

Reading Terminal Market: The Complete Guide

BY
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Reading Terminal Market

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A true culinary gem situated in the heart of [Philadelphia](#), the iconic Reading Terminal Market celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2018 and still attracts throngs of locals and visitors daily with its abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables, homemade baked goods, organic seafood and meats, regional prepared foods and many other gourmet offerings.

With an inviting, casual ambiance filled with a mixture of tantalizing aromas and diverse food offerings, this bustling and vibrant market is overflowing with appetizing delights at every turn.

History and Background

Opened in the early 1890s, this legendary market quickly became a beloved destination among city residents. Located in a historical landmark building, it's known as one of the country's largest and oldest public markets. The market was first opened in its current location (at 11th and Market Streets) over century ago when the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company consolidated its four separate Philadelphia terminals into one large location in the city's downtown. Over the years, this urban market expanded and improved in many ways, including the quality and quantity of the variety of food offerings sold here.

Throughout its storied history, it also overcame bankruptcy and adopted modern advancements, such as refrigeration and food safety procedures. Today, the Philadelphia Convention City is situated adjacent to this lively market, drawing massive numbers of new customers daily who attend conferences, events and meetings nearby.

Notable Market Vendors

The Reading Terminal Market features over 100 vendors that serve up everything you might be craving, including authentic Pennsylvania Dutch baked goods and other specialties, an array of produce from nearby farms in New Jersey, locally-distilled spirits, artisanal cheeses, organic honey, and many other made-from-scratch, [regional Philly delights](#). In addition to edible items, visitors can purchase flowers, cookbooks, candles, books, clothing, home goods and more.

These are some of the many fantastic and creative merchants at the Reading Terminal Market who are worth a visit:

- **[DiNic's Roast Pork and Beef](#)**: As the winner of the Travel Channel's "America's Best Sandwich" in 2012, it's not surprising that there's usually a lengthy line of customers waiting to order at this fan favorite. This renowned family-run business is famous for its delectable homemade offerings, including their namesake slow-roasted beef and pork specialties.
- **[Dutch Eating Place](#)**: Located inside the market, this cozy neighborhood diner features a robust menu of Pennsylvania Dutch comfort-food favorites. Offering plenty of seating, this friendly spot serves up a number of sandwiches and other classics, as well as regional fare like shoo-fly pie and apple dumplings.
- **[Carmen's Famous Italian Hoagies and Cheesesteaks](#)**: Enjoy a delicious taste of Philadelphia when you order an overstuffed sandwich at Carmen's. Their most popular is the classic cheesesteak (with fried onions, of course), but they also offer plenty of other toppings and creative variations on the city's most iconic specialty (and don't call it a "sub!")
- **[Godshall's Poultry](#)**: Specializing in free-range, organic poultry, Godshall's has been in business since the early 1900s and known for their high-quality, fresh food items. They also sell eggs, duck, capon, geese, and other offerings.

- **[Golden Fish Market](#)**: Seafood enthusiasts flock to this exceptional fishmonger that sells an abundance of freshly-caught specialties, including whole fish, sushi grade tuna, as well as local clams, mussels, and oysters straight from the Atlantic Ocean. You can also purchase a variety of prepared seafood as well.
- **[Kennett Square Specialties](#)**: Known as the “mushroom capital of the world,” Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, offers a vast assortment of exotic mushrooms in various colors, shapes and sizes. Admire and taste some of the area’s specialties offered by this vendor.
- **[Termini Brothers Bakery](#)**: A legendary city bakery, Termini Brothers is a beloved Philly favorite, and serves up a wide variety of classic Italian desserts, including cannoli, ricotta pies, and tiramisu.
- **[Pennsylvania Pour Collective](#)**: This stellar group of local distilleries and spirit producers offers a selection of unique small-batch alcoholic beverages made in the Philadelphia area to sample and purchase.

What to Expect

If you decide to stop by the market at lunchtime, be prepared to be quick on your feet, as large crowds of hungry patrons and lengthy lines are the norm at some of the vendors. There is always a mix of residents who are on their lunch break (or simply shopping for dinner), as well as tourists taking plenty of photos while admiring the colorful displays of produce, seafood, baked goods, and more. At other times, such as late morning or afternoon, the market is less busy, and visitors have the opportunity to stroll around at a (somewhat) more leisurely pace.

How to Visit

The Reading Terminal Market is located in Center City, Philadelphia at 51 N. 12th St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The market is open daily from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The market is closed on most major holidays, so be sure to check the website for specific times. Also, all of the Pennsylvania Dutch vendors are closed every Sunday.

There are nearby parking lots, but public transportation is highly encouraged, as the area is very congested and known for high traffic volume, especially during rush hour.

Tour the Market

For visitors who are interested in learning more about this market’s fascinating history through its only official walking tour, check out [“Taste of Philly” food tours](#), which take place at 10 a.m. every Wednesday and Saturday. The tours are more than an hour in length and start at the market’s welcome desk, located near the 12th and Filbert Street entrance to the building. Reservations for the tour must be booked in advance.