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30+ Free and Affordable Ways to Enjoy Philadelphia This Summer

From outdoor movies and waterfront concerts to museum deals and neighborhood tours, Philadelphia offers plenty of budget-friendly ways to enjoy the season

PHILADELPHIA, June 9, 2026 – Summer is here, school's out, and the season of sunshine is officially in full swing. For families, friends and visitors looking to make the most of the warmer months without breaking their budgets, Philadelphia offers a variety of fun, affordable ways to explore the city.

This summer's lineup includes outdoor movie nights at Independence Mall, free concerts along the Delaware River Waterfront, kid-friendly festivals, museum admission deals, neighborhood tours, cultural celebrations and history experiences that only come around once in a generation.

Celebrating the inaugural year of their partnership, the Barnes Foundation and Calder Gardens will offer Philadelphia residents free admission throughout July. With a valid Philadelphia ID, visitors can explore both world-class institutions, attend gallery talks and experience special America 250 exhibitions.

At the Barnes, [Freedom Dreams](#) features works by Black artists examining history, archives and cultural memory, while [Sky Hopinka: Red Medal Dust](#) offers a thoughtful exploration of the American experience through an Indigenous lens. At [Calder Gardens](#), visitors can see the U.S. premiere of *Cirque Calder on Film*, directed by Vic Brooks, alongside Carlos Vilardebó's landmark 1961 film *Le Cirque Calder*.

The city is full of opportunities to plan a memorable day trip or an overnight getaway. Below are free and low-cost activities to enjoy in Philadelphia and the surrounding region this summer:

Arts, Music and Performance

[Arts on Center Stage](#)

1 S. 15th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Arts on Center Stage returns to Dilworth Park this summer with free, family-friendly performances every Thursday from May 21 through August 27. The 15-week series invites audiences to enjoy live ballet, opera, jazz, orchestral music and more on the Albert M. Greenfield Lawn, with performances by the Philadelphia Ballet, Opera Philadelphia, The Philly Pops, Philadanco, Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra and other local arts organizations. Guests are encouraged to bring blankets or chairs and arrive early to enjoy

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an hour of free entertainment against the backdrop of historic City Hall. **Hours:** *Thursdays, May 21 – Aug. 27, 2026, 6–7 p.m.*

[Friday Night Jazz Series](#)

301 S. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

The free Friday Night Jazz Series brings standout jazz performances to the Waterfront in partnership with Rising Sun. Open to all ages, the series offers an easy summer night out with live music at Spruce Street Harbor Park. **Hours:** *Fridays, May 22 – Sept. 25, 2026, 7–10 p.m.*

[Latin Night: Salsa & Bachata](#)

301 S. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Salsa Bachata Latin Night brings music, movement and dancing to Spruce Street Harbor Park. Free and open to all ages, the event welcomes both experienced dancers and anyone looking to try something new. **Hours:** *Fridays, May 29 – Sept. 4, 2026, 6–10 p.m.*

[Live and Local Concert Series](#)

301 S. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Spruce Street Harbor Park's free Live and Local Concert Series returns with all-ages performances from Philly-area bands, DJs and musicians. Visitors can enjoy live music, summer views and waterfront energy. **Hours:** *7–10 p.m. Event dates vary; please check the website for details.*

[Philly's Funniest Block](#)

2000 Block of Sansom Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Four Philadelphia comedy venues are teaming up with the City of Philadelphia to launch “Philly’s Funniest Block,” officially recognizing the 2000 block of Sansom Street as a destination for live comedy, performance and community celebration ahead of America’s 250th anniversary. The initiative brings together ComedySportz Philadelphia, Helium Comedy Club, MacGuffin Theatre and SideQuest Theater to spotlight the city’s independent comedy scene. A free community celebration will take place, featuring comedy performances, interactive activities, neighborhood specials, giveaways and a ribbon-cutting and City Citation Ceremony. **Hours:** *Saturday, June 13, 2026, 5:30–7 p.m.; Ribbon cutting, 6:15 p.m.*

[Movies on the Mall](#)

599 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Movies on the Mall returns to Independence Mall this summer with a free outdoor movie series celebrating the themes and history of Independence National Historical Park. Presented by the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation and Independence Historical Trust, the series includes free admission, free popcorn and pre-show activations before each screening. Upcoming films include *Harriet*, *National Treasure*, *National Treasure 2: Book of Secrets*, *Hamilton* and *Hocus Pocus*. Advance

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registration is encouraged, but walk-ups are welcome. *Event dates vary; please check the website for details.*

[Shakespeare in Clark Park](#)

4300-4398 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Free Shakespeare in Clark Park returns to West Philadelphia this July in collaboration with Revolution Shakespeare, bringing free outdoor theater to one of the city's most beloved green spaces. This year's production of *Hamlet* puts a community-centered twist on the classic, with every actor taking on the iconic title role and surprise Hamlets appearing from the audience and throughout the park. *Hours vary; please check the website for details.*

[Kid & Family-Friendly Fun](#)

[Family Fun Day with PopUpPlay](#)

301 S. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

PopUpPlay brings free, hands-on family fun to Spruce Street Harbor Park with creative crafts, beginner-friendly STEM activities and playful building challenges. Designed for kids and grown-ups alike, the sessions encourage families to create, experiment and make summer memories together. **Hours:** *Sundays, May 23 – Sept. 27, 2026, 1–4 p.m.*

[Wellness on the Waterfront – Yoga](#)

N Christopher Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Free yoga classes return to Race Street Pier this summer, offering participants a chance to enjoy a refreshing workout with scenic views of the Delaware River. Presented by Independence Blue Cross, the series runs Mondays, Thursdays and Sundays from May 25 through October 12, 2026 **Hours:** *May 25 – Oct. 12, 2026: Mondays & Thursdays at 6 p.m., Sundays at 10 a.m.*

[Colonial Muster](#)

Signer's Garden, 5th & Chestnut streets, Philadelphia, PA

Colonial Muster invites kids of all ages to experience the daily life of a Colonial soldier through lively parades, marching drills and stories about camp life. The interactive program gives families a fun, hands-on way to learn about early military traditions. **Hours:** *June 2 – Sept. 7, 2026 (also July 5 and 6, Sept. 6 and 7) Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.*

[Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Benches](#)

143 S. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Visitors can grab a seat at one of the Once Upon A Nation Storytelling Benches throughout Historic Philadelphia and hear short, engaging stories that bring America's past to life. The free, family-friendly

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experience highlights the women, African Americans, Native Americans and everyday Philadelphians whose stories helped shape the nation. **Hours:** *June 2 – Sept. 7, 2026 (also July 5 and 6, Sept. 6 and 7) Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.*

[Colonial Kids' Quest](#)

18th Century Garden, 399 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Colonial Kids' Quest is a free, interactive puppet show designed for young visitors and their adults. The lighthearted adventure invites kids to help animal puppets search for a missing copy of the Declaration of Independence. **Hours:** *June 5 – Sept. 5, 2026, Fridays and Saturdays: 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. (two shows).*

[Neshaminy Creek Brewing Co. Free Anniversary Party](#)

909 Raye Avenue, Croydon, PA 19021

Neshaminy Creek Brewing Company will celebrate its 14th anniversary with a free, all-ages, circus-themed party on Saturday, June 13, 2026. The celebration will feature craft beer, food trucks, local vendors, flash tattoos, live music and special anniversary releases, including Elephant in the Room IPA, a new hot sauce collaboration with Brian's Hot Sauce, limited-edition T-shirts and new merchandise.

Hours: *June 13, 2026, noon – 7 p.m.*

[America 250 Fireworks & Concert](#)

101 S Christopher Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

The Delaware River Waterfront will celebrate America's 250th birthday with a free Yacht Rock concert featuring Tommy Conwell & The Young Rumlbers, followed by fireworks over the river. The event offers an all-ages summer night out with music, waterfront views and a patriotic finale. **Hours:** *June 27, 2026, 8 p.m.; Fireworks begin at 9:30 p.m.*

[Kidchella 2026](#)

3500 Reservoir Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19121

Kidchella returns to Smith Memorial Playground on Friday, June 26 in partnership with Wawa Welcome America. The free family music festival transforms Smith into a kid-friendly concert experience with live performances, hands-on activities, food, play and nonstop fun for children and families of all ages.

Hours: *June 26, 2026, 4–9 p.m.*

[Elmwood Park Zoo](#)

1661 Harding Boulevard, Norristown, PA 19401

Elmwood Park Zoo will offer free admission on the Fourth of July and Labor Day as part of the nationwide America's 250th celebration. Each holiday will feature live music, drink specials, animal encounters and family-friendly activities, with free parking available as always. Guests can register for

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free tickets in advance, and additional programming details will be shared ahead of each date. **Hours:** *July 4, 2026 and Sept. 7, 2026, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

[Summerfest at Piazza Alta](#)

1099 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Summerfest at Piazza Alta will bring a free community block party to Northern Liberties on Saturday, July 18. Expected to draw more than 4,000 attendees, the event will feature more than 50 local vendors, food and drinks, live music, fitness activations, giveaways and family-friendly activities, including face painting, balloon art, character appearances and children's entertainment. **Hours:** *July 18, 2026, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.*

[Sunset Social Movies](#)

129 S. 30th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

On Wednesdays, Sunset Social hosts free weekly movie nights on the Cira Green Rooftop Park, featuring screenings on a 60-foot screen with skyline views. They also have Saturday matinees offering family-friendly films, food and drink specials and a welcoming atmosphere for kids and dogs. **Hours:** *Wednesdays at 6 p.m.; Saturdays at noon.*

[Historic Philadelphia and America 250](#)

[Ben Franklin Under the Mulberry Tree](#)

Franklin Court, 314 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Guests can meet Dr. Benjamin Franklin beneath the shade of a historic mulberry tree in Franklin Court. Through conversation and storytelling, visitors can learn more about Franklin's life as a printer, inventor, statesman and Philadelphia neighbor. **Hours:** *May 23 – Sept. 5, 2026, Fridays and Saturdays: 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m. (two shows).*

[Betsy Ross in Her Upholstery Shop](#)

239 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Visitors can step inside the nation's only working 18th-century upholstery shop to meet Betsy Ross and learn about her life, craft and connection to the first American flag. The experience gives guests a close-up look at the hand-stitched techniques used during the Colonial era. **Hours:** *May 23 – Sept. 7, daily, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (until 6 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays in June and July); Sept. 8–30, daily, 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.*

[Declaration Reading](#)

520 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

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Visitors can celebrate America's 250th anniversary with a daily theatrical reading of the Declaration of Independence behind Independence Hall. After the reading, History Makers mingle with guests and pose for photos. **Hours:** *June 2 – Sept. 7, 2026 (also July 5 and 6, Sept. 6 and 7) Tuesdays – Saturdays, 3:45 p.m.*

[Flag Fest at the Betsy Ross House](#)

239 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

The Betsy Ross House will celebrate National Flag Week with an expanded 10-day Flag Fest, featuring free, family-friendly programming. The celebration includes hands-on activities, cultural connections and immersive living history experiences at one of America's most iconic landmarks. **Hours:** *June 5–14, 2026, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

[Flag-Raising at the Betsy Ross House](#)

239 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Start the day in the Betsy Ross House courtyard with a special flag-raising ceremony featuring Betsy Ross. Visitors will learn why raising the thirteen-star flag was considered especially daring in 1776. **Hours:** *May 23 – Sept. 7, 2026, daily, 10 a.m.*

[Free Quaker Meeting House](#)

5th & Arch streets, Philadelphia, PA

At the Free Quaker Meeting House, visitors can meet a History Maker and learn about the people who influenced Colonial Philadelphia. The free experience provides additional context for one of the city's historic houses of worship. **Hours:** *June 2 – Sept. 7, 2026 (also July 5 and 6, Sept. 6 and 7) Tuesdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.*

[Meet the History Makers](#)

143 S. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Throughout Independence National Historical Park, visitors can meet costumed History Makers portraying real figures from Philadelphia's Revolutionary-era past. Guests can ask questions, hear personal stories and connect with the people who helped shape America's founding. **Hours:** *June 2 – Sept. 7, 2026 (also July 5 and 6, Sept. 6 and 7), Tuesdays – Saturday, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.*

[Meet the Women of the 18th Century](#)

239 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

In the Betsy Ross House courtyard, visitors can meet women from Colonial Philadelphia through engaging first-person interpretation. New for 2026, select days will feature Hannah Till, an enslaved cook who worked for George Washington during the Revolutionary War and later purchased her freedom.

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Hours: June 18 – Sept. 5, 2026, Thursdays – Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Sept. 12 – Oct. 31, 2026, Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Museums and Cultural Celebrations

[Pay What You Wish at the Philadelphia Museum of Art](#)

Main Building, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19130

The Philadelphia Museum of Art is bringing back Pay What You Wish Friday Nights from April 10 through September 4, 2026 as part of its 150th anniversary celebration and Philadelphia’s America 250 programming. Named Independent Fridays, the expanded access program invites visitors to enjoy the museum’s galleries, late-night hours, live music, gallery tours, cocktails and light bites while paying what they wish for admission. Children 18 and under are always free and the museum also offers Pay What You Wish admission on the first Sunday of every month. **Hours:** *Fridays, April 10 – Sept. 4, 2026, 5–8:45 p.m.*

[Penn & Philly 250](#)

3260 South Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

The Penn Museum and Wharton Community Engagement will host Penn & Philly 250: A Celebration of Community, Culture, and Freedom on Saturday, June 13, 2026, with free admission and advance registration required. The indoor/outdoor festival combines the Penn Museum’s Juneteenth celebration with Wharton’s Wellness Empowerment Project, offering free access to the museum’s galleries, exhibitions and historic gardens, along with live cultural performances, family activities, community conversations, pop-up exhibitions and a marketplace spotlighting Black-owned businesses. **Hours:** *noon – 6 p.m.*

[Juneteenth Jubilee](#)

701 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

The African American Museum in Philadelphia will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a free, family-friendly Juneteenth Block Party on Friday, June 19. Presented in partnership with Wawa Welcome America, the celebration will feature performances by DJ Jazzy Jeff, Doug E Fresh, Slick Rick, Leah Jenea and local artists, along with a vendor village, food trucks, games and interactive activities. Guests can also enjoy free museum admission beginning at 10 a.m., plus free 15-minute Gallery Talks highlighting AAMP’s exhibitions, including Ruth E. Carter: Afrofuturism in Costume Design. **Hours:** *noon – 5 p.m.*

[Barnes Foundation](#)

2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

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The Barnes Foundation will offer free admission to Philadelphia residents throughout July in honor of America's 250th anniversary. Residents can explore the [Barnes collection](#), daily gallery talks, drop-in experiences and special exhibitions, including [Freedom Dreams](#), [Sky Hopinka: Red Metal Dust](#) and [Just Us](#). Visitors must show a valid Philadelphia ID, and tickets are subject to availability. **Hours:** *Mondays, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Thursdays – Sundays, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

[Calder Gardens](#)

2100 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Calder Gardens will offer free admission to Philadelphia residents throughout July as part of a joint initiative with the Barnes Foundation commemorating America's 250th anniversary. Residents can experience the museum's rotating installation of works by Alexander Calder, along with daily screenings of *Cirque Calder on Film* and *Le Cirque Calder* from June 11 through Aug. 3. Visitors must show a valid Philadelphia ID, and tickets are subject to availability. The Piet Oudolf-designed gardens are always free to visit during open hours. **Hours:** *Mondays, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Thursdays–Sundays, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

[The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University](#)

1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

The Academy of Natural Sciences offers \$2 admission for ACCESS, EBT and SNAP cardholders, plus up to three of their guests. This summer, the museum will also offer \$10 Thursday admission throughout July and August as part of their Dino-Mite Summer programming. Additional affordable opportunities include free admission during Welcome America Free Museum Days on June 26, 2026, and pay-what-you-wish day August 1 for the Academy's First-ival, part of the 52 Weeks of Firsts series. **Hours:** *Closed Mondays–Thursdays. Open Fridays – Sundays, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

[Wawa Welcome America](#)

Various locations throughout Philadelphia

Wawa Welcome America's Free Museum Days returns offering two weeks of free and pay-what-you-wish admission to some of Philadelphia's most beloved attractions. From June 19 through July 4, at least one museum or historic site will offer free or discounted admission each day, with 44 participating locations across the city, including art museums, cultural institutions, history museums, science museums and historic mansions. Many participating sites will also offer special programming and tours, giving residents and visitors an affordable way to explore Philadelphia during Independence Day season. *Hours and dates vary; please check the website for details.*

Neighborhood Tours and Community Events

[Neighborhood Jawnts Tour Series](#)

Locations vary, please check the website for details

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Neighborhood Jawnts is a free citywide tour series celebrating the culture, creativity and small businesses that make Philadelphia's neighborhoods unique. The series features 20 hyper-local experiences curated with community partners, inviting residents and visitors to explore neighborhood stories through food, art, history, local leaders and cultural traditions. Registration is required. **Hours:** *May – Oct. 2026, Fridays at 2 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.*

[Historic Germantown OnePass](#)

Various locations in Germantown

The Historic Germantown OnePass returns June 12 to August 29, offering discounted access to nine historic and cultural sites in one of Philadelphia's oldest neighborhoods. The pass includes one-time entry on Fridays and Saturdays to participating attractions, including [Cliveden](#), [The Colored Girls Museum](#), [Concord School House](#), [Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion](#), [Germantown Historic Society](#), [Johnson House Historic Site](#), [Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery](#), [Stenton](#) and [Wyck](#). Tickets are \$43 for adults, \$28 for youth (6-13) and seniors (65+), and free for children 5 and under. *Hours vary; please check the website for details.*

For more fun low-cost things to do, please check out our [web guide](#).

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, 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.

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

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