

CONTACTS: Cara Schneider
(215) 599-0789, cara@visitphilly.com
Donna Schorr
(215) 599-0782, donna@visitphilly.com
Tweet Us: [@visitphillyPR](https://twitter.com/visitphillyPR)

Tweet It: First in freedom, first in fermentation: Philly's delicious pickles, kombucha, breads & more
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A STARTER GUIDE TO PHILADELPHIA FERMENTATION

The Region's Restaurants, Bars & Food Producers Embrace Ancient Preservation Techniques

PHILADELPHIA, October 4, 2018 – Philadelphia's food culture is more cultured than ever, thanks to a booming trend of fermentation. The ages-old process involves exposing ingredients to bacteria and yeasts to allow beneficial microorganisms to convert carbohydrates to alcohol or organic acids. While fermentation is involved in many mass-produced edibles—everything from coffee and chocolate to wine, cheese and yogurt—a growing number of regional producers have dedicated themselves to creating smaller-batch pickles, sauerkraut, kefir (a slightly sour, fermented drink similar to liquid yogurt) kombucha (a cultured, slightly effervescent, probiotic tea) and sourdough breads that employ local ingredients, elevate flavor and offer winning health benefits.

Here's a look at some of Philly's ferment-focused eateries and the most biotically blessed hometown products to sample:

Fermentation-Friendly Cafes, Bars & More:

- **Brauhaus Schmitz** – It's not surprising that a German restaurant would showcase **sauerkraut**, but great sauerkraut merits attention. At this South Street *bierhalle*, the fermented cabbage shows up on all manner of meat platters, inside dumplings and more. 718 South Street, (267) 909-8814, brauhauschmitz.com
- **Cedar Point Bar and Kitchen** – **Draft kombucha** from Funky Fresh provides a healthier alternative to beer at this Fishtown neighborhood hangout that also serves a tempeh Reuben. 2370 E. Norris Street, (215) 423-5400, cedarpointbarandkitchen.com
- **Earth Bread & Brewery** – With a restaurant concept built around fermentation, Mt. Airy's popular gathering spot has taken it to the next level. **House-brewed beer, kombucha** and **hearth-baked flatbread pizzas** all rely on good bacteria doing their job. 7136 Germantown Avenue, (215) 242-6666, earthbreadbrewery.com
- **Fermentery Form** – The **artisan beers** are fermented—not brewed—at this offbeat Kensington neighborhood taproom. Fermentery opens to the public, 2-8 p.m. Saturdays (and other times via Instagram announcement), and serves the house sours, perfected with signature yeasts. 1700 N. Palethorp Street, (267) 518-3676, fermenteryform.com
- **Front Street Café** – This all-day Fishtown eatery emphasizes all-things healthful, making the **kombucha** a must. The daily changing selection includes both draft and bottled brews. 1253 N. Front Street, (215) 515-3073, frontstreetcafe.net

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- **Martha** – Fermented food rates high at this Kensington bar. Not only does the menu include many **housemade fermented vegetables and condiments**, but the bar has two flavors of **kombucha on draft**. 2113 E. York Street, (215) 867-8881, marthakensington.com
- **Miss Rachel's Pantry** – At her South Philly vegan catering kitchen and gathering space, chef Rachel Klein serves **cheeses made from fermented nuts and coconut**. Visitors can sample selections at a five-course dinner or order a cheese board from the pantry's catering menu. 1938 S. Chadwick Street, (215) 798-0053, missrachelspantry.com
- **Philly Homebrew Outlet** – With locations in Kensington and West Philly, these stores cater to anyone interested in **fermenting at home**, be it beer, cheese, veggies or kefir. In addition to equipment and starters, Philly Homebrews also offer workshops on relevant techniques (and wine and beekeeping supplies too). 1447 N. American Street, 1314 S. 47th Street, (215) 755-4556, phillyhomebrew.com
- **Talula's Daily** – The quick-service sibling of Washington Square's Talula's Garden makes a steady flow of locally made **Baba's Bucha** available on draft. Customers can bring growlers (or buy one there for \$10) to fill up for \$24 each. 208 W. Washington Square, (215) 592-6555, talulasdaily.com
- **Tria** – Everything at this family of restaurants starts with a fermentation starter, given that the entire menu was built on **cheese, beer, wine**, plus wine- and aperitif-based cocktails. The restaurants also host informative events and tastings that educate the public about the beauty of the fermentation process. Tria Café, 123 S. 18th Street, (215) 972-8742; 1137 Spruce Street, (215) 629-9200; Tria Taproom, 2005 Walnut Street, (215) 557-8277, triaphilly.com

Bakeries:

- **Four Worlds** – A baker's obsession with natural fermentation eventually grew into a beloved West Philly storefront. Four Worlds' artisan loaves combine in-house milled grains with natural yeast starter for a full-flavored, dense and utterly memorable result. 4634 Woodland Avenue, (215) 967-1458, fourworldsbakery.com
- **Lost Bread Co.** – Alex Bois, former head baker for High Street on Market, opened his own store to offer highly creative breads such as burnt barley baguette and beetroot rye; he also gives away his proprietary sourdough starter for DIY use. 1313 N. Howard Street, (215) 739-2904, lostbreadco.com
- **Metropolitan Bakery** – In the 1990s, pastry chef James Barrett and managing partner Wendy Smith Born from White Dog Café decided to bring naturally started, European-style breads to the Philly masses. Their efforts have yielded a locavore chain of bakeries featuring expertly fermented loaves. 4013 Walnut Street, (215) 222-1492; 262 S. 19th Street, (215) 545-6655; Reading Terminal Market, 12th & Arch Streets, (215) 829-9020, metropolitanbakery.com
- **Mighty Bread Co.** – Focusing on sourdough and sourdough breads only, this microbakery sells its wares at area restaurants and farmer's markets and at the bakery Saturdays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. The venue opens its doors to the public monthly for workshops that showcase the art of fermentation. 1211 Gerritt Street, (215) 778-3520, mightybreadco.com

Kefir Makers:

- **Fresh Made** – Founded in 1982, this Fox Chase-based dairy was one of the earliest local proponents of kefir and its probiotic benefits. The company still produces multiple varieties, including its Philadelphia and Amish-style beverages. 810-20 Bleigh Avenue, (215) 725-9013, freshmadedairy.com

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- **Shellbark Hollow** – A Chester County goat farm turns out beloved chèvres, ricotta and a cult favorite goat kefir. The fermented drink can be found at specialty retailers, organic markets, area farmer's markets and the farm itself. 240 Lippitt Road, Honey Brook, (610) 431-0786, shellbarkhollow.com
- **Funky Fresh** – Kefir pop—kefir fermented to a naturally bubbly soda—is just one of the many live, nutrient dense foods created and packaged by a Philly company with a psychedelic label. The producer also offers kombucha, hot sauce and sauerkraut, at times made in collaboration with local artists, farms, businesses and organizations. funkyfreshphilly.com

Kombucha Makers:

- **Baba's Brew** – A Siberian immigrant recreates the flavors of home with a line of flavored beverages brewed in Chester County. Chamomile honey, Flower Power and hibiscus 'buchas are available at area restaurants or at the Phoenixville tasting room. 333 Morgan Street, Phoenixville, (267) 738-1973, babasbrew.com
- **Inspired Brews** – Based in Old City, this fermentary focuses strictly on fermented tea, opening to the public for special events and growler purchases from its draft selections. The local, seasonal kombucha comes in flavors like ginger, blueberry mojito and salted watermelon. 263 N. 3rd Street, (215) 821-9207, inspiredbrews.com
- **Sole Kombucha** – Bucks County's answer to the kombucha craze focuses on sustainable, non-GMO and organic ingredients from local farms, with the beverage bottle-conditioned for carbonation. Blackberry blossom, lemon ginger and Fakie (cherry Citra Hop) brews retail at Weavers Way Co-Op, Williams Cafe and other area stores and restaurants. solekombucha.com

Pickles, Sauerkraut & Vinegar Makers:

- **Jacob's Raw** – Named for the owners' sauerkraut-devouring child, this Elverson, Chester County-based producer draws on local organic ingredients. The jarred products, ranging from sauerkrauts to salad dressings to health tonics, are on offer at area markets. jacobsraw.com
- **Keepwell Vinegar** – Two former pastry chefs go savory, creating locally sourced maple, sorghum molasses and bitter-lemon vinegars just outside of York. The small-batch bottles, already a hit with local restaurateurs, retail at Philadelphia's DiBruno Bros., Riverwards Produce and Primal Supply Meats. keepwellvinegar.com
- **NetCost Market** – Catering to Russian and Eastern European clientele, these markets in Northeast Philly maintain a huge and varied pickle selection. The dedicated department carries both shelf-stable and fermented Ukrainian tomatoes, Azerbaijani watermelon and sauerkraut, among dozens more vegetables and flavor variations. 11701 Bustleton Avenue, (267) 672-2500; 2417 Welsh Road, (215) 795-3773, netcostphilly.com

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