

# **52 Romantic Outings in Greater Cleveland**

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Easy-to-follow outings for romance—for an hour, an evening, or a day

**Miriam Carey**

Gray & Company, Publishers  
Cleveland

### **52 Romantic Outings in Greater Cleveland**

Easy-to-follow outings for romance—for an hour, an evening, or a day

**Miriam Carey**

\$13.95 / softcover/ 208 pages

Want a new spark for your relationship? These outings lead step by step out of the tired old dinner-and-a-movie routine and into a realm of romantic discovery.

For all price ranges—from totally free to truly decadent—and all interests. Activities include a wintry sleigh ride followed with hot chocolate by a cozy fire; stargazing at an observatory; ballroom dancing; even “love golf!”



**Available from bookstores and online from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)**

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52  
ROMANTIC  
OUTINGS  
*in Greater*  
CLEVELAND

— SECOND EDITION —



*Miriam Carey*



GRAY & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS  
CLEVELAND

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# INTRODUCTION

My friends don't know about it. Neither does my family. It's something I try to keep under wraps as best I can, and hope that no one will notice. If they found out, it might damage my reputation.

I can't have everyone in town knowing that I'm a hopeless romantic.

When I decided to write this book, my friends laughed. "You? Miriam? A book about romantic places to go?" I guess that my track record with dates and boyfriends—a frighteningly long losing streak of wanna-be's and ne'er-do-wells—makes them think that I'm not the most qualified person to pontificate on the many hidden romantic treasures of Cleveland. But they're wrong.

For the last two years I've been annoying people with invasive questions. At a wedding, I'd throw out to the table, "Do you believe in true love?" At a bar with friends, I'd query, "Where do you think Cleveland's romantic epicenter is?" Over drinks with a new friend I'd prod, "Do you remember where you were the very last time you felt the beginnings of true romantic love?" Most of the time they answered honestly. Sometimes, they'd blush. But always—after the conversation had died down—I'd catch them drifting off in a romantic reverie.

I live in a secret world, drifting through downtown daydreaming about my fantasy Cleveland. There, the Avenue is still the Terminal Tower, and I'm a lady in a silk suit with a matching hat, handbag, shoes, and gloves waving good-bye to my true love as he boards the train to serve in WWII. On my jaunt down Euclid Avenue there is always a gentleman under the arch of the Arcade peering eagerly toward Public Square anticipating my arrival, tipping his felt hat and rearranging the folds of his trench coat. And when I travel to the country, I know I'll be treated to a hayride through an apple orchard so pungent with the scent of fall that I'll have no choice but to slide into the arms of the tall, dark, and handsome fellow next to me for a long, warm kiss.

But this is the real world, and these are modern times. So I set out to write this book knowing I could uncover some of Cleveland's hidden treasures and share them with other hopeless romantics like myself. Together, I thought, we could share the bustle of Public Square, the glory of the blooming countryside, and the endless charms that await us in the little nooks and crannies of this town of ours. I envision a city

full of happy couples walking hand in hand down the city streets, their hearts filled with love, copies of *Fifty-two Romantic Outings in Greater Cleveland* tucked under their arms for reference.

Yes, this is the Cleveland of my dreams. A town so full of love that its borders can barely contain it. The shores of Lake Erie teeming with lip-locked lovers at sunset, the country roads just outside of town bursting with picnickers on their way to little hideaways for a Saturday afternoon.

In each chapter, you'll find an itinerary for an outing or date in greater Cleveland. Some outings are simple, others are more complicated. Some require a big budget, others little more than the cost of a few gallons of gas. Use the book as you like. Choose a different chapter every week for an entire year, and you'll have something new to do each week, or refer to the book periodically for an idea, or an answer to that gnawing question: "What's something we can do that's different?" Parachuting over the farmlands of Northeast Ohio might be just the cure for that dinner-and-a-movie rut you're in.

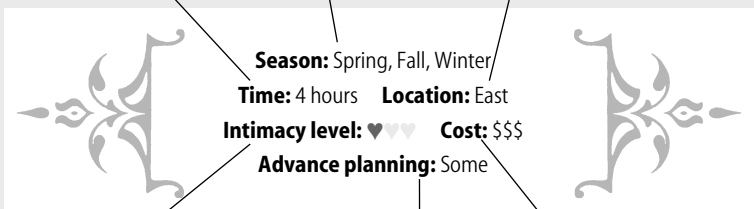
My friends, ever the smart alecks, point out that even after spending two years researching and writing on the topic of romance, I still haven't found any for myself. They're wrong again. True romance isn't to be found in a mate, or even a place. It's in your heart. And what you make of it is up to you.

## Key to the Data

**Time.** About how long it will take you to do the whole date as I've presented it.

**Season.** What time of year you can go on the outing. Usually has to do with weather, but sometimes has to do with availability.

**Location.** What part of town you'll visit to do the outing. Often I've included variations for a similar outing in a different part of town.



**Intimacy level.** Suggests how well the two of you should probably know each other in order to feel comfortable on the date. Any outing can be tailored to fit any relationship, but the outings as I present them fit best into these ratings.

♥♥♥ = Good for first dates and good friends.

♥♥♥ = Best for couples who know each other pretty well and at least have serious intentions.

♥♥♥ = For long-term relationships and married couples.

(Of course, if you're comfortable enough to go on an outing rated ♥♥♥ you can certainly handle a ♥)

**Cost** is an estimate of how much you'll probably need to spend on this date:

\$ = Free-\$20

\$\$ = \$21-\$50

\$\$\$ = \$51-\$80

\$\$\$ = \$80 and more

**Advance Planning.** Can we just pick up and go? Do we need reservations? Do I schedule way ahead?

**None** = No planning. You can pick up and do these outings at a moment's notice.

**Some** = Plan a day or two in advance to make diner reservations, check a show schedule, or reserve a seat.

**A Lot** = Plan well in advance to do things like order tickets, book a hotel room, or reserve a special day and time.



*Outing 1*  
**A FOOLPROOF NIGHT  
 UNDER THE STARS**



**Season:** Spring, Fall, Winter  
**Time:** 4 hours    **Location:** East  
**Intimacy level:** ♥♥♥    **Cost:** \$\$\$  
**Advance planning:** Some



*What You'll Do*

- ✦ Pick up a couples astrological chart at Delphic Books (\$20).
- ✦ Stargaze at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History observatory (admission \$6.50 per person).
- ✦ Continue the evening under the stars on the patio of the Barking Spider for after-dinner drinks (\$10–\$15 per couple).

**NOTE:** *You'll need to pick a Wednesday night between September and May, when the observatory at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History is open to the public. At least a day before, call Delphic Books to order your couples astrological chart. The morning you'd like to go, check the weather forecast for clear skies that evening (216-931-1212).*

*B* Brilliant starry nights are the stuff of which romance is made—and the inspiration for many famous musical works, from the corny “Harvest Moon” to the very sultry “Midnight Sun” (the Ella Fitzgerald version from the Songbook series will give you goose

bumps). Beautiful, inspiring, humbling—the night sky is all this and more, especially when the view is shared with a loved one. Stargazing is made easy in Cleveland’s University Circle, where the Museum of Natural History provides a dome-covered observatory and even houses its own night sky under cover of its planetarium. You’ll visit there this evening for an up-close encounter with the universe.

## *Step by Step*

**9 A.M. THE DAY BEFORE YOU GO** Place a phone call to Delphic Books and order a couples astrological chart; let them know you plan to pick it up at around 7:30 p.m. (charts take an hour or two to compile). Have handy the day, month, year, and time of birth for both you and your date. Delphic will prepare a printed astrological chart that describes your individual characteristics and also your traits as a pair. “The chart interprets relationships using data from two individuals,” says Delphic owner, Lori Brdar. “It defines what each individual is looking for in a relationship and compares data for compatibility.” The charts include detailed descriptions of how the planets were aligned when each of you was born, and how this alignment will affect your destinies as individuals and as a pair. The couples chart costs \$20. One printout per couple.

**7:30 P.M. THE DAY OF YOUR DATE** Stop by Delphic to pick up your chart, pocket it without peeking, and keep it handy for reference after your trip to the observatory. While you’re here, browse around. Brdar says her store has one of the largest astrology sections in the city and carries everything from books for the novice astrologer to advanced materials for the more savvy astronomical enthusiast. Among the eclectic mix you might find a guidebook to help stimulate your new interest in the heavens. (Delphic closes at 8 p.m.)

**8:30 P.M.** Arrive at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History Ralph Mueller Planetarium and Observatory. This is one of Cleveland’s hidden gems, and great pains have been taken to preserve its place in this community. Even as observatories in other cities are dismantled because of poor funding and light pollution, Mueller has been kept viable by University Circle’s installation of special streetlights that shine downward only, allowing for a clearer view of the sky above.

The observatory is the perfect perch for viewing a clear sky. Its ceiling can be retracted slightly to allow the 10.5-inch refracting telescope a clear view of objects in space. The telescope—made

right here in Cleveland 100 years ago by Warner & Swasey—swivels to provide highly magnified views of different areas of the night sky, taking in the moon, stars, and planets. “Depending on what time of year it is, you can see Jupiter’s four largest moons, jewel-like star clusters, and double solar systems,” says observatory coordinator Clyde Simpson.

Simpson or one of his associates will welcome you to the observatory with a brief description of its history and purpose, and of the equipment housed there. During your visit you and a handful of other visitors will be invited to take turns looking through the eyepiece of the telescope at various parts of the sky. Because the telescope can move up, down, back, and forth, you’ll get to see a cross-section of the hemisphere above Cleveland. Throughout the course of the evening—the observatory is open until 10 p.m.—there will be plenty of opportunities to see major sights in the night sky.

Of course, this being Cleveland, there are evenings when all you’ll get from the telescope is a clear view of murky clouds, even if the morning weather report foretold clear skies. That’s where the planetarium comes in handy. Its circular lobby features displays of meteorites and an interesting array of antique instruments (dating back to a time when an inaccurate reading of the skies could cost you your earthly skin if you were a sailor or a desert traveler dependent on the stars for your course).

Inside the planetarium, the Hanna Star Dome seems to float overhead, the setting for complex, fiber-optic planetarium shows. During a typical show, the dome, which provides an accurate picture of the night sky, rotates to show the changing seasons astrally. Programs take about a half-hour, as the night sky changes from month to month, planets jockey for position in the darkness, and a simulated shooting star or two seem to fall from the ceiling onto your lap.

Whether the stars you see this evening are fiber-optic replicas or the real thing, you’ll be humbled by your celestial experience.

By now, you’re probably hungry, too.



**Planets jockey for position in the darkness, and a simulated shooting star or two seem to fall from the ceiling into your lap.**



**10 P.M.** A 10-minute walk or 5-minute drive will take you to the Barking Spider, a great Bohemianesque spot for a beer under the stars. This club—also a converted stable—offers a rustic brand of hominess. Bric-a-brac adorns the walls, a mishmash of tables and chairs

beckons you to take a seat, and the beer coolers contain a wide variety of beer and wine. Local musicians frequently play at the Barking Spider in front of mellow but interested small crowds. On any given night you can hear folk, rock, or blues. To maintain the focus of this evening, take a seat outside on the patio and let the music drift out to you, turning your head upward every so often to look at the starry, starry sky. (To avoid seeing the wrong kinds of stars, limit your beer consumption appropriately; the Barking Spider is well known for its selection of strong, hearty brews.)

Complete your celestial evening with one last good night to the sky, one last hopeful look for a shooting star to wish on. Then count your lucky stars together. They're the ones that really matter.

## *Variations*

**MINI-DATE** When the clouds are so oppressive that a view of the night sky seems impossible, consider spending an evening in a Moorish garden setting. Renovated in 2002, the Akron Civic Theater was originally built in 1929 in the “atmospheric theater” tradition, recreating a Moorish garden at night with beautiful woodcarvings, paintings, and reliefs throughout the theater’s lobbies and main performance hall. Arrive early for a performance at the theater, find your seat and look up to the domed ceiling. Stars twinkle against a theatrical lapis lazuli sky designed to mimic the deep blue of mid-night while clouds drift gently by.

**WEST SIDERS** The Schuele Planetarium at the Metroparks Lake Erie Nature and Science Center at the Huntington Reservation opens after dark on the first and third Saturday of every month. Visit the night sky at the planetarium then dine just up the road at the Cabin Club, a rustic Western Reserve–style log cabin replica built in 1947. The Cabin Club prides itself on fresh, high-quality steaks (in fact, they’ll let you pick the steak you want when they roll the steak cart to your table at ordering time), perfectly grilled big-game fish, and salmon. After dinner, make your way back to the Huntington Reservation for a firsthand view of the moon and stars over Lake Erie.

*Directory*

**Akron Civic Theater**  
128 South Main St., Akron  
330-535-3179  
HOURS/AVAILABILITY:  
Show times vary.

**Barking Spider Tavern**  
11310 Juniper Rd., Cleveland  
216-421-2863  
HOURS/AVAILABILITY:  
Tue–Fri 2 p.m.–1 a.m.; Sat  
4 p.m.–1 a.m.; Sun 3 p.m.–  
midnight

**Cabin Club**  
30651 Detroit Rd., Westlake  
440-899-7111  
HOURS/AVAILABILITY:  
Mon–Fri 11 a.m.–10:30 p.m.;  
Sat noon–11:30 p.m.; Sun  
4 p.m.–10 p.m.

**Cleveland Museum of  
Natural History**  
1 Wade Oval Drive, Cleveland  
800-317-9155  
HOURS/AVAILABILITY:  
Clear Wednesday evenings  
September–May until 10 p.m.

**Delphic Books**  
1793 Coventry Rd., Cleveland  
Heights  
216-321-8106  
HOURS/AVAILABILITY:  
Mon–Fri 11 a.m.–8 p.m.;  
Sat 10 a.m.–7 p.m.; Sun  
1 p.m.–5 p.m.

**Schuele Planetarium at  
the Lake Erie Nature and  
Science Center**  
28728 Wolf Rd., Bay Village  
440-871-2900  
HOURS/AVAILABILITY:  
2nd and 4th Saturday of the  
month; call ahead; plan-  
etarium programs at 2 p.m.  
and 7 p.m.





## Outing 2

# A SLEIGH RIDE TOGETHER



**Season:** Winter    **Time:** 3 hours  
**Location:** Far East  
**Intimacy level:** ♥♥♥    **Cost:** \$-\$\$\$  
**Advance planning:** Some



### *What You'll Do*

- ❖ Shop for snow gear in charming Chesterland (\$20–\$50).
- ❖ Dash through the snow in a sleigh at Patterson Farms (\$100 for up to 15 people; \$250 with use of sugarhouse).
- ❖ Play games, sip on cider, and lounge by the fireplace at the Patterson's old-fashioned sugarhouse.

**NOTE:** *At least 15 inches of snow must be on the ground in Chesterland for operation of this sleigh. Call ahead to make a reservation for a Saturday or Sunday sleigh ride at Patterson Farms (no rides after February 15). If you like, pack up a board game to play by the fire after the ride.*

For Santa, it's work, for Iditarod competitors it's survival. For the two of you, it's pure fun. A sleigh ride is among the charms of winter in northeastern Ohio. In the days of the early settlers, sleighs were the primary mode of wintertime transportation. Families bundled up to go to church on a Sunday with hot potatoes in their pockets for warmth. These days, sleigh rides are a charming dash through the past.

For our purposes, a sleigh ride is an inventive way to get close in the

wintertime. Be sure to cuddle, and you can make believe—at least for the moment—that winter ain't so bad after all.

Even recreational sleigh rides, though, are becoming history, because sleighs are difficult to build and maintain. Also, the litigious nature of our current society threatens this treasured mode of transportation, as the family farmer who used to offer sleigh rides (a romantic way to subsidize the off-season) faces ever-higher insurance premiums. Say a silent word of thanks to the sleigh owners of today—die-hard romantics who refuse to cave in to the harsh realities of these modern times.

### *Step by Step*

**4 P.M.** Arrive in downtown Chesterland to browse through the charming shops. Pick up some warm mittens, a scarf, or a hat at Ferdl Aster Ski Shop (they also offer an assortment of outdoor gear for winter sports). Leave about 15 minutes to get to Patterson Farms. (Drive west on SR 6/Chardon Rd. to SR 306. Turn left onto SR 306. At next intersection, turn left onto Mulberry Road, Patterson Farms is 0.5 mile down on your right.)

**5 P.M.** Arrive at Patterson Farms. Nancy and Jim Patterson—the fifth generation of Pattersons to run the farm—have crafted a bobsled in its original splendor. “The ‘bob,’” says Nancy Patterson, “is the old-fashioned runner that glides over the snow. We built a body for the sled based on traditional bobsleds.” Add the Pattersons’ two Percheron draft horses with their requisite bells jingling through the crisp winter air, and you’ll swear Norman Rockwell once painted this nostalgic winterscape.

The Pattersons’ big sleigh holds up to 15 people, and Nancy Pat-



*In the wintertime the strawberry patches  
rest under quilts of snow,  
while icicles dangle their daggers  
from the branches of apple trees.*

terson believes that the distinctive romance of this adventure is best experienced by a group of friends, couples, or a family. The half-hour or so you'll spend on the sleigh provides plenty of time for storytelling and togetherness.

Your sleigh ride will take you on a wintry tour of the Pattersons' property via a path through orchards of bare apple trees. In the gentler seasons, the farm is a great place for strawberry-picking and cider-pulling. In the wintertime, however, the strawberry patches rest under quilts of snow, while icicles dangle their daggers from the branches of the apple trees.

**5:45 P.M.** After your ride through this enchanted forest, warm up at the Pattersons' sugarhouse, designed for maple syrup production. This rustic room features a large fireplace and a lounging area where you can relax, sip on hot chocolate or cider, and play games if you brought them. It's bring-your-own at the sugarhouse, but you can stay as long as you like.

"We have couples who have come here for years," says Nancy, "and now some grandparents even bring their children. We believe in sharing what you have with others and love to invite people here to enjoy our land." Besides being enchanted by the Pattersons' lovely woods, you'll certainly be charmed by their homespun philosophy.

## Variations

**SUPER SIZE IT** Book a stay at the cushy Walden Country Inn in Aurora and the staff will fix you up with a carriage ride—and if there's snow, a sleigh ride—on the romantic grounds that surround the inn.

**SLEIGHS ON THE HOMESTEAD** At Lake Farmpark one foot of snow is required for a proper sleigh ride, but the ride is worth waiting for. The two-seater sleigh is sleek, fast, and thrilling. You'll need to call at the beginning of the season; when the snow starts to fall, they'll give you a call. Rides are \$35. On December weekends, this farm hosts the Country Lights Festival. More than 500,000 lights twinkle in the moonlight and cast shadows on snowy Kirtland. During the festival you can enjoy a candlelight dinner, tour a bevy of decorated trees, and watch the classic toy trains as they chug along. Sleigh rides continue after the holiday season, without the candlelight dinners. Instead, guests are invited for cocoa and sweets at the park's cafeteria.

**THE OTHER NORTHFIELD PARK** Sleigh rides come with a historical message when you travel with the Carriage Trade. This horse-drawn sleigh ride through a family farm in the Cuyahoga Valley includes an oral history of the area by your driver/tour guide as you zip along—from the Ice Age to modern times. Afterwards, you're invited to warm up by a wood-burning stove, sip on cappuccino, and nibble on sweets in the "Sleigh Chalet." Cost is \$60 per couple, \$100 for two couples. Deposit required.

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## Directory

### Carriage Trade

8050 Brandywine Rd.,  
Northfield  
330-467-9000

**HOURS/AVAILABILITY:**

All winter (weather permitting) Thu–Sun 1–9 p.m. Call for reservation.

### Ferdl Aster Ski Shop

8330 Mayfield Rd.,  
Chesterland  
440-729-9472

**HOURS/AVAILABILITY:**

Mon–Fri 10 a.m.–8 p.m., Sat  
10 a.m.–5 p.m., Sun 1–5 p.m.  
Closed mid-Apr through  
Aug 1.

### Lake Farmpark

8800 Chardon Rd., Kirtland  
800-366-3276

**HOURS/AVAILABILITY:**

Tue–Thu, Sat–Sun 9 a.m.–  
2:30 p.m. (weather and staff  
availability permitting). Call  
at beginning of season for  
reservation.

### Patterson Farms

8765 Mulberry Rd.,  
Chesterland  
440-729-9809

**HOURS/AVAILABILITY:**

Sleigh rides Mid-Dec through  
mid-Feb (weather permitting),  
Fri evening, Sat–Sun. Call for  
reservation.

### Walden Country Inn

1119 Aurora-Hudson Rd.,  
Aurora  
888-808-5003

**HOURS/AVAILABILITY:**

Advance reservations required.

