

URBAN OUTDOORS



Escape to Cleveland's Outdoor Paradise

With Lake Erie in its front yard and the nation's 11th most visited National Park in its backyard, visitors to Cleveland can easily escape the hustle and bustle of city life. From watersports to hiking and biking, opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors can be found in the 33,000-acre Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the 23,000 acres of the Cleveland Metroparks and along the shore of the shallowest and warmest of the Great Lakes.

New and Noteworthy

- As of June 2018, Asian culture is on display in the middle of Cleveland's urban zoo. The new Asian Highlands exhibit at [Cleveland Metroparks Zoo](#) provides unobstructed views of the zoo's snow leopard, red pandas, takin species and, one of the most endangered big cats on Earth, the Amur Leopard.
- Cooling off with a cocktail or re-fueling after a beachfront walk or volleyball game is easier than ever at [Cleveland Metroparks' Edgewater Park](#). Its new open-air, two-story beach house, which debuted in June 2017, includes a full-service bar, concessions and 360-degree views of the city and the lake.
- When it opens in 2019, the new \$6 million Boston Mills Visitor Center at the [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#) will showcase the history and ecology of the park while also offering numerous guest services.

Mighty River Valley

- With 33,000 acres for hiking, biking, birding or simply relaxing, the [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#) is the 11th most visited national park in the country. Located between Cleveland and Akron, the park is led by the mighty Cuyahoga River that snakes through a wilderness of verdant trees, valley landscapes and historic farms. Much of the history-rich Towpath Trail, which follows the route of the legendary Ohio and Erie Canalway, also winds through the park.
- Offering unparalleled access to the postcard-perfect scenery of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park is the 51-mile [Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad](#). It's ideal for a date with nature—especially during the popular wine sampling (Grape Escapes) and beer tasting (Ales on Rails) excursions.
- Known as the "Emerald Necklace," the sprawling and picturesque [Cleveland Metroparks](#) encircle the city of Cleveland with nearly 23,000 acres of greenspace in 18 reservations—from the Hinckley Reservation (home of the beloved buzzards) to the lush, forest-filled Bradley Woods.

Lakeside Pride

- Jutting up against the expanse of Lake Erie, Downtown Cleveland is home to the [Cleveland Metroparks Lakefront Reservation](#). This land area encompasses Wendy Park at Whiskey Island, Edgewater Park, East 55th Street Marina, Gordon Park, [Merwin's Wharf](#) restaurant on the West Bank of the Flats and Euclid and Villa Angela Beaches.
- Located on a peninsula that jets into Lake Erie, visitors can hike lakefront trails and observe a variety of wildlife, including more than 300 species of birds and butterflies, at the 88-acre [Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve](#).
- Take in Instagram-ready views of the city skyline and Lake Erie from the [Rock and Dock Marina](#), located behind the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. The area boasts 53 transient slips for day-trippers and day-dockers alike, as well as paddle boat, paddle board and kayak rentals.
- Thrill-seekers can catch some rays while learning to stand-up paddleboard via [Aloha SUP](#) and [41° North Kayak Adventures](#); the latter of which also offers kayaking lessons.
- [Great Lakes Watersports](#) on the West Bank of the Flats rents jet skis, boats and kayaks to the adventurous, while [River Cruiser Kayaking](#) offers tours of area waterways, including the Cuyahoga River, Ohio Erie Canal and the Cleveland Metroparks' Rocky River Reservation.
- Travelers can let someone else navigate the fair waters on both the [Goodtime III](#) and [Nautica Queen](#) boats, which offer a variety of waterfront cruises.

- Visitors can slip away to the [Lake Erie Islands](#), just an hour drive west of Cleveland, and visit music-filled and bar-friendly [Put-in-Bay](#) or outdoors haven [Kelleys Island](#).

Cycle the City

- The [Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad's Bike Aboard!](#) program allows visitors to bike through the scenery of the Ohio and Erie Canalway Towpath Trail and then ride the historic railroad (bike included) back to their starting point for just \$3.
- During the spring and summer months, local advocacy group [Bike Cleveland](#) organizes numerous group rides for visitors to join, including night rides on the Towpath Trail or routes that explore specific neighborhoods.
- For visitors who don't bring bikes from home, [Ohio City Bicycle Co-op](#) rents bikes for a day of traveling the city's trails. Visitors can also take advantage of the city's bike sharing program and hop on one of the 250 [UH Bikes](#) housed at 29 self-service stations throughout Cleveland.
- Both [Cleveland Bike Tours](#) and [Bob's Bike Tours](#) offer expert-guided tours of the city's enclaves, while the [Cleveland Velodrome](#) offers adventure-seekers access to an Olympic-style track.

Hook, Line & Sinker

- [Eyes Ready Charters](#) in Fairport Harbor brings visitors straight to prime specimens of walleye, perch and steelhead, while the [Head Boat Fishing Charters](#) at Wildwood Marina and the Scranton Peninsula-based [Holiday Charters](#) offer both walk-on excursions and exclusive private trips.
- For those looking to stay on land, the [East 55th Street Marina](#) boasts a 1,200-foot fishing pier, guest docks and a bait shop, while the [Edgewater Fishing Pier](#) offers skyline views.

Tee the Greens

- The [Cleveland Metroparks](#) alone has eight courses of varying difficulty, from the easygoing nine-hole par 3 at [Shawnee Hills](#) to the championship-caliber [Sleepy Hollow](#), with its sloping greens and pernicious bunkers.
- For a less-traditional game, both [Mastick Woods](#) and [Shawnee Hills](#) offer the novel sport FootGolf, which challenges players to follow the rules of golf while using five regulation-size soccer balls, thereby encouraging fancy footwork rather than majestic swings.
- Other public golf courses making Northeast Ohio a putter's paradise include picturesque [Boulder Creek](#), rustic Geauga County mainstay [Fowler's Mill](#), waterfront resort [Sawmill Creek](#), lake- and stream-dotted Medina course [Shale Creek](#) and the tree-shaded [Pine Hills](#) in Hinckley.

A Tour de Force

- One of the best ways for visitors to experience Cleveland and its treasures first-hand is on foot. The [Walk CLE tour](#) features the city's unique architecture, distinctive public art, restored historical sites, beautiful parks, great restaurants and world-class attractions.
- From May through September, the Historic Gateway Neighborhood Corporation offers free [Take A Hike Tours](#), which are guided walking tours of five districts – the Gateway District, Warehouse District, Playhouse Square, the Flats and the Civic Center. The Take a Hike Tours feature actors and actresses portraying historical figures from Cleveland's past as visitors learn about the history, culture and future plans for each area.