

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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## Fill Up on Philadelphia

With parks galore and a globe-spanning food scene, Philly makes for an ideal long weekend away this spring. Here's what to do.

THE UNDERDOG SPIRIT of Philadelphia runs deep, but touting the city as an “under-the-radar destination” has become as stale as a day-old soft pretzel. If there is a radar, America’s birthplace registers brightly—from its food scene (the most James Beard awards granted a city in 2023) to the outdoors (the largest urban park system in the nation) to sports (the MLB and FIFA chose it for the 2026 All-Star Game and as a World Cup venue respectively).

The city charms most effectively in the spring, when bubble gum redbuds and pastel-pink magnolias splash cobblestones and row houses with exuberant color. The Phillies are on in every bar, and ramps are on every menu. What a time to be in Philadelphia, technically the sixth-largest city in the U.S., but spiritually a small town, filled with character and characters. Block out a long weekend to make their acquaintance.

### Day 1 | SATURDAY



7:45 p.m. After they arrived from Saigon as refugees, the Lai family staked their claim in West Philly in 1982 with Fu-Wah market, a still-operational grocery, but they’re best known for **Vietnam**, the Chinatown restaurant they opened two years later—your dinnertime destination. The familial service led by Benny Lai and his sons, and dishes like the BBQ

platter—a kit of grilled meats, lettuce, herbs and rice paper for DIY wrapping—just earned Vietnam Restaurant a **James Beard America’s Classic award**.