

selling **TRAVEL**

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TRAVEL TRADE PUBLICATION OF THE YEAR

PENN PALS

*Suggest Philadelphia for a
U.S. city break and as
the gateway to the
Pennsylvania countryside*

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Penn bals

*Philadelphia is the perfect
starting point for a tour of the
Pennsylvania countryside,
says Neil Murray*

Philadelphians just love their sport – and then some. This was something I found out quickly enough on a visit to the City of Brotherly Love.

And with teams in all four major U.S. sports – Phillies: baseball; Eagles: American football; 76ers: basketball; and Flyers: ice hockey – plus the Philadelphia Union Major League Soccer team, there's no shortage of outlets for their enthusiasm.

I am at Citizens Bank Park to see the Phillies but, with

a limited knowledge of the game, have to resort to asking my seat neighbour, a teacher named Mark, to explain some of the more puzzling aspects of the game.

As a football supporter, I'm used to a more concentrated 90 minutes of action (well, supporting QPR, some of the time) so the stop-start style of baseball (including a little sing song before the seventh innings) takes a bit of getting used to – as does the army of food and drinks vendors that move up and down the aisles.



But it strikes me the family atmosphere and fun and games in the breaks between innings – such as the Kiss Cam, which encourages couples in the crowd to embrace – are great distractions, although I can't see them catching on at Chelsea.

When play is held up because of rain, we move on to discussing Philly's other teams, before switching to American politics and an explanation of the Primary System in this U.S. Presidential election year.

Who says you can't mix politics and sport?

Political

And "Politics is coming home" could well be the tagline of the Democratic National Convention when it heads for Philadelphia in July (25-28).

As the 'Birthplace of America', Philly is known for its nation-shaping politicians and history-makers and many city attractions focus on the country's formative years.

With all that history, as well as statewide tax-free shopping, sports teams, museums and more than 3,500 murals, Philadelphia – the US's first World Heritage City – has a multi-level appeal and is an ideal starting-off point to explore parts of wider Pennsylvania.

Areas to recommend outside of the city include:

Brandywine Valley and Valley Forge

With Valley Forge's massive King of Prussia Mall and Philadelphia Premium Outlets in nearby Limerick, shopping is the leading pull for the newly-branded Countryside of Philadelphia (countrysidephl.com), which encompasses the Brandywine Valley and Valley Forge regions.

Says Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board's Marc Kaminetsky: "We believe this enhanced brand will allow our region to appeal more to international markets."

Brandywine Valley, 'America's Garden Capital', should be pitched at horticultural enthusiasts, with Longwood Gardens (longwoodgardens.org), one of the world's premier display gardens. It will highlight Nightscape: A Light and Sound Experience from August 3.

Hershey & Harrisburg

Family fun is what keeps people visiting, and coming back, to Hershey. Its moniker, 'The Town Built on Chocolate', is appropriate as its major attractions are the award-winning Hersheypark (hersheypark.com) and Hershey's Chocolate World (hersheys.com/chocolateworld). The town even smells of chocolate!

Founded in Harrison, the state capital, but now established in Hershey, Tröegs Independent Brewery tours (troegs.com) are a major draw for craft beer enthusiasts. Local wineries and microbreweries have joined up to promote Wine & Craft Beer Country.



"Emphasise to clients that Pennsylvania is a tax-free state for shopping for clothes and shoes. The 400-store King of Prussia Mall has the largest retail space in the US, with 40 more retailers and restaurants being added by the end of July"

Pocono Mountains

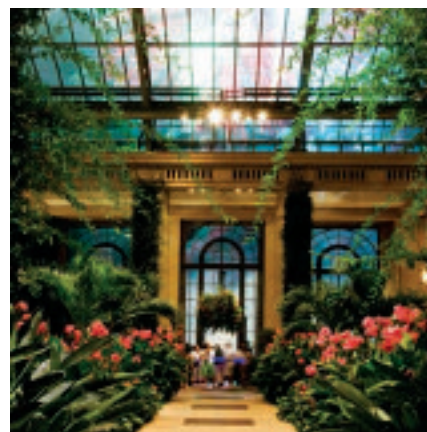
With a new promotional slogan 'Free You', the Pocono Mountains CVB is encouraging visitors to experience the Great Outdoors in a destination that encompasses both summer and winter activities but also offers cultural tours, shopping and festivals galore.

And with live cameras on the CVB site (poconomountains.com) at 16 locations around the region, agents can show ski areas, resorts and scenic views.

Waterparks are a major attraction, too, with the latest – the Africa-themed Kalahari Resorts & Conventions (kalahariresorts.com) – now open.

Perfect ten

- 1 Tour de force:** Numerous Philadelphia tours include movie sites, ghost and photo walks and a thirst-quenching Tipplers' Tour.
- 2 One Liberty Observation Deck:** New last November, the deck offers 360-degree views of Philadelphia from the 57th floor.
- 3 Shoppers' delight:** Take an organised day trip from Philadelphia to the sprawling King of Prussia Mall in Valley Forge.
- 4 The Rocky statue:** Strike a pose in front of the statue near the Philadelphia Museum of Art, on Benjamin Franklin Parkway.
- 5 Food fare:** Sample a famous Philly cheesesteak (sliced pieces of beef with



melted cheese), as well as Amish and Asian fare, at Philadelphia's Reading Terminal Market.

6 Sweet smelling: Take a train from Philadelphia to Harrisburg, the capital city of Pennsylvania, and then hire a car to explore the area and savour the delights of the chocolate-smelling town of Hershey.

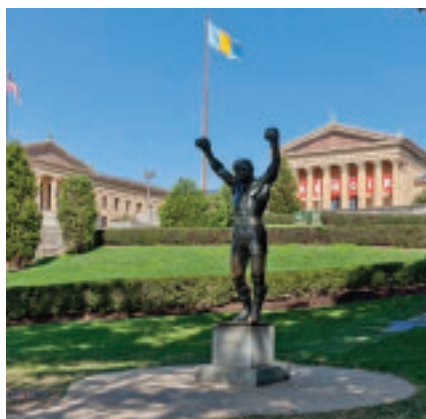
7 Prison visit: Visit Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary – America's most historic prison – and see why Charles Dickens said its solitary cells 'could drive men insane'.

8 Victorian village: Drive to the Victorian village of Jim Thorpe (formerly Mauch Chunk, then renamed in 1953 after a famous American Native Olympic sports legend) to wander the historic streets and bike the wandering trails of an area nicknamed the 'Switzerland of Pennsylvania' because of its picturesque mountain scenery.

9 Picture this: Discover more than 3,500 murals scattered throughout Philadelphia by joining a Mural Arts Programme Tour.

10 Culture walk: Stroll along Philadelphia's Benjamin Franklin Parkway (Museum Mile) and visit the Philadelphia Museum of Arts, the Rodin Museum, the Barnes Foundation and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. ▶

Opposite page: Philadelphia's famous 'Love' sign; this page: family fun at Hersheypark; Longwood Gardens, located just 30 miles south of Philadelphia; Philly's skyline



“Target history buffs who will be in Seventh Heaven in Philadelphia, the city that saw the ‘birthplace of American democracy’ and where the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776”

► What's new

♥ **Statewide:** Pennsylvania recently launched its new slogan, “Pennsylvania. Pursue Your Happiness”.

The slogan, says Michael Chapaloney, the state's Executive Director of Tourism, reflects the fact Pennsylvania is easy to navigate, whether by train or by car.

“We are promoting a lot of packages based on ‘happiness’, which is something we feel people will find on our road trips. And agents can access more than 60 via our website, visitPA.com.”

🏠 **Attractions:** Philadelphia's ‘tallest’ beer garden, the SkyGarten rooftop bar, is set to open this month (June) at Top of the Tower (topofthetower.com). It will specialise in German brews and biergarten-style bar food.

One Liberty Observation Deck (phillyfromthetop.com) is now included in the Philadelphia CityPASS package, which offers discounted entry to many of the city's top attractions.

🏨 **Accommodation:** Philadelphia's hotel inventory is scheduled to grow by 20% by 2018.

Perhaps Philadelphia's ‘most beloved hotel’, The Logan (theloganhotel.com) has reopened following a multi-million-dollar renovation.

The revamp of the Ritz-Carlton (marriott.com) is due to be completed this month (June).

The Omni Hotel has changed its name to The Franklin Hotel at Independence Park (marriott.com) while improvements take place in the autumn. It will convert to a Renaissance Hotel next year.

Hotels scheduled to open in 2017/18 are Aloft, the 47-storey SLS International, the Study Hotel, the Four Seasons (in what, at 1,221 feet, will be the tallest building in Philadelphia) and the W/Element Hotel.

Agents should consider the City District at the height of the summer seasons as there is usually better room availability there. The area is just 10 minutes by subway to the centre of Philadelphia.

Tourism talk



“With the increased airlift from the UK to Philadelphia, we are seeing a huge upturn in the number of passengers travelling to the U.S. via Philadelphia and an increase in the

number of passengers staying there – the city is perfect for a city break – before travelling on to places beyond.

“Philadelphia is an ideal and affordable base for the East Coast, as well as being the gateway for The Countryside of Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Hershey and the Pocono Mountains region.

“This year's figures will be released at IPW in New Orleans but in 2014 Philadelphia welcomed more than 88,000 visitors from the UK.

“The city was recently added to the Brand USA Discovery Programme and agents can get the new badge after working through the training modules.

“Pennsylvania conducted a UK & Ireland sales mission in May and held a workshop in London, training sessions in Scotland and events in London and Dublin.”

Greg Evans, Philadelphia CVB, The Countryside of Philadelphia & Harrisburg Hershey CVB

Where to book it

📞 AMERICA AS YOU LIKE IT – 020 8742 8299

The seven-night Countryside of Philadelphia, Gardens and Wine holiday leads in at £1,070pp.

Including flights and five days' car hire and hotels, it visits Valley Forge, Brandywine Valley and Philadelphia. The operator also has a Pennsylvania Highlights brochure.

americaasyoulikeit.com

📞 VACATIONS TO AMERICA – 01582 469 661

The Pennsylvania Freedom 10-day package takes in Philadelphia, the Philly Countryside, the Pocono Mountains and Dutch Country, and leads in at £1,795 pp. It includes flights, car hire and accommodation.

vacationstoamerica.com

📞 USAIRTOURS – 08000 350 149

The seven-night Philadelphia & Valley Forge package leads in at £1,099 and visits Philadelphia, Brandywine Valley and Valley Forge, and includes flights, car hire and accommodation.

usairtours.co.uk 📞

WHO FLIES THERE

britishairways.com; aa.com; delta.com



Left to right: King of Prussia Mall; Valley Forge; Rocky Statue, Philadelphia Museum of Art; Philly cloaked in summer blooms; The stunning Pocono Mountains are an adventure playground of numerous activities lakes and quaint

Pennsylvania rocks into town



UK AND IRELAND SALES MISSION 2016

Representatives from several of Pennsylvania's regions met with 80 members of the UK trade at at London's Hard Rock Cafe.

Fronting the sales mission, Michael Chapaloney, Executive Director of Tourism, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, said: "We are here to send a message that Pennsylvania is the place to pursue your happiness." The five Pennsylvania partners in attendance were: Philadelphia, Countryside of Philadelphia, Discover Lancaster, Hershey Harrisburg and the Pocono Mountains.

Three holidays to the state were up for grabs and the lucky winners were Rachel McAneny from British Airways Holidays, Sarah Howland from Flight Centre and Hannah Phipps from The Internet Traveller.



Pennsylvania
pursue your happiness

American Airlines

BRITISH AIRWAYS

KEEP CLIMBING
DELTA