

South End & Chinatown

SOUTH END | CHINATOWN | THEATER DISTRICT | LEATHER DISTRICT

Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Dressing to the nines and going out for a night on the town, whether for comedy at the **Wilbur Theatre** (p105), opera at the **Shubert Theatre** (p105) or music or dance at the **Wang Theatre** (p105).
- 2 Browsing at the **South End Open Market** (p105) and **SoWa Vintage Market** (p106) followed by Sunday brunch on **Tremont St** (p98).
- 3 Packing into **Wally's Café** (p104) for old-time jazz and blues.
- 4 Sampling the stylish vintage threads at **Bobby from Boston** (p106).
- 5 Club-hopping in the **Theater District** (p103) and post-club noshing in **Chinatown** (p100).



For more detail of this area, see Maps p256 & p258 ➔

Explore South End & Chinatown

Four side-by-side neighborhoods are home to Boston's lively theater scene, its most hip-hop-happening night-clubs and its best international and contemporary dining. Ethnically and economically diverse, these districts border Downtown and Back Bay, but they are edgier and artier.

The edgiest (and artiest) is the South End. Once downtrodden, it was claimed and cleaned up by the gay community, and now everyone wants to live there. And why not? The South End boasts the country's largest concentration of Victorian row houses; it offers Boston's most innovative and exciting options for dining out; and the artistic community has moved into the area south of Washington St (now known as SoWa), converting old warehouses into studio and gallery space.

Although tiny by New York standards, Boston's Theater District has long served as a pre-Broadway staging area. It's also Boston's club hub, with many late-night hotspots clustered along Boylston St and surrounding streets.

Nearby, Chinatown is overflowing with multicultural restaurants, live-poultry and fresh-produce markets, tea-houses and textile shops. This tight-knit community also includes Cambodians, Vietnamese and Laotians.

East of Chinatown, the Leather District is a pocket of uniform brick buildings that shelter some fine restaurants and a few funky clubs.

Essentially, these aren't districts to visit for traditional 'sights,' but for their abundant eating and entertainment options. You could go out every night for months on end, and never run out of trendy restaurants, innovative theater and electrifying nightlife.

Local Life

- ➔ **First Fridays** On the first Friday of the month, get thee to the open studios at SoWa Artists Guild (p98) to chat with the resident creatives.
- ➔ **Hang-outs** Southenders hang out at Delux Café (p102) while the Corner Pub (p104) is the Leather District local.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** For the South End, take the orange line to Back Bay station for Tremont St or to Tufts Medical Center station for SoWa. Chinatown is served by the station of the same name, also on the orange line. The green-line Boylston station is closest to the Theater District, though Chinatown station is also nearby. The Leather District is easiest to access from the red-line South Station.
- ➔ **Bus** Good for the South End, the silver-line bus runs down Washington St from South Station (SL4) or Downtown Crossing (SL5).

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

If you plan to hit any night-clubs in the Theater District (or anywhere), definitely go online and get yourself on the guest list. This normally will ensure entry (instead of leaving it to the whims of the bouncer) and sometimes will get you a reduced cover charge.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ O Ya (p102)
- ➔ Coppa (p98)
- ➔ Gourmet Dumpling House (p100)
- ➔ B&G Oysters (p98)

For reviews, see p100 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Delux Café (p102)
- ➔ The Gallows (p103)
- ➔ Les Zygomates (p104)
- ➔ Beehive (p103)

For reviews, see p102 ➔

Best Places to Dance

- ➔ Bijou (p103)
- ➔ District (p104)
- ➔ Underbar (p103)

For reviews, see p102 ➔