

A PLAY DATE IN PHILLY

The City of Brotherly Love played a key role in American history. It's also a great place for a family vacation.

BY Tiffany Thornton



Left: The Love sculpture in JFK Plaza or "Love Park."
Far Top Right: 100,000 cars cross The Benjamin Franklin Bridge each day.
Far Bottom Right: The Liberty Bell Center.



Philadelphia, or “Philly”, as it is often referred to, is a city that knows itself very well. From the time you land at the airport and walk past the long montage of posters of the movies that have been filmed in “The City of Brotherly Love,” you feel this is a place filled with an energy that you want to be a part of. Best of all for those with a young family, it’s a city that offers loads of infectious fun. Philadelphia is rated one of the best walking cities in the country, so be sure to pack comfy shoes and get ready to embark on a cultural adventure that is bound to leave an indelible impression.

The city centre is where the Liberty Bell of independence proudly stands. Slightly flawed with a famous crack in the side, it recalls the city’s long historical significance. Founded in 1682 by William Penn, during the American Revolution, Philadelphia played a key role as a meeting place for the Founding Fathers of the United States, who signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the Constitution in 1787.



About a half an hour walk away from there are the “Rocky Steps,” known for the famous scene where Sylvester Stallone runs to the top, pumping his fists triumphantly in the air. The 72 stone steps have been traipsed upon by millions of tourists over the years and it’s the perfect spot to improvise the same classic moment with the family.

After you’ve worked up an appetite, indulge in edible delights like Philly Cheese Steaks, a sandwich that was invented in the 1930s, or the soft pretzels that tempt your palette at every turn.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art boasts one of the largest collections in all the country with over 227,000 pieces from around the globe, so plan to linger there for a while. It offers a variety of family programs for kids of all ages to enjoy. An added bonus is that admission to the gallery includes entrance into the Rodin House Museum of Sculpture, as well as historic homes Mt. Pleasant and Cedar Grove, where you and the little ones can step back in time.

Hippos may be one of the most dangerous animals in Africa, but you can get safely close to them behind the enormous tank at the Adventure Aquarium Hippo Haven Experience. The aquarium is home to an ocean realm habitat where sea turtles swim past schools of fish and dozens of lurking sharks. There is even a touch tank where you can hang out with an array of ocean life ranging from shrimps to stingrays. The aquarium is in New Jersey, but just minutes away from the centre of Philly over the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

Opened in 1874, the Philadelphia Zoo was America’s first, and it is considered one of the most esteemed zoos in the world. It has played an integral role in conservation and the





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~ LISA SCOTTOLINE, NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR



Left: Bronzed footsteps from the iconic Rocky scene at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Top Right: The Museum of Art features offers 200 galleries.

Middle Right: KidZooU at the Philadelphia Zoo.

Bottom Right: Ben Franklin’s namesake park.

breeding of animals. It has over 1,300 hundred animals and an exploration trail system called ZOO 360. Don’t be alarmed if you see a tiger or lion walking around above you in what has been touted as the “first-in-the-world animal travel system.”

Franklin Square is the perfect spot to take a break while the kids run free. Play a game of mini golf or take an old-fashioned carousel ride before grabbing a tasty burger and a cold frothy milk shake at Square Burger.

Don’t miss The Please Touch Museum, “the place where kids ages 1-7 are boss.” It’s a highly engaging, interactive space located in Fairmont Parks Memorial Hall. It houses two floors of exhibits and a 100-year-old carousel.

This spring gather up the young ones, take along a great camera and be prepared to create some amazing everlasting memories in Philadelphia, a city that has it all for the family. 📷

