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A Bookish Weekend in Philly: 20+ Literary Attractions to Uncover

Discover museums, gardens, hotels and hidden gems that feel like they've stepped straight from the pages of a novel.

PHILADELPHIA, Aug. 6, 2026 - Book lovers don't have to cross the Atlantic to feel like they've stepped inside the pages of a novel. From Gothic libraries and hidden gardens to literary-themed hotels and historic speakeasies, Greater Philadelphia offers dozens of places that bring favorite books and genres to life.

For those looking to turn the page on their next Philly adventure, the timing couldn't be better. The [Philadelphia Bookstore Crawl](#) returns on Saturday, August 22, bringing together more than 50 independent bookstores across the region for a day of giveaways, discounted books, tarot readings, writers' workshops and author signings. After picking up your next read, use our guide to participating bookstores and venture out to explore these literary-inspired destinations.

Here are more than 20 attractions across Greater Philadelphia where book lovers can step into the worlds of their favorite stories and discover a few new ones along the way. For an extended list of independent bookstores, check out our [official guide](#).

Libraries

Get lost in a library, explore rare books and lounge among the iconic architecture reminiscent of the books you've always dreamed of exploring.

[Charles Library at Temple University](#)

1900 N. 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122

Charles Library is a contemporary architectural masterpiece that resembles the setting of a modern fantasy novel. The grand wooden entrance and soaring arches create a dramatic three-story domed atrium lobby. For readers drawn to high fantasy and stories where knowledge is power, Charles Library is a must-visit, a real-life setting that feels almost too cinematic to be a university library. *Hours: Monday - Thursday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

[Fisher Fine Arts Library at Penn](#)

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220 S. 34th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 – University of Pennsylvania

This red-sandstone, brick and terra-cotta Venetian Gothic giant is particularly dark-academia-coded. Consider it a must-visit for Harry Potter fans and readers who love *Katabasis* and *Immortal Dark*. Gothic details and mysterious atmosphere make Fisher look like the kind of place where you can travel through the seventh ring of hell with Alice and Peter, hunt for the Sorcerer's Stone, and maybe get bitten by a vampire, all before dinner. If that sounds like the itinerary for your perfect day? No judgment here. *Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - midnight, Saturday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., closed Sundays.*

[Free Library of Philadelphia – Parkway Central](#)

1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

A stunning Beaux Arts building along the culture-packed Benjamin Franklin Parkway serves as a sanctuary for book lovers. Visitors here can explore a massive collection of rare works. Insider tip: Charles Dickens' taxidermied pet bird, Grip, thought to be Edgar Allan Poe's inspiration for *The Raven*, resides upon a pedestal in the Rare Book Department. *Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. (Note: You will need a library card to borrow books).*

Gardens

Gardens often play a key role in storytelling; not just beautiful backdrops for the imagination, they signify moments of transformation, escapism and mystery. This list is nothing short of that symbolic setting.

[Andalusia Historic House](#)

1237 State Road, Andalusia, PA 19020

Step into this *Bridgerton*-esque garden of grandeur, where rose gardens bloom in abundance and gorgeous flowers cascade from elegant arches. All that's missing is a string quartet playing modern hits to complete the ultimate Regency-era fantasy. Consider it the perfect cure for FOMO (fear of missing out) if you've ever wished you could step inside a period-piece romance. The library in the historic home is one Lady Whistledown would boast about endlessly. *Hours: Open Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

[Longwood Gardens](#)

1001 Longwood Road, Kennett Square, PA 19348

This award-winning garden, named one of *USA Today*'s Best Gardens in the Nation, is anything but an ordinary botanical getaway. Sprawling across 1,100 acres, it is one of the most visited gardens in the country, with a magnificent conservatory, rolling hills, winding meadows and meticulously cultivated landscapes. Flora and fauna blanket the grounds in a kaleidoscope of color, creating a living tapestry so vibrant it feels almost surreal. *Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Friday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 10 p.m., closed on Tuesday.*

[Morris Arboretum & Gardens](#)

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100 E. Northwestern Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19118

This magical garden is a real-life Pixie Hollow, with tiny gnomes tucked among the greenery and a miniature electric train winding through the grounds with whimsical sculptures, fun for kids and adults. Its Hill & Cloud Garden was designed by renowned Japanese garden designer Yonehachi Muto and features dwarf azaleas, lush ferns and seasonal blooms. *Hours: Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

[Shofuso Japanese Cultural Center](#)

Lansdowne Drive & Horticultural Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19131

For fans of *iyashikei*, the Japanese genre of healing fiction, this spot is the perfect antidote to a busy mind. Shofuso transports visitors to Kyoto, Japan, with its 17th-century-style Japanese house, one of Philadelphia's most peaceful escapes and featuring the only traditional Hinoki bark roof of its kind outside Japan. Surrounded by tranquil gardens, koi ponds and centuries-old design traditions. *Hours: Wednesday - Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday.*

[Wyck Historic Garden](#)

6026 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144

Now on the National Register of Historic Places, this 50-acre farmstead was settled by Quakers in 1690. Step into Wyck's famous gardens and get transported back to the Colonial and Victorian eras with a stroll through the rose garden and vegetable garden, which are direct descendants of the original 19th-century plantings. If you dream of abandoning society, disappearing somewhere remote and becoming a mysterious gardener at the center of your own story, Wyck might be your kind of escape. *Hours: Thursday - Saturday Noon - 4 p.m., closed Sunday - Wednesday.*

Museums

Rare artifacts, historic manuscripts and literary treasures are housed in these exquisite museums. From early manuscripts to timeless classics, readers can see the stories, objects and ideas that shaped the books they love.

[Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle](#)

84 S. Pine Street, Doylestown, PA 18901

Mercer Museum is Henry Mercer's collection, comprising tens of thousands of objects across six stories that span the pre-Industrial Revolution period. Furniture hangs dramatically from the ceiling, as if it's floating in time and space. Down the road, Fonthill Castle towers over the ground's greenery with 40 lavish rooms. For readers drawn to medieval worlds, the Dark Ages and grand fantastical castles, these two landmarks offer a real-life escape into another era. *Hours: Tuesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., closed on Monday.*

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Rodin Museum

2151 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19130

Visit the largest collection of works by Auguste Rodin outside of Paris, featuring *The Gates of Hell* and a bronze cast of *The Thinker*, right here in Philadelphia. The Rodin features 120 of the French master's sculptures, set amid a sweeping garden. If a stroll through Paris isn't in the cards, the Rodin Museum offers a romantic escape that captures the beauty, artistry and timeless charm of the French capital. *Hours: Friday - Monday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., closed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.*

The Rosenbach Museum & Library

2008-2010 Delancey Street, Philadelphia, PA

Some of the world's greatest literary treasures are on view at this 1860s brownstone, home to the personal collection of the Rosenbach brothers, 19th-century dealers in fine art, rare books and manuscripts. A well-known feature is James Joyce's manuscript for *Ulysses*, but equally impressive are more than 600 Lewis Carroll books, Shakespeare's 1664 folio and playbills from 18th-century performances, as well as portions of Charles Dickens' manuscripts and notes and outlines for Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. *Hours: Thursday - Saturday, 10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

Warden Garden and Penn Museum

3260 South Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

The University of Pennsylvania Museum sits behind a lush, serene garden with a gorgeous koi pond, home to nearly 200 colorful koi. If *The Odyssey* has earned a permanent place on the bookshelf, the museum's Greece Gallery is a chance to step into the landscapes, myths and legends that inspired one of history's greatest epics. It's the closest you'll come to ancient Greece without boarding a plane. Other notable exhibitions include their Egyptian, Asian, African and Indigenous galleries. *Hours: Tuesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., closed on Monday.*

VAMPA Museum

3686 US-202, Doylestown, PA 18902

If Stephen King is your king, VAMPA Museum is your invitation to get lost in a world of vampires and the paranormal. Museum founder and published author Edmond Crimi showcases his lifelong collection of vampire artifacts and curiosities. The museum's story is deeply personal. Crimi's fascination with the paranormal was inspired by his two uncles from Catania, Italy, who were exorcists, giving the collection roots that reach far beyond the world of horror fiction. *Hours: Thursday - Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday.*

Bars

For those looking to pair their next great read with a good cocktail, these themed bars make the perfect setting for a solo reading date or a fun boozy book club meetup.

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[Midnight & The Wicked](#)

1500 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Step back into the Roaring Twenties at this hidden jazz lounge and cocktail bar, tucked beneath one of Philadelphia's historic buildings. As if torn from a page in *The Great Gatsby*, this elegant speakeasy pairs expertly crafted cocktails with vintage glamour. Guests can explore a collection of immersive spaces, including The Vault, Midnight, The Crimson Theater and The Wicked — each offering its own distinct atmosphere for an unforgettable evening. *Hours: Open daily from 5 p.m. - 2 a.m.*

[Mona](#)

1308 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Spend a night in Greece without leaving Philadelphia at this Neo-Mediterranean escape. Upstairs, pink-hued lighting sets the scene for a vibrant dining experience, while downstairs, a mysterious speakeasy unfolds with Greek Revival-inspired interiors and a darker mood. Order the signature Forbidden Fig Martini and let the food menu take you on a journey. *Hours: Open daily from 4 p.m. - 2 a.m.*

[The Library Bar at The Rittenhouse Hotel](#)

210 W. Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Tucked inside The Rittenhouse Hotel, The Library Bar is an intimate retreat that invites guests to linger over handcrafted cocktails beside the fireplace. Equally suited for a pre-dinner aperitif or a leisurely nightcap, the cozy lounge comes alive on Friday and Saturday evenings with live jazz, making it an ideal setting to unwind with a good book or great conversation. *Hours: Sunday - Thursday 5 p.m. - 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday 4 p.m. - midnight*

[Writer's Block Rehab](#)

1342 Cypress Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

This three-story literary-themed lounge and bar is the perfect meet-cute destination for writers and book lovers alike. Moody lighting, cozy library nooks and a warm, inviting atmosphere create an intimate setting that practically begs you to linger over another chapter. The drink menu features a selection of beer, wine and a list of creative, earthy cocktails like a turmeric pisco sour and arugula martini. *Hours: Wednesday 4 p.m. - 11 p.m., Thursday 5 p.m. - 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday 4 p.m. - midnight, closed Monday and Tuesday.*

Hotels

If you're looking for a truly bookish hotel stay, these thoughtfully themed destinations offer a mix of wonder, history and meticulously curated interiors that transport you to another world — no passport required.

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[Bookhouse Hotel](#)

130 S. Union Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348

This beautifully restored Victorian mansion offers a boutique stay with seven cozy, one-of-a-kind rooms, each thoughtfully themed around a beloved literary world or character. Settle into Daisy's Room, inspired by Daisy Buchanan from *The Great Gatsby*, retreat to the Jane Austen-inspired room, or tumble down the rabbit hole in the Alice Suite, inspired by *Alice in Wonderland*. Just a short trip away, [Baldwin's Book Barn](#) adds another dose of literary nostalgia. Housed in a five-story building dating to 1822, the beloved bookshop is packed with rare books, curious finds, and old-world charm — making the perfect companion stop for a bookish getaway.

[Guild House Hotel](#)

1307 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

The Guild House Hotel is housed in the former headquarters of the New Century Guild. The exquisitely restored property is now a luxury boutique hotel, as rich in design as it is in history. One of the first organizations in the United States dedicated to supporting working women was founded in the mid 1880s by Eliza Sproat Turner, a writer, teacher, mother and outspoken feminist. Today the hotel boasts 12 fully styled rooms across three floors of preserved Italianate architecture.

[Hotel Anna & Bel](#)

1401 E. Susquehanna Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19125

Tucked away in one of Philadelphia's buzziest neighborhoods, this historic hotel feels like a European summer escape. The crown jewel is its breathtaking courtyard pool, surrounded by elegant balconies and guest rooms tucked behind French doors, creating the feeling of a secluded oasis in the midst of a bustling city. Grab a cocktail at the cocktail lounge Caletta and enjoy a sultry summer read by the pool.

[River House at Odette's](#)

274 River Road, New Hope, PA 18938

This gorgeous getaway overlooks the Delaware River waterfront. The sound of the river pairs with the vintage interior, making it a romantic stay in a cozy town made for dilly-dallying and endless book shopping. The luxury lifestyle hotel partners with Farley's Bookshop to bring guests a curated collection of books to enjoy and take home, completely complimentary.

Whether discovering new worlds or finding a new favorite spot to read it, Philadelphia offers endless ways to make a literary adventure of your own.

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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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