

Birthplace of America

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Map of Philadelphia with landmarks. Illustration © Natalia Chernyshova, Dreamstime.com.

This year's AAO annual session returns to one of its frequent stops, Philadelphia, after previous visits in 2013 and 2002. The Pennsylvania Convention Center, centrally located in the Old City, will host the meeting April 25-27. Here is JCO's annual preview of attractions, events, and restaurants in the convention city.

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April high temperatures in Philadelphia average in the upper 60s, with lows around 50. Overcast skies and rain are common.

Philadelphia International Airport is only about seven miles from downtown. Taxis, charging a flat rate of \$32 to Center City, depart from Zone 5, limousines and vans from Zone 6, and app-based services from Zone 7, on the South Commercial Roadway outside each baggage claim. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) provides rail service to Center City every half-hour on weekdays (hourly on

Boldface names in this article are listed in the Directory on pp. 132-133 with their telephone numbers and street addresses. The online version of this article (freely accessible) includes live website links; see the JCO Online Archive at www.jco-online.com.



Aerial view of Philadelphia City Hall. Photo © Demerzel21, Dreamstime.com.

weekends). You can buy a Quick Trip at the airport kiosk for \$6.75, or you can purchase a SEPTA Key Card in advance for \$4.95 (which is credited to your wallet), and then load it as needed (septakey.org).

Philadelphia Visitor Centers are located at **City Hall**, on the Independence Mall, in **LOVE Park**, and at the base of the **Philadelphia Museum of Art**. Besides souvenirs and information, the centers offer discounted tickets for tours, attractions, and theater productions. You can also get discounts by using either the Philadelphia Pass (philadelphiapass.com) or the Philadelphia CityPASS (citypass.com), which can be purchased online before your trip. LOVE Park (officially JFK Plaza) not only contains Robert Indiana's iconic



"Building the City," on the famous Mural Mile. Photo © David Pillow, Dreamstime.com.



The Reading Terminal Market is a popular attraction for culinary treats. Photo © Sean Pavone, Dreamstime.com.

LOVE sculpture, but is currently the home of the Portal, a giant video installation by Lithuanian artist Benediktas Gylys, featuring a rotation of livestreams from several global cities.

Philadelphia claims to be the "Mural Capital of the World," with more than 4,300 installations curated by Mural Arts Philadelphia (muralarts.org). You can search for public art, or take a self-guided tour, through the Association for Public Art (associationforpublicart.org). Many other self-guided walking or driving tours are suggested on the Visit Philadelphia website (visitphilly.com).

Philly food tours are available through numerous outlets. The **Reading Terminal Market**, near the convention center, boasts more than 80 merchants, while the **Clark Park Farmers Market**, in West Philly, operates on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The annual **Manayunk StrEAT Food Festival**, taking over Main Street in the 300-year-old Manayunk district, will be held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 27.

Attractions

East of the convention center is the Historic District, including Independence National Historical Park, known as "America's Most Historical Square Mile." Timed tickets for **Independence Hall** tours can be reserved online for a \$1 fee through recreation.gov or the National Park Service (NPS) app. Other NPS-operated landmarks on Independence Square include the **Liberty Bell Center**, **Congress Hall**, and **Old City Hall** (all open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, with free admission); the **President's**



The Liberty Bell, from Independence National Historical Park. Photo © Erix2005, Dreamstime.com.

House Site, an outdoor installation with the foundations of America's first executive mansion (7 a.m.-10 p.m. daily, free); the **Museum of the American Philosophical Society** (10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Sunday, free); and the **Benjamin Franklin Museum** (9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, paid admission).

Additional historic sites worth visiting include the **National Constitution Center**; **Carpenters' Hall**, site of the first Continental Congress; the **Betsy Ross House**; and **Elfreth's Alley**, one of the nation's oldest residential streets. The familiar **City Hall**, America's largest municipal building, offers a tower tour with a spectacular view of Philadelphia from 548 feet above ground level.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art may be best known for its "Rocky steps," but it is also one of the world's leading museums, featuring new galleries designed by Frank Gehry. Current exhibits include "Mythical Creatures: China and the World" and "Boom: Art and Design in the 1940s"; also on site will be the Philadelphia Show, a touring national art and design fair, running April 25-27.



Eakins Oval and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, with a mural in progress. Photo © Kat Kendon, Dreamstime.com.

Nearby, the Beaux-Arts-style **Rodin Museum** houses one of the largest collections of the French sculptor's work, while the excellent **Barnes Foundation** will be spotlighting "Cecily Brown: Themes and Variations." The **Franklin Institute** is presenting "Body Worlds: Vital," an "inside-out look" at how the human body works; the museum's Fels Planetarium offers various astronomical shows.

Those with more specialized interests can find a plethora of museums in Philadelphia, including the **African American Museum in Philadelphia**, **Fireman's Hall Museum** (a restored 1898 firehouse), the **Museum of the American Revolution** (showing "Banners of Liberty: An Exhibition of Original Revolutionary War Flags"), the **Museum of Illusions**, the newly renovated **Science History Institute** museum, and the **Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History**. A bit farther from the convention center are the **Penn Museum**, the University of Pennsylvania's museum of archaeology and anthropology, showcasing "Native American Voices"; Congregation Rodeph Shalom, the 1920s-era Byzantine-style synagogue housing the **Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art**; **Philadelphia's Magic Gardens**, "an immersive mixed media art environment" by mosaicist Isaiah Zagar; and the rather controversial **Mütter Museum**, operated by the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

Just across the Schuylkill River in Fairmount Park, the **Philadelphia Zoo**, billed as "America's first zoo," is undergoing some renovations and is currently open only Thursday through Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., with last admission at 1:30 p.m. Nearby are the **Please Touch Museum** (Philadelphia's children's museum) and the **Shofuso Japanese Cultural Center** (a traditional garden and teahouse built in Japan in 1953).

A few blocks east of the Historic District, **Penn's Landing** is the centerpiece of the Delaware River waterfront, where you can hike the 3.3-mile Delaware River Trail. The World War II submarine *Becuna* and 1895 cruiser *Olympia* are berthed at the **Independence Seaport Museum**. Across the water in Camden, New Jersey, you can visit the **Battleship New Jersey** and the **Adventure Aquarium**.



A ship sailing past the Independence Seaport Museum. Photo © Anthony Aneese Totah Jr., Dreamstime.com.

Events

The renowned **Philadelphia Orchestra** will be presenting pianist Yefim Bronfman with conductor Tugan Sokhiev in Robert Schumann's Piano Concerto, paired with Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 4, April 25-27. On April 26, the **Curtis Symphony Orchestra** performs an appealing concert featuring pianist Yuja Wang and conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin in Einojuhani Rautavaara's Piano Concerto No. 1; also on the program will be Lili Boulanger's *D'un matin de printemps*, Maurice Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, and Claude Debussy's *La mer*. The cutting-edge **Opera Philadelphia** offers an old favorite, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, April 25 and 27. **PHILADANCO!** showcases its own choreographers April 25-27 in "Relentless Resident Visions!"

At the **Met Philadelphia**, comedian Jeff Arcuri will appear on April 24, and the venerable Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds on April 26.

The **Quintessence Theatre Group** presents William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* April 24 and 26 and *Antony and Cleopatra* April 25-27. The musical *Dreamgirls* is playing at the **Walnut Street Theatre**, and the **Arden Theatre Co.** is running a production of *The Hobbit*, adapted especially for children.

The iconic **Penn Relays** are being raced at Franklin Field April 24-26, in conjunction with the Philly Black Pride festival.

Restaurants

The much-decorated Marc Vetri headlines

the Philadelphia dining scene with his flagship **Vetri Cucina**. The Vetri-founded northern Italian **Osteria** is still serving in the Spring Garden district under new ownership, but other outposts have sadly closed in recent months. Stephen Starr continues to lead a reliable Philly empire, including **Barclay Prime** (steakhouse), **Buddakan** (modern Asian), **Butcher and Singer** (classic American), **The Continental Midtown** (eclectic), **The Dandelion** (British pub), **El Rey** (Mexican), **El Vez** (Latin), **Frankford Hall** (German Biergarten), **Morimoto** (home of a former Iron Chef), **Parc** (French bistro), and **Talula's Garden** (farm to table).

Other highly rated Philadelphia restaurants: **a.kitchen** (new American), **Amada** (Spanish), **Barbuzzo** (Mediterranean), **Café y Chocolate** (Mexican), **Forsythia** (French), **Friday Saturday Sunday** (tasting menu), **High Street** (new American), **Irwin's** (Sicilian), **Jansen** (new American), **Kalaya** (Thai), **Kampar** (Malaysian), **Laurel** (French), **My Loup** (new French), **Pietramala** (vegan), **River Twice** (new American), **Vernick Fish**, and **Zahav** (Israeli).

If you're looking for traditional city fare, try **Geno's Steaks** or **Pat's King of Steaks**, the cat-corner rivals for best Philly cheesesteak; **The Olde Bar**, in the Old Original Bookbinder's; or **Rittenhouse Grill**. Wine bars near the convention center include **Tria Cafe Rittenhouse** and **Vintage Wine Bar & Bistro**.



Geno's Steaks, home of "the best cheesesteaks in Philadelphia." Photo © Scott Biales, Dreamstime.com.

DIRECTORY		
Events and Attractions	Address	Phone
Adventure Aquarium	1 Riverside Drive, Camden, NJ	(844) 474-3474
The African American Museum in Philadelphia	701 Arch St.	(215) 574-0380
Arden Theatre Co.	40 N. Second St.	(215) 922-1122
Barnes Foundation	2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway	(215) 278-7000
Battleship New Jersey	62 Battleship Place, Camden, NJ	(856) 966-1652
Benjamin Franklin Museum	317 Chestnut St.	(267) 514-1522
Betsy Ross House	239 Arch St.	(215) 629-4026
Carpenters' Hall	320 Chestnut St.	(215) 925-0167
City Hall	1400 John F. Kennedy Blvd.	(267) 514-4757
Clark Park Farmers Market	4300-4398 Baltimore Ave.	(215) 575-0444
Congress Hall	Sixth and Chestnut Streets	(215) 965-2305
Curtis Symphony Orchestra	Marian Anderson Hall, 300 S. Broad St.	(215) 893-7902
Elfreth's Alley Museum	124-126 Elfreth's Alley	(215) 574-0560
Fireman's Hall Museum	147 N. Second St.	(215) 923-1438
Franklin Institute	222 N. 20th St.	(215) 448-1200
Independence Hall	520 Chestnut St.	(215) 965-2305
Independence Seaport Museum	211 S. Columbus Blvd.	(215) 413-8655
Liberty Bell Center	526 Market St.	(215) 965-2305
LOVE Park and Portal	16th St. and JFK Blvd.	
Manayunk StrEAT Food Festival	Main St. Manayunk	(215) 482-9565
Met Philadelphia	858 N. Broad St.	(800) 653-8000
Museum of Illusions	401 Market St.	(267) 703-2270
Museum of the American Philosophical Society	Philosophical Hall, 104 S. Fifth St.	(215) 440-3440
Museum of the American Revolution	101 S. Third St.	(215) 253-6731
Mütter Museum	19 S. 22nd St.	(215) 563-3737
National Constitution Center	525 Arch St.	(215) 409-6600
Old City Hall	Fifth and Chestnut Streets	(215) 965-2305
Opera Philadelphia	Academy of Music, 240 S. Broad St.	(215) 732-8400
Penn Museum	3260 South St.	(215) 898-4000
Penn Relays	Franklin Field, 235 S. 33rd St.	(215) 898-6151
Penn's Landing	101 N. Columbus Blvd.	(215) 922-2386
PHILADANCO!	Perelman Theater, 300 S. Broad St.	(215) 387-8200
Philadelphia Museum of Art	2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway	(215) 763-8100
Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art	Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 N. Broad St.	(215) 627-6747
Philadelphia Orchestra	Marian Anderson Hall, 300 S. Broad St.	(215) 893-1999
Philadelphia Zoo	3400 W. Girard Ave.	(215) 243-1100
Philadelphia's Magic Gardens	1020 South St.	(215) 733-0390
Please Touch Museum	Memorial Hall, 4231 Avenue of the Republic	(215) 581-3181
President's House Site	600 Market St.	(215) 965-2305
Quintessence Theatre Group	7137 Germantown Ave.	(215) 987-4450
Reading Terminal Market	1136 Arch St. #400	(215) 922-2317
Rodin Museum	2151 Benjamin Franklin Parkway	(215) 763-8100
Science History Institute Museum	315 Chestnut St.	(215) 925-2222

DIRECTORY		
Events and Attractions	Address	Phone
Shofuso Japanese Cultural Center	West Fairmount Park, Horticultural and Lansdowne Drives	(215) 878-5097
Walnut Street Theatre	825 Walnut St.	(215) 574-3550
Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History	101 S. Independence Mall E.	(215) 923-3811
Restaurants	Address	Phone
a.kitchen	135 S. 18th St.	(215) 825-7030
Amada	217-219 Chestnut St.	(215) 625-2450
Barbuzzo	110 S. 13th St.	(215) 546-9300
Barclay Prime	237 S. 18th St.	(215) 732-7560
Buddakan	325 Chestnut St.	(215) 574-9440
Butcher and Singer	1500 Walnut St.	(215) 732-4444
Café y Chocolate	1532 Snyder Ave.	(267) 639-4506
The Continental Midtown	1801 Chestnut St.	(215) 567-1800
The Dandelion	124 S. 18th St.	(215) 558-2500
El Rey	2013 Chestnut St.	(215) 563-3330
El Vez	121 S. 13th St.	(215) 928-9800
Forsythia	233 Chestnut St.	(215) 644-9395
Frankford Hall	1210 Frankford Ave.	(215) 634-3338
Friday Saturday Sunday	261 S. 21st St.	(215) 546-4232
Geno's Steaks	1219 S. Ninth St.	(215) 389-0659
High Street	101 S. Ninth St.	(215) 625-0988
Irwin's	800 Mifflin St.	(215) 693-6206
Jansen	7402 Germantown Ave.	(267) 335-5041
Kalaya	4 W. Palmer St.	(215) 545-2535
Kampar	611 S. Seventh St.	(215) 989-2202
Laurel	1617 E. Passyunk Ave.	(215) 271-8299
Morimoto	723 Chestnut St.	(215) 413-9070
My Loup	2005 Walnut St.	(267) 239-5925
The Olde Bar	125 Walnut St.	(215) 253-3777
Osteria	640 N. Broad St.	(215) 763-0920
Parc	227 S. 18th St.	(215) 545-2262
Pat's King of Steaks	1237 E. Passyunk Ave.	(215) 468-1546
Pietramala	614 N. Second St.	(215) 970-9541
Rittenhouse Grill	1701 Locust St.	(215) 772-1701
River Twice	1601 E. Passyunk Ave.	(267) 457-3698
Talula's Garden	210 W. Washington Square	(215) 592-7787
Tria Cafe Rittenhouse	123 S. 18th St.	(215) 972-8742
Vernick Fish	1 N. 19th St.	(215) 419-5055
Vetri Cucina	1312 Spruce St.	(215) 732-3478
Vintage Wine Bar & Bistro	129 S. 13th St.	(215) 922-3095
Zahav	237 St. James Place	(215) 625-8800