

5 Best Little Italy Neighborhoods in the U.S.

Come for the sense of community, stay for the cannoli.

By Giovanna Caravetta | Published on September 1, 2023



As a granddaughter of Italian immigrants, I have a penchant for immersing myself in Italian culture — namely food, wine, and language — here in the United States. When I travel, I instinctively gravitate toward locally sourced restaurants, farmers markets, and family-owned pastry shops — a true testament to my heritage.

Now, as my family in Italy will attest, Italian-American cuisine and culture differ from those in [Italy](#), but they are not at odds with one another. In fact, the same undeniable sense of tradition persists here in the U.S., and especially in thriving Little Italy neighborhoods across the country. As a *piazza*, or square, is the meeting place and heartbeat of a city center in Italy, so, too, are America's Little Italy communities. Italian immigrants built them as such, creating a

similar setting in order to preserve as much of the culture they left behind as possible, despite being pressured to assimilate to their new surroundings.

These neighborhoods have long served as unifying spaces. Italian immigrants get to enjoy the community of fellow *paesani*, and the inviting atmosphere draws locals and tourists alike. Each neighborhood is overflowing with the familiar sights of families taking a *passeggiata* (or stroll), the aromatic smells of fresh pasta and *pizza napoletana*, and the musical sounds of the Italian language and regional dialects. Beloved for their decadent food and rich history, Little Italy destinations across the U.S. will transport you to the cobblestone streets of Italy and leave you craving more.

For those times when traveling to Italy is not feasible, here are the best and most authentic Little Italy destinations in the U.S. to visit.

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Providence's Little Italy in historic Federal Hill covers both Atwells Avenue and Spruce Street and has embraced Italian immigrants since the early 1900s. This bustling community has maintained its charm and continues to encapsulate the essence of a true Little Italy neighborhood through specialty stores like [Venda Ravioli](#) and [Tony's Colonial Foods](#), its pastry shops, and its classic Italian-American restaurants.

No trip to Federal Hill would be complete without stopping by [Scialo Brothers Bakery](#) for a *sfogliatella* (a traditional pastry from Naples) or other beloved Italian cookies. Dine at [Il Massimo](#) for Italian favorites

like *spaghettoni alla carbonara*, or enjoy a fresh take on Southern Italian cuisine paired with a wine from the entirely Italian wine list at [Pane e Vino](#).

Book your stay close by at [Hotel Providence](#) for a modern experience and polished rooms, or visit [Graduate Providence](#) for stylized accommodations in the downtown area.