

Spruce Street Harbor Park: The Complete Guide

By Marla Cimini



Located along the Delaware River in Philadelphia's scenic Penn's Landing area, [Spruce Street Harbor Park](#) is a fun, outdoor destination for all ages. With lovely views of the picturesque Benjamin Franklin Bridge and the city skyline, it's considered an "urban beach," as this unique award-winning waterfront park emits a lively and upbeat, yet relaxed vibe.

After its initial launch as a pop-up beer garden in 2014, the park became an overnight success and immediately started attracting loyal fans. Open during the summer months only, Spruce Street Harbor Park is easily accessible and situated in a prime location in the city. So wherever you're staying in Philadelphia, chances are you are not far from this enchanting park. It's within walking distance of Philadelphia's Old City neighborhood (and it's not far from Philadelphia's Center City area, too).

The laid-back atmosphere draws visitors as well as locals from around the city (and the region). It features over 50 brilliantly-colored handmade hammocks where guests can hang out and soak in the ambiance. This area also showcases floating gardens, a boardwalk that stretches along the water (with plenty of activities), pretty riverfront views, an abundance of seating options—and a variety of casual food offerings, too.

Things to Do

A true urban escape, Spruce Street Harbor Park feels like a mini-getaway within the city. It offers several distinctive and lovely areas, including the "Oasis" and the "Boardwalk." The Oasis is a unique spot, as it features three barges and an expansive, comfortable "net lounge" that invites visitors to hang out on strong yet flexible nets that are positioned several feet over the river. (Fortunately, the park has installed strong liners under the nets to catch any items that might unexpectedly fall out of pockets, such as cell phones and keys).

The floating gardens here are not only visually attractive but practical, as they are comprised of recycled materials that are used around the world to promote sustainable wetlands.

Reminiscent of a busy oceanfront promenade, "The Boardwalk" area is lined with brightly-hued, oversized hammocks and features an array of classic arcade games, such as Ms. Pac-Man, skeeball and several racing machines, as well as ping-pong tables, full-size bocce courts, swings and more.



What to Eat

You don't have to leave the park to find some great food. In fact, you'll have more than enough delectable choices at Spruce Street Harbor Park, so you really won't need to worry about going hungry! Several popular Philadelphia restaurants have set up outposts here to serve up some of their familiar specialties, as well as newly-created options. It's a memorable yet casual culinary experience, as the eateries are situated in massive shipping containers that are lined along the river within the park.

Several of the popular local restaurants selling food here include:

- **HipCity Vedge:** This restaurant is known for fast-casual vegan offerings, such as a vegan Philly cheesesteak, Jerk Caesar salad, and homemade sweet potato fries.
- **Chickie's and Pete's"** This iconic Philly sandwich place has several locations throughout the city and the surrounding suburbs. This smaller eatery is a hotspot that serves up crispy shrimp rolls, hot pizza, and their famous zesty "crab" fries.
- **Garces:** Chef Jose Garces is an award-winning top chef in the city, and this is another great spot where you can taste a few of his innovative specialties, including oversized burgers and fresh tacos.

- Franklin Fountain: This dessert destination may be small, but it has a huge menu of frozen delights. When you need to cool down in the summer months, it's the place to be. It serves up refreshing ice cream, generously-portioned sundaes, creamy milkshakes, and frosty drinks in an array of flavors.
- Beverage options: Alcoholic beverages are sold here as well. Spruce Street Harbor Park has been compared to a giant beer garden, as there are three bars on the premises serving many varieties of beer, as well as wine and cocktails on tap.



Events at Spruce Street Harbor

Spruce Street Harbor park hosts a robust selection of music, events, weekly markets and live entertainment all summer long. The schedule is released when the park opens each year, so keep an eye on the website for details when the events are announced.

And if you happen to be in town for your own private event, keep in mind that you can rent a unique space at Spruce Street Harbor Park, including the hammock lounge and barge oasis areas.

Parking

Although it's best to walk here or take public transportation, if possible, if you need to park your car here, there are several parking lots within walking distance of Spruce Street Harbor Park that accept cash or credit cards.

Tips for Visiting

Not surprisingly, Spruce Street Harbor Park is expansive and attracts a lot of adults as well as children during warm evenings and weekends. You can easily just stroll by on a whim and discover the park yourself, but if you plan to go in advance, it's best to arrive early to enjoy the area without the crowds—and perhaps score a comfy hammock in a prime location so you can settle in, sip a cocktail and relax—well before the rest of the visitors arrive.