



# Which is the best Philly cheesesteak in Philly?

Ask any Philadelphia native what they feel best symbolizes the City of Brotherly Love and you'll get several different answers: The Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, and Love Park (some of Philadelphia's main attractions) ... AND Philly Cheesesteaks.

Nearly every corner of The City features an eatery slinging the meaty, cheesy delicacy -- but how do you know which one is the best? Better yet, do you know HOW to order a cheesesteak in Philadelphia? (Yes, there's a right way and a *wrong way*.) Here are a few tips for ordering an authentic Philly cheesesteak, as well as palate-pleasing recommendations for some of the top steak shops in the city. [See our google map on Page 3.](#)

## Disclaimer: We know more about CMC than Cheesesteaks

DSI is a Philadelphia based Regulatory Drug Development consulting firm that serves the needs of small emerging biotechs. Being based in Philadelphia we wanted to take a closer look at what makes a philly cheesesteak unique and provide a guide for attendees. Whether you need regulatory or CMC support or just a cheesesteak fix, we are here for you!



## Where to Go for a Great Philly Cheesesteak

### South Philly

Philly is famous for its rival steak shops -- Pat's and Geno's -- that operate directly across the street from one another in South Philly. Each has their own merits, although both shops have devotees that will insist their favorite is the best. Decide for yourself!

#### 1. **Pat's King of Steaks**

If you want some Philly culture mixed with phenomenal eats, start where it all began. The original home of the cheesesteak, Pat's King of Steaks, is still owned and operated by the Olivieri family. The founder, Pat Olivieri, invented the steak sandwich in 1930, and this joint has since been serving up some of the tastiest cheesesteaks in the city -- if not the world. Whether you're in the mood for wit' or wit'out, you'll be leaving this cozy corner of the city a satisfied customer. **1237 E Passyunk Ave.**

#### 2. **Geno's Steaks**

Take ten steps across the street and you find yourself in similar, but very different territory. Often overshadowed by Pat's veteran reign of cheesesteak triumph, Geno's is certainly no slouch. Geno's was founded by Joey Vento in 1966 and has turned this South Philly corner into the home one of the most exciting and appetizing food rivalries in the world. Open 24 hours a day, Geno's will help you soak in all that the flavors of Philadelphia have to offer. Just make sure to order right or you may find yourself at the back of line. **1219 S 9th St.**

**How to get there from the convention center:** take the 47 from 8<sup>th</sup> & Arch to 8<sup>th</sup> and Wharton



### 3. **Jim's**

It's a tough order to follow legendary cheesesteak spots like Pat's and Geno's, but Jim's certainly has something special to offer. With multiple locations, Jim's doesn't supply the Philly vibe mentioned above, but it does serve up some of the city's best tasting cheesesteaks. Jim's was started in 1939 at its original location of 431 North 62nd Street on the west side of the city before branching out with several shops scattered throughout Philadelphia. This family-owned-and-run business has deep Philadelphia roots, a well-seasoned grill and a unique spin to one of the city's most popular treats. (If you like your steaks spicy, ask for Jim's Mud Sauce!) **400 South St.**

## **Neighborhood Favorites – If you find some time to get away from the Conference to explore further**

South Philly isn't the only place you can get a great cheesesteak. Here are several great steak shops that have rabid followings of their own.

### 4 **Joe's Steaks + Soda Shop**

Formerly known as Chink's, this Northeast Philly mainstay (**6030 Torresdale Ave.**) has been in business since 1949. Although they changed their name in early 2013, one thing that hasn't changed is the full flavor of the shop's steaks. Rather than chopping up the steak, Joe's cuts their grilled ribeye into juicy chunks before being doled out onto luscious Liscio's rolls. Wash it down with a cherry soda or a traditional egg cream.

### 5 **Steve's Prince of Steaks**

Another fairly "underground" cheesesteak spot is Steve's Prince of Steaks. (**multiple locations**) Sprinkled all over the City of Brotherly Love and surrounding areas, Steve's is a sure favorite among locals and has recently garnered the attention of Center City visitors craving a bite. The once-corner store in Northeast Philly has grown, spreading the quality taste and culture to all corners of the city. Founder Steve Iliescu used to make the cheesesteak pilgrimage from Philly's outskirts to taste the likes of Pat's and Geno's, sparking what would become a lifelong dedication to the cheesesteak sandwich.

### 6 **Jimmy G's Steaks**

This five-year-old shop on **695 N Broad St** came onto the scene with signs that proclaimed "Best Fries in Philly" (and Eater didn't disagree). But Jimmy G's cheesesteaks are just as good: beefy monsters with just the right amount of greasiness. Lamb steaks are a thing here too.

### 7 **Campo's**

Family-run Campo's, in business since 1947 and at its current location (**214 Market St**) in Old City since 2001, is known for The Heater, a spicy take on a cheesesteak with hot peppers, jalapeno cheddar, and buffalo hot sauce. But the classic version is also well represented here, along with all different types of hoagies (including vegetarian and vegan options). Cheesesteak seekers will also find Campo's at Citizens Bank Park, home of the Phillies, and at the Wells Fargo Center, home of the 76ers and Flyers.

### 8 **John's Roast Pork**

Many believe that John's cheesesteaks are the very best in Philadelphia (**14 Snyder Ave**). The sandwich is heavy with seasoned beef, cooked to order — no piles of soggy meat in sight. And the cheese? Sharp provolone works surprisingly well. John's Roast Pork might not have invented the cheesesteak and, given the name, it might not have originally sold it, but one thing is for certain: John's has pretty much perfected it.

### 9 **Sonny's Famous Steaks**

Don't let Sonny's location (**228 Market St**) in tourist-friendly Old City be a deterrent. Sure, it's a bit cleaner-looking — less grimy and "authentic" — than many of the other top shops on this list. But Sonny's combination of friendly service, a great product, and lines that aren't usually too long make it a solid choice.

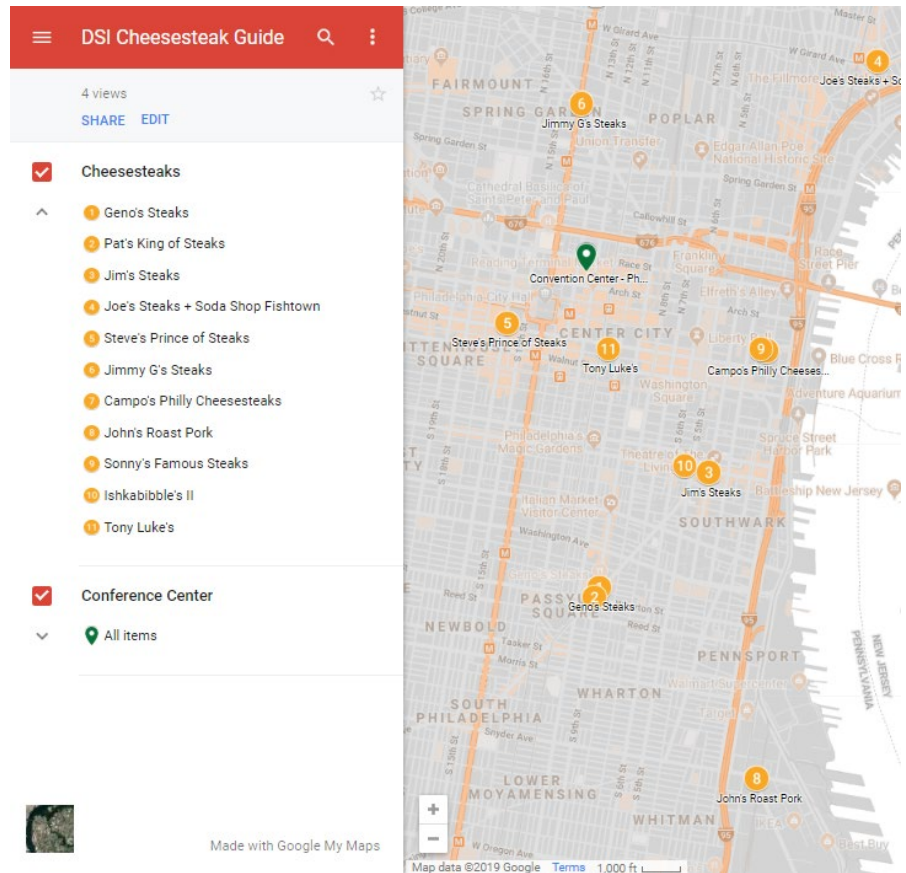


## 10 Ishkabibble's

This iconic yellow-and-pink storefront on **337 South Street** has been serving cheesesteaks since 1979. The original is still there, along with a second, much bigger location just up the street (**517 South Street**). It's no wonder it expanded: The cheesesteaks are executed perfectly; chopped and packed to just the right ratio. Ishkabibble's cheese fries are also a must-order.

## 11 Tony Luke's

Tony Luke's has made quite the name for itself, with locations far beyond the city's boundaries. **39 E Oregon Ave**, the original location, with the impossible-to-miss neon signs, is where to start. Served on fresh Liscio's rolls, Tony Luke's cheesesteaks tend to be less greasy (and messy) than other iterations, but the flavor is still just right. Given the location near the ballpark, it's especially fun to go after a Phillies game. (**multiple locations**)



[Go to interactive google map](#)

## What Is A Cheesesteak?

A cheesesteak is a long, crusty roll filled with thinly sliced sautéed rib-eye beef and melted cheese. Generally, the cheese of choice is Cheez Whiz, but American and mild or sharp provolone are common substitutions. The art of cheesesteak preparation lies in the balance of flavors, textures and what is often referred to as the “drip” factor. Other toppings may include fried onions, sautéed mushrooms, ketchup and hot or sweet peppers. Some sandwich shops also offer a cheesesteak hoagie, a hybrid version that combines the cheesesteak with cold hoagie dressings like lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise. Cheesesteaks are fast, portable and readily available at steak shops, delis, food trucks, pizzerias and even some high-end restaurants throughout the region.

## Cheesesteak History

The cheesesteak made its official debut in 1930, when South Philadelphia hot dog vendor Pat Olivieri slapped some beef from the butcher onto his grill. A taxicab driver noticed the alluring aroma and asked for his own steak sandwich. The next day, as the story goes, rumor of the delicious lunch had spread, and cabbies around the city came to Olivieri demanding steak sandwiches. Soon thereafter, Olivieri opened a shop on 9th Street and Passyunk Avenue, Pat's King of Steaks, to sell his new creation. Eventually, according to legend, he added cheese to the recipe. Today, Pat's grills sizzle 24 hours a day, as does circa 1966 Geno's, the rival shop across the street. For decades, the two family-run businesses have waged a friendly competition to win the title of best cheesesteak in town, with Geno's late founder, Joe Vento, claiming it was he, not Olivieri, who first added cheese to the cheesesteak.



## Yo! It's Not a Hoagie: Traditional Philadelphia Cheesesteak Etiquette

Depending on which part of the U.S. you call home, you might refer to any sandwich on a long roll as a "hoagie," "sub," "submarine sandwich," "hero," "wedge," or "grinder." Everyone has regional differences in lingo and Philly is no different! Life-long Philadelphians have a particular way of ordering their cheesesteaks. For starters, never ask for a "cheesesteak hoagie." Chances are, the person taking your food order will give you a strange look if you forget this crucial bit of etiquette. In Philadelphia, a hoagie is a sandwich on a long roll with lettuce and tomato. Unless you like vegetables other than fried onions on your cheesesteak, avoid asking for a cheesesteak hoagie.

## Wit' or Wit'out

Speaking of onions, you might not savor the taste of fried onions on your cheesesteak. That's okay. Just order "with" or "without." You don't have to add in the extraneous verbiage of "onion." Your server will know what you're talking about. Trust them. They're professionals!

## Choose Your Cheese... Or not

Many Philly steak shops offer patrons a choice of cheese, although most favor that processed delight, Cheeze Whiz, as the warm, gooey, delicious default topping. However, many steak shops offer other options for customers to gobble up, including American, provolone, or mozzarella, in addition to wiz. If given the option to choose your cheese, brevity is still the order of the day. If for some blasphemous reason (other than lactose intolerance) that you decide you do not want cheese on your cheesesteak, you would just order "a steak" with or without (onions).

## Putting it All Together...How to order

Say you want to order a cheesesteak with American cheese and onions. Here's how you do it without incurring the wrath of the Philly sandwich shop faithful. Just follow this simple template with examples: [Quantity] + [Cheese] + [With or without onion]

If you want to order a single cheesesteak with onions, you would say: **"One American with."**

Perhaps you want a good old-fashioned cheesesteak without onions. You'd say: **"One whiz without."**

If you're ordering for a friend or you're really hungry and feel like ordering two different types of cheesesteaks, here's how to do it: **"One whiz with, one provolone without."**

Or, you can keep it simple and order a matching pair of cheesesteaks: **"Two Americans with."**

**So which is the best Philly cheesesteak in Philly? We guess you'll have to try them all to find out!**

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