

Philadelphia getaway guide

Head south for a jam-packed summer of brotherly love with our guide to the season's essential exhibitions and events, plus where to shop, eat and drink



Photograph: Shutterstock

While [we love summer in NYC](#), a few days in another city can feel like a breath of fresh AC. Philadelphia has an impressive collection of [museums](#), a cool alternative music scene, mind-blowing street art and some great bars and restaurants (we're not only talking cheesesteaks). And since the train ride is little more than an hour, you can be there in the time it takes to get from Washington Heights to [Bushwick](#).

Arts and culture



(Re)discover the Impressionists

The Philadelphia Museum of Art is renowned for so much more than its role in *Rocky*; guys. Overlooking the Schuylkill River, the crown jewel of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway is known for its collection of late-19th- and early-20th-century painting and sculpture. "Discovering the Impressionists: Paul Durand-Ruel and the New Painting" (through September 13) just hit Philly after stints in Paris and London. Reuniting key works by Monet, Renoir, Degas, Manet, Pissarro and others for the first time in more than a century, the exhibition also focuses on the role of the visionary dealer (Durand-Ruel) who nurtured the emerging artists and organized groundbreaking shows between the early 1870s and the early 1900s. Afterward, check out PMA's gallery dedicated to Duchamp's readymades *The Large Glass* and *Étant donné*, then head to the Rodin Museum, included in the \$14 to \$20 admission. *Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy* (215-763-8100, philamuseum.org).



See masterpieces in a new light

The history of the Barnes Foundation, established by self-made pharmaceutical magnate and collector Dr. Albert C. Barnes in 1922, is as fascinating as the collection it houses. Impressionist, Postimpressionist and early modern masterpieces (including 181 works by Renoir) share gallery space with African sculpture, Pennsylvania German furniture and more. In its new 93,000-square-foot home designed by Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects, the eclectic collection remains true to the founder's vision, arranged in ensembles according to light, line, color and space instead of chronology, style or genre. In "Mark Dion, Judy Pfaff, Fred Wilson: The Order of Things" (through August 3), three contemporary artists respond to the display practice with large-scale installations of their own. *The Barnes Foundation, 2025 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy* (215-278-7200, barnesfoundation.org).



Get schooled in modern art

Founded in 1805 and home to the nation's first art school and museum, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts touts an extensive collection of 19th- and 20th-century American art in its landmarked Victorian Gothic building. Despite its venerable history (graduates include Thomas Eakins and Mary Cassatt), the institution embraces contemporary expression: On view from July 2 through October 11 are installations by local artist collective and studio Traction Company, including a salvaged-wood reproduction of a truss from their studio space. A massive monument to the PAFAs mission, Claes Oldenburg's 51-foot-tall sculpture, *Paint Torch*, was installed in the plaza in 2011. *Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1301 Cherry St (215-972-2001, pafa.org).*



Visit Paris (by way of Penn)

Tucked inside the University of Pennsylvania's historic Fisher Fine Arts Library is the free, 2,000-square-foot Arthur Ross Gallery. From July 18 through November 8, you can view more than 120 artworks, jewels and other extravagant objects from the collection of Thomas W. Evans, an American expat and the dental surgeon to Napoleon III. Among the "Courtly Treasures" are Dr. Evans's carriage, which whisked Empress Eugenie to exile in England after mobs stormed the palace in 1870, and a gold tankard embellished with St. George and the dragon, a gift from the Prince and Princess of Wales. *Arthur Ross Gallery, 220 South 34th St (215-898-2083, arthurrossgallery.org).*



Ogle unearthed treasures

Containing roughly a million pieces of art and artifacts, the Penn Museum (a.k.a. the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology) sprawls over three floors. Its African and Egyptian collections are among the nation's largest, and the centerpiece of the latter is an impressive 15-ton granite sphinx. Through November 1, "Beneath the Surface: Life, Death, and Gold in Ancient Panama" showcases adornments, pottery and other artifacts from a pre-Columbian cemetery. The eclectic, period-spanning building includes statues by local sculptor A. Stirling Calder (Alexander's dad), stunning gardens and a koi pond. Visit on a Wednesday and linger for outdoor concerts through September 2—including Jordanian jazz singer Farah Siraj on July 22. Admission is reduced to \$10 for July and August. *Penn Museum, 3260 South St (215-898-4000, penn.museum).*



Enter a material world

The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) collaborates with artists to take fabric (and other mediums) to extraordinary levels—for example, Mona Hatoum's *Entrails Carpet* composed of cast silicone rubber intestines. The highlight of this summer is the Richard Tuttle survey, conceived by the current artist in residence and featuring more than five decades of his work. Known for exploring the dynamic possibilities of fabric at FWM, Tuttle created a series of handprinted clothing, *Shirts* (1978) and *Pants* (1979), that was worn by dancers in the Pennsylvania Ballet. The show includes the international premiere of his new kimono work, *Extraordinary: Fabric Workshop and Museum, 1214 Arch St (215-561-8888, fabricworkshopandmuseum.org)*



Have some family time

The National Museum of American Jewish History has a lot more than Sandy Koufax and Barbra Streisand memorabilia (though the core exhibition's "Only in America" Gallery offers an engaging glimpse at their lives, among others). The brand-new building features immersive displays that track the Jewish experience, from the Thirteen Colonies to *Seinfeld*. Through August 2, "Richard Avedon: Family Affairs" spotlights the photographer's portraits of prominent cultural and political figures of the '60s and '70s—Andy Warhol and members of the Factory, and 1976 Presidential candidates Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, for example. Pose with your brethren in the photo booth—no selfie stick required. *National Museum of American Jewish History, 101 S Independence Mall E (215-923-3811, nmajh.org).*



Check out Einstein's brain

Part of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the unforgettable Mutter Museum has more than 20,000 medical objects and anatomical oddities on display, dating back to the 19th century. Feast your eyes on a Viennese collection of 139 human skulls, a plaster cast of conjoined twins, pieces of Albert Einstein's brain (yep, you heard us) and the well-preserved "Soap Lady," an unidentified local woman whose body was exhumed in 1875 and found to be encased in a soaplike fatty substance. Totally worth the nightmares you'll have afterward. *Mütter Museum, 19 S 22nd St (215-563-3737, muttermuseum.org).*



Mix it up in a mausoleum

First it was a tombstone manufacturer's HQ, then home to DJ Diplo's Mad Decent record label. Now the building in Callowhill, the area that inspired David Lynch's 1977 film *Eraserhead*, is an alternative concert and gallery space with an unsurprising edge. The Philadelphia Mausoleum of Contemporary Art (PhilaMOCA) hosts everything from Tim Burton burlesque (June 27; \$15) to the Walla Fest (August 8, 9; \$10-\$12), two nights of indie bands, a music-related art show and vendors of handmade jewelry, clothing and more. *Philadelphia Mausoleum of Contemporary Art, 531 N 12th St (267-519-9651, philamoca.org).*



Cross the Delaware for a stellar lineup

Hosted by the University of Pennsylvania's award-winning public radio station, WXPB, the XPoNential Music Festival is a three-day extravaganza on the Camden Waterfront. The 30-artist lineup includes fan favorites St. Vincent and My Morning Jacket and next big things Courtney Barnett and Hop Along, against a backdrop of the Philly skyline. *2 Riverside Dr, Camden, NJ (xpnfest.org). July 24-26; \$65-\$150.*