



# outlook

everything is political

THE HOLIDAY ISSUE

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# trippin out

## WE'RE SERIOUS: IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A WEEKEND GETAWAY, YOU CAN ALWAYS TRY CLEVELAND

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by Aaron Leventhal,

I was born and raised in Cleveland, attended OSU, live in German Village and have been a part of the Buckeye Nation for going on three decades. But I return often to my hometown to visit family and friends and root for its hapless sports teams.

I understand why Cowtowners are less than enthusiastic about Cleveland. It's an acquired taste: urban, ethnic, gritty, edgy - yes, different. I do, however, recommend it for a long weekend escape, less than a three-hour drive from Columbus.

Listed below are some highlights of a recent visit. When the winter doldrums set in, I recommend giving Cleveland a go.

**THURSDAY:** After work, head north on I-71, exit on E Ninth Street and drive east on Euclid Avenue about four miles to the Glidden House (216.231.8900, [www.gliddenhouse.com](http://www.gliddenhouse.com)), a century-old, French Gothic mansion built by the son of the founder of the Glidden Varnish Co. It has been restored as an intimate 60-room bed and breakfast inn on the Case Western Reserve campus in the heart of University Circle.

Dine in the inn's carriage house at Sergio's (216.231.1234, [www.sergioscleveland.com](http://www.sergioscleveland.com)), noted for its Mediterranean, French and seafood specialties. Close the night out at nearby Nighttown (216.795.0550), a gathering place since 1965 with three bars, a kitchen that's open until midnight and live music nightly. *Down Beat* magazine named it one of the best jazz clubs in the world.

**FRIDAY:** Begin the day with a hearty, complimentary, European-style buffet breakfast in the

inn's parlor. Hop on the nearby RTA Health Line to Public Square and take a short stroll to I.M. Pei's iconic glass pyramid, the seven-story Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum ([rockhall.com](http://rockhall.com)) on the shores of Lake Erie. It contains the largest single collection of rock artifacts in the world, five movie theaters, exhibit galleries, interactive listening exhibits, a museum store and cafe. (Admission is \$22.)

Grab a cab to the legendary West Side Market on W 25th Street in Ohio City ([www.westsidemarket.org](http://www.westsidemarket.org)). It's celebrating its centennial year as the largest indoor/outdoor public market in the country with nearly 200 vendor booths. The market features extraordinary neoclassical Byzantine architecture with a regal clock tower and red-tile vaulted ceiling.

For an amazing sensory experience, stroll through the bustling aisles as vendors of every ethnic background hawk their fresh produce, meats and baked goods to bargaining shoppers. Be sure to nosh on the free samples. Continue along W 25th past dozens of small specialty shops, cafes and restaurants, all exuding an Old World ambiance.

Lunch at Nate's Deli (216.696.7529), a Middle Eastern vegetarian restaurant open for breakfast and lunch. The baba ganoush, tabbouleh, kibbeh, hummus and homemade baklava are superb. Taxi back Downtown for a walking tour of landmarks including the Arcade, the new Horseshoe Casino and the Old Stone Church.

Return to the Glidden House for a few hours of welcome relaxation. Its cozy Palette Lounge is a full-service bar serving tapas from Sergio's. The night begins with a short drive up Mayfield Road to Little Italy (also known as Murray Hill), crowded with dozens of specialty shops, art gal-

leries, bakeries and Cleveland's finest restaurants.

Enjoy a great dinner at the popular La Dolce Vita Bistro (216.721.8155, [www.ladolcevita-cleveland.com](http://www.ladolcevita-cleveland.com)). To close the night, drive a short distance up the Hill to Cleveland Heights' Coventry Village. Located along a six-block corridor of Euclid Heights Boulevard, the famed community prides itself for being independent, offbeat and loaded with eclectic bookshops, craft stores, art galleries, intimate cafes and coffee shops, and small international and vegetarian restaurants.

**SATURDAY:** After breakfast at the inn spend the entire day strolling around University Circle, reputed to be the most concentrated square mile of art and culture in the world. Begin at MOCA, the Museum of Contemporary Art ([www.moca-cleveland.org](http://www.moca-cleveland.org)), Cleveland's shiny new four-story, \$26 million jewel designed by internationally renowned architect Farsid Moussari of London.

Its geometric stainless steel and black glass exterior at the corner of Euclid Avenue and Murray Hill is startling. The goal of Moussari's dramatic building is to showcase innovative visual art that's open to new ideas and programs. Its first exhibition features works by 13 celebrated international artists, including Louise Bourgeois, David Hammons, Gordon Matta-Clark and Rachel Whiteread. (Admission is \$8.) The nearby Cleveland Botanical Garden ([www.cb garden.org](http://www.cb garden.org)) boasts an impressive greenhouse with 10 acres of outdoor gardens. (Admission is \$9.50)

Stop for lunch at the Cleveland Museum of Art's new cafe, Provenance, part of a \$350 million renovation. With 30,000 works, the museum is one of the world's greatest and the only major one in the country still offering free admission. Complete your walking tour at the Cleveland Mu-

seum of Natural History ([www.cmnh.org](http://www.cmnh.org)), with its impressive Hall of Dinosaurs, stunning gem collection, planetarium shows and two intriguing exhibits on whales and photos from *National Geographic*. (Admission is free.)

Obsessive shoppers can break up the day with a return visit to Coventry Village or Tower City Center on Public Square ([www.towercitycenter.com](http://www.towercitycenter.com)), featuring three levels of more than 75 specialty shops, restaurants and an 11-screen cinema.

In the evening, head downtown to E Fourth Street, a narrow, one-block entertainment district crowded with some of the city's best dining and entertainment. Dine at Chef Jonathan Sawyer's new Greenhouse Tavern (216.443.0511, [www.thegreenhousetavern.com](http://www.thegreenhousetavern.com)), the first green, farm-to-table restaurant in Ohio. Entrees range from tangy kale salad with grilled chicken pailard to pancetta and red pepper pasta to veggie crepes.

On E Fourth Street, you'll also find the House of Blues, Iron Chef Michael Symon's Lola, Hilarities 4th Street Theatre (comedy) and the Corner Alley with bowling lanes, entertainment and its Martini Lounge. For other popular downtown nightlife there's Cowboy Rock, a nightclub with huge dance floor and light show; the incomparable Playhouse Square ([www.playhousesquare.org](http://www.playhousesquare.org)) with 10 theaters for ballet, opera, shows, concerts and shows, including the Cleveland Playhouse; Peabody's ([www.peabodys.com](http://www.peabodys.com)), a music institution since the 1960s with two floors of live acts; and Improv Comedy Club and Restaurant ([www.clevelandimprov.com](http://www.clevelandimprov.com)).

**SUNDAY:** Time to check out a number of attractions before returning to Columbus. Recommendations include the Greater Cleveland City



Glidden House at University Circle  
Photo by Beth Ervin Leventhal

Aquarium ([greaterclevelandaquarium.com](http://greaterclevelandaquarium.com)), with a 70,000-square-foot aquarium, 36 tanks and 5,000 saltwater and freshwater fish; Great Lakes Science Center ([www.glsc.org](http://www.glsc.org)), with hundreds of hands-on exhibits and a six-story Omnimax screen; Severance Hall, the Cleveland Orchestra's famed Art Deco concert hall offering free tours on Sunday at noon and 1p; and the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage ([www.maltzmuseum.org](http://www.maltzmuseum.org)) in Pepper Pike.

No visit to Cleveland is complete without a final stop at my beloved Corky and Lenny's ([www.corkyandlennys.net](http://www.corkyandlennys.net)), the best Jewish deli between New York and Chicago. Located on Chagrin Boulevard in Beechwood near I-271, it features incredible piled-high corned beef and pastrami sandwiches, mishmash soup (matzo ball, chicken noodle, and kreplach), 13 signature salads, cheesecake, rugalech and chocolate cream sodas.

#### The Cleveland GLBT Scene

"Cleveland is a welcome destination for gay and lesbian travelers," according to Ann Gynn of Gay Games 9. She cites Lakewood, Ohio City, Tremont and Detroit Shoreways on the west side, and Coventry Village in Cleveland Heights as ideal areas to enjoy gay nightlife and culture. ([www.positivelycleveland.com/lgbt](http://www.positivelycleveland.com/lgbt))

David Pecjak, the new owner of Bounce Cafe Bar and Nightclub (2814 Detroit Ave, 216.357.2997), said Cleveland doesn't have traditionally gay neighborhoods like Columbus' Short North and German Village. He describes the GLBT community there as "very conservative, cliquish and fractured."

He said he's trying to create an open gay environment at his club. He has a full-service

restaurant open nightly from 5p-2:30a and a dynamic schedule of happenings: Sunday buffet from 11a-3p; Tuesday karaoke, Wednesday and Friday drag shows, and a Saturday dance club.

Another popular club is Twist (11633 Clifton Blvd, 216.221.2333) in nearby Lakewood, which caters to gay men in a sophisticated and subdued atmosphere. The club is known for its huge square bar and friendly wait staff and bartenders who can mix and shake any drink upon request.

Coming up in August 2014 is Gay Games 9 ([www.gg9cle.com](http://www.gg9cle.com)), to be held in Cleveland and Akron. It's one of the biggest GLBT sports and cultural festivals in the world, and Executive Director Tom Nobbe said organizers hope Columbus residents get involved. There are 36 sports competitions and three cultural events, ranging from rowing, darts, softball and volleyball to visual arts and choral singing.

It's open to athletes and amateurs.

*For More Information, call Positively Cleveland, the city's convention and visitors bureau, at 1.800.321.1001 or go online to [www.positivelycleveland.com](http://www.positivelycleveland.com). You can also pick up brochures, book concerts and plays, or make dinner and hotel reservations at the CLE+VISITORS Center at the corner of Euclid Avenue and E Fourth Street.*

Columbus travel writer Aaron Leventhal has organized a small group tour to Cleveland in conjunction with the Tri-C Jazzfest, April 18-21, 2013. For more information and rates log on to [leventhaltravel.com](http://leventhaltravel.com) or contact him at 614.506.9666.

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