

PENN TRACKS

OLD CITY

Overview:

This tour traces the steps of Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson in Philadelphia. Beyond Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, it includes 18th-century churches, 19th-century factories turned into apartments and art galleries, and the city's trendiest restaurants.

Transportation:

To get to Old City: Take the Market – Frankford Line (also known as the Blue Line) to 2nd Street. To return to Penn: Take Blue Line from 2nd and Market streets or 5th and Market streets back to 34th Street.

1

Market Street

2nd & Market Streets

Christ Church, where Ben Franklin and George Washington worshiped, is the world's first Episcopalian church. Today, it's surrounded by top restaurants and arts venues. Many old 19th-century factories on this street are now loft apartments and art galleries, making it the SoHo of Philly. On the first Friday of each month, galleries stay open late, restaurants offer specials, and there's often street music.

2

Elfreth's Alley

2nd Street between Race & Arch streets

Stroll down Elfreth's Alley, the nation's oldest residential street, dating back to 1702. Named after a blacksmith, this cobblestone street features Trinity Houses, each with one room per floor and winding staircases. Don't miss Bladen's Court, an alley within the alley, once providing access to properties on Front Street.

3

Betsy Ross House

239 Arch Street

Betsy Ross, born Elizabeth Griscom Ross Ashburn Claypoole, was more than the seamstress of the U.S. flag. Excommunicated from the Quakers for marrying outside her denomination, she lost two husbands in the Revolutionary War, had seven daughters, and lived for nine decades.

4

Free Quaker Meeting House

5th & Arch streets

Built in 1783, this meeting house is one of the nation's largest. William Penn, a Quaker, founded Philadelphia as a model of tolerance. The building's simplicity reflects Quaker worship: no minister, altar, or liturgy.

5

Christ Church Cemetery

Between 4th & 5th streets on Arch Street

Make sure you take part in a Philadelphia tradition and drop a lucky penny on Ben Franklin's grave. He and many other important historical figures are buried in the Christ Church Cemetery.

6

National Constitution Center

5th & Arch streets

The National Constitution Center is America's most interactive history museum; it has more than 100 interactive and multimedia exhibits, as well as photographs, sculpture, text, film, and artifacts. It is the only museum devoted to the U.S. Constitution.

7

Liberty Bell

Independence Mall West

The bell, designed in 1751 to honor William Penn and his Charter of Rights and Privileges granting religious freedom, features a quote from Leviticus: "Proclaim Liberty to all the land and to all the inhabitants thereof." It became a national symbol in the 1830s when abolitionists adopted it for their cause.

8

Independence Hall

Independence Mall West

The Declaration of Independence was written and signed here in 1776, and in 1787 the Founding Fathers returned to write the Constitution. Philadelphia became the de facto capital in 1774 and was the official capital of the U.S. from 1790-1800.

9

Carpenters' Hall

320 Chestnut Street

The first Continental Congress was held here in 1774. Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Monroe, Madison came here to discuss the problem with England, namely taxes. The *First Bank of the U.S.* is right behind Carpenters' Hall.

Of Additional Interest

A

African American Museum

701 Arch Street

It is the first institution built by a major United States city to house the work of African Americans. Here you can enjoy four magnificent exhibition galleries that are filled with historical pieces and fascinating art of African American heritage.

B

Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History

55 N. 5th Street

Opening its doors on July 4, 1976, it is the only museum in the nation that exclusively collects, preserves, and interprets artifacts linked to American Jewish life.

C

Washington Square

6th & Walnut street

It is one of the original five public squares designed by William Penn. It was originally a potter's field which means over 2,000 colonists' graves lie beneath your feet. An eternal flame flickers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the Revolutionary War.

D

Penn's Landing

101 N. Columbus Boulevard

Penn's Landing, named for William Penn's 1682 landing, hosts year-round events, classes, and entertainment. It features seasonal parks like Spruce Street Harbor Park and Blue Cross River Rink Winterfest, plus a lot of activities at the Great Plaza.

See www.oldcitydistrict.org for more information.

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Washington Square

Carpenters' Hall

Betsy Ross House

Elfreth's Alley

Penn's Landing



FUN FACTS

NSOAI Communications Track '24

Many Old City residents live in restored 18th-century rowhouses.

Old City in Philadelphia is celebrated as a central hub for art and design. This distinguished arts district boasts over 30 art galleries and home décor showrooms, earning recognition as one of America's premier ArtPlaces.

Old City Philadelphia is famous for being where American independence was born and is filled with many historic sites.



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