

The Walking, Magical Mystery Scavenger Tour of the North Shore

Talk about makeovers! Pittsburgh’s North Shore, the banks of the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers across the water from downtown Pittsburgh, is one of several areas in Pittsburgh that has undergone revitalization in recent years. In addition to cultural, historical, sporting, and recreational attractions, this area boasts some of the most beautiful views of the city—and that says a lot, as this town is packed with amazing vistas. While the panoramic views from Mount Washington are spectacular, the sights from the North Shore along the river take you up close and personal to strategic land and waterways that, for centuries, had been coveted by the explorers who came across them. For visitors, this is a “must-see” area, and for residents--well, you already know this is a great destination. Although even locals may not be aware of all that is located in the area that was once independent of the City of Pittsburgh and was known as “Allegheny City” before being annexed to the City of Pittsburgh in 1907.



Popular Pittsburgh wants to help you make the most of your visit to the North Shore. Therefore, we have created our Walking, Magical Mystery Scavenger Tour of the North Shore. Like our other walking tours—The Walking, Magical Mystery Scavenger Tour of Pittsburgh and The Walking, Magical Mystery Scavenger Tour or Oakland--we suggest you collect pictures of yourself from the various stops along the tour. We think this is more fun than collecting a player’s card from the Rivers Casino or a coaster from the Jerome Bettis Grille 36, and at Popular Pittsburgh, we are all about fun. With your permission, we’d like to feature your photos on our Pinterest page. Nothing warms our heart more than people enjoying Pittsburgh.



To double the fun, we’ve also made the tour a bit of a mystery. For each landmark, we’ve included some information and a question. We’ll drop clues to help you find the answers. Correct answers will be posted on our website.



You can begin the tour at any of the 11 points of interest and pick up the hunt from there by going to the following site. Along the way, feel free to take in the other venues. Many of the sites highlighted on the tour require extra time and some require admission tickets to fully explore them. The North Shore is easily accessible from the bridges that span the Allegheny River or from the two T-Stations. Keep in mind that on Pirate game days, the Roberto Clemente Bridge is closed to vehicular traffic, making it a pedestrian bridge. If you get lost, head toward the river, or just ask someone for directions to one of the streets, and you will be fine. Pittsburghers are a friendly lot and most will be eager to help.

The time to complete the tour will vary according to your pace and curiosity and whether you explore in

more depth some of the sites along the way. It should take a few hours, but there is no reason to rush. Enjoy your tour. Enjoy the North Shore. And don't forget to send us your photos.

1. The Rivers Casino

When you think of casinos, you think of Vegas, but even Vegas with all its glitz and glamour can't boast the location that the Rivers Casino does.

Located on the Ohio River, at 777 Casino Drive, just down river from the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers at The Point, the Rivers Casino has slots, table games, and a poker room. Even if you are not a gambler, The Rivers Casino is worth a visit. There is no admission charge and it is open 24/7. Five restaurants are located on the premises, to include a wide range from the upscale Andrew's Steak & Seafood to a scrumptious buffet, as well as numerous bar areas. The Drum Bar features a wall of windows that offers an amazing view of the city.



Question: We think The Rivers Casino is a "stellar" place to visit, but before the casino opened, it had a name change. What was its original name?

(Answer: The Rivers Casino was originally going to be called the Majestic Star Casino.)

*****Photos are not permitted on the casino floor, but a great place to have your picture taken is on the landing between the escalators near the Drum Bar. The two-story glass wall affords a spectacular view of the city for your backdrop.

Leave the casino through the front entrance and turn right. Head for the paved pathway toward the Ohio River, then bear left walking along the river shore on part of the Three Rivers Heritage Trail, which is popular with pedestrians, runners, and cyclists. On the left, you will pass the back of the Carnegie Science Center, which we will detail later. On the right, is the vessel RiverQuest, which provides hands-on learning experiences that deal with the river ecosystems in the area and is an exhibit of the Science Center. On Saturday's during the warmer months, you can sail on the RiverQuest by purchasing tickets inside the Carnegie Science Center. Continue further along the lower path by the river until you come to the:

2. USS Requin Submarine

This World War II sub is also an exhibit of the Carnegie Science Center. It's well worth a visit just to marvel at how 80 men lived inside it this small Tench-class sub.

Question: Before the Requin came to Pittsburgh, the sub called this "city of buccaneers" home.

(Answer: The Requin was a museum ship in Tampa before it came to Pittsburgh.)

*****This sub even beats the six foot ones you can get at Subway. Be sure to snap a picture of yourself posing with this underwater craft.

Continuing along the pathway, you will soon approach a flight of stone stairs. Proceed to the left on the path that is above the stairs. On the left, you will pass Heinz Field, home of the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Pitt Panthers. You will explore Heinz Field further along in the tour. You will encounter a piece of art entitled "Langley Observatory Clock". According to its creator, R. M. Fischer, the work "celebrates the act of looking out over the river. The work is a response to the industrial history of Pittsburgh, while simultaneously appearing timeless and looking forward." Proceed onward, and at the approaching pier, look up toward the keyhole opening in this former part of the Manchester Bridge and discover the:

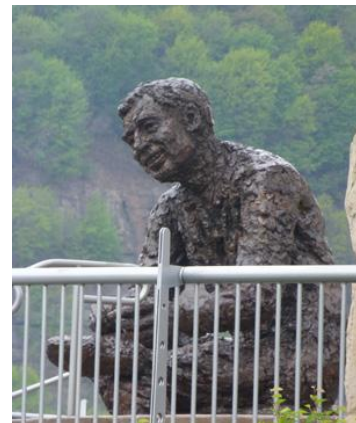
3. Statue of Mr. Rogers

Dedicated in November 2009, this tribute to Pittsburgh's most famous and beloved neighbor, Fred Rogers, attracts visitors who grew up with Mr. Rogers and those who admired the work he did for children. The smiling Mr. Rogers looks out over the city he loved and welcomes friends.

Question: This is not an "old tale," but the statue was bombed in July 2013. With what was it bombed?

(Answer: The statue was "yarn bombed." Someone knit the 11-foot statue a red cardigan sweater, which was Mr. Rogers' signature piece of apparel.)

*****It wouldn't be "neighborly" if you didn't pose with the statue and have your picture taken.



As you continue along the path, you will come to a fork. The upper path will take you to a few office buildings where, if you are hungry or thirsty, you will find something to refresh yourself. If you don't want to stop now, continue along the lower path where you will see the future home of the World War II Memorial and the Law Enforcement Memorial. In addition, you will also encounter The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, The Korean War Veteran's Memorial, and a historical marker noting that this was the site where the first World Series was played in 1903, pitting Boston against Pittsburgh. Continue along the river until you come to the:

4. Water Steps at Riverfront Park

If it's warm and your tootsies are tired from walking, now is the time to rest and dip your toes into the refreshing waters of the Waters Steps. Nearly 500 blocks of sandstone, cut from a quarry in Butler, form stepping stones and a waterfall that has proven to be irresistible to children and even some adults. The water recycles up to the pool at the top and then cascades back through the waterscape, making it a veritable oasis in the city.



Question: Though Venice still has theirs, the water steps are located on a site of Pittsburgh's past.

(Answer: In the early 1800s, a canal ran along here.)

*****Channel your inner child, and have your photo taken while wading in the Water Steps.

Put your walking shoes back on and proceed along the river path. Soon you will come to:

5. PNC Park

The current home of the Pittsburgh Pirates opened on March 31, 2001, and is regarded as one of the top, if not the finest, baseball parks in the country. During the summer months, in-depth tours of PNC Park are offered, but you must purchase tickets ahead of time. If you can't take a tour, you still can walk around the outside of the ballpark and see the statues of Pirates greats: Bill Mazeroski, Roberto Clemente, Willie Stargell, and Honus Wagner. There are numerous restaurants and watering holes around PNC Park as well. On game days, the adjacent Roberto Clemente Bridge is closed to vehicular traffic, giving this area a festival atmosphere.



Question: You will be "jonesing" to give this answer. Who is the only Pittsburgh Pirate to hit a baseball out of the park and into the Allegheny River?

(Answer: Garrett Jones' water-seeking homer splashed down on June 2, 2013.)

*****Pick a favorite Pirate statue and have your photo taken with it, unless you are a Reds fan. In that case, just take a photo of the city's skyline from PNC Park.

Return to the river path and walk under the Roberto Clemente Bridge (Sixth Street Bridge) where Kayak Pittsburgh rents kayaks for paddling on the river. Continue along the cement walkway, where you will encounter historical markers commemorating the Allegheny Cotton Mill Strikes of 1848 and the Founding of the former Allegheny City in 1783, until you come to:

6. Mythic Source & Piazza Lavoro in the Allegheny Landing Sculpture Park Area

No, the circular stone monument on the hill is not Pittsburgh’s answer to Stonehenge, but one of a two–part piece of art entitled Mythic Source & Piazza Lavoro. The Mythic Source part is a mosaic located near the river and pays tribute to life’s aquatic origins and “the sustaining powers of the waters.” The upper portion recognizes the significant contributions of Pittsburgh to America’s labor history. Further along the path are several other pieces of art. This area will soon be getting a makeover that will restore the deteriorating sculptures.



Question: A famous family commissioned “Mythic & Piazza Lavoro.” You’ll be in a pickle if you don’t know this answer.

(Answer: The Heinz Family is responsible for this work of art.)

*****Grab onto the palm tree sculpture in the center of Piazza Lavoro and have your photo taken.

Continue along the path under the Warhol Bridge (Seventh Street Bridge). Turn left on the path and walk parallel to the bridge away from the river. The Alcoa Building will be on your right. Cross Isabella Street, traveling on Sandusky Street. Walk a block or so on Sandusky Street until you come to the intersection of Sandusky Street and E. General Robinson Street. On the left will be:

7. The Andy Warhol Museum

Located at 117 Sandusky Street, The Warhol Museum is the largest museum in the U.S. dedicated to a single artist and contains an extensive collection of, Pittsburgh-born, Andy Warhol’s works. It chronicles his early works as an illustrator and his rise to becoming the most celebrated Pop artist.



Question: It’s not a bunch of hot air, but you’ll be glad you visited the Silver Cloud exhibit at Warhol. What is the exhibit?

(Answer: A room filled with silver helium balloons.)

*****Have your photo taken under the Warhol Museum sign.

Continue along Sandusky Street, walking under the overpass. At Allegheny Center, Sandusky will turn into E. Commons Street. In the center of the commons on the left, look for Children’s Way. Turn left onto Children’s Way until you come to:

8. The Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh

If small children are in your group, you must stop and tour this museum. The Water Play area alone will make you a hero to the tots in the group. Among its many hands-on exhibits, is one devoted to Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood. There, the kids can see all their favorite puppets from X the Owl to King Friday.



Question: You should be able to mail this answer in. Before it was The Children’s Museum, what was the building in which it is located?

(Answer: The Old Allegheny Post Office.)

*****Have your photo taken on the stairs leading to the doors of this impressive historical building.

Continue along Children’s Way until you come to W. Commons. Cross over W. Commons, where it will eventually turn into Ridge Drive. At the corner of Ridge Drive and Arch Street, turn right onto Arch Street where you will come to:

9. The National Aviary

The National Aviary is the nation’s only non-profit aviary, and it is home to more than 500 animals. There you can see everything from a Blue-Bellied Roller to a White-Faced Whistling Duck. And, of course, since it’s Pittsburgh, there are “penguins” too.



Question: Legend has it that this area is haunted because of a different sort of bird that once resided on these grounds. What was located here before the Aviary?

(Answer: Jailbirds once lived here. In the early 1800s, this was the original site of Western Penitentiary. Then the area housed a Civil War Prison. Several Confederate captives died there and are said to haunt the place.)

***** If you tour the aviary, have your photo taken with your favorite feathered friend. If you don’t go inside, have your photo taken outside, but be sure there are no Confederate prisoners lurking in the background.

Go back down Arch Street toward the direction from which you came, and turn right. Walk further along Ridge Avenue through West Park. During warmer weather, near the tennis courts on the

right where W. Ohio Street traverses the park, you will see a Pittsburgh icon-- Gus & Yia Yia's Ice Ball Cart. As the their cart says, they've been on the North Side, "Since Your Dad Was a Lad." Their gourmet ice balls are inexpensive and delicious and a make a great reward for tired walkers. Continue along Ridge Avenue past the campus of Community College of Allegheny County. You will see many historic buildings in this area that was once known as Pittsburgh's Millionaires' Row, where many of the city's steel magnates resided. At the intersection of Ridge and Allegheny Avenues, turn left and walk down Allegheny Avenue. When you come to Reedsdale Street, turn left. There you will begin to explore our next destination:

10. Heinz Field

This is the house the ketchup built. Heinz Field is the home of both the Pittsburgh Steelers and the University of Pittsburgh Panthers. Tours are scheduled from April through October. At Art Rooney Avenue turn right, and walk around the stadium where you will see a historical plaque noting that this was the site of the former Three Rivers Stadium. You will also come to a monument area dedicated to the founder of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Art Rooney. After paying respect to "The Chief," stroll to the south end zone on your right, and look inside Heinz Field. Imagine the challenge of being a field goal kicker and trying to place one between the uprights with the wind blowing in from the river. Continue along, and on the left, you will come to a monument of the Pitt Panther.



Question: You may have to walk the plank if you miss this question. Before they were called the Steelers, what was the football team's name?

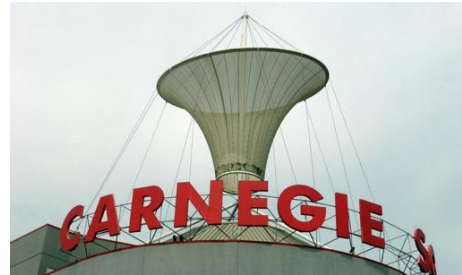
(Answer: Until 1940, the team was also known as the Pirates.)

*****Take your pick—a photo with Art Rooney or the Panther. Another great spot is in front of the end zone.

Continue around the stadium onto the Allegheny Avenue side. On the left, at One Allegheny Avenue is:

11. The Carnegie Science Center

The Science Center has four floors of exhibits, an Omnimax theater, Buhl Planetarium, Highmark SportsWorks, and the ever popular Miniature Railroad & Village. In addition, you will find the previously-mentioned USS Requin and RiverQuest, both of which are docked outside the Center. There's always something new and interesting at the Science Center, and you could spend hours here just having fun while learning.



Question: On top of the Science Center is a funnel-like sculpture called E-Motion that is illuminated at night. You will be “hyper”-excited if you can give the exact name for the shape of this work of art.

(Answer: The precise name for this shape is a hyperboloid.)

*****Have your picture taken with E-Motion in the background.

If you began your tour at No. 1, The Rivers Casino, this concludes the tour (unless you'd like to take the loop again). If you did not begin at the Casino, continue past the Science Center onto Casino Drive, which will take you to No. 1: The Rivers Casino.

NOTE: There are two T-Stations (subway) in this area. The one closest to the Casino and Heinz Field is the Allegheny Station and the one near PNC Park is the North Side Station. It is free to ride it across the river into downtown Pittsburgh. And if you still have the energy, Popular Pittsburgh suggests doing the tour of downtown Pittsburgh too.