

## WEEKENDS



## QUIRKY WEEKEND

By Robert DiGiacomo for USA TODAY

**Philadelphia a go-go:** The city shows its quirky side by day with its colorful murals and offbeat museums, while nighttime brings a shot of whiskey, dinner at a tucked away trattoria, and live music at an intimate club.

## FRIDAY

Kick off the weekend at **The Trestle Inn** (339 N. 11th St.; 267-239-0290; [thetrestleinn.com](http://thetrestleinn.com)), a former dive bar in the emerging Loft District that's morphed into a whiskey and go-go joint for hipsters. Happy hour runs from 5 to 8 p.m. The dancers take the stage later.

The owners of local recording studio MilkBoy have transformed a long-vacant downtown building into a bar-restaurant-performance space, **MilkBoy Philly** (1100 Chestnut St.; 215-925-6455; [milkboypyphilly.com](http://milkboypyphilly.com)). The location hosts a mix of rock, roots, and jazz acts, as well as the occasional appearance by Martha Graham Cracker, one of the city's most beloved drag acts.

## SATURDAY

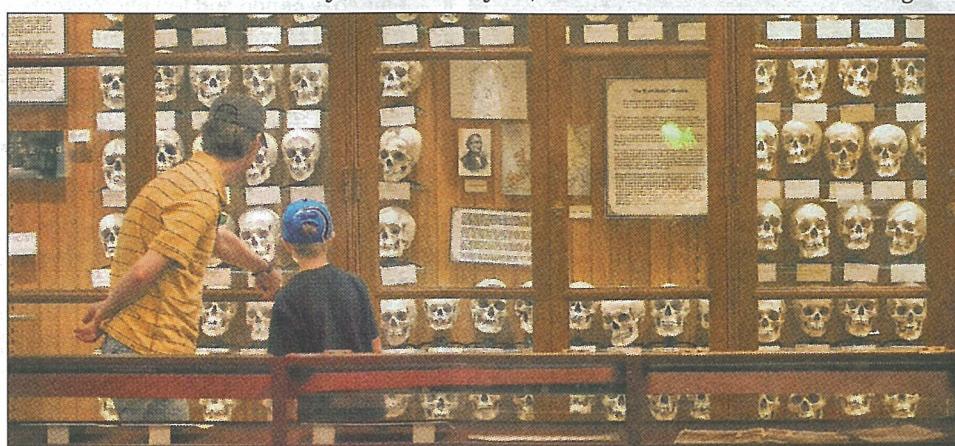
The only way to see *A Love Letter to You*, a series of 50 murals telling the story of a guy courting a girl, is by taking the Market-Frankford elevated transit line. The works, which span the tops of buildings from 46th and Market streets west to 63rd Street and back, resemble old school ads, from the poignant "Miss you too often not to love you" to the witty "We share defeats, we share receipts, and we share the sheets." You can buy two tokens, download a map, and explore on your own, or take the informative guided El tour (\$17) offered by the Mural Arts Program (215-685-0750; [muralarts.org](http://muralarts.org))

Dine at **Mr. Martino's** (1646 E. Passyunk Ave.; 215-755-0663) a tucked away South Philadelphia trattoria where mood lighting, antique furniture, and lace curtains make for a date spot, especially for couples on a budget. The small menu has hardly changed in nearly 20 years. Homey favorites like polenta and roasted sausage and a pasta fagioli with white beans and broccoli rabe are among the standouts. Mr. Martino's is cash-only and BYO (Bring Your Own). Reservations are a good idea.

Finish the night enveloped in the warm jazz of The Crowd Pleasers, the house band at **Bob & Barbara's Lounge** (1509 South St.; 215-545-4511). This veteran group builds its sound around organ and

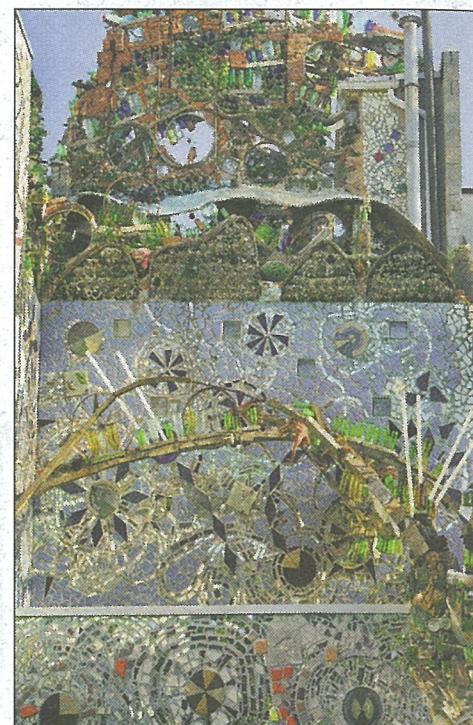


Street art: Take a 2-hour trolley tour of the city's 2,800 murals with the Mural Arts Program.



Skull wall: The Mutter Museum has a bunch of weird sights, including famous body parts.

sax, offering a fitting aural backdrop to this old-school establishment. You'll find yourself surrounded by a mix of students from the nearby University of the Arts, locals, and jazz aficionados.



R. Kennedy/GPTMC

**South Street magic:** Explore Isaiah Zagar's Magic Gardens, an artistic wonderland.

## SUNDAY

Kick-start your day at **Carman's Country Kitchen** (1301 S. 11th St., 215-339-9613), a tiny storefront breakfast-brunch spot, where you can count on an unusual spin on typical morning fare and unusually large portions. The menu, which changes daily, might offer ginger snap and apricot waffles one day and challah French toast with figs, raspberries, and goat cheese the next.

Over the past few decades, mosaic artist Isaiah Zagar has been growing his fanciful **Magic Gardens** (1020 South St.; 215-733-0390; [phillymagicgardens.org](http://phillymagicgardens.org)). The labyrinthine installation occupies three formerly vacant lots. The series of tiled tunnels, grottos, and other creations is meant to represent the artist's life, as well as aspects of the world outside, including the Day of the Dead, the city's dance community, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Not for the squeamish, the **Mutter Museum** (19 S. 22nd St.; 215-563-3737; [coliphyl.org](http://coliphyl.org)) brings together an odd assortment of medical curiosities, including one of its latest acquisitions: 46 slides from the late Albert Einstein's brain. Among the Mutter's most famous holdings are a malignant tumor taken from President Grover Cleveland during a secret operation; part of the thorax from John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated President Abraham Lincoln; and the livers from the 19th-century celebrities—and conjoined twins—Chang and Eng Bunker.

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## FOODIE WEEKEND

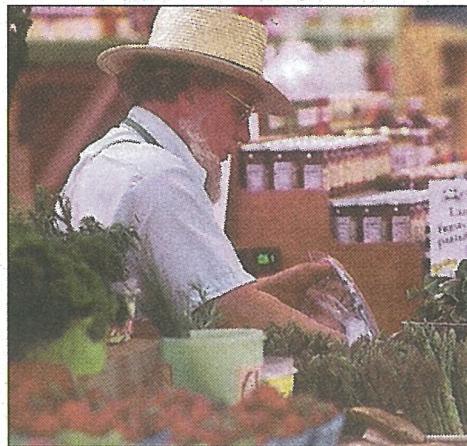
By Robert DiGiacomo for USA TODAY

The cheesesteak may be Philadelphia's most famous culinary export, but the city's food scene has evolved to become a showcase for locally sourced cuisine, craft beers, and artfully stirred cocktails.

## FRIDAY

Choose a bottle among the well-edited selection at the wine boutique inside **Garces Trading Company** (1111 Locust St.; 215-574-1099; [garcestradingcompany.com](http://garcestradingcompany.com)) to prep for dinner at one of the city's many BYO (Bring Your Own) restaurants. Tote your picks to **The Farm and Fisherman**, (1120 Pine St.; 267-687-1555; [thefarmandfisherman.com](http://thefarmandfisherman.com)) an intimate storefront restaurant serving seasonal American cuisine. Be sure to book ahead.

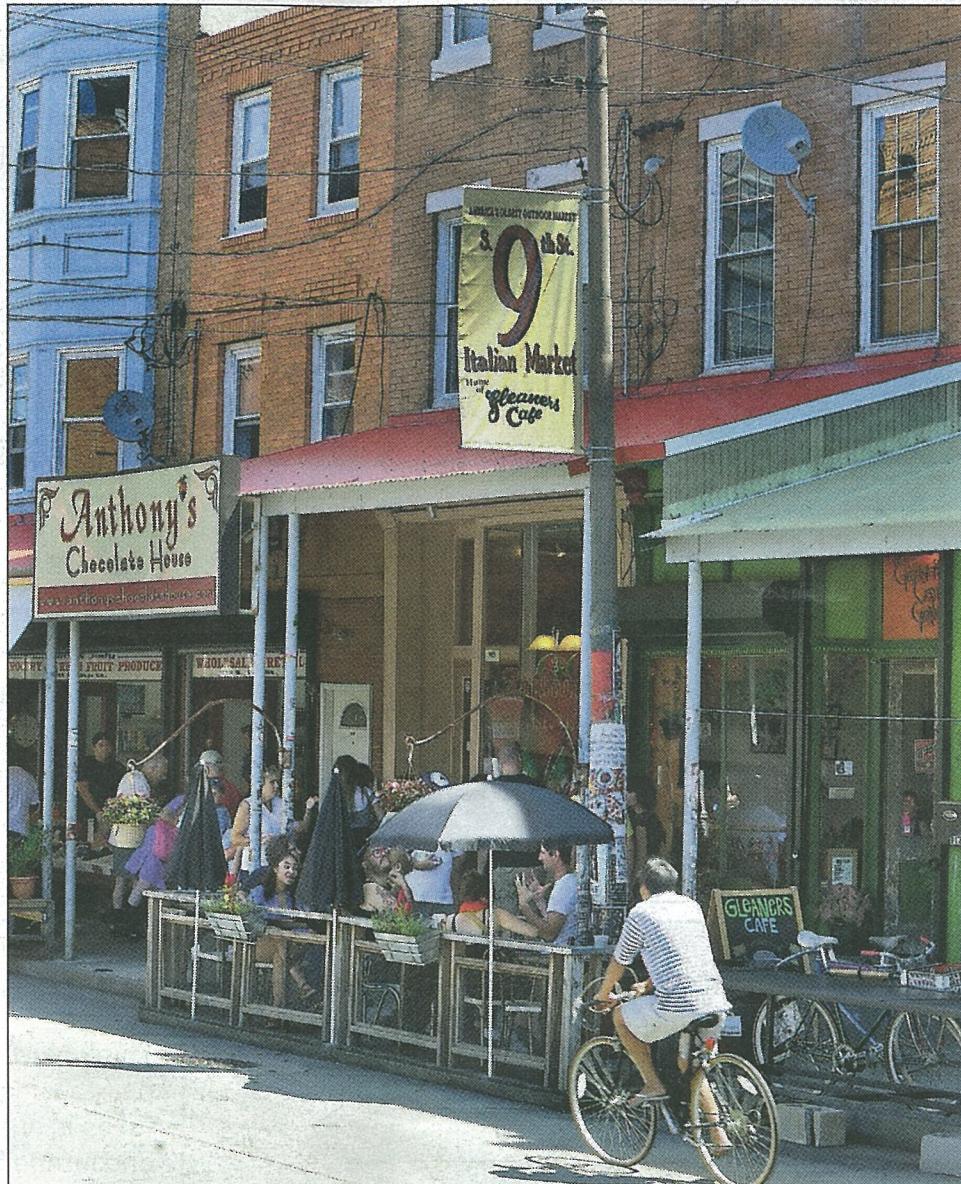
Finish the night at **The Franklin Mortgage & Investment Co.** (112 S. 18th St.; 267-467-3277; [thefranklinbar.com](http://thefranklinbar.com)). At this speakeasy-style cocktail lounge, the mixologist rules. Sip a classic, like a bourbon-based Brown Derby, throw back the tequila-fired Childhood's End, or ask one of the experts to create a concoction just for you.



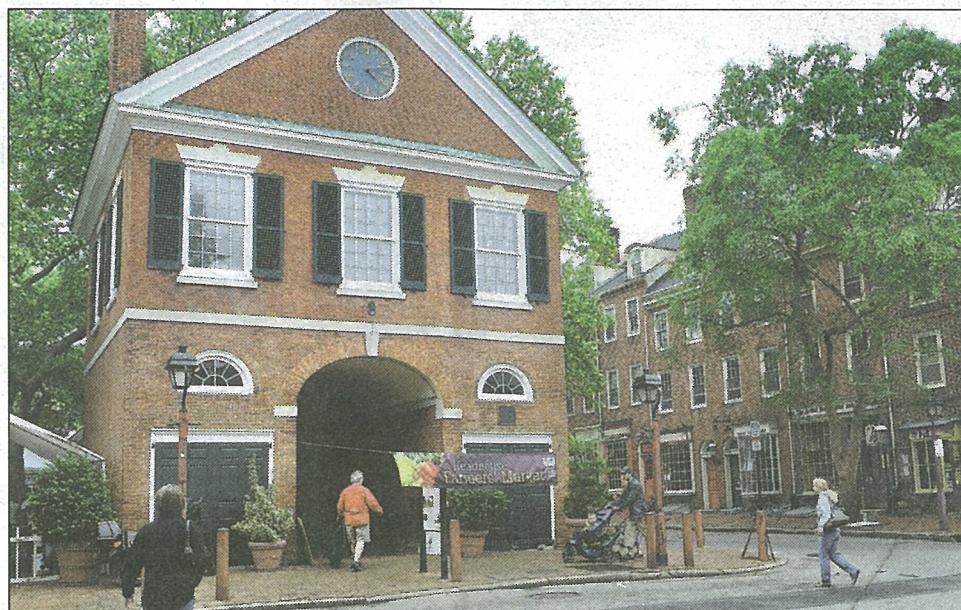
B. Krist/ GPTMC  
Amish goods: Reading Terminal Market

## SATURDAY

Browse on your own or take an official tour at **Reading Terminal Market**, (12th and Arch streets; 215-922-2317; [readingterminalmarket.org](http://readingterminalmarket.org)) an indoor affair dating to 1892. Dozens of stalls brim with meats, cheeses, fish, produce, and prepared foods. A Pennsylvania Dutch vendor is a great place to score a hearty breakfast. And then treat yourself to dessert. The chocolate-chocolate-chip at Bassett's Ice Cream is one of life's essentials, and you can't go wrong with a



R. Kennedy/ GPTMC  
Taste of Italy: Philly's Italian Market has delectables from Italy and around the world.



R. Kennedy/ GPTMC  
Headhouse Square: The farmers market on South Street is open May to December.

cannoli (or two) from Termini Bros.

Find out everything you ever wanted to know about tea, spaghetti bolognese, French macaroons, or other food matters at **COOK** (253 S. 20th St.; 215-735-2665; [audreyclaire-cook.com](http://audreyclaire-cook.com)). This demonstration-style school off Rittenhouse Square has just 16 seats, which gives students the chance to get up close and personal with top local chefs, cookbook authors, and purveyors. Advanced reservations, especially on weekends, are a must.

Craving a nice cold one? A few blocks from COOK is the **The Dandelion** (124 S. 18th St.; 215-558-2500; [thedandelionpub.com](http://thedandelionpub.com)). This gastropub from prolific restaurateur Stephen Starr takes inspiration from classic British watering holes without being too cutesy. Pair a local craft beer with a burger made of aged beef topped with a special sauce. Or try the pub's version of the UK staple, bangers and mash.

Dinner is for name-dropping among the city's cooking stars. Will it be *Iron Chef America* winner Jose Garces' tapas-driven Amada; Marc Vetri's signature Italian; Marcie Turney's Mediterranean hot spot Barbuzzo; Michael Solomonov's Israeli Zahav; or the classic French fare of Georges Perrier's Le Bec-Fin? You really can't go wrong at any of these places, but the chef's tasting at **Amada** (217-219 Chestnut St.; 215-625-2450; [amadarestaurant.com](http://amadarestaurant.com)) is not to be missed. Reservations are essential.

## SUNDAY

You can make like Rocky and run through the **Italian Market** (South 9th Street, between Christian and Washington; [phillyitalianmarket.com](http://phillyitalianmarket.com)). But a better course would be to power up with an espresso at Anthony's Italian Coffee House and work your way through the traditional cheese and butcher shops and recently arrived Mexican grocers selling tamales and fresh tortillas. Leave your name for a table at Sabrina's, a go-to spot for brunch, or enjoy a riff on the classic cheesesteak with a brisket sandwich topped with provolone and a fried egg at Paesano's.

Burn off the morning's calories with a brisk walk to historic Headhouse Square, which has been the site of a market off-and-on since 1745. A weekly farmer's market operates here May through December. Across the street are worthwhile year-round stops Stella, a brick oven pizzeria, and Bodhi, one of the city's top coffee houses.

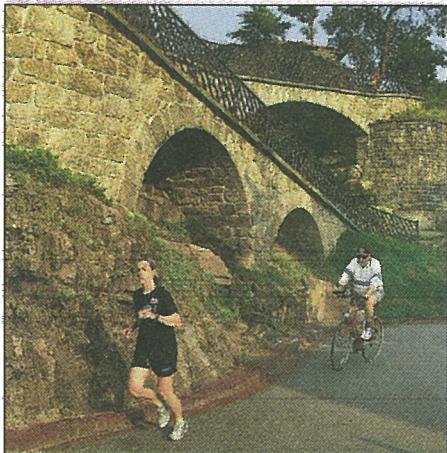
Continue on to Old City to stock up on sweets for the road at **Shane's** (110 Market St.; 215-922-1048; [franklinfountain.com](http://franklinfountain.com)), a candy store dating to 1911. The old-timey shop recently reopened under the ownership of the nearby Franklin Fountain ice cream parlor. Shane's Victorian-era architecture is newly shined, and its decades-old equipment has been cleaned and fine-tuned. But the hand-dipped chocolate butter creams, caramels, and other treats are as irresistible as ever.

## ON THE CHEAP

## LIVE IT UP WITHOUT GOING BROKE

By Robert DiGiacomo for USA TODAY

No need to run up a big bill—or even spend a dime—to enjoy many of the City of Brotherly Love's most famous attractions



R. Kennedy/ GPTMC

## GO GREEN

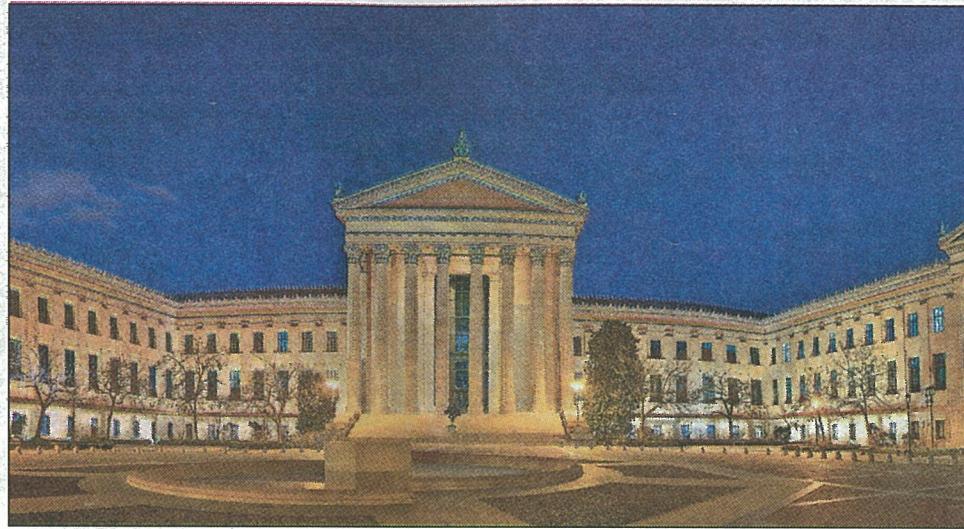
Rittenhouse Square may anchor one of the city's toniest neighborhoods, but it's also a popular gathering spot for locals and visitors alike. If you're looking for more active recreation, bike or walk to the **Schuylkill River Park**, (main entrance at 25th and Locust Street) which runs along the river to connect Fitler Square to the Art Museum, Boathouse Row, and Fairmount Park.

## SOUP IT UP

For filling comfort food with an Asian twist, chow down on a bowl of steaming Vietnamese pho with your choice of meat, rice noodles, bean sprouts, hot peppers, and a twist of lemon for just \$5.95 at **Pho 75** (1022 Race St.; 215-925-1231). Or have your soup inside the dumpling, Shanghai-style, at **Dim Sum Garden**, (59 N. 11th St.; 215-627-0281) where the No. 1 steamed pork juicy buns cost just \$5.25 for eight.

## FREE ON FOOT

Get the local scoop on Philly history, food, and culture and pay as little—or as much—as you want, via [freetoursbyfoot.com](http://freetoursbyfoot.com).



Handout

## NAME YOUR PRICE

Visit the **Philadelphia Museum of Art** the first Sunday of each month and pay what you want to view this priceless collection of European paintings, American art, and armor. (26th Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway; 215-763-8100; [philamuseum.org](http://philamuseum.org)). The nearby **Rodin Museum** boasts the biggest collection of works by the sculptor outside of his native France for a suggested donation of \$5. **NOTE:** The Rodin is closed for renovations until Spring 2012. (22nd Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway; 215-568-6026; [rodinmuseum.org](http://rodinmuseum.org)).

## ART SHOW

Join the festivities the first Friday of each month, as Old City's galleries, antiques shops, and boutiques host simultaneous art openings from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Sip a glass of wine or beer and gallery-hop among street performers and artists. Maybe you'll discover the art world's next star. (N. 2nd to N. 4th Streets, Market to Race; 215-625-9200; [oldcityarts.org/start.html](http://oldcityarts.org/start.html))

## JOYFUL NOISE

**Macy's Grand Court** (1300 Market St.; 215-241-9000; [wanamakerorgan.com](http://wanamakerorgan.com)) is the site of free performances of the Wanamaker Organ, considered the world's largest working pipe organ. The 100-year-old instrument also sounds its glorious notes during the store's annual holiday season light show, which runs through Dec. 31.

## MUSICAL FINDS

Discover a future classical virtuoso by attending a free student recital held Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights during the school year at the world-renowned **Curtis Institute of Music** (1726 Locust St.; 215-893-5261; [curtis.edu](http://curtis.edu)). Meanwhile, newcomers and veterans alike share the stage on Monday nights at the Upstairs at **World Cafe Live** (3025 Walnut St.; 215-222-1400; [philly.worldcafelive.com](http://philly.worldcafelive.com)) venue. The jazz jam starts at 5:30 p.m., followed by the Philly Rising Open Mic night.



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## THE HAPPIEST HOURS

HERE ARE A FEW HAPPY HOUR FAVES:

► **Oyster House** (1516 Sansom St.; 215-567-7683; [oysterhousephilly.com](http://oysterhousephilly.com)) from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 9 to 11 p.m. Saturday features \$1 raw oysters, \$3 oyster shooters, and \$3 drafts.

► The neighborhood-y **Sidebar Bar & Grille** (2201 Christian St.; 215-732-3429; [thesidecarbar.com](http://thesidecarbar.com)) is a really happy place, with \$1 off drafts, \$2.50 well drinks, \$3.50 call drinks, and half-price nachos, chicken fingers, and carnitas from 3 to 7 p.m. and midnight to 2 a.m. Monday to Friday.

► Popular Mediterranean spot **Barbuzzo** (110 S. 13th St.; 215-546-9300; [barbuzzo.com](http://barbuzzo.com)) pulls out the deals at 10:30 p.m. Sunday to Thursday, with \$3 draft beers, \$4 sangrias, \$5 wines by the glass, and \$10 specials on a featured pizza or pasta, burgers, and veggies.