

# South End & Chinatown

SOUTH END | CHINATOWN | THEATER DISTRICT | LEATHER DISTRICT

## Neighborhood Top Five

- ➊ Hitting Chinatown (p99) for pork buns, dumplings and other dim sum delights.
- ➋ Browsing at the **SoWa Open Market** (p103) and **SoWa Vintage Market** (p104) followed by Sunday brunch in the South End.
- ➌ Packing into **Wally's Café** (p102) for old-time jazz and blues.
- ➍ Sampling the stylish vintage threads at **Bobby from Boston** (p103).
- ➎ Dressing to the nines and going out for a night in the Theater District, whether for comedy at the **Wilbur Theatre** (p103), opera at the **Shubert Theatre** (p103) or dance at the **Wang Theatre** (p103).



For more detail of this area see Map p240 and p242 ➔

## Explore South End & Chinatown

Four side-by-side neighborhoods are home to Boston's lively theater scene, hip-hop-happening nightclubs and its best international and contemporary dining.

Once downtrodden, the South End was claimed and cleaned up by the gay community, and now everyone wants to live there. And why not? The neighborhood boasts the country's largest concentration of Victorian row houses, the city's most innovative and exciting options for dining out, and a vibrant art scene.

Although tiny by New York standards, Boston's Theater District has long served as a pre-Broadway staging area. Many landmark theaters have received facelifts in recent years, and their colorful marquees and posh patrons make for a festive night out on the town. The Theater District is also Boston's club hub.

Nearby, Chinatown is overflowing with ethnic restaurants, live-poultry and fresh-produce markets, teahouses and textile shops. As well as the Chinese, this tight-knit community also includes Cambodians, Vietnamese and Laotians. Chinatown is a popular stop for lunch, a pre-theater dinner or a post-clubbing munch.

East of Chinatown, the Leather District is a pocket of uniform brick buildings that also shelters some fine restaurants. In all four neighborhoods, there is a dearth of traditional 'sights' to see, but there is a superabundance of eating and entertainment options.

## Local Life

- ➔ **First Fridays** On the first Friday of the month, get thee to the open studios at SoWa Artists Guild (p96) to chat with the resident creatives.
- ➔ **Hang-outs** Southenders hang out at Delux Café (p101) and Franklin Café (p97).
- ➔ **Chinese Chess** Local residents congregate in the shadow of the Chinatown Gate (p96) for fierce chess competitions and friendly Cantonese chatter.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** For the South End, take the orange line to Back Bay station or New England Medical Center station. Chinatown is served by its eponymous station, also on the orange line. The green-line Boylston station is handy for the Theater District, while 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

Budget travelers will find Boston's best restaurant bargains in Chinatown at lunchtime. Go straight to Kneeland St to take advantage of amazing lunch specials. Chow down on soup and a main course for less than \$10 – bargain!

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ O Ya (p101)
- ➔ Toro (p97)
- ➔ Gourmet Dumpling House (p99)
- ➔ Q Restaurant (p100)
- ➔ B&G Oysters (p97)

For reviews, see p96 ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Gallows (p101)
- ➔ Beehive (p101)
- ➔ Delux Café (p101)

For reviews, see p101 ➔

## Best Places to Dance

- ➔ Whisky Saigon (p102)
- ➔ Tunnel (p102)
- ➔ Candibar (p102)
- ➔ Emerald Lounge (p102)

For reviews, see p102 ➔