

Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

- ❖ Arts
- ❖ History
- ❖ Shopping
- ❖ Recreation



Recreation, history, retail and the arts intersect in irresistible ways in the Valley Forge area. Located 18 miles west of downtown Philadelphia, it is most often remembered as the site of **George Washington's winter encampment** of 1777-1778, where the army was transformed from a rag-tag band of soldiers into the fighting force that went on to win the American Revolution.

Bicyclists and joggers share the tranquil beauty of **Valley Forge National Historical Park's** 3,600 acres of rolling hillsides and sparkling streams. In the spring, flowering dogwoods, red buds and mountain laurel dot the landscape and, in the fall, the countryside explodes with yellow, red and orange. Soldiers' replica log huts and many monuments to the soldiers' sacrifices are evident.

A recently renovated 1913 train station at Valley Forge features a new interactive exhibit on Washington as Leader and serves as the educational entryway to Gen. Washington's original stone headquarters at the encampment – considered the Pentagon of its day.

Fifty-five miles of biking trails traverse the county and even connect Valley Forge to Center City, Philadelphia via the 22-mile Schuylkill River Trail. The 19-mile Perkiomen Trail leads north to **Green Lane Park** where visitors can rent boats and fish in the spring and summer and ice fish and skate in the winter.

Five miles from the Park, along the Perkiomen Trail, is the **John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove**, this French-born artist/naturalist's first home in America. Here he developed his revolutionary painting style, and a wire armature to capture birds and animals in naturalistic poses. The grounds are still much as they were when Audubon found them – a sanctuary for birds and wildlife.





Even more animals are featured at the **Elmwood Park Zoo**, an area must-see. It is home to one of the largest open-air bald eagle exhibits in the country and showcases more than 150 animals in park-like settings. Visitors, especially young children, will marvel at bison and elk, wolves and cougars, alligators and the new “Butterflies and Blossoms” exhibit.

Nature serves as the backdrop at **Abington Art Center's** 20-acre sculpture park. Some installations are permanent, like Winifred Lutz' “Woodland Reclamation Garden,” with its mystical stone solstice tower and others change throughout the year, as does the contemporary art inside the gallery. Workshops for the entire family and concerts are offered during the summer.

Tucked away on Valley Forge Mountain is the **Wharton Esherick Studio Museum**. This former painter, furniture maker, and sculptor is heralded by the national art and design community as the “Dean of American Craftsmen” for his leadership in developing non-traditional designs, and encouraging and inspiring artists and craftspeople by his example.

King of Prussia Mall, the largest retail-shopping complex in the country features upscale items for the trendiest fashionistas. Bloomingdale's Nordstrom's, Neiman-Marcus, Tiffany's, and Williams-Sonoma – the list goes on and on. And just a few miles away along the Route 422 corridor is **Philadelphia Premium Outlets** in Limerick, Pa., with more than 150 outlet stores and savings of 25% to 65% every day on brand name designers.

For adventure seekers there is **Spring Mountain Adventures** in Schwenksville, Pa. Open year-round, Spring Mountain is an adrenaline addict's dream offering skiing, snowboarding, zip line canopy tours above the treetops, rock climbing and even geo-caching.

This is just a handful of the area's many indoor and outdoor delights. For details on all these sites and more, including addresses and hours of operation, visit **www.valleyforge.org** or call **888.VISIT.VF** for a free visitors guide. High resolution images available at:

www.valleyforge.org/media



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