



Cincinnati

By Angela Ash

Cincinnati is a city that is always changing... always upgrading. If you ever think that you have officially “seen” Cincinnati, then go back in six months, and chances are that you will find things a little bit different... a bit more exciting.

I can remember when Newport on the Levee was just a few stores and an aquarium. Look at it now! It surely rates within the top tourists attractions within a day’s drive.

While it is technically on the Northern Kentucky side of the river, does Cincinnati care?

Absolutely not.

While even in a different state, all of the Newport attractions are always included within Cincinnati area attractions.

Why?

Well, because that’s just the way the people in Cincinnati are.

Visit, and you will find the friendliest people north of Kentucky.

I promise.

Of course, you will need wonderful accommodations... close to the action, but void of neon lights blazing in the windows.



The SpringHill Suites Midtown is a fantastic hotel that offers amenities that will make you feel right at home... only better! This all-suite property is the PERFECT place to make your "base" while visiting the diverse attractions that Cincinnati and neighboring Northern Kentucky have to offer!

But you may have a hard time leaving at all. With a gorgeous indoor swimming pool and a state-of-the-art fitness facility, you may find that your day turns into night rapidly as you relax and enjoy a workout routine, a few laps in the sparkling heated water, or simply relaxing poolside with that book you've been meaning to finish.

But don't call it a night yet! The Horseshoe Casino is just a few minutes away, and with a FREE shuttle to deliver you right to the door, it's almost impossible not to at least give Lady Luck a few spins.

When sleep finally calls, be prepared to spend the night on the most comfortable mattress in existence! I know the term "sleeping on a cloud" is terribly over-used, but in this case, it is a brilliant description!

And with a conveniently split bathroom, getting ready in the morning is a breeze, with no fighting over the sink, because there are two! This room is designed with ultimate comfort and convenience in mind, complete with a

pull-out sofa, free wi-fi, a kitchenette with a microwave and mini fridge, a flat screen tv... all decorated in a welcoming color scheme that instantly just breathes comfort into the space.

Now if you're wondering if things can get any better, a complimentary hot breakfast will definitely raise the bar! Expect all of the morning traditions... fresh and ready to prepare you for the day ahead. With so many things within easy proximity, the possibilities are endless! The Cincinnati Art Museum is FREE, and it is within easy walking distance. While there, stroll through Eden Park, or also visit the Krohn Conservatory.

If work calls, SpringHill Suites has you covered... offering a complete business center, with everything that you may need to close that deal, print off directions, or even plan your next trip back to SpringHill Suites!

Whenever you are visiting the Cincinnati area, SpringHill Suites is the ideal choice for accommodations. Experience a getaway tailored to your exact specifications, with the convenience that only this exciting location can provide!

For more information, visit SpringHill Suites [online](#) or call (513) 381-8300.

Since we mentioned Newport, Kentucky previously, let's definitely touch there first. Newport Aquarium is to Newport what Disney World is to Orlando. The place is amazing! They boast over 7,000 creatures, surrounded by a million gallons of water.

Visiting the Newport Aquarium is like taking a trip around the world...taking a peek in the ocean or in a quiet river, all without leaving the banks of the Ohio.

Your admission will include entrance to over 70 exhibits and 14 galleries, including your trek through 5 acrylic tunnels, measuring 200 feet in length! And did I mention that, as you peacefully walk through, you will be surrounded by sharks?

Speaking of sharks, want to TOUCH one?

Come on, don't be chicken.



***Newport Aquarium
Newport On The Levee
1 Aquarium Way
(859) 491-3467***

www.newportaquarium.com

While in Newport, ride the Ducks. Yes... really. The Newport Ducks are amphibious vehicles straight out of a movie.

One minute, you are riding along a normal roadway, and the very next you are slowly dipping into the Ohio River.

This sightseeing experience lasts about 45 minutes, exploring the historic waterfronts of Newport, Covington, and Cincinnati. See the World Peace Bell, Newport Aquarium, historic Riverside Drive, the Great American Ballpark, Paul Brown Stadium and more.

And all without getting a bit wet.



***Ride The Ducks Newport
Newport On The Levee
1 Levee Way
(859) 815-1439***

www.newportducks.com

Ready for some more fun? Then let's head into the heart of Cincinnati to visit Coney Island. Obviously this is not the Coney Island you hear about in New York, because, of course, we are in Ohio. Believe me, it's even better! I truly mean this. Walking into Coney Island is like walking back in time to a better place, when an amusement park was a clean, happy environment for the family. This park is beautifully manicured. The rides are all steps away from each other. No climbing hills and walking a mile to get to the next attraction here at Coney Island. You will also find just about everything you could want for a comfortable, no-rush, HAPPY outing. Coney Island features Sunlite Pool, the world's largest recirculating swimming pool with over 2 acres and 3 million gallons of water fun, plus new in 2009 is the Twister, a state of the art water slide with four separate twisting slides and over 1400 feet of fiberglass trough. And if you're into staying dry, then Coney Island also has you covered. Adults will enjoy such thrills as the the Scream Machine and the Super Roundup. There is even a roller coaster that the family can ride together. And Coney Island would never forget the young ones, with a vast array of crowd pleasers, such as the Frog Hopper and Racing Rockets. There are even bumper boats, paddle boats, and canoes on Lake Como. And don't miss out on the daily attractions that are offered, ranging from musical acts to a circus show. Spend the day, eat your fill of delicious food and snacks, and plan your return visit. Trust me, you will be back!



Coney Island
6201 Kellogg Ave.
(513) 232-8230

www.coneyislandpark.com

Now, after all of this fun, I always like to throw in something educational. But do we really have to leave out all of the fun?

Not at the Cincinnati Museum Center!

Make sure you set aside some time for the building itself.

Originally built in 1933 as the Union Terminal train station, the building is a national historic landmark and was renovated and reopened as Cincinnati Museum Center in 1990.

Did I tell you that it is FANTASTIC?

Well, it is... for sure.

And wait until you see what this magnificent structure contains!

The Cincinnati Museum Center is made up of the Cincinnati History Museum, the Duke Energy Children's Museum, the Museum of Natural History and Science, the Robert D. Lindner Family Omnimax Theater, and the Historical Society Library.

The Cincinnati History Museum is, as you may have guessed, full of exhibits regarding the history of Cincinnati and the surrounding region. Permanent exhibits include a re-creation of a 94-foot side-wheel steamboat, a wonderful home-front exhibit on World War II, and a great model of the city of Cincinnati from 1900s to 1940s, complete with working trains and inclines.

The Children's Museum could entertain a child for hours... maybe even days. They can climb, crawl, explore and learn about just about everything, with hands-on fun for kids of all ages in nine educational and FUN exhibit areas, where the parents can joy in the excitement.

The Museum of Natural History and Science is one of my favorite places anywhere. True story! This place is full of everything from glaciers to a re-created Kentucky limestone cave, complete with underground waterfalls, streams, fossils and a live bat colony... that you can actually walk through. Whoa!

The Omnimax features a five-story domed and one of the most sophisticated digital sound systems. Movies are shown several times daily, and what can I say? This place is impressive. Walking through the door can actually take your breath away by the sheer magnitude of the screen. And that's even before the movie starts.

The Cincinnati Historical Society Library was founded 1831, and has been collecting and preserving materials relating to the the state of Ohio and the Old Northwest Territory. Today, it houses one of the most significant collections in the entire country. Those visiting may view the Printed Works, the Manuscript Collection and the Audiovisual Collection in the reading room. Staff members are there answer questions, as well as to assist with anything that you may need while visiting.

Altogether, the Cincinnati Museum Center is a wonderful place to spend the day. Featuring a food court and plenty of places to snack, one can easily feed their mind AND their stomach. All in a day's work, right?



The Cincinnati Museum Center
1301 Western Ave.
(513) 287-7000

www.cincymuseum.org

Who's up for some polar bears?



Junior Journalist [Kendyl Rae](#)

Who's up for some adventure? The Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden is rated one of the top zoos in the nation, and I can definitely see why. It boasts over 500 animals and 3,000 plant species.

From feeding the giraffes at Giraffe Ridge to petting the animals at the Spalding Children's Zoo, this is one interactive place! With the opening of "Africa" in June 2013, the zoo is even bigger and better than ever!

I definitely think my favorite animals here are the manatees. There is a peace whilst watching them that can not be described. And if you crave for even more interaction with these beautiful mammals, there are [events](#) and animal encounters just for these fantastic creatures! Our junior journalist, [Kendyl Rae](#)

, was absolutely enthralled with the manatees. She asked question after question, which is absolutely what an attraction is after when providing exhibits for children. We literally had to tear her away, with a promise that she could visit Betsy and Woodstock soon.

And then there's the vampire bat. I mean, how frequently do you get to see a vampire bat? Hopefully, your answer is "not often". But they are intriguing creatures, and quite rare to see in a zoo setting.

Other inhabitants to be noted were actually gifts from Siegfried and Roy in 1998. Four rare white lions, two males and two females, were presented to the Cincinnati Zoo . The males, Sunshine and Future, and the females, Prosperity and Gracious, are gorgeous, regal animals, and you may view them as they take turns in their outdoor enclosure, on display on alternate days.□

The Cincinnati Zoo also offers playgrounds, a train, a carousel, and a 4-D theater.□ This is definitely a place where you could spend the entire day, and still not see everything.□ This zoo not only demands a look, but repeat visits.□

Special packages are offered for admission and attractions, so visit today and plan a wonderful excursion to the Cincinnati Zoo!

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden

3400 Vine St.

(800) 944-4776

□ Now, how do you feel about an INDOOR WATER PARK? Yeah... count me in, too!

The CoCo Key Water Resort is like stumbling upon Key West in Ohio. This place boasts a 50,000 square foot indoor water park, and is always 84 degrees.

The attractions include Parrot's Perch Play Structure (an interactive adventure with slides for younger children, zero depth entry area, water cannons, and a huge bucket that dumps hundreds of gallons of water every few minutes), Coconut Grove Adventure River (a tube ride through the water island with splashy coconut surprises along the way), 4 thrilling waterslides, Palm Grotto Indoor/Outdoor Spa, the Dip-In Theater, and the Coral Reef Cavern (an exciting activity pool that features lily pads, water basketball). Sound like fun yet?



This is a place where you can really unwind after a long day at the

museums, or a destination all in itself. I mean, an indoor water park in the middle of December. How cool is that?

CoCo Key Water Resort

11320 Chester Rd.

(877) 252-7309

www.cocokeywaterresort.com

Wow... Cincinnati sure does have it all. Visit the folks at **www.cincinnatiusa.com** to plan

your exciting trip to Cincinnati.

Whether for a day, a weekend, or even a week, the site is great, and you will have your trip planned in no time, especially if you take advantage of their handy Trip Planner.

So what are you waiting? Pack your bags and head out. You won't even have to stop for gas, or get on a plane, or buy Mickey ears.

Oh no. That was my second Disney reference in one article. This is truly becoming a problem.