



Courtesy Lancaster Arts Hotel

BY KRISTY ALPERT

LANCASTER ARTS HOTEL MAKES A BEAUTIFUL LODGE OUT OF A HISTORIC TOBACCO WAREHOUSE.

Whether it stems from the vast history of the state or from the resiliently creative inhabitants who managed to preserve scenery both on land and on canvas, Pennsylvania is brimming with a vibrant arts community that welcomes groups into a world of beauty in all forms.

From driving any of the seven sanctioned artisan trails to sleeping overnight in an art museum, this state offers a plethora of places for the artfully penchant. Here are a few of our favorite group spots for exploring Pennsylvania's vibrant art scene.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART PHILADELPHIA

Recognized as one of the top five art museums in the country, the Philadelphia Museum of Art comprises five buildings containing world-class collections that span 2,000 years and more than 227,000 works of art, giving groups ample opportunity to explore at their own pace or pack in as much art as possible on each visit. The main building was designed as a walk through time where works of art — like van Gogh's "Sunflowers" — come together in dramatic galleries enhanced with period architectural elements such as a Japanese ceremonial teahouse, a stone temple hall from India and an arms and armor collection.

"The main building stays open until 8:45 p.m. for Art After 5 on Friday evenings, which offers jazz and world music in the Great Stair Hall," said Shari Feldman, group sales manager for the museum. "It is a very vibrant

scene and allows visitors a chance to relax with a cocktail and enjoy the music in a beautiful setting. Groups can reserve tables for food service and enjoy the galleries. For groups, we offer lunch as well as admission and guided tours of all five buildings, as well as the museum's wonderful sculpture garden."

The second structure is the Perelman building, where rotating displays from the museum's contemporary collection entice modern art aficionados; the third building, the Rodin Museum, plays host to the largest collection of Rodin sculptures outside France. The final two buildings are the historic houses of Mount Pleasant and Cedar Grove from the 18th and 19th centuries, respectively; they were originally the summer homes for wealthy Philadelphians who lived in the Society Hill section of the city.

WWW.PHILAMUSEUM.ORG

CARNEGIE MUSEUMS OF ART AND NATURAL HISTORY PITTSBURGH

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History are only two of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, but the duo stand alone as showstoppers in the Oakland neighborhood for art enthusiasts and the aesthetically inclined. With works dating from present day back to the 16th century, the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History are known worldwide for their collections and distinctive exhibitions, true to philanthropist Andrew Carnegie's legacy. Today, his "Palace of Culture" offers groups of all ages the opportunity to experience two of the world's greatest cultural institutions for one admission price.

“Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History offer the opportunity for creativity and contemplation and welcome everyone to enjoy the wonders of their collections and exhibitions,” said media relations manager Jonathan Gaugler. “Our signature exhibition, the Carnegie International, is the oldest exhibition of international contemporary art in North America, and both museums provide a broad perspective on the history of art from the ancient world to the present.”

Groups visiting the museums can go at their own pace or select a guided tour with a museum educator and can enjoy discounted admission, customizable tours, dining packages and more.

WEB.CMOA.ORG

LANCASTER ARTS HOTEL LANCASTER

More than just a place for weary guests to rest their heads, the Lancaster Arts Hotel also boasts a full-fledged art gallery on the first floor where groups can explore local works of art before heading to bed. All of the rooms, from the lobby to the suites, are filled with original works by Lancaster artists. In total, the hotel displays more than 270 pieces, and each is for sale.

Housed in a renovated historic tobacco warehouse built in 1881, the boutique hotel caters to smaller groups with its 63 artfully decorated guest rooms. But even if your group isn't staying the night, the hotel is worth a visit for its curator-run art gallery where exhibits rotate every three months. The Lancaster Arts Hotel is a favorite choice for celebrities, bands and college speakers.

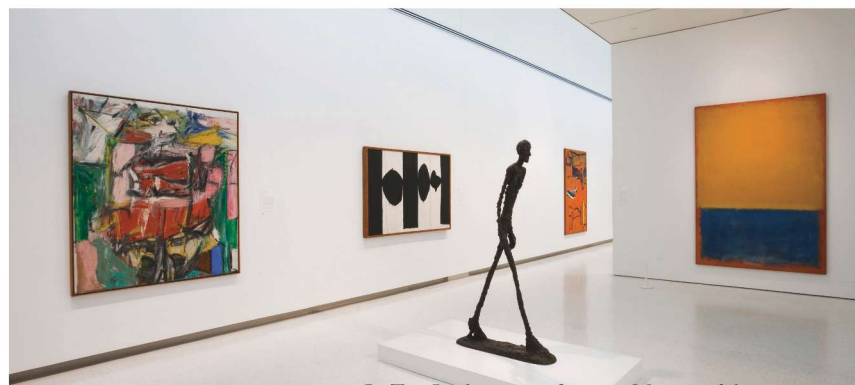
“I think the little extras like the sketch pads in the rooms are a nice touch, as well as the complimentary bikes with baskets and maps that our guests can ride around town,” explained Mara Sultan, director of sales and marketing for the hotel, who has been with the property since before opening day in March 2006. “We appreciate being a part of Lancaster City, so we are thrilled to promote the arts in any way that we can to our guests, like offering unique packages for groups by pairing up with city events, attractions and restaurants like the Lancaster Barnstormers package, Lancaster Brewing Company, Lancaster Symphony, opera, girlfriends packages, etc. We take care of their every need, no matter how big or small.”

WWW.LANCASTERARTSHOTEL.COM



Courtesy Philadelphia Museum of Art

THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART BOASTS A NUMBER OF GRAND CLASSIC BUILDINGS.



By Tom Little, courtesy Carnegie Museum of Art



Courtesy Lancaster Arts Hotel

TOP: MODERN ART ON DISPLAY IN PITTSBURGH'S CARNEGIE MUSEUM.
BOTTOM: AN INDIVIDUALIZED ROOM AT LANCASTER ARTS HOTEL.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

Experience our beautifully renovated Rodin Museum and garden.

RODIN MUSEUM

Discover the treasures of the collection in our iconic main building.

MAIN BUILDING

And don't miss the Fairmount Park houses.

FAIRMOUNT PARK HOUSES

Call 215-684-7863 to book your groups now, or visit www.philamuseum.org/groupvisits for more information.