

The Mexican War Streets Getaway Guide

Our historic Victorian neighborhood is a favorite destination for tourists and local visitors. Here is an insider's guide to what to do and where to hang in the beautiful Mexican War Streets. Everything in this guide is within a one-square mile radius, so it is all walkable, or an easy Uber or Lyft.

Arriving

A cozy home base for your walkable weekend is essential. Three of the most notable properties on North Avenue have been lovingly restored into wonderful guest accommodations, and their owners are onsite to ensure your stay is lovely.

The Inn on The Mexican War Streets

The Boggs Mansion was built by department store baron Russell H. Boggs during the Gilded Age. This magnificent stone structure has an inviting front porch with views of the park and skyline, and an elegant feel, thanks to meticulous touches by owners Karl and Jeff.

<https://www.innonthemexicanwarstreets.com/>

The Historic Day Mansion

Considered by many to be the most Insta-worthy home in the War Streets, the Day Mansion has four beautiful suites that you can call home during your stay, and the genteel hospitality of my friend Dennis.

<https://www.airbnb.com/h/theallegheysuite>

<https://www.airbnb.com/h/heinzsuite>

<https://www.airbnb.com/h/theparkviewsuite>

<https://www.airbnb.com/h/thebalconysuite>

Day One is all about Art!

If the weather is fine, make your way over to Mechanic's Retreat community garden at the corner of Buena Vista Street and Jacksonia. Community residents maintain the garden. It is just across the street from [Commonplace Coffee](#), so you can plan your day with some java, cookies and muffins.

Really hungry? The Sandwich Shop nearby at 822 Western Ave is open at 7:30am Tuesday through Sunday. The [Fabled Table](#) at 1400 Buena Vista Street serves a luscious brunch on the first Sunday of every month.

Now it is time to put that energy into action with a nice walk! The original Historic District is bounded by Buena Vista Street and Sherman Avenue, with the picturesque parallel streets of Monterey, Resaca and Palo Alto running in between them. Meander up and down and marvel at the dedicated restoration of the Italianate and Queen Anne architecture. Notice the "[River of Words](#)", a public art work created by writer Israel Centeno during his stay at City of Asylum. At 1406 Monterey, use the code on the gate to visit the [Alphabet Garden](#), a gentle haven for community and visitors.

Speaking of City of Asylum, did you know that this neighborhood hosts the largest grassroots sanctuary for exiled artists in the world? Neighbors Henry Reese and Diane Samuels founded City of Asylum in 2004. Head toward Sampsonia Way via Monterey Street. The decorated [house](#)

[publications](#) on Sampsonia Way each house a writer seeking refuge from persecution in their own country. Click here for more about [City of Asylum](#).

Keep walking down Sampsonia Way toward Sherman Avenue, and make a left on Sherman, and a right on Jacksonia Street. At the corner of Jacksonia and Arch Street sits the world-famous Randyland. In 1995 Randy Gilson purchased two rundown buildings with a credit card, and with his husband Mac, turned them into an incredible art center. Over the years the installations have grown, and the property has become a local treasure that receives national and international attention. Randy often comes out to say hello to visitors and loves being in selfies. Randyland is free!

Now it is time for lunch. Just down the road from Randyland at 1327 Arch Street, you can grab a lunch at the [Mayfly Market](#). They serve gourmet deli goods, produce and baked goods.

Head back to Randyland and keep walking for about one minute on Jacksonia Street to the [Mattress Factory](#), at 509 Jacksonia. This unique art laboratory supports established and emerging artists through a residency program that provides leadership and opportunities to create artwork that is unconventional, challenging, and thought-provoking.

Your last stop before heading back to rest before dinner is just steps away down Monterey Street to the small, contemporary [here gallery](#), at 527 North Taylor Avenue.

End your day of art immersion with dinner reservations at [40 North](#), located in the City of Asylum event space and Alphabet City Bookstore. Check the [calendar](#) at City of Asylum, you may be able to plan your reservation on an evening where there is free music or poetry.

Day Two

Today's itinerary takes you beyond the neighborhood into Allegheny West and the greater Northside.

Plan your day with a coffee at [Adda](#) on Western Ave. Make sure your short walk over to Western takes you via Beech Avenue, a scenic stroll past stately Victorian-era sandstone and brownstone homes.

Take a stroll around photogenic Lake Elizabeth in the [West Commons](#) before heading to the [National Aviary](#), located in the heart of the Commons by the lake. It is the nation's only independent indoor nonprofit zoo dedicated to birds, and it is an extraordinary experience. Time your visit to include the penguin feeding, and don't miss the chance to hand feed the lorikeets! You can have lunch in their café or take a short walk (.25 miles) down Ridge Avenue past the old Post Office. On the same promenade you will find the Buhl Planetarium, and the original Carnegie Library and Concert Hall. The planetarium and Post Office now house the [Children's Museum](#). In this square you will find [Federal Galley](#), offering four unique restaurant concepts in a spacious food hall.

If you have kiddos in tow, you can circle back to the Children's Museum. Or walk a third of a mile to the acclaimed [Andy Warhol Museum](#), a multi-level delight with a massive collection of the iconic artist's work. The gift shop alone is worth the visit!

From the Warhol, you are steps away from Pittsburgh's magnificent Riverwalk. Walking toward the Confluence during the "magic hour" near sunset will provide memorable photos of the city and take you past the stadiums where the Steelers and Pirates play. At the end of the Riverwalk, there is a monument dedicated to Pittsburgh's favorite neighbor, Fred Rogers.

Back to your inn to rest before dinner. For scale, you are still only a mile away from the Mexican War Streets.

Dinner options on Western Avenue and War Streets are plentiful, and they are all great. My go-tos are the [Monterey Pub](#), where you can dine with the locals on pub-fare in a charming setting, or [Nicki's Thai](#) on Western Avenue. If you choose Nicky's and the weather is fine, ask for a seat in the garden in the back. Save room for dessert at [Happy Day Dessert Factory](#).

There are several nightcap options along Western, including [Refucilio](#), [Four Points Brewing](#) and [412 Brewery](#).

I hope you enjoy your time in my neighborhood. There is so much more than can be fit in to just two days! I hope you will return to explore the many wonderful things that the Northside and Pittsburgh have to offer visitors. For more information on restaurants and things to do in the Mexican War Streets, click [here](#).