



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Abby Keefe, Destination Cleveland
440.590.5002, akeefe@destinationcle.org

WHAT'S NEW IN CLEVELAND 2026

*From new developments to national celebrations,
2026 offers travelers more to see and do in Cleveland*

CLEVELAND (Dec. 3, 2025) – With the “Midwest moment” in travel predicted to continue next year, Cleveland will welcome visitors with major attraction expansions, vibrant arts programming and a focus on the area’s central role in the nationwide America250 celebrations. Whether arriving by car, airplane or rail, travelers can discover new exhibits, innovative public spaces and events that showcase the city’s cultural depth, creativity and community spirit – without breaking the bank.

Redefining Expansions Enrich Key Attractions

Two of Cleveland’s signature attractions will unveil major expansions in 2026. The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame will open its highly anticipated [\\$175 million expansion](#) next fall, adding 50,000 square feet to its lakefront home. The project preserves architect I.M. Pei’s iconic glass pyramid while introducing new exhibition galleries, a performance venue accommodating 800 to 1,000 guests and indoor and outdoor public gateways that connect visitors directly to Lake Erie. A new, ADA-accessible community park will enhance the museum’s role as a global gathering place.

In the Old Brooklyn neighborhood, the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo will debut the first phase of its [\\$120 million Primate Forest](#) in 2026. The zoo’s most significant expansion in over a century, the immersive new habitat will showcase orangutans and other primate species in next-generation environments designed for conservation, education and wellness. Guests can explore the high-tech CrossCountry Mortgage Forest Gallery and get an up-close look at animal care and enrichment programs.

As part of its commitment to belonging and inclusive travel, Destination Cleveland recently launched a partnership with [Wheel the World](#). To help ensure visitors can explore with confidence, an initial list of hotels, attractions and experiences that provide verified accessibility is now available on both [ThisisCleveland.com](#) and [WheelTheWorld.com](#).

Cleveland Marks America’s 250th Birthday with Culture, Creativity and Community

Cleveland’s industrial legacy, cultural depth and creative energy make it a meaningful place to reflect on where the country has been and where it’s headed as the nation celebrates America250. [The Cleveland History Center](#) will anchor local programming with exhibitions and events that link the nation’s founding

to the innovators, artists and everyday Clevelanders who helped shape modern America. Visitors can explore stories of aviation, design, music and immigration that reflect both Cleveland's identity and the broader American experience.

The city will also be in the spotlight as part of the statewide America250 celebration, the [Ohio Trails & Tales program](#). The [Ohio Air & Space Trail](#) will showcase Cleveland's role in flight and aerospace innovation, while the [Ohio Creativity Trail](#) will celebrate Cleveland as a center of art, fashion and music. Outdoor offerings will weave America250 into Cleveland's landscape, with the [Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail](#) drawing visitors to the city's waterfront and [Murals Across Ohio](#) adding new public art that turns Cleveland neighborhoods into open-air storytelling spaces.

Together, these experiences invite travelers to connect with America250 and see how Cleveland's story reflects the story of the nation.

Arts & Culture Highlights in Cleveland for 2026

Cleveland's arts scene is gearing up for a year of memorable exhibitions and a reimagined festival that gives visitors a new way to explore one of the city's most eclectic and authentic neighborhoods.

The Cleveland Museum of Art marks its 110th anniversary with a lineup of special programming, including [Renaissance to Runway: The Enduring Italian Houses](#) through Feb. 1. The exhibition traces five centuries of Italian fashion, showcasing more than 100 iconic garments and accessories from design houses such as Versace, Valentino and Ferragamo, including rarely seen pieces and celebrity looks.

On Feb. 21, Cleveland's signature [Brite Winter](#) festival moves to the Waterloo Arts District, turning six blocks of galleries, studios, restaurants and venues into an immersive landscape of music, art and fire. Thousands of visitors can explore outdoor installations and performances, making it a unique way to uncover Cleveland's creative energy.

Cleveland Adds New Game-Day Excitement in 2026

Cleveland's deep-rooted sports culture gives visitors a distinctive way to experience the city on game day. In 2026, fans can be part of the action in fresh ways. Progressive Field is entering the final phase of its [\\$200 million renovation](#), adding upgraded seating, improved concourses and enhanced concessions designed to elevate the fan environment. New viewing and gathering spots such as [Tom's Watch Bar](#) and [Urban Meyer's Pint House](#) will bring additional energy to the Gateway District, home of Progressive Field and Rocket Arena. Additionally, construction continues on [Cosm](#), an immersive entertainment venue scheduled to open in 2027, while the [WNBA](#) returns to Cleveland in 2028.

Waterfront Developments Take Shape

Cleveland's waterfront development continues to progress. The Cuyahoga River, recently designated a [National Water Trail](#), highlights the city's notable environmental turnaround. Visitors can explore the winding river by kayak, bike or the new [Cleveland Water Taxi](#), which links entertainment areas along the river. On Lake Erie, the [Patrick S. Parker Community Sailing Center](#) will open in 2026, providing year-

round public access and sailing programs at the Cleveland Metroparks' [E. 55th Street Marina](#). The new [Mandel Community Trail](#) will make it easier than ever for visitors to move between attractions on Cleveland's downtown lakefront and nearby east side recreation amenities, such as the new sailing center and the [Lakefront Nature Preserve](#).

Construction continues at [Irishtown Bend](#), a transformative 25-acre greenspace that will link the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail to Lake Erie when completed in 2027. The project will add a major urban park to Cleveland's growing portfolio of outdoor destinations upon expected completion in early 2029.

Ohio City Culinary Evolution

Cleveland's dining scene is gaining momentum, with the Ohio City neighborhood becoming a hub of change – welcoming innovative restaurants, creative collaborations and international flavors that reflect the city's diverse residents.

Anchoring the development is a [\\$70 million transformation](#) at the historic West Side Market. New outdoor dining space, updated amenities and a makeover of the market's mezzanine space will honor the market's legacy while adapting to welcome a new generation of food lovers. Nearby, the Ohio City Farm's Cuyahoga Kitchen incubates immigrant-owned restaurants. Concepts like [Furahi Congolese Cuisine](#) and [The Pierogi Bucket](#) blend global flavors with Cleveland comfort food, offering unique dining experiences.

Local chefs continue to make their mark across the neighborhood. [Noble Beast Brewing](#) will open an indoor-outdoor Biergarten featuring European-inspired fare. Meanwhile, the [nationally recognized](#) team behind the successful Downtown restaurant Cordelia will introduce a [new concept](#) in Ohio City's Hingetown district. [Hereafter](#), led by StarChefs "Rising Star Bartender" Gabriela Holzer, joins a thriving corridor of independently owned businesses along Lorain Avenue in Ohio City. The intimate location will offer minimalist cocktails and small plates designed for guests to slow down and savor the moment.

With these openings and expansions, Ohio City is a must-visit destination for food lovers in 2026.

New Hotels Bring Modern Luxury and Boutique Flair to Downtown Cleveland

Cleveland's visitation growth is driving downtown hotel development. In 2026, the historic New England Building will reopen as the [AC Hotel by Marriott](#), featuring 141 modern rooms in the restored 1896 structure. [The Marriott Tribute Hotel](#) and [W Hotel](#) will follow in 2027, adding boutique and luxury options to the city's lodging scene. These additions reflect the city's growing momentum and offer travelers fresh, modern options as they explore Cleveland in 2026 and beyond.

To keep up to date on new developments and activities, please visit www.thisiscleveland.com or follow us on [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#) or [YouTube](#).

###

ABOUT DESTINATION CLEVELAND: *Destination Cleveland is Cleveland's destination marketing and management organization. The private, non-profit organization's mission is to stimulate economic growth by attracting people and connecting them to experiences that illustrate Cleveland's diversity, creativity and contagious passion. In 2024, visitation increased for the fourth straight year to 18.6 million visits, with visitor spending infusing a record-high \$6.9 billion into the local economy. For more information, visit www.thisiscleveland.com.*