

PENN TRACKS

SOUTH PHILLY

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, home of cheesesteaks and Rocky Balboa, and up and down the eclectic and energetic South Street. Along the way, you will find some of the best cheesesteaks, water ice, seafood, pizza, and cookies in the city, so come hungry!

Transportation:

To get to South Philly: Take the Green Line trolley to 15th Street/City Hall then transfer to the Broad Street Line and get off at Ellsworth – Federal
To return to Penn: Take the 40 Bus from 2nd and Lombard to 34th and Spruce or take the Market–Frankfort Line from 2nd and Market streets back to 34th Street or 40th Street.

1

Magic Gardens 1020 South Street

Philadelphia's Magic Gardens is South Street's most distinctive landmark. In the 1960s, Isiaah Zagar started tiling the equivalent of three empty lots with "found" materials like glass, plates, bottles, bicycle wheels, and even whole toilets. The result is a mind-bending maze that can be described as anything from "folksy" to "trippy"—but everyone agrees that the Magic Gardens are a must-see.

2

Queen Village Neighborhood South of South Street and east of 7th Street

Originally called Southwark, this neighborhood south of South Street was renamed Queen Village in the 1970s to honor early 17th-century Swedish settlers. Street names like Queen, Christian, and Catherine reflect this heritage.

3

Jim's Steaks 400 South Street

Originally in West Philadelphia, Jim's Steaks expanded to South Street in 1976. Famous for hoagies and cheesesteaks, it's a must-visit for both new and experienced Philly cheesesteak lovers.

4

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.

5

South Street Between 7th & Front streets

Once Cedar Street, South Street was Penn's original city's southern border. It's known for fringe culture, tattoo parlors, Jim's cheesesteaks, TLA concerts, and eclectic shops. At 2nd Street, look north to see Head House Square, an 18th-century market with craft fairs.

6

Philly AIDS Thrift 710 S 5th Street

Philly AIDS Thrift is a nonprofit thrift store selling a variety of donated items. All proceeds support local organizations fighting HIV/AIDS. Shop sustainably and support a great cause!

7

3rd Street Gallery 610 S. 3rd Street

3rd Street Gallery is one of the oldest cooperative art galleries run entirely by artists in Old City, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Since 1978, the gallery has brought together artists of all generations to create new work for the gallery's exhibitions

8

Theater of Living Arts (TLA) 334 South Street

Once a single-screen movie theater, the Theater of Living Arts is now a top Philadelphia concert venue with a 1,000-person capacity. Known for '80s grungy art house films, it's a great spot to see a show with friends after dinner on South Street.

Of Additional Interest

A

Pat's & Geno's 9th Street, Passyunk 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 believe that Geno's perfected it. Whether you order yours "Whiz wit" or "Whiz witout" (with or without Cheez Whiz) is up to you.

B

Fabric Row Mural 4th and Monroe streets

By the late 19th century, Philadelphia was the world's textile manufacturing center, attracting many immigrants. Its proximity to the Delaware River Immigration Station made it home to many Eastern European Jews in the garment industry. The National Museum of American Jewish History notes that about 400 elderly descendants still live in the neighborhood.

C

Ralph's Italian 60 S. 9th St

Ralph's, renowned for its traditional Italian cuisine served in a charmingly historic setting, continues its legacy under the stewardship of the fourth and fifth generations of the Dispigno and Rubino families. For more than 120 years, this familial tradition has enriched South Philadelphia with authentic Italian flavors, attracting a diverse clientele, including celebrities like Frank Sinatra and Taylor Swift.

D

Casa México 1134 S. 9th St

Casa México, overseen by renowned Mexican chef and immigration advocate Cristina Martinez, began with her famous homemade barbacoa. Initially selling tacos from a weekend pushcart with her husband, Martinez established South Philly Barbacoa. Now, her original establishment has merged with Casa México, offering a wide array of exceptional, authentic Mexican dishes.

See southstreet.com for more information.

South Philly



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FUN FACTS

NSOAI PHINS Track '24

7th Street in South Philadelphia hosts a variety of markets offering distinctive ingredients from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Taiwan.

South Philadelphia boasts a diverse array of Asian culinary offerings, including Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, Khmer, Indonesian, and Laotian cuisines.

South Philly's Mexican community, primarily hailing from the city of Puebla, particularly the towns of San Mateo and San Lucas Atzala, significantly shapes local cuisine and social dynamics in a positive and meaningful ways.



Veronica Marlotte
Yuliya Solyanyk
Ariana Hidalgo

