

ART MUSEUM DISTRICT

CITIZENS BANK PRESENTS

pennttracks

WALKING
TOURS OF
PHILADELPHIA

OVERVIEW:

This tour will take you from the Penn Bookstore, through Drexel University and the Powelton Village section of West Philadelphia, over to the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Rocky!), and down the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. This tour, like this city, is oozing with culture, but also gives you a little ethnic flavor and history to keep you on your toes.

WHY YOU SHOULD RETURN:

Just three blocks off your campus lies some of the best Thai and nuevo-Mexican in the city and an entire university that borders your own. The Philadelphia Museum of Art may have steps made famous by Rocky, but it is also 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!

To start your tour: walk to the corner of 36th and Walnut.

1.) Sansom Common

36th and Walnut St.

A few years ago, this entire block was a parking lot. Now it hosts the Inn at Penn, the Penn Bookstore, Così, EMS, Douglas, Urban Outfitters, and Pod around the corner.

2.) University City High School

36th St., between Market St. and Lancaster Ave.

Many Penn students volunteer their tutoring and mentoring skills here. Right out front is a mosaic that tells the story of the neighborhood known as Blackbottom, which was here before the high school and the surrounding office buildings. The neighborhood was destroyed in the name of "urban renewal," and this helps explain some of the tensions between West Philly and Penn. But Penn has recently begun to work closely with the surrounding community to improve relations, and the fact that you can take a class on Blackbottom is a testament to that new partnership.

3.) Lemongrass and Zocalo

36th and Lancaster Ave.

Just blocks from the bookstore are these two great restaurants, which most Penn students don't even know about! Come to Lemongrass for the best Thai in West Philly, and Zocalo for great Mexican.

4.) Powelton Village and Drexel University

Powelton St. between 36th and 33rd St.

West Philadelphia was once filled with the summer houses of Philadelphia's elite, who escaped across the river to cooler and greener space. Powelton Village is named for Samuel Powel, one of George Washington's best friends. Today Powelton Village is the home of many students and faculty of Penn and Drexel. As you can see, many of these mansions have been turned into student housing, including Drexel fraternity houses.

5.) Spring Garden Bridge

From this bridge, you have a great view of the skyline of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Boathouse Row. You might see sculls along the Schuylkill River, which hosts the country's largest rowing competition every spring, the Dad Vail. Behind the boathouses winds Kelly Drive, a gorgeous path along the Schuylkill where countless Philadelphians can be found walking, jogging, rollerblading and biking. And this is the gateway to Fairmount Park, which is ten times larger than Central Park of NYC!

6.) Philadelphia Museum of Art (PMA)

End of the Ben Franklin Parkway

Many people recognize the front steps of the museum from the movie *Rocky*. But the museum is also 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.

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. Its 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 also lined with the flags of the world, a beautiful testament to Philadelphia's international flavor.

8.) Rodin Museum

22nd and the Ben Franklin Parkway

Rodin is known today as one of the greatest sculptors who ever lived, but he was not so famous during his lifetime. A wealthy Philadelphian met Rodin when he was down on his luck, and agreed to fund Rodin if Rodin would give him a copy of his major works. Rodin agreed, and the result is that this museum holds the world's finest collection of Rodin sculpture outside of France.

9.) Swann Memorial Fountain

Logan Circle, 18th and Race St.

The three figures at the center of Swann Fountain 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 can be found in Philadelphia. 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 the Penn campus right outside Meyerson Hall.

The Swann Fountain is just one piece in Philadelphia's remarkable collection of outdoor art, which also includes the LOVE statue and Oldenburg's giant clothespin just west of City 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.

10.) City Hall

Broad and Market St.

Construction was begun on City Hall in 1871, and it was designed to be the tallest building in the world. But by the time they finished, 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 the best view of the city. And just two blocks north is another great art museum, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the oldest art museum and school in the country (1805).

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 St. or the Blue Line to 34th St. Now you are home again!

Tour developed by Poor Richard's Walking Tours

