



## **Independence Visitor Center**

6th and Market Streets

Plan your visit at the Independence Visitor Center with the assistance of park rangers and concierge staff for the city. Pick up a map and tickets for Independence Hall, or use the free WiFi to download the NPS Independence app. Public restrooms are also available. Wheelchair accessible.

## **Declaration House**

7th and Market Streets

Closed September-June

Not only did Thomas Jefferson draft the Declaration of Independence while living on this site, he also recorded the daily temperature and precipitation at least twice every day. Much like scientists at the National Weather Service today, Jefferson gathered data to learn about weather patterns and advance the science of meteorology. Curious about the weather on July 4, 1776? Dry and 76F at 1pm, according to Jefferson's weather record.

## **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the American Revolution**

Washington Square, closest to 7th and Walnut Streets

This memorial, erected in 1954, includes an eternal flame, a tomb, and a bronze cast of Jean Antoine Houdon's statue of George Washington. The tomb contains the remains of an unknown Revolutionary War soldier who perished in the fight for independence while the eternal flame honors the high price paid by soldiers in the name of freedom.

## **Washington Square**

6th and Walnut Streets

This beautiful park was originally a burial ground and cattle pasture. Today, there are more than 30 species of trees in the square, including a sycamore (*platanus occidentalis*) cloned from the original Moon Tree, which was grown from seeds that orbited the moon 34 times with the Apollo 14 mission in 1971. Scientists wanted to know if a change in gravity would affect the seeds. Can you find the Moon Tree?

## **President's House Site**

6th and Walnut Streets

The house is gone, but outdoor exhibits mark the spot where Presidents Washington and Adams lived in the 1790's. Look for the foundations of the home embedded in the ground. Washington's large household included family members as well as indentured and enslaved servants. Adams, never a slaveholder, employed a small staff of servants. Outdoor exhibits examine the paradox between slavery and freedom in this house, and in the nation.

## **Liberty Bell Center**

6th and Market Streets

The wide "crack" in the Liberty Bell is actually the repair job! Look carefully and you'll see over 40 drill bit marks. But the repair was not successful, and the bell cracked again in 1846. Today, computer modeling gives us an approximation of the [Liberty Bell's sound](#). Visit the park's website ([www.nps.gov/inde](http://www.nps.gov/inde)) and look under Photos and Multimedia to find the link to the sound of the Liberty Bell.

## **Independence Square**

Enter through a security checkpoint on 5th and Chestnut Streets.

Free, timed tickets required for Independence Hall.

Scientists observed the Transit of Venus (Venus crossing in front of the Sun) from an observatory on Independence Square in 1769. Their measurements of this a rare astronomical event, along with calculations from over 170 other observers around the globe, enabled scientists to figure out the distance between the Earth and the Sun (Astronomical Unit or AU), and begin to understand the size of our solar system. (The observatory is long gone).

## **Congress Hall**

Enter through the security checkpoint on 5th and Chestnut Streets.

This building was home to the Congress in the 1790's. The story here is all about addition... and division. Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee joined the original 13 states, boosting the number of senators to 32. Meanwhile, membership in the House increased from 65 to 106 representatives due to census results and the new states. But political disagreements caused deep divisions among lawmakers, and political parties were born.

## **Great Essentials Exhibit**

Enter through the security checkpoint on 5th and Chestnut Streets.

Rare printed documents from the late 1700's are displayed in the Great Essentials Exhibit, including the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution. Preserving these documents is serious business, so the documents are kept in a case with argon, an inert gas that will not facilitate organic decay. Harmful sunlight has been blocked from the room, and the pages of the documents are turned periodically so they all get an equal amount of light exposure.

## **Independence Hall**

Enter through the security checkpoint on 5th and Chestnut Streets.

Entry by tour only. Free, timed tickets required.

The Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution were both signed at Independence Hall. But from 1802 to 1827, Charles Wilson Peale's Philadelphia Museum occupied the second floor of this building, working to educate and entertain. Visitors marveled at more than 700 mounted birds, 4,000 insects, 190 quadrupeds, and countless rocks and minerals, while portraits of notable men were meant to inspire citizens. Today, entrance to Independence Hall is by tour only; tickets required March through December.

**Old City Hall**

5th and Chestnut Streets

Old City Hall served as the city's governmental hub in the 1790's. In 1793, an epidemic of Yellow Fever swept through Philadelphia. Community organizers like Absalom Jones and Richard Allen met here with city officials to discuss efforts to nurse the sick and bury the dead. Today, we know that Yellow Fever is spread by mosquitoes, but in the 1790's, some people suspected that a load of rotting coffee on the wharf was to blame.

**Philosophical Hall**

5th Street, just south of Chestnut Street

Home to the American Philosophical Society, Philosophical Hall now features a gallery of changing exhibits. Benjamin Franklin founded the American Philosophical Society in 1743 to "promote useful knowledge." Early members included politicians, doctors, artisans, clergy, and tradesmen – all interested in science. Members today are recognized as leaders in the fields of science and humanities.

**Library Hall**

5th and Library Streets

The research library of the American Philosophical Society houses thousands of books, manuscripts, and periodicals, including the journals of Lewis and Clark. Beginning in 1804, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led the Corps of Discovery on an expedition from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean, passing through territory that no European had ever seen before. Their journals provide a record of the geography, flora and fauna, and inhabitants of those regions.

**Second Bank of the United States**

Chestnut Street, between 4th and 5th Streets

Hours vary

The Second Bank building is a marvel of Greek Revival architecture that houses an impressive gallery of original portraits of early American politicians, soldiers, and scientists. Note the deterioration of the exterior marble columns. Pollutants in the air cause the columns to peel apart over time. Surprisingly, the parts of the columns most shielded from the elements deteriorate faster because it's more difficult for rainwater to reach and wash away the pollutants.

**New Hall Military Museum**

Chestnut Street, between 3rd and 4th

Closed September-June

The exhibits in the New Hall Military Museum tell the story of the Continental Army, Navy, and Marines during the Revolutionary War. Much of the story is about the technology and physics of warfare. For example, weapons like mortars and cannons required artillerymen to understand trajectory and recoil. Sailors, on the other hand, learned to use wind speed and position to their advantage, though communication in the fog of battle challenged both soldiers and sailors.

### **Carpenters' Hall**

Chestnut Street, between 3rd and 4th Streets

The Carpenters' Company literally shaped the city. Members were skilled craftsmen and master builders experienced in design, engineering, and construction. In 1774, they loaned Carpenters' Hall to the First Continental Congress. Look carefully at the weather vane. Do you see the tools at the very top? The one that has a right angle is a try square. The other one is a divider.

### **Dock Creek**

Between Chestnut and Walnut Streets, and 3rd and 4th Streets

This beautiful landscape was once home to a foul creek. Slaughterhouses dumped animal carcasses into the creek, while residents threw their everyday trash into the waterway. Benjamin Franklin associated outbreaks of yellow fever with its putrid smell and unhealthy conditions. He urged the city government to restore the creek to its original clean condition, but they merely concealed it with a street.

### **Rush Garden**

3rd and Walnut Streets

This garden was once the site of Dr. Benjamin Rush's home. Dr. Rush treated many city residents suffering from yellow fever in 1793. He promoted the "English cure," which involved using a lancet or leech to remove some of a patient's blood, and giving the patient medicine to purge his/her intestines. Today we know that Dr. Rush's well-intentioned efforts may have harmed patients. There is still no cure for the yellow fever virus.

### **Franklin Court**

Between Market and Chestnut Streets, and 3rd and 4th Streets

Although long gone, Benjamin Franklin's elegant home and rather unique garden once stood in this courtyard. While living in London, Franklin participated in a seed exchange with a network of scientists. His wife, Deborah, often acted as an intermediary from Franklin Court, passing along seeds to Franklin's friends and planting some in the garden here--among them broccoli, cauliflower, and some "curious" beans.

### **Fragments of Franklin Court**

318 Market Street

Closed September-June

This home, built in 1786 by Benjamin Franklin as a rental property, features an architectural and archeological exhibit. Stripped down to the bare walls, the building allows visitors to examine 18th century building practices and observe some of Franklin's fire safety improvements. Exhibit cases contain artifacts found buried in Franklin Court. From teapots to lice combs, the artifacts reveal the stuff of everyday life in the past.

### **Benjamin Franklin Museum**

Between Chestnut and Market Streets, and 3rd and 4th Streets

Fee applies

This museum allows visitors to learn about Benjamin Franklin through his life-long interests in science, business, philanthropy, and politics. See historical objects, like a fossilized mastodon tooth and a family Bible. Animated videos and computer interactives engage visitors with stories of Franklin's inventions and community improvements. Fee applies. Reservations for school groups are recommended; fee waivers may be available.

### **Franklin Court Printing Office**

320 Market Street

There were no computers in Benjamin Franklin's day. Books, newspapers, and even paper money were printed on a printing press. Printers spelled out everything with lead letters, putting them in one at a time, upside down, whereas pictures were made by carving images into a block of wood. Printers inked the lead type and wood cuts, and then pressed them against paper, printing one sheet at a time.

### **Welcome Park**

2nd Street, between Chestnut and Walnut Streets

This small outdoor park is the place to learn about William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. Embedded in the ground is a giant map of the original street grid for Philadelphia, with trees marking the original squares. A small scale replica of the City Hall statue of William Penn sits in the middle of this urban space while a biographical timeline wraps around the two perimeter walls.

### **Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial**

3rd and Pine Streets

Open April-October

This house is a national memorial to an international champion of human freedom. Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a Polish military engineer and volunteer in the American Revolution, designed and supervised the construction of fortifications for the Continental Army, including those at West Point. He designed a huge chain that stretched across the Hudson River, preventing British ships from entering the area. He later led an unsuccessful uprising in Poland against the Russian occupation.

### **Christ Church**

2nd and Church Streets

Constructed in 1744, the church features many elements of classic Georgian architecture, including a Palladian window. The steeple, added ten years later and funded through the sale of lottery tickets in Benjamin Franklin's printing office, was easily recognizable from all of colonial Philadelphia. George Washington attended services here, as did members of Franklin's family. Don't miss the bishop's mitre (hat) on the weathervane!

### **Christ Church Burial Ground**

5th and Arch Streets

This is the final resting place of some of the nation's most prominent founders, including Benjamin Franklin. There are about 1,400 markers in the burial ground; another 5,000 have eroded and disappeared through time. Franklin's gravestone now has a significant crack caused by weather

exposure. The damage is exacerbated by the Philadelphia tradition of tossing a penny for good luck on Franklin's grave.

**National Constitution Center**

Arch Street, between 5th and 6th

Fee applies

Experience the U.S. Constitution through more than 100 interactive and multimedia exhibits. Life-size bronze statues in Signers' Hall will transport you to September 17, 1787, when 39 men signed an enduring compact of government beginning with the words "We the People." The National Constitution Center is a private, non-profit museum. Fee applies.