

# The 10 Most Exciting Cities in Pennsylvania (That Don't Begin with "P")

By Gogobot | [Adventure Awaits](#), [Featured](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [United States](#) | [0 comment](#) | 12 May, 2016 | 0

Pennsylvania is anchored by two very cool cities on either end of the state. [Philadelphia](#), in the east, is a metropolitan hub of history, education, business, and culture. [Pittsburgh](#), in the west, has beauty (hello, bridges!) and practically oozes hipster cool. The rest of the state, on the other hand, rarely gets any attention — and that's a shame. To determine the top 10 most exciting cities in Pennsylvania (that don't begin with "P") we pooled data from our Nightlife, Foodie, and Trendsters [Tribes](#). Read on to learn about some surprising contenders, and then [book your Pennsylvania hotel here](#).

## 1. [New Hope](#)

In addition to great dining and shopping options, one of the most exciting aspects of New Hope, located about halfway in between Philadelphia and New York City, is that Broadway shows are often tested here. To get your culture kick on a budget, check out the Bucks County Playhouse or the Downtown Performing Arts Center.

## 2. [Lancaster](#)

Lancaster is known for being the de facto capital of [Pennsylvania Dutch Country](#), but the city is much more than that. It's got a youthful population, a vibrant nightlife scene, and a strong arts community — a perfect combination for a "hip" city.

## 3. [Allentown](#)

One of the biggest cities on our list, what Allentown loses in small-town charm it makes up for in its variety of amenities: parks, restaurants, museums, and even a vibrant theater district keep visitors and locals busy with plenty to do.

## 4. [Doylestown](#)

In addition to the incredibly picturesque countryside, the appeal of Doylestown lies in its ever-evolving selection of restaurants. Whether you are looking for something family friendly or upscale, this city has it all: from gourmet burgers and pizza to farm-to-table cuisine and international eats, plus plenty of craft beer to wash it down.

## 5. [State College](#)



Photo: State College by: wfyurasko flickr – Courtesy: Gogobot

Naturally, college towns are pretty exciting. If you don't mind the students, there's always a lot going on in State College, the home of Penn State. There are breweries (try Robin Hood) and distilleries (try Big Spirits), plus lots of museums, culture, and outdoor activities. And then, of course, there are the sports — football, baseball, and many others provide entertainment and hot-dog-eating opportunities most of the year.

## **6. Bethlehem**

If you consider yourself a culture maven, Bethlehem is a great place to be. For a relatively small city (the population is just above 75,000), there is a seemingly disproportionate number of music venues, art galleries, and theaters per capita. Plus, this is one of the festival capitals of the state, hosting events year round celebrating everything from Christmas to blueberries to celtic music.

## **7. Harrisburg**

Pennsylvania's state capital has a growing nightlife scene, plus lots of festivals and concerts that appeal especially to a younger crowd. There are also a number of great dining options — check out Restaurant Row, where you can enjoy a long weekend lunch and then head out for a stroll along the Susquehanna River.

## 8. [York](#)

Historic York is experiencing something of a renaissance, with a growing number of independent restaurants, coffee shops, and boutiques bringing new, exciting life back into the downtown. The city is also a great base for exploring some of Pennsylvania's wine country (yes, that's a thing).

## 9. [Jim Thorpe](#)

In addition to having the charm of a European village (it's known as the "Switzerland of America"), Jim Thorpe also has lots of restaurants with great views, unique shops, and a ton of outdoor sports, including kayaking, skiing, hiking, and biking.

## 10. [Reading](#)

Pagoda-topped Reading's claim to fame is that it is Taylor Swift's hometown. The city suffered during the recession, but it has been working hard to infuse more excitement into the downtown and riverfront areas. The city also made our list for its high number of concert venues — perfect if Ms. Swift ever decides to return.

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