sun noon–5pm.

**5 ★ Christ Church Burial Ground.** The 1719 expansion of Christ Church (see p 11, bullet 8), includes the graves of signers of the Declaration of Independence, including, most notably, that of Benjamin Franklin. Join the throngs who have tossed a penny on it (through the fence) for good luck. 🕒 ¼ hr. SE corner of 5th & Arch sts. [www.oldchristchurch.org](http://www.oldchristchurch.org). Closed to the public.

**6 ★★ Fork Etc.** Step back, momentarily, into modern times for a tasty salad, light sandwich, natural soda, cappuccino, and the day's papers at this quick-stop gourmet cafe. For a longer lunch, try Etc.'s slightly-more-formal sister restaurant, Fork, next door (see p 106). 308 Market St. 📞 215/625-9425. [www.forkrestaurant.com](http://www.forkrestaurant.com). \$–\$\$.

**7 ★★ kids Franklin Court.** Brick arches disguise Ben Franklin's former home, which, since it was long ago demolished, is now represented by a steel frame girder. Nearby is a museum that pays tribute to Franklin's many







*Elfreth's Alley is the oldest continually inhabited street in the United States.*

careers, shows a 22-minute film about *The Real Ben Franklin*, and operates a post office that hand-stamps postcards. 🕒 1 hr. 314-322 Market St. ☎ 215/965-2305. Free admission. Daily 11am–5pm. Post office closed Sun.

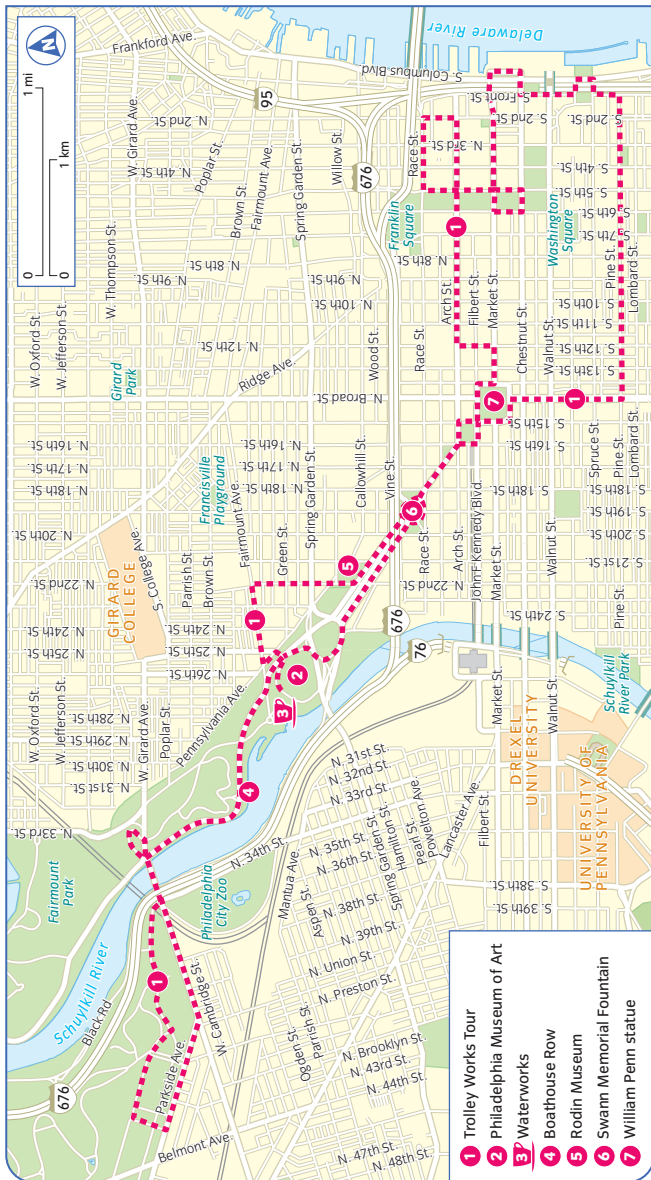
**8 ★★ Christ Church.** Old City might be proudest of this English Palladian landmark, oft regarded as the neighborhood's most important Colonial building. George Washington had his own pew here. William Penn (1644–1718) received his baptism in the font, a gift from London's All Hallows' Church. Although plaques and memorial markers abound, keep in mind that person seated beneath the circa 1744 chandelier could be one of the active church's congregants. A volunteer guide in the nave will gladly offer an impromptu tour—and hush you, if necessary. 🕒 ½ hr. 2nd & Market sts. ☎ 215/922-1695. [www.christchurchphila.org](http://www.christchurchphila.org). Free admission; donations accepted. Mon–Sat 9am–5pm; Sun 12:30–5pm. Closed Mon–Tues in Jan–Feb.

**9 ★ kids Betsy Ross House.** The jury's out on whether Betsy Ross (1752–1836), the seamstress of the Stars and Stripes, actually lived in this teensy abode (or,

actually, if she really sewed the first flag). No matter: This restored dwelling remains a minute joy to explore, from cellar kitchen to wee bedrooms to flag-filled gift shop. 🕒 ½ hr. 239 Arch St. ☎ 215/686-1252. [www.betsyrosshouse.org](http://www.betsyrosshouse.org). Suggested donation \$3 adults, \$2 students; audio tour \$5. Apr–Sept daily 10am–5pm; Oct–Mar Tues–Sun 10am–5pm.

**10 ★★★ Elfreth's Alley.** The oldest continuously inhabited street in the States could teach you a thing or two about getting along with the neighbors. Small, two-story row houses line the narrow cobblestone lane, the original homes of tradesmen, artisans, and urbanites of varied religions and ethnicities. Number 126, the Mantua Maker's House (cape maker) is the alley's museum, complete with 18th-century garden and dressmaker's shop. 🕒 1 hr. Off 2nd St., toward Front St., btw. Arch & Race sts. ☎ 215/574-0560. [www.elfrethsalley.org](http://www.elfrethsalley.org). Free admission to visitor center & gift shop; Mantua Maker's House \$5 adults, \$1 children (includes 20-minute tour). Mar–Oct Tues noon–5pm, Wed–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun noon–5pm; Nov–Feb Thurs–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun noon–5pm.



## The Best in Two Days



**Y**ou've done enough walking. On day two, it's time to take a load off (at least, for the morning) and get the lay of the land. Of all of Philadelphia's touring methods—amphibious landing vehicles, horses-and-carriages—the Victorian-style trolleys are my favorites. **START:** 5th & Market sts, or any of the 20 stops along the trolley's route.



### 1 ★★ **kids** Trolley Works

**Tour.** A 24-hour pass for the surprisingly speedy rail-less trolleys and double-decker buses gets you the most comprehensive tour of downtown. On-and-off privileges and unlimited rides mean if Junior wants to see the fortress-like Eastern State Penitentiary (see p 48, **bullet 8**) again, or if you regret not picking up those vintage earbobs on Antique Row, a second chance at satisfaction is just a short ride away.

 1½ hr. 5th & Market sts., 19 more stops along route, plus shuttles from hotels.  215/389-TOUR. [www.phillytour.com](http://www.phillytour.com). 24-hour pass: \$27 adults, \$25 seniors, \$18 children. Apr–Nov Mon–Fri 9:30am–5:30pm, Sat–Sun 9:30am–6pm; Dec–Mar daily 10am–4pm.

### 2 ★★ Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Hop off at this Greco-Roman temple on a hill, jog up the steps à la *Rocky*, and get lost in 80-some galleries of art and *objets*, even a medieval cloister. Cézanne's (1839–1906) monumental *Bathers* is here, as are works by native Philadelphian Thomas Eakins (1844–1916), classics from Van Gogh (1853–1890), Poussin (1594–1665), Rubens (1577–1640), Duchamp (1887–1968), and Monet (1840–1926). Recent special exhibitions include Cézanne and Renoir (1841–1919), and across the street at the newer Perelman Building, Marcel Wanders (1963–) and Frank Gehry (1929–).

 2 hrs. 26th St. & Ben Franklin Pkwy.  215/763-1000. [www.phila.museum.org](http://www.phila.museum.org). Admission \$16 adults,

*The Philadelphia Museum of Art features more than 80 galleries.*

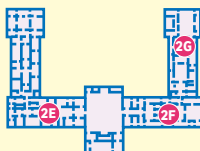


\$14 seniors, \$12 students (does not include special exhibits); first Sunday of the month, pay what you wish.

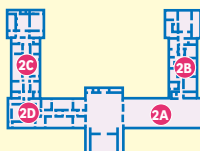
Tue–Sun 10am–5pm (Fri until 8:45pm).

## Philadelphia Museum of Art

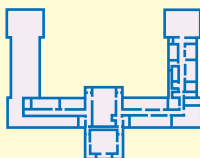
SECOND  
FLOOR



FIRST  
FLOOR



GROUND  
FLOOR



You'll spend most of your time on the first and second floors of this U-shaped museum. Begin where your interests lie—especially at **2A Special Exhibitions**, which are almost always world-class, usually require advance reservations, and charge additional admission. Next, explore works by Thomas Eakins, as well as Shaker and Pennsylvania Dutch furnishings in the **2B American Collection**. Cross the grand stair (looking up to see Alexander Calder's [1898–1976] "Ghost" mobile) to **2C Modern and Contemporary Art**, where you can find iconoclastic pieces by Jasper Johns (1930–), Marcel Duchamp, Cy Twombly (1928–), and Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957). Before you

head upstairs, **2D European Art 1850–1900** deserves your perusal: Review your art history lessons with works representative of the Impressionist, Symbolist, Naturalist, and Art Nouveau styles—including Cézannes, Cassatts (1844–1926), Monets, Van Goghs, and amazing period *objets*. The second floor shows earlier pieces from Europe: **2E 1500–1850 French and English period** rooms, Poussins and Rubenses, and **2F 1100–1500: Renaissance works**, a 15th-century Venetian bedroom, a French Gothic chapel, and an **2G Asian gallery** that includes an interesting mix: a Japanese teahouse, Persian carpets, and a 16th-century Indian temple hall.



**3 ★ Waterworks.** Just behind the museum, a 200-year-old municipal water system has been cleverly restored as an elegant river-top restaurant. Try the grilled haloumi cheese, the lobster BLT, and a bottle from the water list. **640 Water Works Dr.** ☎ 215/236-9000. [www.thewaterworksrestaurant.com](http://www.thewaterworksrestaurant.com). \$-\$\$\$.

**4 ★★ Boathouse Row.** From the restaurant, head toward the river, along Kelly Drive, to this iconic row of 10 antique (circa 1850s–1870s) clubhouses belonging to collegiate and other amateur crew groups and teams. You'll likely glimpse some oarsmen sculling along the river. Come back, if you can, after dark to see the houses lit up. ⌚ ½ hr.

**5 ★★★ Rodin Museum.** Farther up the Parkway, stop by this Paul Cret–designed mini-museum (on the street's north side). Here, a rendering of *The Thinker* and the *Gates of Hell* will greet you to the largest collection of Rodin's (1840–1917) works outside of Paris. It's a lovely spot, really, replete with major sculpture, plaster models, and original sketchbooks. ⌚ 1 hr. **22nd St. & Ben Franklin Pkwy.** ☎ 215/568-6026. [www.rodinmuseum.org](http://www.rodinmuseum.org). Suggested admission \$5. Tues–Sun 10am–5pm.

**6 ★★ Swann Memorial Fountain.** A few more blocks, and you'll run into Logan Circle and its classical centerpiece fountain, a creation of Alexander Stirling Calder (1870–1945), the son of City Hall sculptor

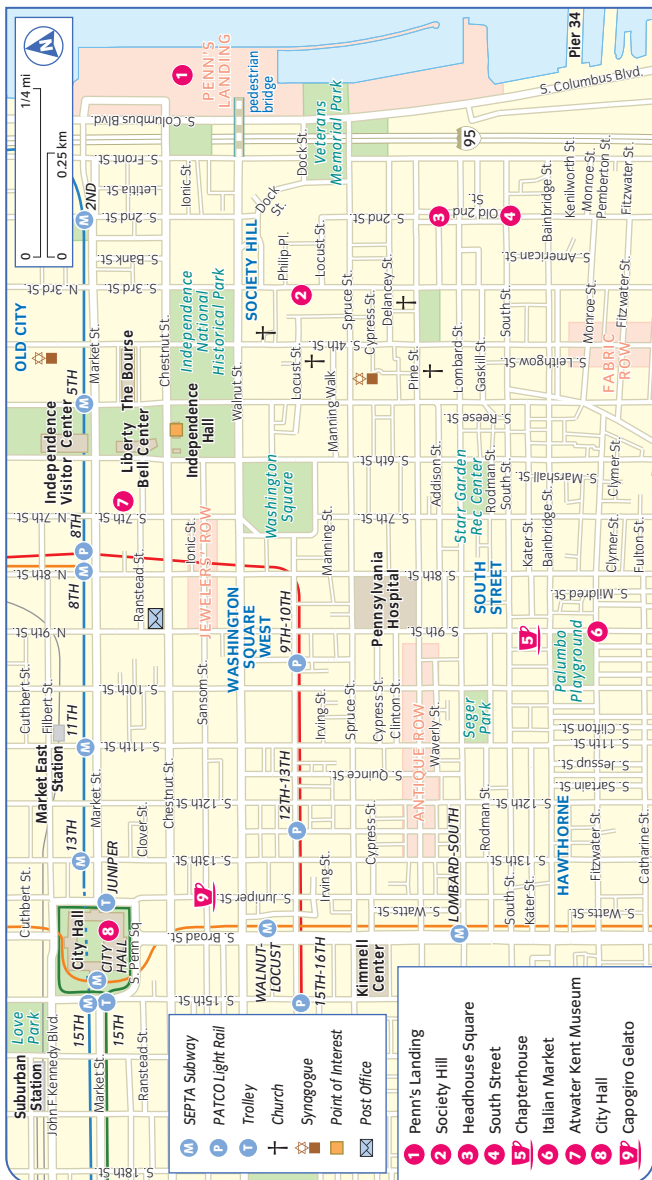


*The clubhouses along Boathouse Row date back to the mid-19th century.*

Alexander. Also known as “The Fountain of the Three Rivers,” the aquatic sculpture represents the region's three major waterways: the Schuylkill, Delaware, and Wissahickon rivers. ⌚ 20 min. **1 Logan Sq., at 18th St. & Ben Franklin Pkwy.**

**7 ★★★ William Penn statue.** Finally, go a few blocks more to reach City Hall and Philadelphia's biggest statue of all. Created by Alexander Milne Calder (1846–1923), father to Alexander Stirling, this enormous topper represents Philadelphia's original city planner and Pennsylvania's namesake. ⌚ 20 min. **Broad & Market sts.**

## The Best in Three Days



**S**o, you've done high-brow culture and big-time history. On day three, it's time to get to know the city's inimitable blend of gorgeous, gritty, and gourmet—the essential components that make Philadelphia . . . *Philly*. Start with a brisk walk. (You'll need the exercise: Soon, you'll be eating your way through 9th Street's Italian Market.) **START: Columbus Blvd. at Walnut St.**

**1 Penn's Landing.** The nicest time of day to visit the pedestrian-friendly Delaware Riverfront is morning, with the seagulls and joggers. No longer the bustling port it once was, the area is nonetheless a decent place to stroll, to gaze across the river at Camden, New Jersey, and if you're into shipbuilding and seafaring, to return to later, to visit the Independence Seaport Museum, USS *Becuna*, USS *Olympia*, and the four-mast-tall ship the *Moshulu*, converted into a restaurant (see p 96). For now, however, walk south along the water, past the Art Deco-inspired Hyatt Regency, then cross back over Columbus Boulevard at Spruce Street. ⌚ ½ hr. **Columbus Blvd at Walnut St.** [www.delawareriverwaterfrontcorp.com](http://www.delawareriverwaterfrontcorp.com).

**2 ★★ Society Hill.** Back on the "mainland," you can find the very Philly dichotomy of living styles. To the north: I.M. Pei's (1917–) circa

1963 modernist Society Hill Towers. To the west and south: Historic brick Colonial-, Georgian-, and Federal-style townhouses, some of the city's first. Society Hill, a neighborhood loosely bound by Walnut and South streets, the river, and 8th Street, gets its name from the Free Society of Traders, a wealthy 18th-century group of Quaker financiers who footed some of William Penn's bills and who resided here. Today, the area is considered the city's second-most sought-after real estate, after Rittenhouse Square. (I think Society Hill is infinitely more charming.) To really get a flavor for the blend of history here, explore a few blocks and be sure to seek out details such as "busybody" mirrors in upper-floor windows, invented by Ben Franklin, used by residents to see who's at the door without having to descend the stairs; original wrought-iron boot scrapers; and sidewalks that bear antique hitching

*Penn's Landing is home to the four-masted tall ship Moshulu, now a restaurant.*





*South Street is a beacon to the city's adolescents.*

posts and marble steps, relics of horse-and-buggy days. To explore the inside of a residence-turned-museum, call ahead to see the Powel House. 🕒 ½ hr. 244 S. 3rd St. (See p 55.)

**3 Headhouse Square.** This all-brick replica of the original “New Market” or “Shambles” was once—

and is again—an open-air market in continuous, English-style sheds. And it’s attached to the nation’s oldest surviving volunteer firehouse. Weekends in the spring through fall, shop or browse Headhouse’s bustling farmer’s market. 🕒 15 min. 2nd St., btw. Pine & Lombard sts.

**4 South Street.** To skip this colorful strip of sneaker stores, costume jewelers, rustic cafes, and neon-lit food stands would be to miss out on the city’s beating adolescent heart. For decades, this one-way boulevard has been a sort of Mecca for the under-21 set. Notice the gum stuck to the tree trunks. Darn kids. 🕒 15 min.

**5 ★★ Chapterhouse.** This airy and art-dappled converted storefront serves great espresso, fresh fruit smoothies, and breakfast pastries to a crowd of serious medical students and laid-back neighborhood types. 620 S. 9th St. (btw. South & Bainbridge sts.). ☎ 215/238-2626. \$.

## Keeping Mum

If you thought the Italian Market was gritty, you ain’t seen nothing ’til you’ve seen the **Mummers’ Museum**. This unintentionally oddball homage to Philly’s New Year’s Day parade (think Mardi Gras with more feathers, fewer beads, less organization) encapsulates a local tradition that’s virtually ineffable, but here goes . . . Every January 1, hundreds of locals who’ve spent the previous year rehearsing routines, concocting opulently clownish costumes and over-the-top sets, and spray-painting shoes gold, “perform” (dance, play instruments, stumble intoxicatedly) up Broad Street. The parade descends, apparently, from an old wassailing-style tradition. But this spot, with its strange decor and old-to-quite-old memorabilia, feels more eccentric than historic—in a good way, of course. 🕒 ½ hr. 2nd St. (referred to as “Two” St.) & Washington Ave. ☎ 215/336-3050. [www.mummersmuseum.com](http://www.mummersmuseum.com). Admission \$3.50 adults, \$2.50 seniors & children.







Visitors to City Hall can ride the elevator up into the statue of William Penn at the top of the building.

### 7 ★ Atwater Kent Museum.

The only venue offering homage to history, that's specifically Philadelphia, lays out the birth (and continuing life) of the city via sublime art and amazing objects spanning early Quaker fashions to Norman Rockwell works to 2008 Phillies memorabilia. On the first floor you can't — and shouldn't — miss the giant, walk-upon floor map detailing Philly's every natural and man-made nook and cranny. 🕒 1 hr. 15 \$. 7th St. (between Chestnut and Market sts.) ☎ 215/685-4830. [www.philadelphiahistory.org](http://www.philadelphiahistory.org). Admission \$5 adults; \$3 seniors and students 13–17; free children 12 and under. Weds–Sun 1–5pm. (Museum closed for renovations until mid 2010.)

8 ★★ City Hall. Ready to walk again? Head toward the elaborate,

all-masonry crux of Philadelphia government, home to the mayor's office, courtrooms, and other dubiously functional functionaries. Visitors may peek into an ornate reception room (no. 202) and Council Chambers (no. 400), and if City Hall's whims permit, take a tour, too. (Call ahead to find out.) If you can, ride the elevator up into the statue of William Penn for an amazing view. 🕒 1–2 hrs. **Broad & Market sts.** [www.phila.gov/](http://www.phila.gov/). Admission \$5 observation deck; \$10 tour, including observation deck. Mon–Fri 9:30am–4:15pm.

### 9P ★★★ kids Capogiro

**Gelato.** The most delicious gelato and sorbets reside at this popular spot, where samples are free, scoops are pricey, and flavors include sublime *fior di latte* (milk), classic *baccio* (hazelnut), and off-beat-but-delish pineapple with Lancaster mint. 13th & Sansom sts. ☎ 215/351-0900. [www.capogirogelato.com](http://www.capogirogelato.com). \$. ●

*Capogiro Gelato features free samples and several outstanding flavors.*

