

# NSO PennTracks Chinatown

## Overview:

This tour takes you through the Asian cultural center of Philadelphia. Chinatown offers a variety of amazing cuisines including Japanese, Thai, Cambodian, Burmese, Laotian, Malaysian, and Vietnamese. Churches, temples, artwork, and a concert hall are also highlights.

## Why You Should Return:

Chinatown offers the opportunity to sample cuisines from nearly every country in Asia. Chinatown is a one-stop-shop for food, entertainment, and cultural immersion and is a place unlike any other Philadelphia neighborhood. The Pennsylvania Convention Center is the second largest convention center in the Northeast and stages such shows as the International Auto Show in February and the Flower Show in March. At the Reading Terminal Market you can buy seafood, cheesesteaks, baked goods from Pennsylvania Dutch merchants, and any other food you could want.

## Transportation:

To get to Chinatown, take the Green Line trolley to 13th Street or the Market-Frankford Line to 11th Street. To return to Penn, take the take the Green Line trolley from 13th Street to 37th Street or the Market-Frankford Line from 11th Street to 34th or 40th streets.

## Emergency:

In case of emergency, contact 911. Report emergency to NSO staff.

## 1 Friendship Gate | 10th and Arch streets

Built as an exchange between Philadelphia and its sister city in China, Tianjin, this ornate gate was dedicated on January 31, 1984. It is the first authentic Chinese gate built in America by artisans from China. The graphic patterns, based on mythical creatures from the Ming and Qing dynasties, include a phoenix, which symbolizes good luck and long life, as well as a dragon, which has the power to keep water in its mouth and protect the community from fire.

## 2 Fire Station | 10th and Cherry streets

Originally established on July 4, 1791 as part of the Diligent Volunteer Fire Company, it was located on the south side of Market near 8th Street. After moving several times, it settled on June 5, 1956 in its present location. The station is nicknamed the "House of Dragons."

## 3 Chinese Christian Church and Center | 225 N. 10th Street

Beginning in the late 1800s, Philadelphia saw an increase in religious participation that eventually led to the establishment of CCC&C in 1941. The center continues to serve as a place for cultural and religious activity, and is inextricably linked to Chinatown's history. An additional campus stands on 11th and Vine streets.

## 4 History of Chinatown Mural | 10th and Winter streets

Commissioned for Chinatown's 125th anniversary, this mural by artist Arturo Ho traces the history of the community, from the arrival of the early laundrymen to the fight against urban renewal in the 1960s/70s. The mural stands opposite the Vine Street Expressway, for which parts of historic Chinatown were demolished in order to make way for construction.

## 5 Race Street | Between 11th and 9th streets

The culinary heart of Chinatown, this stretch of Race street is home to some of the best food you can find in Philadelphia. Sample dim sum at Ocean Harbor or Dim Sum Garden, devour traditional noodle dishes at Nan Zhou, discover late night eats at David's Mai Lai Wah, or enjoy karaoke at Penn favorites Red Kings and Ken's. Just around the corner are standout dessert options like Mango Mango and A La Mousse.

## 6 Franklin Square | 200 N. 6th Street

One of Philadelphia's five original squares, Franklin Square features a variety of park attractions, including a carousel and a mini golf course. Each spring, the square hosts Chinatown's celebration of the Chinese Lantern Festival, which includes performances, food, and countless handcrafted lantern designs and displays illuminating the park.

## 7 The Pennsylvania Convention Center | Arch between 11th and 13th streets

The Pennsylvania Convention Center houses exhibitions, conferences, and conventions ranging from Wizard World Comic Convention to The 14th Congress of the International Headache Society. It is comprised of four main halls and the grand hall, which is part of the former Reading Railroad terminal elevated train shed.

## 8 Reading Terminal Market | 12th and Arch streets

This is part of the Reading Railroad that you know from the Monopoly game. Though the trains no longer rumble overhead, the old train shed is now the century-old Reading Terminal Market, an unrivaled testament to the rich flavors of the city's ethnic neighborhoods. Treasured by locals and tourists alike, the market brings together a variety of food cuisines under one roof: Amish pretzels, steaks, and hoagies—all Philly originals!

## Of Additional Interest

### A The Rail Park | Callowhill Street between 11th and 12th streets

The first quarter mile of a planned 3-mile long project, the Rail Park is a revitalization of unused rail lines. The initial stretch of the park features walking trails, swings, artwork, and occasional performances.

See [www.visitphilly.com/chinatown](http://www.visitphilly.com/chinatown) for more information.

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