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### **AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LGBTQ PHILADELPHIA**

*Must-Dos Include Historic Sites, Popular Neighborhoods, Top Restaurants & Buzzed-About Bars*

**PHILADELPHIA, March 15, 2019** – Philadelphia, the United States’ birthplace, is proud of the roles it has played—and plays still—in the founding, furtherance and celebration of the LGBTQ civil rights movement. The City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection has an easy-to-explore trail of LGBTQ historic sites and markers among vibrant neighborhoods where queer life thrives.

To see and do it all, visitors need to spend at least a couple of nights, and that’s made easy with the [Visit Philly Overnight Hotel Package®](#), offering free parking and more perks.

Here’s an essential itinerary for visitors interested in Philadelphia’s LGBTQ history and present:

#### **Historic District:**

Perhaps not surprisingly, Philadelphia’s Historic District, the original city, played a pioneering role in the birth of the United States’ LGBTQ rights movement. Between the Delaware River and 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Vine and Lombard Streets are the colonial yet contemporary neighborhoods of Old City and Society Hill—and Independence National Historical Park, home of the **Liberty Bell**, symbol of the abolitionist movement and freedom in general. 6<sup>th</sup> & Chestnut Streets

- **Reminder Day Marker at Independence Hall** – Independence Hall was the site of the country’s earliest organized recurring gay rights demonstrations, beginning July 4, 1965. A state historical marker commemorates this peaceful protest—and the four that followed each July 4 through 1969—known collectively as the Annual Reminders. 6<sup>th</sup> & Chestnut Streets, [nps.gov/inde](https://nps.gov/inde)
- **Old City** – In 1973, Quaker landlords defied then-commonplace discrimination against LGBTQ tenants by renting the storefront at 60 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the gay activists who founded the city’s first LGBTQ coffeehouse. This community space was the direct predecessor to the William Way LGBT Community Center (see below), a safe space for the community. Today, the neighborhood vibrates with art galleries, independent boutiques, historic sites, bring-your-own-bottle (BYOB) restaurants and lively bars—and **Menagerie Coffee**, a stylish and inviting queer couple-owned cafe. Old City, between the Delaware River & 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Walnut & Race Streets, [oldcitydistrict.org](http://oldcitydistrict.org); Menagerie, 18 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, [menageriecoffee.com](http://menageriecoffee.com)
- **Arch Street Meeting House** – The historic home of a more than 200-year-old Quaker “Friends” congregation hosted 300 LGBTQ activists in February 1979 for the Philadelphia Conference, to plan the first National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. That October, that march would attract 100,000 demonstrators and would define a national civil rights movement. Visitors can view the historical marker outside the meetinghouse and are welcome inside. Hours vary seasonally. 320 Arch Street, (215) 627-2667, [historicismh.org](http://historicismh.org)

### **The Gayborhood:**

The center of Philadelphia's gay residential life and culture since World War II, the blocks between 11<sup>th</sup> and Broad Streets and Pine and Chestnut Streets earned their nickname—the “Gayborhood”—during an October Outfest event in 1995. In 2007, Philadelphia Mayor John Street dedicated 36 rainbow street signs around the neighborhood. Since then, the rainbows have multiplied, adorning more street signs (72 in all), homes, businesses and crosswalks at 13<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets.

- **Dining** – In the past 15 years, 13<sup>th</sup> Street has become the neighborhood's own restaurant row. It's here that enterprising businesswomen, chef Marcie Turney and spouse and business partner Valerie Safran, took a chance on their first venture, **Lolita**, an intimate and inventive Mexican bistro with in-demand fresh-fruit margaritas. Today, the couple owns and operates nearby Spanish destination **Jamonera**, all-American **Bud & Marilyn's**, Italian trattoria **Little Nonna's**, gourmet market **Grocery**, Mediterranean **Barbuzzo**, along with two gift shops (see below), one with its own chocolate-making studio. But that's not all: The street is also home to happening hidden Izakaya and coffee shop **Double Knot**, modern Asian **Sampan**, lounge-like upscale taqueria **El Vez**, fancy wine bar and ristorante **Tredici Enoteca**, stylish pizzeria **Zavino**, international stunner **Maison 208** (with the city's only retractable roof), and pristine cafe and pastry shop **J'aime French Bakery**. 13<sup>th</sup> Street between Locust & Chestnut Streets
- **Shopping** – Independent shops have set up their own stakes in the neighborhood too. There are handmade soaps and products at **Duross & Langel**, hip and Philly-centric finds at Turney and Safran's gift shops **Open House** and **Verde**, thoughtfully curated Japanese housewares and beauty products from **Rikumo**, global jewelry at **Bella Turka**, original and vintage jewelry at **Halloween** and throwback fan gear at **Mitchell & Ness Nostalgia Co.** and **Shibe Vintage Sports**. Between 11<sup>th</sup> & Broad Streets and Pine & Chestnut Streets
- **Nightlife** – The name of the after-dark game is: Don't stay in one place too long. Bar hopping rules the night in these parts. Energetic parties can be found partaking in singalongs at piano bar **Tavern on Camac**; casually knocking a few back at **Writer's Block Rehab**, **Toasted Walnut** or **Knock**; flirting at dance club **Voyeur**; catching a cleverly queer show or two at **Tabu**; hanging with friends and maybe having a nosh at **Franky Bradley's**; imbibing at beer spots (**BoxersPHL**, **Ubar**); or socializing at mega club, bar and lounge **Woody's**, a Gayborhood staple since 1980. Between 11<sup>th</sup> & Broad Streets and Pine & Chestnut Streets
- **AIDS Library** – Founded in 1987, this community library was the nation's first to dedicate itself to the delivery of information on HIV treatments, services and resources. Today, the safe center continues to offer referrals for nearby and national resources and provides the public with free internet access. A historical marker stands outside the building. 1233 Locust Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (wheelchair accessible), (215) 985-4851, [critpath.org](http://critpath.org)
- **William Way LGBT Community Center** – The city's LGBTQ community center occupied several rented spaces from 1976 to 1995 before settling into its very own home in 1996. William Way opens its doors 365 days a year, offering a variety of programs, support services, events and meeting spaces for the LGBTQ community. On the block-long western exterior wall of the building, artist Ann Northrup's mural *Pride & Progress* depicts a tribute to Philadelphia's LGBTQ history and culture. 1315 Spruce Street, (215) 732-2220, [waygay.org](http://waygay.org)

- **Gloria Casarez Mural** – The now shuttered 12<sup>th</sup> Street Gym, long the neighborhood’s de facto official athletic center, bears artist Michelle Angela Ortiz’s portrait of the late Gloria Casarez, the City of Philadelphia’s first director of the Office of LGBTQ Affairs, founding member of the Philly Dyke March, longtime community activist and Philadelphia native. A City Council resolution renamed the block where *A Tribute to Gloria Casarez* stands “Gloria Casarez Way.” Casarez helped ensure Philadelphia adopted the nation’s broadest possible LGBTQ-rights protection during her time in City Hall. 204 S. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, [muralarts.org](http://muralarts.org)
- **John E. Fryer Historical Marker** – This Pennsylvania Historical Museum & Commission marker honors the late activist John E. Fryer, M.D. In 1965, the University of Pennsylvania expelled Fryer from his psychiatric residency program on the basis of his homosexuality, which was then classified as a mental illness by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). In 1972, Fryer, a faculty member at the Temple University School of Medicine, offered an electrifying anonymous testimony that resulted in the APA’s 1973 declassification of homosexuality as a mental illness. 13<sup>th</sup> & Locust Streets, [phmc.pa.gov](http://phmc.pa.gov)
- **Philly AIDS Thrift @ Giovanni’s Room** – The country’s longest-running LGBTQ bookstore opened along South Street in 1973 and relocated in 1979 to its current Pine Street location. The unofficial community and cultural center is named after James Baldwin’s trailblazing novel and now operated by Philly AIDS Thrift, a nonprofit secondhand shop located at 710 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Proceeds from both stores go to people living with HIV & AIDS. A state historical marker resides outside the corner shop. 345 S. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, (215) 923-2960, [queerbooks.com](http://queerbooks.com)
- **Tavern on Camac** – From around 1920 to 1960, wood block-paved Camac Street between Walnut and Spruce Streets was known as “Philadelphia’s Greenwich Village.” Maxine’s, a speakeasy and musical bar, was at the heart of LGBTQ life along Camac. Today (and for the past 20 years), Maxine’s is known as Tavern on Camac, the city’s longest continuously running LGBTQ bar, still with the piano bar, weekend dancing and a dinner-only restaurant. 243 S. Camac Street, (215) 545-0900, [tavernoncamac.com](http://tavernoncamac.com)
- **Edith Windsor Historical Marker** – This marker honors Philadelphia-born-and-raised Windsor, whose activism and legal battle led to the Supreme Court’s dismantling of DOMA, the Defense of Marriage Act, in 2013. 13<sup>th</sup> & Locust Streets

### **Center City West:**

Philadelphians refer to their city’s downtown, the area bound by the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers and Vine and South Streets, as “Center City.” The Gayborhood and Historic District are east of Broad Street, but LGBTQ history and life thrive west of Broad too.

- **Philadelphia City Hall** – More than an architectural marvel and the seat of city government, City Hall is where, in 1982, Philadelphia became one of the first U.S. cities to pass an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. It’s also where countless LGBTQ couples have come to marry and get their marriage licenses since 2014, when Pennsylvania enacted marriage equality. Broad & Market Streets, Room 121, (267) 514-4757, [phlvisitorcenter.com/CityHall](http://phlvisitorcenter.com/CityHall)
- **South Street** – This colorful boulevard owes its vibrancy to the artists, hippies and queer folk who turned it into a welcoming enclave in the late 1960s and early ’70s. It’s where radical gay collective Gazoo founded Philadelphia’s Gay Liberation Front and where bisexual blues singer Bessie Smith performed at the Royal Theatre, an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century African-American-owned

cultural center. Today, the street's known for its **Philadelphia Magic Gardens**, cheesesteak shops and hangouts, including, on its western end, dive bar extraordinaire **Bob & Barbara's**, home of Philly's best-loved drag show, queer-owned **Little Spoon Café** and the eclectic, gay-owned boutique shop **Workshop Underground**. Between Front & 16<sup>th</sup> Streets

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- **Rittenhouse Square** – The most elegant of the five public squares laid out in city planner William Penn's original plan, tree-lined Rittenhouse Square has been an alfresco sanctuary for LGBTQ Philadelphians dating back to the 1930s. The square served as the starting point of the city's first Pride parade in 1972. One block from the square, the nation's first LGBTQ sit-in took place in 1965 at a 24/7 diner (now demolished) when employees denied service to customers they presupposed to be LGBTQ. The **Dewey's Sit-in Historical Marker** (17<sup>th</sup> & St. James Streets), commemorates the protest that changed the restaurant's policy. Three blocks east on Spruce Street, the first meeting of the early East Coast Homophile Organization (ECHO) took place in 1963 at **The Drake**, then a hotel. Today, Rittenhouse Square's benches and lawns are filled with all manner of Philadelphians, and the neighborhood around the park has grown into the city's busiest center of business, shopping, dining and nightlife. 18<sup>th</sup> & Walnut Streets
- **The Barbara Gittings Home** – A pioneer in the LGBTQ rights movement, Gittings, a Philadelphia resident from age 18 and lifetime activist, edited *The Ladder*, the nation's first lesbian magazine, co-organized the Annual Reminders at Independence Hall (see above) and led charges both to promote positive LGBTQ literature in public libraries and to change the APA's classification of homosexuality as a mental illness. A Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission marker at 21<sup>st</sup> and Locust Streets honors the home she shared with photojournalist partner Kay Lahusen (entry not permitted). Across Broad Street, a sign at 13<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets in the Gayborhood declares the thoroughfare Barbara Gittings Way.

#### Beyond Center City:

From deep in South Philly, home of the cheesesteak and Philly's sports pro arenas, to the Philadelphia region's most iconic Revolutionary War-era site, all the way to a bucolic Bucks County village, the region offers LGBTQ attractions to appreciate.

- **Keith Haring Mural** – South of Center City, 1987's *We the Youth* is an original work by out Pennsylvania native and artist Keith Haring. It's one of the many Mural Arts Philadelphia program's murals created by LGBTQ artists or about the LGBTQ movement. 22<sup>nd</sup> & Ellsworth Streets, [muralarts.org](http://muralarts.org)
- **Valley Forge National Historical Park** – More than 200 years before "Don't Ask Don't Tell" was signed, challenged and repealed, Prussian military genius Friedrich von Steuben transformed General Washington's ragtag army at Valley Forge into a professional force. Benjamin Franklin, who had written of von Steuben's "affections for the same sex," recruited the Prussian as the Continental Army's inspector general and major general. A bronze monument at bucolic Valley Forge—an approximately a 30-minute drive from Center City—honors his contributions. 1400 N. Outer Line Drive, King of Prussia, (610) 783-1099, [nps.gov/vafo](http://nps.gov/vafo)
- **New Hope** – In the 1940s, the Bucks County riverside hamlet of New Hope became a popular destination for Broadway-bound performers and musicians. Since then, the artsy village—just a 45-minute drive from Center City—has developed into a beloved destination for the LGBTQ visitors (and residents), offering both a respite from city life and more than a dash of stellar restaurants, bars and shops, the **Bucks County Playhouse** and antique and vintage stores. Each May, **New Hope Celebrates Pridefest** kicks off with an unfurling of the eight-color equality flag, followed by a week of educational events, a cocktail contest, parade, outdoor fair and

parties. The pool at **The Raven Resort** is a popular summer destination for those seeking refuge from surrounding metropolitan areas. [visitnewhope.com](http://visitnewhope.com), [visitbuckscounty.com](http://visitbuckscounty.com)

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*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](http://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).*