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When you're visiting Philadelphia, you don't need to dive into the ocean to learn about the vibrant and exciting life that exists under the waves: There's an abundance of fascinating marine species just over the Benjamin Franklin Bridge in Camden, New Jersey. Located on Camden's Waterfront, across the river from Philly's Center City, the [Adventure Aquarium](#) is a truly wonderful educational destination for adults and children who wish to explore the world down below.

Background

The beautiful and award-winning Adventure Aquarium first opened its doors in 1992, and has hosted millions of visitors over the years. Home to the largest number of sharks on the Eastern Seaboard, as well as more than 15,000 other aquatic species, it's the only major aquarium in the Philadelphia region. Here you'll find a variety of intriguing exhibits, 3-D films, and an assortment of unique opportunities for guests to get up close with some of the animals who reside here.

What to See and Do

A visit to the Adventure Aquarium is a fun, full-day experience for the entire family. In addition to the exceptional shark tanks, some of the more popular exhibits include penguins, stingrays, hippos, tropical fish, and the recent addition of two-toed sloths.

Here are a few of the Adventure Aquarium's current highlights:

Ocean Realm

This expansive area features a soaring salt water tank with more than 700 gallons of seawater. It's also site of the aquarium's famous Shark Bridge and

Shark Tunnel, where you can catch a great view of zebra, leopard, and hammerhead sharks, plus many more creatures of the deep.

Caribbean Currents

This area showcases 15 separate exhibits relating to the Caribbean Sea and the interesting creatures who live there. It features an abundance of colorful tropical fish of all kinds, including seahorses, jellyfish, and sea turtles of all sizes.

Touch Tanks

This guided experience is open to all ages and offers the opportunity to pet stingrays, horseshoe crabs, starfish, and other types of fish. A trained expert educates guests on the different species and how to properly touch them, ensuring that each kid gets the chance to enjoy the experience.

Hippo Haven

This newly renovated area is home to a number of Nile hippos (some are over 3,000 pounds!), and guests can experience their habitat from a massive glass tank that allows you to see the animals explore above and below the water's surface.

Penguin Park

This indoor-outdoor colorful area is the ideal destination for visitors to learn all about the penguins' habitat and enjoy the adjacent small playground. There's a lot of seating in this section, and kids are invited to interact and get social.

Piranha Falls

Featuring 100 piranhas, this incredible exhibit takes visitors on a journey to the Amazon rainforest and its stunning waterfalls.

Encounters

The Adventure Aquarium offers an array of fun and fascinating encounters that enable kids to meet the animals. These include the Sea Turtle Encounter, where visitors can feed loggerhead sea turtles; the Hippo Encounter, which includes a backstage tour of the Hippo Haven exhibit; and the Penguin Pop-In Encounter, in which guests get to spend about 20 minutes with the aquatic birds. If you wish to book an encounter, you'll need to [call ahead](#).

Kid Zone

Designated for children under the age of 6, this area is a fun destination for interactive and educational play. While you're here, kids will get a close-up look at some of the friendlier species and learn from an aquarium expert.

3-D Theater

During your visit, be sure to catch a movie in the aquarium's theater that shines a spotlight on diverse topics relating to the oceans and marine life. You'll also learn about the importance of sustainability and saving our planet's oceans.

Marketplace Café

This comfortable and spacious restaurant offers a menu with all the kids' favorites and plenty of options for mom and dad, too. A sustainable dining destination, they emphasize the importance of recycling and preventing plastics from harming the ocean and the planet.

How to Visit

The aquarium is open 365 days a year, but before choosing your date, check out the Adventure Aquarium website for information about upcoming exhibits and special events. Not surprisingly, the aquarium is most crowded on weekends, so it's a good idea to arrive early on any day you decide to visit.

Tickets are \$32 per adult and \$22 per child. If you live in the area or plan to visit multiple times during the year, the aquarium offers annual memberships, starting at \$55.