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## **Patti LaBelle Champions Black History in Bold Philadelphia Tourism Campaign**

*Visit Philadelphia launches new campaign with Grammy-winning legend during Black History Month's centennial year ahead of America's 250th*

PHILADELPHIA, February 2, 2026 – Global icon and Philadelphia native Patti LaBelle lends her unmistakable voice to Visit Philadelphia's Black History Month campaign with a powerful message: Black history is American history. In a video spot titled [“We Are the Fabric. We Are the Thread.”](#) LaBelle articulates a simple truth: you cannot tell the story of American culture, innovation, music, food, art, literature or progress without Black Americans because they are woven into every thread of the national narrative.

The acclaimed "Godmother of Soul" narrates both 30- and 70+ second videos that showcase the impact of Philadelphia's Black historic landmarks through her pilgrimage to spaces where this history lives. The campaign is the latest installment in Visit Philadelphia's Indivisible initiative, a year-round campaign that amplifies the stories of diverse communities whose heritage and home are often treated as separate, affirming them as inseparable parts of the American story.

“I’m honored to work with Visit Philadelphia on this deeply meaningful campaign,” said LaBelle. “Philadelphia is home, and the history here holds a special place in my heart. Making sure these stories are told, especially at a time when they need to be heard and remembered more than ever, truly matters to me.”

Visit Philadelphia collaborated with marketing agency The Perception and Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Kyra Knox to produce the LaBelle-narrated videos. The Black History Month campaign also includes an appearance by Knox’s young niece, Riley Mills, authentically symbolizing how and why Black history should be passed down to future generations.

The spots show LaBelle walking past iconic sites including Mother Bethel AME Church, the longest Black-owned piece of land in the United States, and the Octavius V. Catto Memorial, visually connecting Philadelphia's role in freedom movements to today's narrative. LaBelle's narration also pays homage to Philadelphia's musical legacy, highlighting images of Kenny Gamble, Leon Huff and Teddy Pendergrass from the legendary Philadelphia Sound, and recognizing barrier-breaking contralto Marian Anderson, who began her career singing in the choir at Union Baptist Church in South Philadelphia.

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"As we prepare to welcome millions of visitors from around the world to Philadelphia for America's 250th anniversary, we're committed to telling the complete story of our nation's founding," said Angela Val, president and CEO of Visit Philadelphia. "The Indivisible campaign proclaims that American identity is inherently multicultural, woven together by many lived experiences. We want everyone to feel welcome in Philadelphia."

To ensure more people have access to these essential stories, Visit Philadelphia has partnered with [1838 Black Metropolis](#) and [The Black Journey](#) to offer free guided walking tours throughout February.

"These free tours give residents and visitors the chance to walk in the footsteps of the people who shaped our nation," said Daniel Davis, director of cultural marketing at Visit Philadelphia. "We have the opportunity to tell a more complete American story through this campaign, and we welcome all to engage with that story right here in Philadelphia."

## Visitors will have two tours to choose from:

- **1838 Black Metropolis 101** — An introductory walking tour exploring Philadelphia's early free Black community, highlighting historic sites, institutions and stories that shaped Black life in the city before the Civil War. *Dates: Feb. 14 and Feb. 21 at 11 a.m.*
- **The Seventh Ward Tour** — A guided exploration of Philadelphia's historic Seventh Ward, once the heart of Black cultural, civic and political life, and home to many of the city's most influential Black leaders and institutions. *Dates: Feb. 28 and March 7 at 11 a.m.*

Tours are available on a first-come, first-served basis and registration is required. For detailed tour descriptions and to register, visit [visitphilly.com/blackhistorytours](https://visitphilly.com/blackhistorytours).

Visit Philadelphia committed 25% of its 2026 marketing budget to reaching diverse audiences. "We Are the Fabric. We Are the Thread" will reach audiences across seven markets including New York City, Pittsburgh, Washington D.C., Atlanta and Baltimore through YouTube, Blavity, Travel Noire and streaming platforms including Peacock, Hulu, ESPN, HBOMax, OWN and Lifetime.

For more information about the Indivisible series, visit [visitphilly.com/indivisible](https://visitphilly.com/indivisible). A comprehensive list of Black historical sites and attractions is available at [visitphilly.com/blackhistory](https://visitphilly.com/blackhistory).

## About Visit Philadelphia

Visit Philadelphia® is our name and our mission. As the region's official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia's image, drive visitation and boost the economy. On Greater Philadelphia's official visitor website, [visitphilly.com](https://visitphilly.com), visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages.

Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the site an effective trip-planning tool. Visitors can also find loads of inspiration on Visit Philly's social media channels.

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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](https://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).

## **1838 Black Metropolis**

The 1838 Black Metropolis collective is a public history nonprofit dedicated to restoring lost or marginalized Black narratives of 19th century Philadelphia. Through deep historical research and public engagement, 1838 Black Metropolis examines the impact of early Black civil rights movements, particularly the 1838 right-to-vote movement, and works to uncover extant 19th-century Black Underground Railroad sites, patterns of Black homeownership and spatial concentration, and critical social spaces such as Beneficial hall and Black churches.

The organization is also engaged in detailed investigations of 19th century mob attacks against the Philadelphia Black community, surfacing the untold histories of the physical, emotional, psychological and economic impacts of these attacks in hopes of starting conversations around truth and reconciliation.

## **The Black Journey**

The Black Journey is dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and sharing Black history through immersive, place-based storytelling that connects people to the landscapes where history happened. Through guided walking tours and accessible audio experiences, we center the lives, contributions, struggles, and triumphs of Black communities whose stories are often overlooked or underrepresented. Our mission is to foster deeper historical understanding, inspire meaningful dialogue, and ensure that Black history remains visible, valued, and woven into the public memory of the cities we serve.