

8 Things to do in Philadelphia's University City Neighborhood

By Marla Cimini, originally published on Trip Savvy



Philadelphia is an interesting place to explore; divided up into a number of diverse neighborhoods, each area has its own personality and offers plenty of sites and activities. And University City, situated to the west of Center City, is no different. True to its name, the University City district is home to a number of major colleges and universities, including the University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School, and Drexel University. In addition to college campuses, you will notice tree-lined streets, lovely parks, bookstores, boutiques, restaurants, and bars as you stroll around the area. Here are some fascinating places and fun activities you can enjoy while in this vibrant part of the city.

Visit the Penn Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

ADDRESS 3260 South St, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

PHONE +1 215-898-4000

WEB [Visit website](#)

In a city with a multitude of world-class museums, the Penn Museum may be considered under-the-radar by some, yet it's home to an extensive and noteworthy collection of ancient art and artifacts. Featuring several architectural styles, the museum itself is interesting, as its structure was first developed in 1899 and has evolved over many years. Visitors can enjoy meandering through massive galleries that focus on a variety of geographical locations: Mexico and Central America, Africa, Middle East, Egypt, Greece, and more. While you're here, you can also stroll the stunning and colorful gardens. There are special exhibitions on a rotating basis, so be sure to check the museums's website in advance.

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Check Out the Philadelphia Zoo

ADDRESS 3400 W Girard Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

PHONE +1 215-243-1100

WEB [Visit website](#)

The oldest in the U.S., the Philadelphia Zoo receives more than one million guests each year. You can easily spend a full day here, as the

42-acre space is home to more than 1,300 animals, including sloth bears, snow leopards, red pandas, and hippos. The zoo also has a "campus-wide network of see-through mesh trails," Zoo360, which allows the animals to travel around the grounds. Meanwhile, the kids will love the KidZooU, a children's education center, and the Rare Animal Conservation Center teaches visitors about animal endangerment and what's being done to promote conservationism.

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Admire Art at the Esther M. Klein Art Gallery

The Esther M. Klein Art Gallery is a world-class center that focuses on the synergies between art and technology while supporting the surrounding Philadelphia neighborhoods. It's a branch of the University City Science Center, a non-profit organization that helps entrepreneurs bring their developments to market. The gallery features a variety of events throughout the year, including panel discussions, gallery presentations, lectures, and studio workshops by local artists. Be sure to check the website for upcoming exhibits.

Admission is free.

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Stroll around Schuylkill River Park

ADDRESS 300 S 25th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA

PHONE +1 215-309-5523

WEB [Visit website](#)

On warm days, you can't beat Philadelphia's lovely parks and green spaces. Running along the Schuylkill River, the park is small yet inviting, and includes a baseball field, playground, recreational center, swimming pool, community garden, and dog parks for large and small pooches. Locals love the pathways lined with shady trees, and there's even a "conversation" area with plenty of seating. For an exceptionally picturesque view of the city, walk across the South Street Bridge for some Instagrammable photos.

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Gaze at Artwork at The Ellen Powell Tiberino Memorial Museum

The Ellen Powell Tiberino Memorial Museum is an unassuming red brick row house dedicated to the work of celebrated local artist Ellen Powell Tiberino. She and her husband, Joseph Tiberino, were known as the "Wyeths of West Philadelphia" as well as the "Frida and Diego of Philadelphia." Today, the museum highlights art by the couple and their four adult children, and supports local neighborhood artists, too. It is open by appointment only and requests a \$10 donation. Visit the [website](#) for details and to schedule a visit.

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Be Mesmerized at the Robert and Penny Fox Historic Costume Collection

Fashionistas flock to the Robert and Penny Fox Historic Costume Collection at the URBN center to view clothing and fashion exhibits throughout the year. Open to the public during weekends, the museum focuses on specific themed exhibits. Previous ones include "Suit Yourself: 75 Years of Personal Style," which featured women's suits, and "A Philadelphia Store-y" a retrospective on fashion designer Nicole Miller. If you'd like to take a tour, contact the museum in advance to make an appointment.

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Skate the University of Pennsylvania Ice Skating Rink

After a recent, multi-million dollar renovation, the University of Pennsylvania's stunning "1923 Penn Ice Rink" re-opened in late 2019.

With an ice surface that's more than 16,000 square feet, it's no surprise that ice skaters love all the new enhancements: seating for 2,600 audience members, a skate-rental area, a viewing area above the ice, and food concessions. They offer figure skating lessons and adult league ice hockey, and it's open to special events as well.

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Listen to Music at World Café Live

ADDRESS 3025 Walnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA

PHONE +1 215-222-1400

WEB [Visit website](#)

Ready for some great live music? Don't miss the World Café Live, a venue with sublime acoustics that attracts national acts throughout the year. It's become somewhat legendary for music lovers in the city and hosts musicians performing everything from jazz to rockabilly. The building features two venues: The Music Hall, a three-level concert hall that seats just under 1,000 guests; and The Lounge, an intimate upstairs area that holds up to 220 people. Both venues serve up great food and have a full bar. Visit the website to see the upcoming schedule and purchase tickets in advance.