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Philadelphia's Historic District Events and Special Exhibits

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Philadelphia, PA - 4.8 million people checked out Independence National Historical Park (INHP) in 2017, the crown jewel of Philadelphia's renowned Historic District. Upon admiring Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell and INHP's other sites, tourists fan out throughout the vicinity to dine, drink and discover even more, and in 2018, they'll enjoy new and exciting benefits to stretch their already-packed visits to the district.

The summer season 2018 will bring with it the first appearance of Cherry Street Pier, an impressive venue for shopping, eating and relaxing, and The Philadelphia Bourse, a 27-tenant food hall sure to be the ideal pit stop for hungry guests. Also in store this season: limited-engagement at the National Museum of American Jewish History and the National Constitution

Center, a Tall Ships festival making its only East Coast stop in Philadelphia (Sail Philadelphia) and a new and not-to-be-missed selfie spot debuting at the renovated Independence Visitor Center.

Major Openings & Renovations:

Cherry Street Pier, summer 2018 – When things happen along the Delaware River Waterfront, they happen in fantastic fashion. The newest case in point: the forthcoming \$5 million makeover of the 55,0000-square-foot Municipal Pier 9 into Cherry Street Pier, an accessible, egalitarian, mixed-use space for artist studios, shopping, performances, dining and drinking, working and relaxing in an innovatively designed public space. The open-air park at the end of the pier will offer breathtaking views of the river, Race Street Pier and the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. Cherry Street Pier will be a permanent addition to the seasonal Blue Cross River Rink Winterfest and Summerfest and Spruce Street Harbor Park. delawareriverwaterfront.com

The Philadelphia Bourse, summer 2018 – The Historic District’s circa 1895 commodities exchange transforms into an artisan market in the style of Chelsea Market. The burnished, Victorian-era member of the National Register of Historic Places across the street from Independence Mall was most recently a food court. The Bourse’s new incarnation promises an experience befitting Philadelphia’s current and centuries-old reputation as a city of makers. Among the 27 tenants in the mix: Mighty Melt (grilled cheese), Scoop de Ville (ice cream), Snapdragon Flowers, Bluebird Distilling, Prescription Chicken (soup), Chaat and Chai (Indian) and Chocodiem (chocolate). 111 S. Independence Mall East, (215) 625-0300, theboursephilly.com

Independence Visitor Center Renovation, Memorial Day Weekend 2018 – The Independence Visitor Center unveils the first portion of its \$15 million Visitor Experience Improvement Project this summer, and with it comes a newly expanded gift shop—the largest retail hub for all-things Philadelphia in the Historic District. Also debuting for the unofficial start to summer: a new public terrace offering sweeping views of Independence Mall and a prime spot for selfies with Independence Hall. 6th & Market Streets, (800) 537-7676, phlvisitorcenter.com

Not-To-Be-Missed Events & Exhibitions:

Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music, Through September 2, 2018 – The National Museum of American Jewish History debuts its exhibition on the life of a 20th-century American musical icon. Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music illustrates the famed conductor and composer’s life, Jewish identity and social activism through more than 100 artifacts—including Bernstein’s piano—as well as film, interactive media and sound installations. The exhibition is part of a city- and country-wide celebration of Bernstein’s centennial. 101 Independence Mall East, (215) 923-3811, nmajh.org

Hamilton: The Constitutional Clashes That Shaped A Nation, March 23-December 31, 2018 – This new exhibit, created by and on display at the National Constitution Center, explores Alexander Hamilton’s fraught relationships with James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Aaron Burr through rare documents and artifacts. Items on display include a Hamilton-penned letter from 1800 that questions John Adam’s ability to be president, Hamilton’s portable writing desk and regulations for the famed duel between Hamilton and Burr. 525 Arch

Street, (215) 409-6600, constitutioncenter.org

Sail Philadelphia, May 24-28, 2018 – Philadelphia celebrates Memorial Day weekend with a five-day festival featuring a dozen Tall Ships from Portugal, Spain, Nova Scotia and the United States, all of which will parade in and dock along the promenade at Penn's Landing. This Tall Ships America event includes public tours (timed tickets now available), sailing excursions and loads of riverside fun. Philadelphia serves as the only East Coast port to host the event this year. sailphiladelphia.com

Summer Sounds in the Historic District, June-September 2018 – From Wednesday through Sunday throughout the summer, visitors to Philadelphia's Historic District can enjoy the sounds of music at parks and public spaces throughout the neighborhood. On Wednesdays, the Who Got the Jazz series pops up at rotating locations. On Thursdays, the waterfront's popular Spruce Street Harbor Park hosts live music. First Fridays bring DJ music to different locations throughout the district each month, and on Fridays in August, music lovers can catch jazz acts at the Great Plaza at Penn's Landing. On Saturdays, Summer Sounds at the Square—Franklin Square, that is—features live musical performances in a variety of genres, kicking off with the Philly POPS on July 21. And on the third Sunday of the summer months, the action moves back down to the Delaware River for jazz at Spruce Street Harbor Park. visitphilly.com

Philadelphia Chinese Lantern Festival in Franklin Square, May 1-June 30, 2018 – The popular Chinese Lantern Festival returns to the square for its third year, featuring 1,500 illuminated creations and 15,000 LED lights in brilliant colors. New this year: an endangered species gallery, a Fairy Tree, a walk-through Great White Shark Tunnel and an elephant lantern that changes colors as participants pedal a bicycle. As always, visitors can watch cultural performances, purchase food and drinks throughout the square and in the Dragon Beer Garden and shop for artisan-made crafts. historicphiladelphia.org

Wawa Welcome America!, June 28-July 4, 2018 – The best place to celebrate America's birthday? Its birthplace. With seven days and nights of parades, concerts and fireworks, the entire city gets in on the action, but the Historic District is the main location for patriotic fun. Highlights include a waterfront fireworks display (June 30), an all-day block party and Philly POPS concert on Independence Mall (July 3) and a patriotic parade and ceremony (July 4). welcomeamerica.com

Philadelphia's Historic District campaign, from **VISIT PHILADELPHIA®**, showcases the city's incomparable place in early American history and the still vibrant neighborhoods of Old City, Society Hill and the Delaware River Waterfront.