Make an Evening Of It!

Why not make these free town tours & village walks your excuse for a summer getaway? Some of Brandywine Valley's most charming B&B's and inns offer special package rates. Many are historic properties so you can extend your experience of times past as you enjoy our countryside for an overnight or even a long weekend.

Many of our restaurants will feature "early bird" specials for pre-tour suppers or other dining values for after your TT&VW.

To request a copy of our TT&VW Summer Specials, call the Brandywine Valley Tourist Information Center at 1-800-228-9933.

Mark these dates on your calendar:

JUNE 2 WEST CHESTER
JUNE 10 DOWNTOWN
JUNE 17 COVENTRY
JUNE 24 KENNED SQUARE
JULY 8 PHOENIXVILLE
JULY 15 BERWYN
JULY 22 MARSHALLTON
JULY 29 MALVERN
AUGUST 3 EVERTON
AUGUST 12 STRAFFORD STATION NEIGHBORHOOD
AUGUST 19 KIMBERTON
AUGUST 26 HISTORIC YELLOW SPRINGS

FREE Guided evening strolls
The 5th Annual Town Tours & Village Walks

Evenings June 2 through August 26, 1999

Chester County, Pennsylvania in the Heart of the Brandywine Valley
WEST CHESTER — JUNE 2
The opening tour of the series is that of West Chester, our only Wednesday evening of the summer. At 6 p.m. the three County Commissioners will officially start the season in front of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 212 S. High St. The Tour will last about two hours and will continue along a number of streets in the northeast and southwest sections of the Borough. Architecture, history and local lore will be shared, from the rich resources of churches, dwellings, commercial buildings and government structures that dot “The Athens of Pennsylvania.” Light refreshments will be served after the tour, which will be a dazzling array of West Chester’s restaurants, pubs and coffeehouses await you.

Downingtown — June 10
Downingtown is Chester County’s oldest town, and featured one of the oldest remaining tourist towns in the county, the noted “Log House” built around 1780. Downingtown’s most prosperous era, however, came with the arrival of the railroad in the mid-nineteenth century, and many of the Italianate steel busts at this time of boom remain for us to view this evening. Period lighting now graces the commercial district for our evening outing. In 1861, at the outbreak of the Civil War, Downingtown had but 800 citizens, including all ages and sexes. Some 100 of the town’s men—a huge percentage—ate to fight in this war. This evening tour will conclude with a concert in a River Park, Civil War era music, in honor of that extraordinary commitment.

Tour Hosts: Downingtown Historical and Parks Commission
Reservations and Directions: (610) 269-2129

Coventryville — June 17
The village of Coventryville is probably much quieter than it was in the eighteenth century when it was a hub of iron-making commerce, and played an important role in the War for Independence. One of the features of this evening’s tour is the United Methodist Church, which this year is celebrating its 227th anniversary—older than the United States. Another high spot in Colonial days was Coventry Hall, home to Benjamin Franklin and his wife, Rebecca, prominent officers of the Continental Army, and where their friend George Washington stayed in 1774. The Coventry Forge Inn, world famous for first food, is another attraction. The old Rising Sun Inn, which opened for business in 1750.

Tour Hosts: South Coventry Township and Historic Coventryville
Reservations and Directions: (610) 660-2644

Kennett Square — June 24

Philadelphia — July 8
Well-watered by the Schuylkill River and the French Creek, Philadelphia has been, in turn, a market town, a light industry town, a heavy-industry town, and, now, a growing commuter town with a historical past. The tour of this Historical District will showcase vivid reminders of a steel town whose iron, brick, and concrete, shaped downtown and the surrounding area. At a grand ballroom, we will take a tour of the building’s history and glass, and enjoy a magnificent Victorian house tour. A surprise is the surprise is the Metropolitan Opera House.

Tour Hosts: The Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area
Reservations and Directions: (610) 935-4766

Berwyn — July 15
Despite vigorous growth, surrounding it, the Mann Lane village of Berwyn today looks and operates much the same as it did a century ago, as is evidenced by the Philadelphia-Lancaster Turnpike, the remnants of the old railroad, and the maintained Victorian houses endure as residences, antique shops and family-owned businesses. In earlier times, farmers of the countryside found needed services in the village.

Tour Hosts: Berwyn Business and Professional Association and the Berwyn-Kenilworth Historical Club
Reservations and Directions: (610) 644-0420

Marshallton — July 22
This nearly unmarked village named foruttin Humphrey Marshall (1772) was an important stop on a freight and drover’s road. There are two hotels in town and one cottage, dating back to 1765. Among the outstanding features of this village was a Quaker Meeting dated 1730 (present building 1765), a circular factory which made granules and crickets, a Blacksmith’s shop, a pump maker, a cigar factory, a metal shop, a clothing store, a bakery, a plumbing business, and a restaurant, in 1805 a post office and in 1829 a Methodist Church.

Tour Hosts: West Bradford Township Historical Commission
Reservations and Directions: (610) 486-0700

Elverson — August 5
Once upon a time in Chester County, (in 1894), a little village called “Springfield” was named its own post office. But there were too many Springfields. From Butterfield to Evergreen to Elverson Office is part of local lore to be covered tonight. Indian artifacts discovered here go back 10,000 years, and in later years, Dutch, Swedish, and French traders harkened here with the Conestoga Indians well before William Penn. Tonight’s tour will focus on early and late Victorian, instead, including one of the town’s last remaining log houses. Also, an early German Bank House, some of the spacious Victorians owned by prominent nineteenth-century gentlemen, and a Victorianized Colonial Church.

Tour Hosts: Elverson Historical Commission and 1st County Heritage Society
Reservations and Directions: (610) 286-7477

Stratford Station Neighborhood — August 12
Since Colonial days, the area around where the Stratford train station now stands has been an important crossroad. In the eighteenth century, the Old Great Road and the Special Eagle Inn served the community and travelers on the Lancaster line. In the late nineteenth century, the Pennsylvania Railroad Main Line enabled office workers to commute to and from Center City from the elegant little station at Stratford. These executives and professionals commissioned Philadelphia’s most noted architects to design their residences in the fashionable Colonial Revival style. Many of these houses remain, clustered about the station in their original settings.

Tour Hosts: Radnor Township Historical Architectural Review Board
Reservations and Directions: (610) 408-3625

Kimberton Village — August 19
Kimberton is one of those movie-set villages that is at the heart of most people’s image of Chester County. The warm fall doldrums of the buildings and the adobe and vigas of structures whose original functions have passed from the scene give an air of serene vitality to this place. The tour will visit Stone Church and the building, now known as a drama studio. Visitors will also see three former schools, two general stores and Old Kimberton Inn. All are still in use, but have been adapted, as Kimberton has moved with the times to still serve as an active village center.

Tour Hosts: PhilaHims Historical Society and East Millheim Historical Commission
Reservations and Directions: (610) 933-1770

Historic Yellow Springs — August 26
The Native Americans first discovered the mineral waters and utilized them for medicinal purposes. More a member of the Lenape tribe and learn of life in the eighteenth century. Other settlers traveled west from Philadelphia to “take the waters.” Mrs. Holman, innkeeper, describes life at the spa. Revolutionary War physician Dr. Boro-Othe provides details of medical care at the Yellow Springs Military Hospital. Enjoy the beauty and ambiance of this quaint country village and discover that the body was healed in its early history of the spa tour may be added to heal the spirit.

Tour Hosts: Historic Yellow Springs, Inc.
Reservations and Directions: (610) 907-7341