

# FREE IN CLE

## Attractions That Don't Cost a Thing



From spending an afternoon with Claude Monet to soaking up the sun in a “talking” garden, visitors can explore Cleveland without ever opening their wallets thanks to numerous attractions that are totally, 100 percent free.

### Arts & Culture Central

- The [Cleveland Museum of Art \(CMA\)](#) houses more than 45,000 objects in its collection, including works by Picasso, Monet, van Gogh and Warhol. Admission to the permanent collection is always free. Visitors begin their tour in the glass-enclosed atrium, Cleveland’s largest free public space at 39,000 square feet, then head to the gallery of their choosing where they can see everything from jewel-encrusted displays of Faberge eggs to medieval statues.
- [SPACES](#) gallery, a venue dedicated to those who create and experiment with traditional and digital media, offers contemporary art aficionados an immersion in the unexpected through its frequently-updated exhibits. The nearby [Transformer Station](#) entices historical and art enthusiasts alike with gallery spaces located in a former substation.
- In celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the ever-changing museum and galleries of the [Museum of Contemporary Art \(moCa\) Cleveland](#) are free to all. Ranging from photos and sculpture to audio works and video productions, this collection of modern art exhibits sits inside a piece of art itself. The four-story building rises 60 feet from a hexagonal base to a square top and is clad primarily in mirror-finish black stainless steel, making it one of Cleveland’s most iconic landmarks.
- Alumni of the [Cleveland Institute of Music](#) perform with the world’s leading orchestras, but CLE visitors can listen to student concerts in University Circle, most of which are free.
- The world-renowned [Cleveland Institute of Art](#) offers free access to its Reinberger Galleries, which feature work from faculty and students as well as international artists.

### Out-of-the-Ordinary Museums

- Visitors can experience a close space encounter with free tours at the [NASA Glenn Research Center](#). The 2019 tour dates are May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14 and October 12.
- Murder. Gangsters. Motorcycles. The [Cleveland Police Museum](#) offers visitors a first-hand look into the history of the city’s law enforcement, from the tenure of famed mafia crime fighter Eliot Ness as the city’s Safety Director to death masks from Cleveland’s unsolved Torso Murders crime spree.
- Visitors will be thankful for modern medicine after laying eyes on a Civil War-era amputation set – complete with a rusty, old saw. From the library of the Renaissance physician who treated the Holy Roman Emperor to a 19<sup>th</sup> century condom made of animal membranes, the [Dittrick Museum of Medical History](#) covers the unnerving—yet fascinating—history of medicine. **CLOSED until Jan. 2020.**
- It’s all about the Benjamins at the [Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland’s Learning Center and Money Museum](#). Visitors can investigate and identify counterfeit bills and create their own currency.
- Visitors can jet over to the [International Women’s Air and Space Museum](#) at Burke Lakefront Airport to learn about the contributions of women to aviation and space exploration, from the exploits of Amelia Earhart to the workings of the WASPs of WWII.
- Patrons of the [National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame](#) can take in the oompah-pahs at this museum dedicated to the “happiest sound around.” It celebrates Cleveland’s very own form of polka, with artifacts and memorabilia from legendary stars like “America’s Polka King” Frankie Yankovic.
- Travelers can step into the restored ticket booth of League Park, one of the oldest ballparks in the world, to visit the [Baseball Heritage Museum](#). This free museum features exhibits and rare memorabilia from some of baseball’s greatest players like Babe Ruth, Bob Feller and Joe Dimaggio. This museum presents the rich history and diversity of baseball with programs, uniforms, signed baseballs and other keepsakes from various Latin and Women’s leagues and the championship Negro League Buckeyes.

## *The Great Outdoors*

- At the center of Downtown Cleveland lies the renovated [Public Square](#). The public park offers plenty of green space for visitors to lounge, a café to enjoy a quick bite or leisurely drink, a splash zone for kids to cool off in the warmer months and an ice rink during winter. Plus, free performances and fitness classes are held in the park throughout the year.
- The heart of Cleveland's skyline, [Terminal Tower](#), was once the tallest skyscraper in the world outside of New York City. The tower is free to look at and a mere \$5 to ascend to the top on weekends. After visiting the tower, travelers can experience an array of other architectural styles at sites like [The Arcade](#), once known as "Cleveland's Crystal Palace" and considered one of the world's first indoor shopping malls. Then, take in neoclassical architecture—and a new novel or two—at the [Cleveland Public Library](#).
- With a collection of 18 parks, including several beaches, the [Cleveland Metroparks](#) are the "Emerald Necklace" surrounding the city. Visitors can get into nature on more than 23,000 acres filled with picnic pavilions, hiking trails, playgrounds and swimming spots. On Thursday nights in the summer, visitors can head to Edgewater Park for the best beach party around: [Edgewater LIVE](#). This free event offers concerts on the waterfront, food trucks, stand-up paddle boarding and a cash bar.
- Situated between Cleveland and Akron, [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#) offers 33,000 acres of woods, water and wildlife. Highlights include the Towpath Trail, more than 80 miles of path totally unexposed to traffic; Ritchie Ledges, a series of ancient rock formations; and Brandywine Falls, a 65-foot-tall waterfall.
- Located on a 1.5-mile stretch of University Circle, 30+ gardens make up the [Cleveland Cultural Gardens](#). Filled with sculptures and unique horticulture, each represents a different culture found in Cleveland.
- Inside the [Rockefeller Greenhouse](#), travelers see a wide variety of botanical displays including a Southwestern desert cacti collection and orchid garden. Outside, visitors can check out the Japanese Garden and Latin American Garden featuring plants from each area. One of the few of its kind in the country, the Betty Ott Talking Garden provides recorded descriptions to help visually impaired guests experience the gardens, as well as plants that appeal to all the senses.

## *Historical Hot Spots*

- After biting into a crisp apple from the market and saying "hay" to horses, goats and bunnies, visitors to [Stearns Homestead](#) in Parma have a taste of life down on the farm. A 48-acre, fully functioning farm with museum and historical displays, it offers a hands-on introduction to the early 1900s.
- Talking shop with John D. Rockefeller or going behind bars with Levi Johnson (builder of Cuyahoga County's first courthouse and jail) are included in the popular [Take a Hike Tours](#). Offered mid-May through mid-September, these free walking tours around Cleveland are hosted by costumed characters from the city's history and showcase six distinct neighborhoods.
- Settled among more than 285 acres of scenery, [Lake View Cemetery](#) is the final resting place of many power players in Cleveland's civic and industrial development, including John D. Rockefeller and inventor Garrett Morgan. It also is home to the 180-foot-tall sandstone monument to President James Garfield, where the flag-draped caskets of the President and his wife Lucretia are displayed for viewing.

## *Grub Hubs*

- Delicacies such as beef tongue and bacon jerky await at the [West Side Market](#), a century-old, food lover's paradise located in the Ohio City neighborhood. Shoppers make their way through the subway-tiled, barrel-vaulted concourse to find more than 100 food stands, many of which have been family-operated for generations. While purchasing food comes at a price, taking in the sights and smells (freshly made crepes!) doesn't cost a thing.
- Once home to a bank, the newly renovated three-story historic Cleveland Trust now houses [Heinen's](#) grocery store in Downtown Cleveland. The second floor mezzanine features a wine and beer tasting area where visitors can take a seat—for free—and observe the rotunda's architecture, including a series of murals depicting the exploration of Ohio and the settlement of the Midwest, beautiful stained glass, bronze balconies and decorative arches.