

ART MUSEUM DISTRICT

pennttracks

WALKING
TOURS OF
PHILADELPHIA

OVERVIEW:

This tour will take you from Penn's Bookstore, through Drexel University and Powelton Village, over to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and down the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. This tour, like this city, is overflowing with culture, but also provides a little ethnic flavor and history.

WHY YOU SHOULD RETURN:

Just three blocks from Penn's campus lies some of the best Thai and nuevo-Mexican food in the city, as well as a thriving university that borders your own. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, immortalized by Rocky of movie fame, is one of the finest art museums in the country, and the gateway to the largest urban park in the world! Add the Rodin Museum and the Franklin Institute, and you'll see several treasures well worth revisiting!

Walk to the corner of 36th and Walnut to start your tour.

On your way to the Art Museum district:

1.) Sansom Common

36th and Walnut Streets

Site of the Hilton Inn at Penn, the Penn Bookstore, Cosi, Douglas, Urban Outfitters, and Pod – a superb Asian fusion restaurant.

2.) University City High School

36th Street between Market Street and Lancaster Avenue

The mosaic on the exterior tells the history of Blackbottom, the previous neighborhood destroyed in the name of “urban renewal” which accounts for some modern day “town/gown” tensions. Many Penn students volunteer their tutoring and mentoring skills here.

3.) Lemongrass and Zocalo

36th Street and Lancaster Avenue

Two great local restaurants serving Thai and Mexican respectively.

4.) Powelton Village and Drexel University

Powelton between 36th and 33rd Streets

These were once the homes of Philadelphia's elite who escaped across the Schuylkill River to cooler and greener space. Powelton Village is named for Samuel Powel, one of George Washington's best friends. Today many students and faculty of Penn and Drexel live here.

In the Art Museum district:

5.) Spring Garden Bridge

From this bridge, you have a great view of the city skyline, the Museum of Art, and Boathouse Row. You might see skulls along the Schuylkill River, which hosts the country's largest rowing competition every spring, the Dad Vail Regatta. Behind the boathouses winds Kelly Drive, a gorgeous pathway where lots of people can be found walking, jogging, rollerblading and biking. This is the gateway to Fairmount Park, which is ten times larger than New York's Central Park!

6.) Philadelphia Museum of Art (PMA)

End of the Ben Franklin Parkway

This gem of a museum is famous for its outstanding collection of European, American and Asian art, an amazing armor collection, a gorgeous cloister, countless period rooms, a Chinese temple, and a Japanese teahouse. Admission on Sundays is “pay what you wish.”

7.) Benjamin Franklin Parkway

The Parkway connects Center City with the PMA and Fairmount Park (behind the museum). Many buildings in the area were influenced by a school of art known as Beaux Arts. The French sensibilities can be seen in City Hall and in the Parkway itself, which is designed to emulate the Champs Élysées in Paris, terminating at the museum rather than the Arc de Triomphe. The Parkway is lined with the flags of the world.

Along this beautiful boulevard or adjacent to it, you'll find many treasures. **The Free Library of Philadelphia** at 1901 Vine St. holds more than “6 million items, ranging from books and magazines to art, music, film and other media.” **The Franklin Institute of Science** at 220 N. 20th St. takes a “hands-on approach to science and technology,” through numerous exhibits, the Fels Planetarium and Tuttleman IMAX Theater. **The Museum of the Academy of Natural Sciences** at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway. offers “permanent exhibits on dinosaurs, dioramas and traveling exhibits.”

8.) Rodin Museum

22nd Street and the Ben Franklin Parkway

This small but breathtaking museum holds the world's finest collection of Rodin's sculptures outside of France.

9.) Swann Memorial Fountain

Logan Circle, 18th and Race Streets

The three figures at the center represent the three rivers of Philadelphia: the Delaware, the Schuylkill, and the Wissahickon. It was designed by Alexander Stirling Calder, the second of three generations of Calders whose sculpture graces the city. Calder's father, Alexander Milne Calder, designed the statue of William Penn atop City Hall. His son, Alexander “Sandy” Calder, was famous for his modernist mobiles, one of which is on Penn's campus right outside Meyerson Hall. Philadelphia has more public art than any city in the country, with the greatest number of outdoor sculptures and public murals in the U.S including the LOVE statue and Oldenburg's giant clothespin west of City Hall.

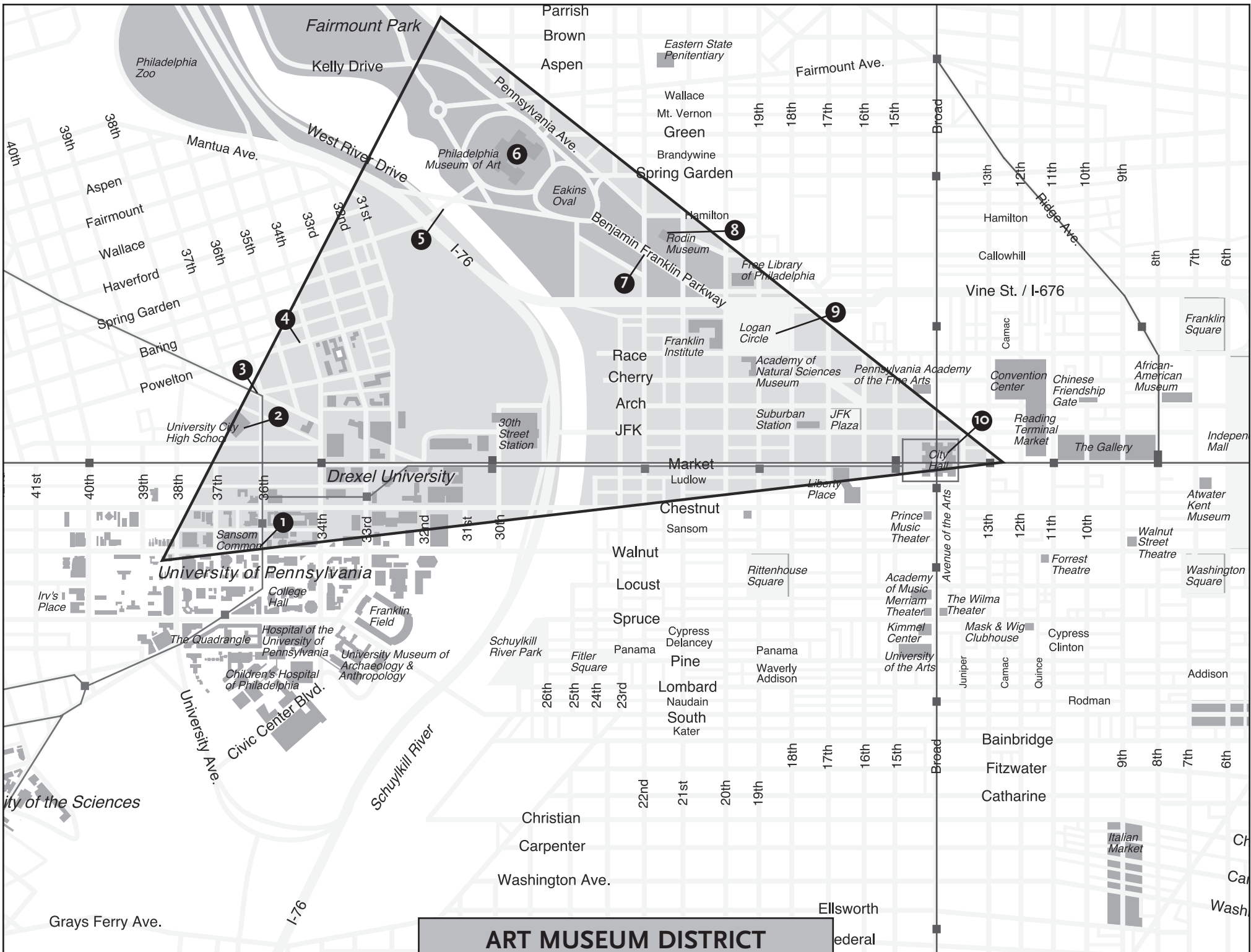
10.) City Hall

Broad and Market Streets

Construction began on City Hall in 1871, and it was designed to be the tallest building in the world. But by the time they finished it 30 years later, it was the third tallest. The statue of William Penn is the tallest statue to stand on top of a building in the world. There is an elevator that rises inside the tower, and you can stand at the feet of William Penn for a spectacular view of the city. Two blocks north of City Hall is another great art museum, **The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts**, which is the oldest art museum and school in the country (founded in 1805) at 128 N. Broad Street.

As you leave, head to the southwest corner where you will find the giant clothespin. Down the stairs is the subway. Go west on either the Green Line (take any trolley except the #10) to 36th Street or the Blue Line to 34th Street. Now you are home again!

Tour developed by Poor Richard's Walking Tours



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