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FAIRMOUNT & SPRING GARDEN NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE
History, Bistros, Nightlife, Cafes & More In Philadelphia's Art Museum District

PHILADELPHIA, February 5, 2020 – Because of their proximity to the renowned arts and cultural institutions along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia's Fairmount, Spring Garden (and increasingly the nearby Francisville and Brewerytown neighborhoods) are often referred to as the "Art Museum area." The personalities of these historic, laid-back, diverse communities are distinct in their own right.

Fairmount is residential, a sort of urban suburb, with many pubs and restaurants and a massive former prison-turned-museum, **Eastern State Penitentiary**. Between the Parkway and Fairmount, Spring Garden has beautiful Victorian architecture and a decidedly relaxed vibe. Bordering neighborhoods include [Logan Square](#) to the south, the Schuylkill River to the west and [North Broad](#) to the east.

The Main Attraction:

- **Eastern State Penitentiary** – Once the most famous and expensive prison in the world, the massive, Eastern State Penitentiary operated from 1829 to 1971. Today, the historic site opens year-round for tours that explore its history, along with modern social justice issues that surround incarceration. During the Halloween season, the venue's Terror Behind the Walls experience frightens even the most daring souls. 2027 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 236-3300, easternstate.org

Restaurants:

- **A Mano** – Under the direction of restaurateur Townsend Wentz, chef Michael Millon prepares seasonal, handcrafted (*a mano* means "by hand") Italian dishes at a bring-your-own-bottle (BYOB) spot that earned three out of four bells from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Cash only. 2244 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 236-1114, amanophl.com
- **Engimono** – A new sushi BYOB from Kabuki Sushi owner Albert Zheng serves traditional and signature rolls named after Philly institutions like the 76ers and Drexel. 1811 Fairmount Avenue, (267) 273-0303, engimonosushi.com
- **Fare** – Healthy, local (and when possible, organic) food comes in small plates, salads and main courses at brunch and dinner. In warmer months, patrons enjoy their food on the outdoor patio, which has a vertical herb garden. 2028 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 763-5500, farerestaurant.com
- **Figs** – Still a relatively well-kept neighborhood secret, this cozy corner BYOB dishes out Mediterranean food in an authentic Moroccan setting. Cash only. 2501 Meredith Street, (215) 978-8440, figsrestaurant.com
- **The Greyhound Cafe** – Vegan food with mass appeal — Buffalo wings, burritos, pizza, Impossible sliders, cheesesteak chimichangas, stuffed shells, Italian bowls — makes the reverse commute from Malvern, home to Greyhound's first location, just north of Fairmount in Francisville. 1839 Poplar Street, (215) 232-2234, thegreyhoundcafe.com

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- **Jack's Firehouse** – Set in a 19th-century firehouse — the fireman's pole is still standing — Jack's has been serving American cuisine, along with impressive whiskey and scotch selections for nearly 30 years. The restaurant has a prime view of the imposing Eastern State Penitentiary across the street. 2130 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 232-9000, jacksfirehouse.com
- **La Calaca Feliz** – This highly praised, brightly colored spot is known for modern Mexican cuisine and a few dozen tequilas. Not to be missed: the carnitas tacos. 2321 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 787-9930, lacialacafeliz.com
- **Pizzeria Vetri** – Awarded three out of four bells by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, this upscale pizzeria serves traditional, wood-fired Neapolitan-style pizzas, salads and more. Patrons can choose from a variety of beverages on tap, including four rotating beers and red and white wine. 1939 Callowhill Street, (215) 600-2629, pizzeriavetri.com
- **Trio BYOB** – A charming converted row home cranks out Pan Asian cuisine, especially traditional Thai dishes: fragrant, curry-like *khao soi*, made with cooked egg noodles and entrees featuring lemongrass meatballs. One block from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, it's especially convenient for museumgoers. 2601 Pennsylvania Avenue, (215) 232-8746, triobyob.com
- **Umai Umai** – This small Japanese BYOB serves some unusual maki: The Godzilla, for example, features shrimp tempura, eel, avocado, honey, macadamia bits and strawberry; the Spartan combines miso-marinated beef tenderloin, cucumber, mozzarella cheese, shrimp tempura and paprika aioli. 533 N. 22nd Street, (215) 988-0707, umai-umai.com

Casual Neighborhood Eateries & Cafes:

- **Buena Onda** – A member of chef Jose Garces' family of restaurants, this Baja Peninsula-inspired, do-good eatery is known for mahi mahi tacos and tofu chorizo quesadillas served on house-made tortillas. Fifty cents from every guacamole or bottled water ordered goes to the Garces Foundation, a nonprofit that helps Philadelphia's immigrant community access health and educational services. 1901C Callowhill Street, (215) 302-3530, buenaondatacos.com
- **Dessertcrazy** – Philly's first brick-and-mortar keto bakery offers wholesome treats that clock in at fewer than five net carbs per serving. Guests can opt to eat their cupcakes, brownies or cookies onsite with coffee or tea in hand, or have these goodies delivered. 1925 Fairmount Avenue, (267) 764-1411, dessertcrazy.com
- **Doma** – This 35-seat Japanese BYOB with Korean influences serves lunch and dinner to in-the-know neighbors. Regulars swear the hot-stone bibimbap rivals anything found in Chinatown. 1822 Callowhill Street, (215) 564-1114, domarestaurant.com
- **iPho** – Van Nguyen brings traditional Vietnamese noodle soups, vermicelli, broken rice, banh mi and bubble tea to a corner bistro. Diners have the option of eating in or taking out. 1921 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 763-7777, iphophilly.com
- **Nine** – Thai street food is the motto and menu of this sleek BYOB, known for *khanom jeep* (pork dumplings), flavorful tom yum soup, cilantro-dressed noodles and mango sticky rice for dessert. 2829 W. Girard Avenue, (267) 703-6699, ninephilly.com
- **Rybread** – Father and son team up to share their passion for food at this all-day cafe. The sandwich and panini menu is based on the son's seven-week road trip across the country; salads, smoothies and ice cream are popular too. 1711 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 769-0603, rybreadcafe.com
- **Sabrina's Café & Spencer's Too** – South Philadelphia's 9th Street Italian Market brunchtime darling operates this outpost, where hungry diners fill up on oversized portions of comfort food during lunch, brunch and dinner. 1804 Callowhill Street, (215) 636-9061, sabinascafe.com

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- **Stockyard Sandwich Co.** – This farm-to-table — and nose-to-tail — spot offers seasonal breakfast, lunch and dinner by chefs Mike Metzger and Will Lindsay, who previously worked together at University City’s White Dog Cafe. 1541 Spring Garden Street, (215) 977-9273, stockyardphilly.com
- **Sweet Nectar Dessert Kitchen** – Baker Robin Broughton-Smith was Jay-Z’s accountant before she opened this spot, known for its cakes, cupcakes, cookies, baked doughnuts and muffins — all made with locally sourced produce and no artificial food dyes. The shop also offers BYOB cupcake-decorating classes. 547 N. 20th Street, (267) 318-7143, sweetnectardk.com
- **Tela’s Market & Kitchen** – Beloved specialty corner store also serves three rustic gourmet meals a day. Early crowds rave about the egg sandwiches and piled-high bagels, while hearty brisket and butternut squash lasagna fill bellies through 8 p.m. on weeknights. 1833 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 235-0170, telasmarket.com
- **Whole Foods** – More than just Amazon’s supermarket, this Whole Foods hosts Philly-based food stalls: *hummusiya* Dizengoff, falafel specialist Goldie and Federal Donuts. 2101 Pennsylvania Avenue, (215) 557-0015, wholefoodsmarket.com
- **Zorba’s** – Loved for its traditional Greek cuisine — the chicken souvlaki and chargrilled whole fish stand out — and atmosphere, including three generations of Greek owners speaking in their native tongue, this spot is one of the neighborhood’s well-kept, most reasonably priced secrets. 2230 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 978-5990, zorbastavern.com

Bars With Great Food:

- **Bar Hygge** – Hygge (pronounced hoo-ga; Danish for “cozy camaraderie”) brings together the couples behind Conshohocken’s Baggataway Tavern and Mount Airy’s Earth - Bread + Brewery. The stylish and rustic neighborhood brewpub focuses on beers, wines and seasonal small and large plates. 1720 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 765-2274, barhygge.com
- **The Black Taxi** – Smithwick’s and Harp are regularly on tap at this corner Irish bar showing English Premier League soccer and serving bangers and mash, rasher-topped burgers and shepherd’s pie along with typical American bar fare. 745-747 S. 25th Street, (215) 232-1086, theblacktaxi.com
- **Crime & Punishment Brewing Co.** – Inspired by Russian literature, this brewery reps Brewerytown with painstakingly crafted IPAs, pilsners, stouts and lagers, and a deliciously refined menu of pickled beets, caramelized cauliflower, sour cherry dumplings and creative brunch options. 2711 W. Girard Avenue, (215) 235-2739, crimeandpunishmentbrewingco.com
- **Era Bar and Restaurant** – Serving Ethiopian food for breakfast, lunch and dinner, this laid-back spot also offers beer, wine, drink specials and pool. 2743 Poplar Street, (215) 769-7008, theerabar.com
- **The Fairview** – The Belgian Café got a complete makeover into an airy gastropub for local craft beers and chef Beth Fox’s American comfort fare, including vegan green chili cheeseburger empanadas. During the warm-weather months, outdoor seating makes for prime people-watching. 601 N. 21st Street, (215) 235-3500, thebelgiancafe.com
- **McCrossen’s Tavern** – This neighborhood staple — and close neighbor of the Barnes Foundation — is known for stepped-up tavern favorites, a progressive beverage program and friendly, polished service. 529 N. 20th Street, (215) 854-0923, mccrossens.com
- **Rybrew** – This Brewerytown pub, sibling operation to Rybread (see above) and just north of Fairmount, serves awesome sandwiches, along with craft beer (available in growlers to go too). 2816 W. Girard Avenue, (215) 763-1984, rybrew.com

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- **St. Stephen's Green** – This multi-level Irish gastropub has plenty of beers and ciders in bottles and on draft, nightly dinner service and Irish brunch on Saturday and Sunday. 1701 Green Street, (267) 239-8968
- **Thirsty Dice** – Philly's first board game cafe and bar charges a flat rate (\$7) for unlimited play of more than 800 board games (Yahtzee, Life, chess, Apples to Apples, Cards Against Humanity, Codenames, Pandemic, Catan, etc.). Staff helps with choosing and instructions, and serves coffees, local beers, French bread pizzas, mac and cheese and spiked Cinnamon Toast Crunch milkshakes. 1642 Fairmount Avenue, (215) 765-2679, thirstydice.com

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