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7 Things You Didn't Know About Cleveland (And Why It Should Be On Your Travel List)



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Travel

I cover adventure, luxury and family travel.

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Cleveland may not be on your radar, but it should be. THISISCLEVELAND.COM

Cleveland, Ohio, may not be on your radar, but it should be. There's plenty of culture (the Cleveland Museum of Art is home to 40,000 pieces of art and free to the public), great places to eat and drink, and plenty of great

attractions for families. Plus, it boasts world-renowned institutions like the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. (Its new exhibit, "[The Biggest Show on Turf: 55 Years of Halftime Shows](#)," is well worth seeing.)

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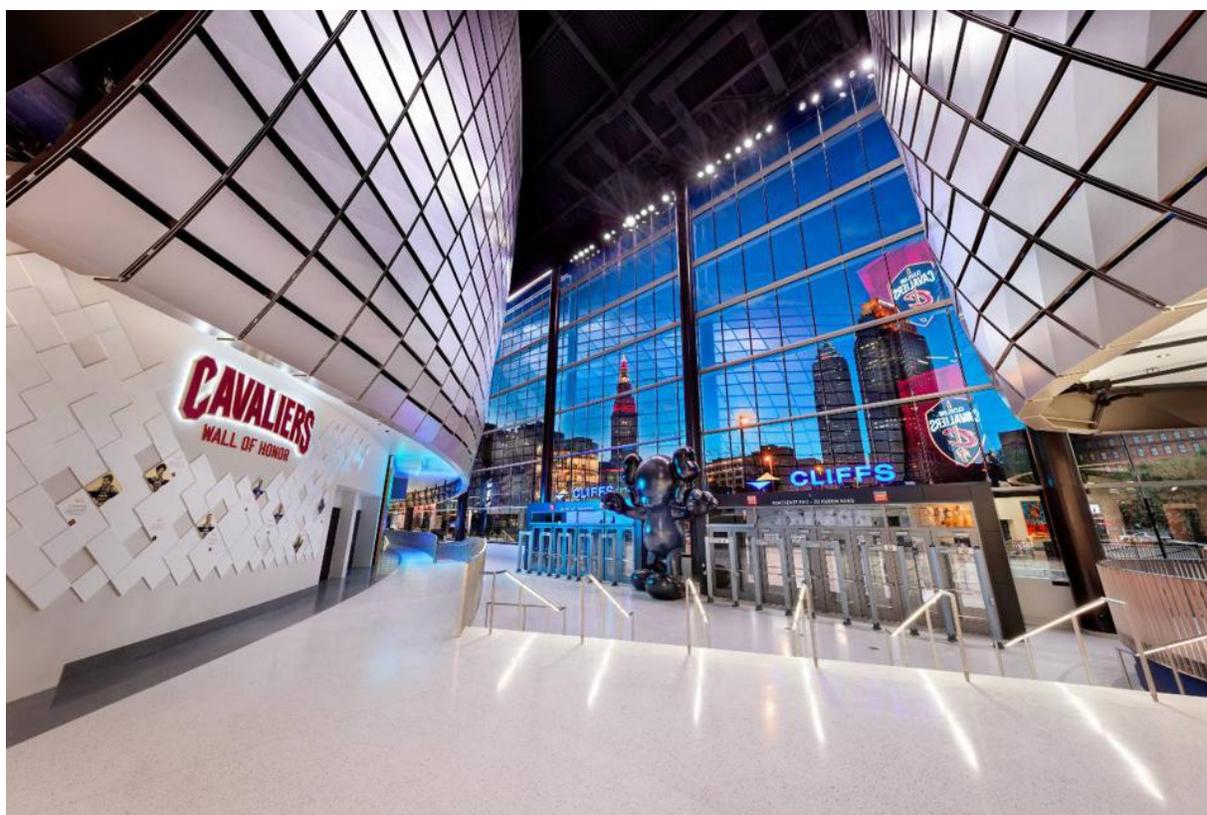
Here are just a few reasons a visit is overdue.

It's Great for Sports Lovers



The Browns, the Indians, and the Cavaliers all call this city home. THISISCLEVELAND.COM

Are you a sports enthusiast? Did you know that Cleveland currently hosted the 86th NFL draft? Plus, it has been tapped to host many big sporting events like the 2022 NBA All-Star Game and 2024 NCAA Women's Final Four, solidifying the destination as a world-class sports hub. This summer the area is slated to host the [Pro Football Hall of Fame's Enshrinement Festival](#) on August 5 to 9, in Canton, Ohio, a short drive from Cleveland. Sports fans can see and interact with their icons as more than 100 Gold Jackets (living Hall of Famers) return each year to be a part of Enshrinement Week. And, of course, you can't visit Cleveland without taking in a game—The Browns, the Indians, and the Cavaliers all call this city home.



Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse recently underwent a \$185 million transformation. CAVALIERS OPERATING COMPANY, LLC.

A must for any sports fan is taking in a Cleveland Cavaliers game. Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse recently underwent a \$185 million transformation—so it's simply stunning. The transformation touched virtually every area of the

building, bringing the latest in cutting-edge technology, innovative design and efficiency. The public art program includes everything from murals to light installations to sculptures; each piece was either created or selected to convey the spirit of sportsmanship and the power of resilience. Over 100 pieces of art are on display. There are a plethora of food and beverage offerings, too, so be sure to get to the game early.

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Foodies Are Welcome



The burger is one of the most popular dishes served at Betts, a restaurant that opened in August of ...

[+] BETTS

There are more than 100 diverse ethnicities found throughout Cleveland, which means there are plenty of culinary options. Dumplings and dim sum in AsiaTown, a Polish Boy sandwich served out of a food truck, or check out one of the many new restaurants that have hit the scene. Cleveland's chefs and restaurant owners source many of their ingredients from farms inside the city limits and within an hours' drive of downtown.

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Be sure to stop at [Betts](#), a great new restaurant that opened in August of 2020. Their goal is simple: Create a menu featuring thoughtfully sourced ingredients; mix with a creative approach to a healthy lifestyle; add a dash of much deserved indulgence; and pepper with genuine hospitality. The result? An entirely new approach to dining in downtown Cleveland. The Schofield burger is a big fan favorite (it's served with Amish sharp white cheddar, bacon jam, cornichon aioli, on a multigrain bun). Another good option is the Tucson bowl, (which is vegetarian and gluten- and dairy-free). It comes with brown rice, esquites, avocado, beans, red pepper, onion, crispy tortilla and salsa verde.



Fresh food served with a warm slice of hospitality. GRUMPY'S CAFE

Located in the Tremont neighborhood [Grumpy's Café](#) is a local favorite—and for good reason. It features fresh "feel good" ingredients in the Cleveland-style comfort food way. Breakfast favorites include omelets, eggs benedict, breakfast tacos, waffles, French toast and pancakes. Lunch specialties include meatloaf, burgers and a variety of sandwiches. While the name is Grumpy's the staff is anything but. Yummy food served up with a smile and Cleveland's friendly hospitality.

[Yours Truly](#) Playhouse Square Kitchen & Bar sits in the heart of downtown Cleveland. They are known for their "anytime breakfast" menu which includes favorites like Belgian waffles (topped with meat or fresh strawberries and whip



cream); corned beef hash and their made-to-order omelets. For lunch and dinner, popular dishes include their filet of cod; grilled salmon; and NY strip. They also are known for their burger bar (with nine different choices) and their grilled chicken breast (served eight different ways). Be sure to leave room for dessert.

Their brownie hot fudge sundae and their root beer floats are just two fan favorites.



The restaurant highlights a careful restoration of the architectural details of the original Halle ... [+] YOURS TRULY RESTAURANT PLAYHOUSE SQUARE



The restaurant within The Westin Cleveland Downtown focuses on farm-fresh ingredients. THE WESTIN CLEVELAND DOWNTOWN

The restaurant at the [The Westin Cleveland Downtown](#) (the Urban Farmer) is a great place to meet friends for drinks or have a sit-down meal. The food is made from scratch utilizing fresh ingredients and that's apparent from the first bite. The hamburgers are some of the best in town; they are served with aged cheddar, aioli, tomato jam and a house-made English muffin. The fries are so good, don't be surprised if you request an extra order. The steak frites are another popular dish. For something lighter, the Caesar salad is a good

option; it's made with hydroponic romaine, kale, white anchovies and parmesan. The bar serves a nice selection of beer, wine and mixed drinks.



Popular lunch dishes at Rebol include the signature bols and broths. REBOL

Trying to stay healthy? Head to [ReboL](#) which focuses on organic, non-GMO nutritious meals, with plenty of vegan, paleo-friendly and gluten-free options. They start with fresh ingredients including grass-fed, antibiotic-free and hormone-free meats and wild tuna. The dressings and sauces are made from scratch and don't contain refined sugars but instead are olive-oil based. All the coffees are lab-tested to ensure they are free of pesticides and mycotoxins and the juices and smoothies are packed with superfood, nutrient-rich ingredients. Popular lunch dishes include the signature bols and broths and breakfast favorites include the overnight oats and breakfast sandwiches.





Sausalito is known for their drinks as well as their food. SAUSALITO

Sausalito on 9th has a great location walking distance from all the sports stadiums, so it's a great spot for lunch, dinner or drinks either before or after a Cavalier, Browns or Indians game. Fan favorites include the burgers,

quesadillas and the salads. They have large screen TVs (to watch the games) and a fun, energetic vibe. Outside seating is great for people-watching and taking in Cleveland's scene.

Outdoor Adventure Abounds



Many people don't realize how biker-friendly this city is. THISISCLEVELAND.COM

The 55,000 acres of parkland between the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the region's metro park system, affectionately known as the "Emerald Necklace," provide plenty of opportunities for **urban outdoor adventure**. For a unique experience, climb aboard the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, one of the oldest tourist excursion railways in the country, to experience a train ride through the national park. Or hike one of the amazing trails found

throughout the park. (Two good ones are the Blue Hen Falls Trail and the Brandywine Gorge Trail.) If you're a biker, then head to the [Cleveland Lakefront Bikeway](#), which spans the entire length of Cleveland's 17-mile Lake Erie shoreline. It consists of both off-road paths and on-street, signed routes. Lastly, if you're looking to stop and take in the scenery, then check out Mill Creek Falls, Cuyahoga County's tallest waterfall standing at 48 feet high.

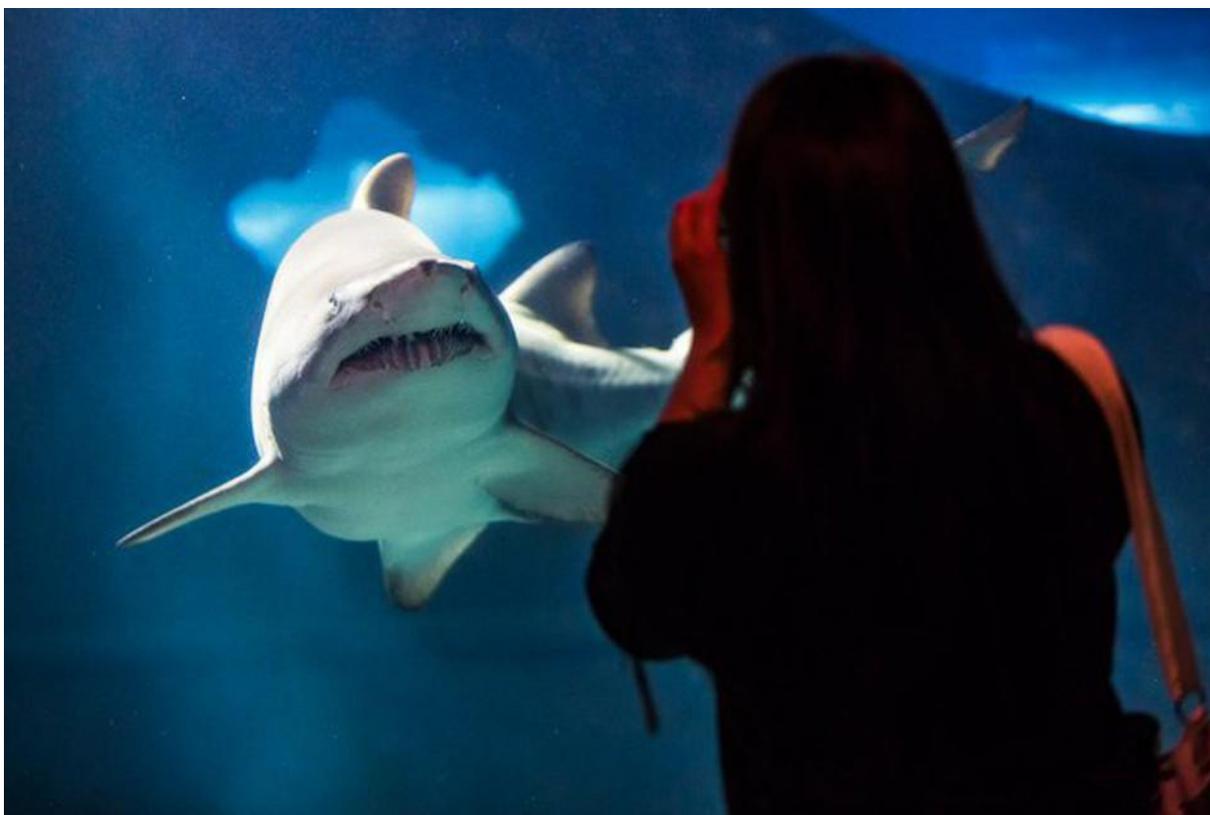
Plenty of Quirky Must-See Sites



The house made famous in *A Christmas Story*. KAYLA LUPEAN FOR THISISCLEVELAND.COM

Looking for something a little different? Visit "[A Christmas Story House](#)" to see the original "fra-gee-lay" leg lamp from the favorite holiday movie. Or take a trip to the [National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame](#), which traces the story of the city's homegrown sound from its roots in the old Slovenian neighborhoods to nationwide popularity. Lastly, take the family to the [Troll Hole Museum](#), which is in the Guinness World Records for the largest collection of troll dolls.

Family Fun Calls



The Greater Cleveland Aquarium DALE MCDONALD FOR THISISCLEVELAND.COM

There's the [Cleveland Metroparks Zoo](#) (tiger cubs are the newest addition and they are adorable!), The Cleveland Botanical Garden, the Greater Cleveland Aquarium, and plenty more. Plus, Cedar Point's 150th Anniversary Season opens on May 14. It featured a daily festival in the park's Frontier Land with live music, interactive games, street entertainers, and special food and drink menus, along with a nightly multisensory parade with more than 100 performers and a dozen illuminated floats.



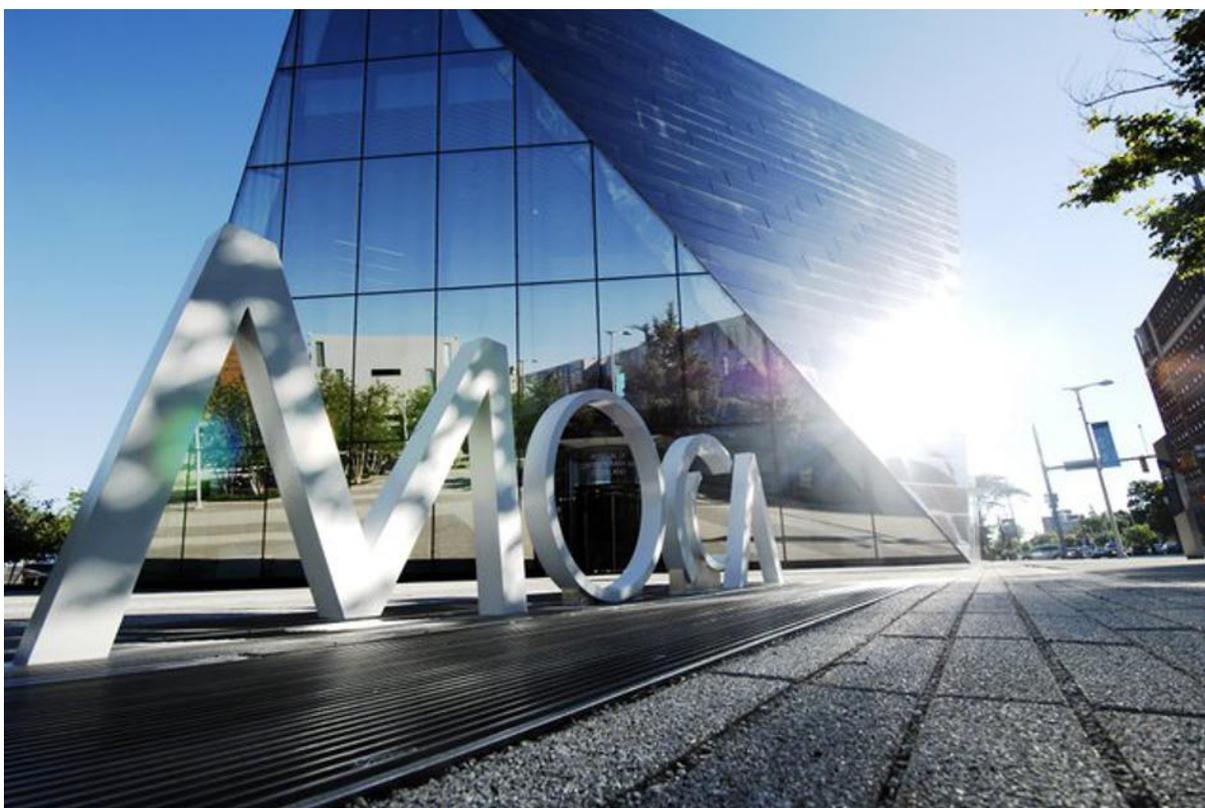


Bowling is a great family activity. GETTY

Another great family option is bowling and [The Corner Alley](#) located in the heart of downtown is just the place. It underwent a major renovation and the result is a 16-lane state-of-the-art bowling alley that is also a great place to hang out. The kids will love the nachos, fries and other bar food that is brought right to your lane (they also have a kids' menu) and adults will love the high-definition TVs, the 24 draft beers on tap, and the expansive indoor and outdoor patio seating area that includes 50 high-top and shared seats.

It's a great spot for a day of bowling or meeting up with friends and watching the big game. There is also an entertainment area that has video games, shuffleboard, air hockey and foosball.

A Thriving Arts and Culture Scene



The [Cleveland Museum of Art](#) is one of the only nationally recognized art museums to offer free admission to its permanent collection, which features more than 45,000 pieces of art from artists like Dalí, Monet, and Warhol. The [Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland](#) showcases an ever-changing and free-to-all collection of exhibits, ranging from photos and sculpture to audio works and video productions. The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame is another big draw. Its newest exhibit, "[The Biggest Show on Turf: 55 Years of Halftime Shows](#)," is on display through September 2021.

Plenty of Great Places to Stay



There are plenty of great hotels in Cleveland, including those on the water. CLEVELAND

[Westin Cleveland Downtown](#) has a great location just a short distance from the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Great Lakes Science Center, and Cleveland Convention Center. The [Drury Plaza Hotel Cleveland Downtown](#) is an upscale 189-room property located in a historic building. The newly renovated [Crowne Plaza Cleveland at Playhouse Square](#) has thirty-six new chandelier suites, which mimic the adjacent Playhouse Square chandelier.

Lastly, the [Hyatt Regency Cleveland](#) at the Arcade is housed in one of the city's most iconic landmarks, The Arcade, which opened in 1890 as the country's first indoor mall.

Check out my [website](#).



Judy Koutsky

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