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DOZENS OF REASONS TO VISIT PHILLY THIS SPRING
*New Museum Opens On Independence Mall & Philadelphia Museum of Art Opens New Galleries
As Part Of Major Renovation*

PHILADELPHIA, March 1, 2021 – As spring nears and COVID-19 restrictions continue to lift, the Philadelphia region is eager to welcome visitors to safely explore new, renovated and just-reopened museums; inspired exhibits; beloved annual events; and brand new hotels.

Those looking to dip their toes back into travel after a long hiatus can explore the brand-new **Faith and Liberty Discovery Center**, making its debut on Independence Mall in May; check out the **Philadelphia Museum of Art's** new galleries, part of a Frank Gehry-designed interior expansion and renovation; and take a special twilight tour of the haunting **Eastern State Penitentiary**, also hosting its first-ever beer garden in the baseball diamond.

When it's time to rest their tired feet after days spent touring the town, visitors can do so at the city's first **W Hotel** or at the **Guild House Hotel**, a boutique property in a National Historic Landmark building, both opening in spring. Another great option for spending a night or two is the ever-popular **Visit Philly Overnight Hotel Package**, which includes hotel parking and buy-one-get-one-free tickets for 19 attractions, many of which are hosting special exhibits this spring (see below). It's available at 40 hotels and bookable at visitphilly.com/overnight.

Here's a look at why Philadelphia is a must-visit this spring:

Museum Openings & Renovations:

- **Independence Seaport Museum** – The first day of spring brings with it the reopening of the Delaware River Waterfront museum focused on national maritime history. To start, the Independence Seaport Museum will operate at 25% capacity on weekends only. Visitors can explore *River Alive*, *Tides of Freedom: African Presence on the Delaware River* and *Patriots & Pirates*, among other exhibits. While the Cruiser Olympia will reopen with the museum, the Submarine Becuna will remain closed until further notice. **March 20, 2021.**
- **Faith and Liberty Discovery Center** – This \$60 million, 40,000-square-foot immersive experience is the latest development in a decades-long transformation of Independence Mall. It will explore the nation's founding tenets shared in the *U.S. Constitution*, *Declaration of Independence* and the *Bible*. The space will include interactive galleries, a 3-D theater and an
-more-

education center. Among the highlighted Americans: civil rights and Baptist leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Catholic anti-war activist Dorothy Day and Quaker William Penn, founder of colonial Philadelphia. The Center will also direct visitors to explore the Faith and Liberty Heritage Trail, including some of the nation's early religious institutions such as Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, home to the denomination's founding congregation, and Mikveh Israel, home to Philadelphia's oldest Jewish congregation. **May 1, 2021.**

- **Philadelphia Museum of Art** – When the iconic Philadelphia Museum of Art debuts its much-anticipated interior expansion and renovation by Frank Gehry, the museum will inaugurate the Robert L. McNeil, Jr. Galleries, dedicated to **American art** from 1650 to 1850, with the first major reinstallation of the American Art collection since the nation's Bicentennial in 1976. The space features the work of the Peale family of artists, presidential china, American landscape paintings, works by German and British immigrants and much more, encouraging visitors to think broadly about art, history and geography as it presents the work of many groups—Indigenous, European and African. On permanent display beginning **May 7, 2021**. In the new Daniel W. Dietrich II Galleries, **New Grit: Art & Philly Now** shows off the work of 25 living artists with ties to Philadelphia. The artists work across a range of media, including ceramics, glass, painting, sculpture, photography and video. Planned over a multi-year period, the works reflect on Black Lives Matter, immigration, incarceration and other timely societal issues. **May 7-August 22, 2021**. Visitors to the museum can also enjoy the renovated Lenfest Hall, a new Forum space and views that show off the city skyline from inside the building.

Museum Exhibits:

- **Centennial Innovations, Please Touch Museum** – If you could change the world, what would you create? Who would you become? These are just some of the big questions being asked of kids in the Please Touch Museum's 5,000-square-foot permanent exhibition, which seeks to tap into imagination and foster resiliency. The City of Philadelphia's Centennial Fairgrounds Model remains the historic centerpiece of the new exhibit, which honors the inventions of the time and the individuals whose ideas have transformed the world from 1876 through today. Exhibit debut and museum reopening to the general public, **April 22, 2021**.
- **Soutine / de Kooning: Conversations in Paint, Barnes Foundation** – In its world premiere and only U.S. showing, this groundbreaking exhibition explores the affinities between the work of Chaïm Soutine and Willem de Kooning. Organized by the Barnes Foundation and the Musées d'Orsay et de l'Orangerie, Soutine / de Kooning: Conversations in Paint presents nearly 45 works by these titans of 20th-century art and considers how Soutine's paintings served the art of de Kooning, shaping his groundbreaking figurative/abstract works in the late 1940s and beyond. **March 7-August 8, 2021**.
- **Strength & Fragility: The Story of the NLM, National Liberty Museum** – This immersive exhibition highlights the life of Irvin J. Borowsky and how his belief in universal equality and liberty, along with his passion for contemporary glass art, led to the founding of the National Liberty Museum. In addition to a magnificent nine-feet-high glass canopy by Ulla Darni, entitled the "Peace Portal," the exhibit features historical materials, artwork and soundscapes. **March 26, 2021-December 2021**.

- **Big Time: Life in an Endangered Age, Philadelphia Zoo** – During this immersive, multi-sensory experience at America’s first zoo, 24 enormous animatronic dinosaurs take guests on a prehistoric journey, highlighting the volcanic eruptions, asteroid strikes and other powerful occurrences that changed the earth forever. Among the life-like giants on display: T. rex, triceratops, anzu and woolly mammoth, among others. **March 29-September 30, 2021.**
- **Gideon Mendel: Drowning World, The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University** – On display at Philadelphia’s natural history museum, this exhibit offers a unique photographic exploration of flooding and a stark portrayal of the human condition within the context of overwhelming climate events around the world. The show features 37 photographs, two found-object displays and a video by Mendel, a leading contemporary photographer and a native of Johannesburg, South Africa. **May 1-September 6, 2021.**
- **Night Tours: Summer Twilight, Eastern State Penitentiary** – During new night tours, visitors can explore the historic cellblocks of Eastern State Penitentiary as the sun goes down. Admission includes an audio tour, featuring the real voices of former prisoners and correctional staff, along with access to the award-winning exhibit **Prisons Today** and points of interest like Al Capone’s cell. Also new: the Fair Chance Beer Garden on the penitentiary’s baseball diamond, offering craft beer from Triple Bottom Brewing Company, and an Andrea Walls digital art installation to be projected onto the exterior of Eastern State. Thursdays through Saturdays, **May 7- September 4, 2021.**
- **When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776-1807, Museum of the American Revolution** – This groundbreaking special exhibition explores the little-known story of women and free people of color legally voting in New Jersey in the Revolutionary era — and how that right was stripped away in 1807. **Through April 25, 2021.**
- **Crayola IDEAworks: The Creativity Exhibition, The Franklin Institute** – Philadelphia’s beloved science museum begins the year with a world-premiere exhibit that helps guests hone problem-solving skills and fosters creativity. Visitors will put their creative skills to action by testing solutions to problems based on current scientific research, including designing a ball that works for astronauts in low gravity, building a sustainable neighborhood and restoring sea life to coral reefs. **Through July 18, 2021.**
- **Through the Lens: Modern Photography in the Delaware Valley, James A. Michener Art Museum** – On view in Bucks County, this exhibition explores nearly 70 years of artistic experimentations with photographic processes and subject matter by artists in the Delaware Valley region, including Paula Chamlee, Susan Fenton, Emmett Gowin, Jack Rosen, Charles Sheeler and others. Work ranges from carefully hand-painted, bucolic landscapes to decisive snapshots taken on the street and features highlights of the Michener’s photo collection, including many never-before-on-view images. **Through August 15, 2021.**

- **Multiple exhibits, [Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts](#)** – The first art museum and school in the United States displays two exhibits right through summer. Approximately 25 paintings make up **Only Tony: Portraits by Gilbert Lewis**, an exhibit that shows off the artist’s sensitive and exquisite portraits of one model, Tony, and solidifies the importance of Lewis’ work within the distinguished history of figurative painting in Philadelphia. Also on display: **Taking Space: Contemporary Women Artists and the Politics of Scale**, inviting viewers to consider how space, size, scale and repetition can be interpreted as political gestures by women artists. Among the artists featured are Jennifer Bartlett, Chakaia Booker, Squeak Carnwath, Guerrilla Girls, Leah Modigliani, Ebony G. Patterson and Mira Schor. **Through September 5, 2021.**
- **Unseen, [The Mütter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia](#)** – Philadelphia’s fascinating museum of medical history mounts dramatic images of rarely seen museum specimens and spaces through the lens of renowned forensic photographer Nikki Johnson. The exhibition offers a visual backstage pass to the museum’s closed-to-the-public storage areas. **Through September 30, 2021.**

Annual Events:

- **[Spring Blooms](#)** – Visitors take in the sights and smells of spring’s arrival at Longwood Gardens with fields of tulips, azaleas, wisteria, and more. **March 27-May 2, 2021.**
- **[Festival of Fountains](#)** – Longwood Gardens’ three fountains jet to life with exciting fountain performances and glorious gardens showcase summer’s beauty. **May 6-September 26, 2021.**
- **[Philly Tech Week](#)** – According to *Forbes*, Philly Tech Week “is quickly becoming known as the fiercest and most comprehensive week of technology and leadership events on the East Coast.” Organized by tech news site Technical.ly, the festival features panels, conferences and more engaging, tech-centric events during its nine-day run. **May 7-15, 2021.**
- **[Radnor Hunt Races](#)** – In its 90th year, this annual steeplechase horse race in Malvern benefits the Brandywine Conservatory. Due to COVID-19 safety guidelines, limited tickets will be available for advance purchase only. **May 15, 2021.**
- **[Strawberry Month](#)** – It’s all about the strawberries each weekend in May at Peddler’s Village. Guests can enjoy strawberry treats galore and live entertainment, and the festivities gear up the weekend of May 15 with even more strawberry-themed activities. **May 1-31, 2021.**
- **[Devon Horse Show and Country Fair](#)** – The country’s oldest and largest event of its kind features equestrian disciplines, exhibitions and an old-fashioned country fair at the Devon Show Grounds. **May 27-June 6, 2021.**
- **[Garden Railway](#)** – Morris Arboretum’s display features a quarter-mile track with seven loops and tunnels, 12 different rail lines, two cable cars and nine bridges, including a trestle bridge that visitors can walk under. **May 29-October 11, 2021; November 26-December 31, 2021.**
- **[Philadelphia Latino Film Festival](#)** – For one weekend, film fans can find works by established and emerging Latino and Latin American filmmakers. The lineup for the 10th annual festival, which will be virtual this year, includes feature films, shorts, animations and documentaries, along with workshops and discussions. **May 30-June 6, 2021.**
- **[Rittenhouse Square Fine Art Show](#)** – This popular twice-a-year event — the oldest outdoor fine arts show in the country (94 years strong in 2021) — turns Rittenhouse Square into an exquisite outdoor gallery featuring works by more than 140 professional artists on the perimeter and works by student exhibitors in the center of the park. **June 4-6, 2021.**

- **PHS Philadelphia Flower Show** – The nation’s longest-running horticultural event is making history in 2021 by moving outdoors for the first time in its 192-year history. The 2021 show, themed “Habitat: Nature’s Masterpiece,” uses South Philadelphia’s expansive and lush FDR Park as the setting for its breathtaking displays by the world’s premier floral and landscape designers. As always, the annual gardening celebration features top-of-the-line horticulture and landscape design, demonstrations, entertainment, themed nights and a marketplace. **June 5-13, 2021.**
- **ODUNDE Festival** – The largest African American festival in the country begins with a week of events (June 6-12, 2021) and culminates with a spiritual procession to the Schuylkill River to ring in the Yoruba New Year, followed by music, dance and vendors along South Street. **June 13, 2021.**
- **Juneteenth** – Philadelphia marks the anniversary of African Americans’ emancipation from enslavement with entertainment, a virtual cultural marketplace and a Juneteenth Freedom Float House tour. **June 13-20, 2021.**

Food & Drink:

- **Terrace on Tap** – The popular pop-up outdoor dining experience returns to the second-floor Liberty View Terrace at the Independence Visitor Center this spring and brings with it local brews, specialty cocktails and seasonal bites from Brûlée Catering. Terrace on Tap offers free activities for kids and stunning panoramic views of Independence Mall. **Returns March 26-28, 2021** weather-dependent and continues Thursday through Sunday through the summer, based on availability.
- **Northern Liberties Restaurant Week** – Nearly two dozen restaurants in Northern Liberties have united for the first-ever Northern Liberties Restaurant Week. Over the course of 10 days, diners can enjoy specially priced two-course lunches for \$10 and \$15, plus three-course dinners for \$15, \$20 and \$25. Among those participating: **Añejo Philly, Heritage, Jerry’s Bar, Standard Tap, Urban Village Brewing Company** and **SET NoLibs**. **April 9-18, 2021.**
- **Dinner at Dilworth** – On 17 Wednesday evenings from spring into summer, diners are encouraged to bring takeout meals from local restaurants to enjoy at Dilworth Park, City Hall’s front yard, featuring a fountain, lush lawn, tree groves and a café serving to-go drinks. Each week brings live entertainment. **May 5-August 25, 2021**
- **New Brewery Openings** – Greater Philadelphia’s lengthy [craft beer trail](#) will soon grow even bigger with new breweries and expansions debuting in and beyond the city. Each drinking destination offers an experience that’s wholly different from the next. In 2021, look for **Victory Brewing Company** to open on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway; **Cartesian Brewing** to come to East Passyunk; **Mystic Ways Brewing** in Perkasië; and **Aristaeus Craft Brewing Co.** in Langhorne.

- **New Restaurant Openings** – The Philly restaurant scene just keeps getting better and better — despite the toughest year on record for restaurants in 2020. Noteworthy additions on the way in 2021 include: **Honeysuckle** from chef and artist Omar Tate (*Esquire* magazine’s Chef of the Year); **The Landing Kitchen** and the **Lark** in Bala Cynwyd from chefs Nicholas Elmi (**Laurel**) and Fia Berisha (**Aether**); **Grace and Proper** in the Italian Market from the team behind **Hawthorne’s** and **The Cambridge**; **Lamberti Pizza & Market** in Washington Square West; **Bagels & Co.** at the Piazza in Northern Liberties; **Sor Ynéz** in Kensington from the Sojourn Restaurant group (**Jet Wine Bar**, **Rex** and **Café Ynez**); and **Lola’s Garden** at Suburban Square in Ardmore from **FCM Hospitality**. Plus, watch for new locations of spots like **DiBruno Bros.** (Wayne), with much more in the works from Philly’s intrepid restaurateurs later this year.

New Hotels:

- **Guild House Hotel** – On the heels of Women’s History Month comes the grand opening of a boutique property in a National Historic Landmark building that belonged to — and will honor — a 19th-century working women’s advocacy and support group known as the New Century Guild. The rooms and suites — 12 in total — in the Midtown Village hotel are named after members of the Guild, which included notable abolitionists, suffragists, activists, poets and artists. Among them: Eliza Sproat Turner, a teacher, writer and New Century Guild founder; Florence Kelley, a founding member of the NAACP; and Emily Sartain, artist and director of the Philadelphia School of Design for Women (now Moore College of Art and Design). Amenities at the invisible service hotel include luxury bath and body products; specialty coffees, teas and chocolates; and customized itineraries, airport pickup and curated experiences upon request. **June 6, 2021.**
- **W Philadelphia** – Less than one block from iconic City Hall, this 295-room hotel will bring modern luxury with a stylish dose of Philly vibrancy and artistry. Among the amenities, including the FIT gym, the Living Room cocktail lounge and bar terrace, is a year-round heated pool — outdoor pool, that is. **Spring 2021.**
- **Element Philadelphia Hotel** – Element’s largest global property opens in the very center of Center City, next door to its dual-branded property, the W Hotel Philadelphia. Element guests will enjoy a kitchen in every guest room or suite, a signature Westin Heavenly® bed, onsite Italian restaurant Dolce and both complimentary breakfast each morning and glass of wine or beer each evening. **Spring 2021.**

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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.