

Word of Mouth

Local Flavors



From the scrapple with maple syrup or ketchup at the Down Home Diner to the intoxicating sticky buns baked by Amish-owned Beiler's Bakery to DiNic's classic roast pork sandwich (with provolone and broccoli rabe, thank you), the Reading Terminal Market is a can't-miss tour of the city's culinary history.

And of its culinary future: The Fair Food Farmstand (left), in the northeast corner of the venerable market, is a treasure trove of the city's newest artisanal and organic products. In addition to offering local fruits, vegetables, and meat (a real treat when Jamison Farm lamb is local), the farmstand is the first — and sometimes the only — place to find small-batch, regional treats such as Shellbark Hollow Farm sharp goat cheese, S&C's hot and spicy pickles, Betty's Tasty Button's vibrant Meyer lemon curd, and R&D's dark chocolate-enrobed salted caramels.

— April White
Reading Terminal Market, 12th and Filbert streets, readingterminalmarket.org

PAINT THE TOWN PROUD

Graffiti here signals civic pride rather than urban blight. With more than 2,800 murals painted on structures in some 57 neighborhoods, Philadelphia claims the name "City of Murals."

It wasn't always so. In 1984, the Anti-Graffiti Network hired Jane Golden (right) to put a dent in the errant work of underground artists. A muralist by training, Golden recognized the talent of the graffiti writers.

Golden developed the Mural Arts Program, which gives youth — many with troubled backgrounds — a creative outlet for their skills through art education. She found willing partners in the communities.

"The spirit of people, their enthusiasm and energy, all of them coming to-



gether to create public art, became a tipping point. Murals became a beacon," Golden says.

The program offers trolley tours of the murals. Guides share anecdotes about the making of the vast and highly evocative works. The popular Murals and Meals tours, offered monthly, feature breakfast or lunch, a tour, and a presentation by Golden. — Callie Young



Icon of Independence

Americans' powerful symbol of freedom first hung in the steeple of the Pennsylvania State House — later called Independence Hall — in 1753. It's job: to ring in important events in Philadelphia (the young nation's capital from 1790 to 1800) and beyond. But the bronze bell cracked on its first test ring and required periodic repairs.

In 1777, when the British occupied the city, the bell was hidden in the floorboards of an Allentown, Pennsylvania, church so it wouldn't be melted down to make cannons.

It rung for the last time in 1846 on George Washington's birthday, when its original crack reopened.

Abolitionists first used the name "Liberty Bell" in the 1830s. Its inscription fit: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Other groups and individuals followed suit, claiming the bell as a symbol of their struggles for freedom. To heal the wounds of the Civil War, the Liberty Bell traveled the country. Suffragists and civil rights demonstrators, world leaders such as the Dalai Lama and Nelson Mandela, and regular folk have been drawn to the bell, now encased in glass in its own museum downtown.

"People come from all over the world," says Ralph Archbold, a local who portrays Benjamin Franklin, "and stand by that Liberty Bell with tears in their eyes."

— Karen Feldscher