



Philadelphia's Regional Cuisine

The Philadelphia Cheesesteak

It is said the Philly Cheesesteak originated in the early 1930's with Pat and Henry Olivieri. Pat and Henry owned a hot dog stand and one day wanted to try something different. So, they made a sandwich with chopped beef and grilled onions which caught the attention of a passing taxi driver. The taxi driver ordered one for himself, afterward suggesting that they start selling this new sandwich. In 1933, they opened the now famous Pat's King of Steaks in South Philly. In the decades that followed, the cheesesteak, as it came to be known, grew in popularity and is now offered at dozens of establishments throughout the city and beyond. There will always be debate as to who makes the best version of this iconic sandwich, but we feel you should avoid the touristy spots and instead head for one of the following:

[Dalessandro's](#) (21 miles from the Desmond)
600 Wendover St., Philadelphia, PA 19128

Always ranked near the top, many claim Dalessandro's in Roxborough has the best cheesesteak in Philadelphia, and it's not hard to see why. Rolls are absolutely *packed* with finely chopped ribeye, the cheese is mixed in just right, and the onions are kept chunky for maximum flavor. Call ahead — or wait in line — to place your order.

[Angelo's Pizzeria](#) (28 miles from the Desmond)
736 S. Ninth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147

Regarded by many as the king of the Philly Cheesesteak, Angelo's has created a masterpiece served on a crackly seeded roll and piled high with finely sliced ribeye, oozing cheese (Cooper Sharp American highly recommended) and sautéed onions. This is a very popular spot, often with long lines, so we recommend calling ahead with your order. It is also cash only and take-out only, but it's all worth it!

[John's Roast Pork](#) (30 miles from the Desmond)
14 E. Snyder Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19148

The pig. The myth. The legend. John's Roast Pork in South Philly not only serves up a great roast pork sandwich, but also one of the city's best cheesesteaks ("the ultimate cheesesteak") served on a sesame seeded, crackly roll with mounds of diced ribeye and provolone. There isn't much seating inside John's, but there are picnic tables outside. You can even pick up a steak at the drive-thru window.

If you don't have the time and/or cannot make the drive, the cheesesteak at [Chickie's and Pete's](#) right across the street from the Desmond Hotel makes a pretty good version themselves!

Tomato Pie

The origins of tomato pie, our city's cheeseless wonder, can be traced back to thick, tomato-topped dough slices made in Sicily that traveled here with waves of Italian immigrants a century ago. Some of those bakeries still stand as icons of the craft. And although New Jersey has its own thin-crust, cheese-on-the-bottom version, we like Philly-style tomato pie best, with lots of red gravy, thick and tender crust, and just a sprinkling of parmesan on top.

When we talk about tomato pie, you need to know that we're talking about *Philly* tomato pie, not Southern tomato pie. What's the difference? Philadelphia's classic tomato pie is a delicious thick and chewy crust topped with a savory tomato sauce-like topping – kind of like a foccacia or Sicilian pizza without mozzarella. Southern tomato pie is basically a traditional pie crust filled with cheese and tomatoes in it and maybe also ... mayonnaise?

If you want to try this Philadelphia specialty, here are some recommended places to go:

[Corropolese Bakery](#) (9 miles from the Desmond)

2809 Egypt Rd, Audubon, PA 19403

A Best of Philly award winner, Corropolese's tomato pie is famous and available in three locations in the Philadelphia area (Norristown, Audubon, and Royersford). The largest version of these generously sized pies (18"x26") feeds 15-20 people. The Corropolese's pie has a somewhat softer crust than others, and a thick tomato layer that is almost as thick as the crust itself. The tomato layer has a jam-like consistency and is sweeter than most others.

[Pizzeria Beddia](#) (29 miles from the Desmond)

1313 N. Lee St. Philadelphia, PA 19122

Pizzeria Beddia in Fishtown is one of the city's favorite places to eat [pizza](#). Naturally, they make a great version of its short, sauce-drunk cousin. The tomato pie slices here have a ton of Sicilian oregano and citrusy olive oil. And the dough ferments for 24 hours, so there's a noticeable tang. Incredible!

[Sarcone's Bakery: Liberty Kitchen](#) (30 miles from the Desmond)

1400 N. Front Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122

Sarcone's has been in business for more than 100 years in Philadelphia's Italian Market. Over the years, Sarcone's has become a staple in South Philadelphia. Reviews for Sarcone's Bakery tomato pie consistently praise its authentic Philly style, with highlights including a flavorful, well-balanced tomato sauce, a crispy crust, and a chewy interior, making it a top choice for those seeking a classic tomato pie experience in Philadelphia; many consider it one of the best in the city, particularly for its fresh, quality ingredients and traditional preparation.

Amish Cooking

The Amish, or "Pennsylvania Dutch" are a religious sect known for their distinctive lifestyle, which avoids many modern conveniences and holds fast to traditions that date back to their European ancestors. They value simplicity and strong community and can easily be identified by their use of horse-drawn carriages, handmade clothing, and of course, their delicious food. You could say that food is one of their traditions, mirroring their values and emphasizing simplicity, family, and self-sufficiency. Their "farm-to-table" approach to cooking is not a trend, but a lifestyle. They grow and harvest their own grains, dairy, and meats. Dairy products, such as cheese and butter, are often made from the milk of their own cows and meats are often raised on the farm, ensuring quality and sustainability. Meals and desserts are made from scratch using these fresh ingredients.

Pennsylvania has the highest Amish population in the country accounting for almost ¼ the total population. The highest concentration of Amish (43,000+ people) resides right here in Southeastern, PA and we are lucky to have opportunities to enjoy Amish cooking at several nearby locations such as those below:

[Honeybrook BBQ](#) (22 miles from the Desmond)

3298 Compass Rd., Honeybrook, PA 19344

Nestled in the heart of Pennsylvania, Amish BBQ is a must-visit destination for food enthusiasts and travelers alike. Known for its rich flavors and traditional cooking techniques, this barbecue restaurant brings a taste of Amish culture to every dish. From tender smoked meats to savory sides, each meal is crafted with care and dedication, making it a memorable dining experience. The inviting atmosphere of Amish BBQ complements its delicious menu. Visitors can expect friendly service and a warm ambiance that reflects the local community's values. Additionally, the restaurant prides itself on using high-quality ingredients sourced from local farms, ensuring that every bite bursts with freshness. Tourists will appreciate not just the food but also the opportunity to engage with local culture through its culinary offerings. Whether you're a barbecue aficionado or just curious about Amish cuisine, this spot promises to satisfy your cravings while providing an authentic taste of Pennsylvania. Open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday 9:00am – 5:00pm.

[Dutch Eating Place](#) at the Reading Terminal Market (28 miles from the Desmond)
1136 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

One of the most iconic eateries at one of the city's most iconic destinations, this diner offers rib-sticking, Pennsylvania Dutch fare to take away or to enjoy at the counter, elbow-to-elbow with locals and visitors alike. It's busy, but worth the wait. Open every day except Sunday, 8am-3pm.

[Beiler's Donuts](#) at the Reading Terminal Market (28 miles from the Desmond)
1136 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Donuts may not be strictly an Amish dessert, but Beiler's Bakery at the bustling Reading Terminal market has perfected the art. Beiler's is owned and operated by multiple generations of the same Pennsylvania Dutch family, using recipes and techniques that have been passed down for hundreds of years. Named "one of America's 20 best dessert spots" by *Fodor's Travel Guide*, Beiler's is Philly's go-to destination for fresh-made, hand-rolled donuts. With more than 50 different flavors at \$10 a dozen, it's easy to see why. Don't care for donuts? Beiler's is also the place to go for fresh baked cakes, cupcakes, breads, cookies and other PA Dutch specialties.

Can't make it to the city? Head to [Beiler's Bakery](#) at the [Westtown Amish Market](#), just a quick 13 mile drive from the Desmond!

[Shady Maple Smorgasbord](#) (33 miles from the Desmond)
129 Toddy Drive, East Earl, PA 17519

The Shady Maple is the largest buffet in the United States with seating for up to 2,000 guests and serving around 1.5 million people per year. It offers a variety of Pennsylvania Dutch dishes, as well as other cuisines from its 200' long buffet. Some of the more regional dishes include scrapple, mush, whoopie pie, shoo-fly pie, and long johns. The buffet also has a salad bar, soups, breads and rolls, cheeses, meats, vegetables, desserts, and a sundae bar. The buffet is open every day except Sunday for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, with dinner prices ranging from \$25 to \$35.

In addition, The Shady Maple has a large gift shop with over 20,000 square feet of unique gift items, collectibles, dolls, candles, accessories, souvenirs, home decor, and Amish crafted oak furniture.