

SOUTH PHILLY

pennttracks

WALKING
TOURS OF
PHILADELPHIA

OVERVIEW:

This tour will take you into the heart of South Philly and its largely Italian neighborhoods. You will travel through the famous Italian Market, continue past the oldest neighborhood in the city, Queen Village, and then up and down the eclectic and energetic South Street. Along the way, you will find delicious cheesesteaks, water ice, seafood, pizza and cookies in the city, so come hungry!

WHY YOU SHOULD RETURN:

You cannot claim to “know” Philly unless you know South Philly! This is a rich part of the city, diverse in ethnicity, architecture, food and neighborhood flavor. The Italian Market is crowded on weekends, and South Street is buzzing virtually every night of the week.

From Spruce Street you are going to catch the 40 bus east to 10th Street. Walk south along 10th Street until you reach Catherine Street to start your tour.

1.) **Dante & Luigi's** *762 S. 10th Street (10th and Catharine)*

In business since 1899, Dante & Luigi's is the oldest family-owned Italian restaurant in America. This is where to come for real Italian food, and a real taste of South Philly!

2.) **Italian Market** *Begins at 9th and Christian Streets*

South 9th Street is heir to a legacy of Italian Americans in Philadelphia. This has been known as the Italian Market for decades. But today, you will see many Asian and Mexican Americans. They are the “new kids on the block,” and have injected new life into the area. This has brought some tension between the old and the new, but the Market continues to thrive. Try the great Mexican food on 9th and Washington Streets at Taqueria La Veracruzana or the new Vietnamese restaurants a few blocks east. Around South Philly, you'll find that there's a debate for everything: the best cheesesteak or the best water ice, etc. There is even a debate over the best cheese shop: Claudio's or DiBruno's, both found here in the Italian Market.

3.) **Pat's & Geno's** *9th Street and Passunk Avenue*

Who serves the best cheesesteak, Pat's or Geno's? Some even argue the best is found at Jim's on 4th and South streets. Pat's is where the cheesesteak was invented 70 years ago, but some argue that Geno's perfected it.

4.) **St. Mary Magdelene de Pazzi** *712 Montrose Street*

This is the first Italian Catholic Church in the country. Read the plaque for the story and take a look at the newly renovated interior.

5.) **John's Water Ice** *7th and Christian Streets*

Water ice is a great way to follow up a cheesesteak. Try the gelato, a combination of water ice and soft-serve ice cream.

6.) **Queen Village Neighborhood** *South of South Street and east of 7th Street*

This neighborhood south of South Street was originally called Southwark, after an area in London. It was renamed Queen Village in the 1970's, in memory of the Swedish settlers who were here before William Penn. The street names like Queen, Christian and Catherine refer to those colonial Swedes who were here in the early 17th century.

7.) **Fabric Row Mural** *4th and Monroe Streets (side of Maxie's Daughter, 724 S. 4th Street)*

By the end of the 19th century, Philadelphia was the textile manufacturing center of the world. It drew thousands of immigrants from every nation. Thanks to its proximity to the Delaware River Immigration Station, this area became a convenient home, especially to Jews from eastern Europe, many of whom worked in the garment

industry. According to the National Museum of American Jewish History, located at 55 N. 5th Street, roughly “400 mostly elderly adult children of the immigrant generation” still call this neighborhood home.

8.) **South Street** *Between 7th and Front Streets*

South Street was originally called Cedar Street and was the southern border of Penn's original city. It has been a magnet for fringe culture from the bawdy theaters of George Washington's day through the tattoo parlors of today. You can get great slices of pizza at Lorenzo's, catch a concert at the TLA, or explore the eclectic (and now more mainstream) shops. If you walk down to 2nd Street, look north and you'll see the 18th-century open-air market called Head House Square where craft fairs are often held.

9.) **Jim's Steaks** *400 South Street*

A local favorite since 1939, this is the main rival to Pat's and Geno's.

10.) **Crash Bang Boom** *528 S. 4th Street*

Formerly known as Zipperhead, Crash Bang Boom is a throwback to the street's grungier days. Although the name and location have changed, the store remains dedicated to the punk culture that once dominated South Street.

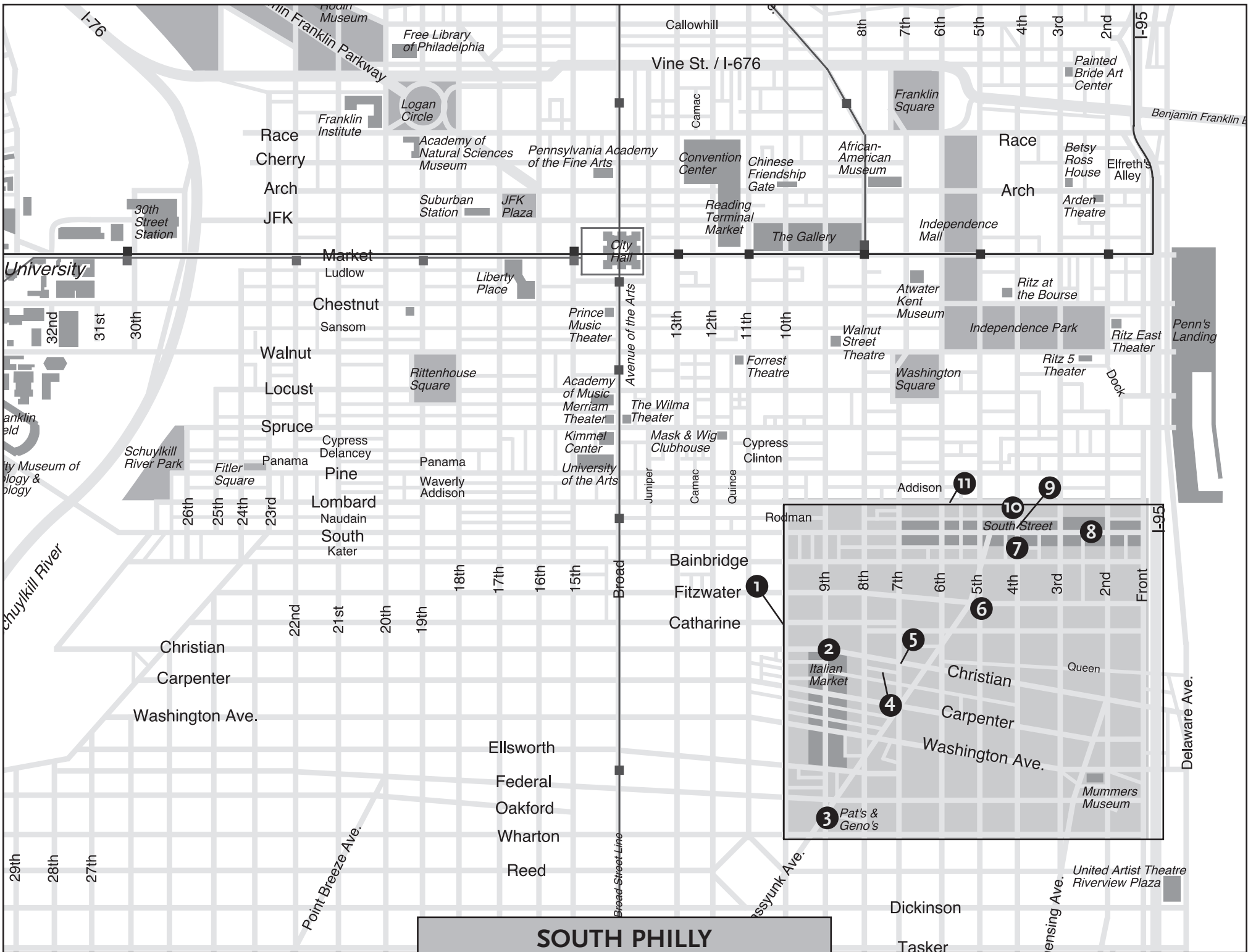
11.) **Mother Bethel AME Church** *6th and Lombard Streets*

Mother Bethel was the first AME church in the world. The African Methodist Episcopal denomination was founded in 1791 by Richard Allen, and now has over 2.5 million members. Allen was born into slavery but was able to buy his freedom and became a preacher at St. George's Methodist Church (on 4th and Vine Streets). At that time, Philadelphia was home to the largest free-black population in America. With the founding of five more black churches in the next 20 years, Philadelphia soon came to be called the “Cradle of the Black Church.” A century later, Penn hired a young scholar, W.E.B. Du Bois, to study this community. The result was published in 1899 as *The Philadelphia Negro*. You can find the marker where Du Bois lived on 6th Street between South and Lombard. Penn's Du Bois College House is named after this important scholar.

See www.southstreet.com for more information.

You can now catch the 40 bus back to Penn at 6th and Lombard Streets. If you miss the bus, then walk five blocks north to 5th and Market Streets and take the Blue Line to 34th Street.

Tour developed by Poor Richard's Walking Tours



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