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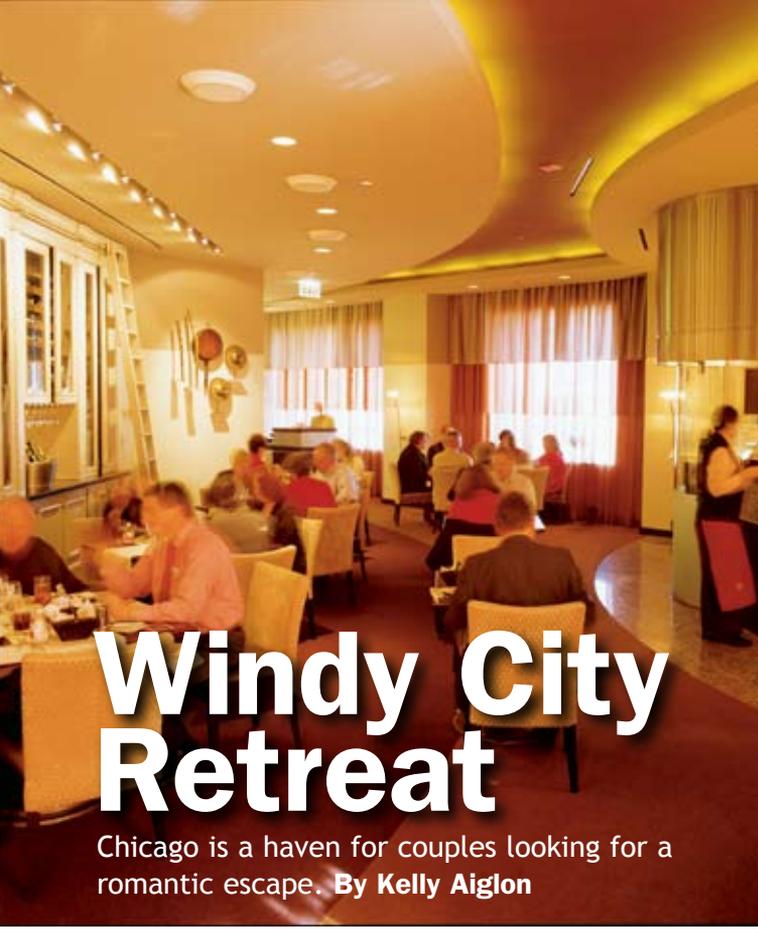
## SUMMER ESCAPES

20 Trips for Family and Friends and 20 for Just for the Two of You

**By Gerald Bartell, Ellen Clark, Amy S. Eckert and Betsa Marsh**

Vacation time is limited, and there's so much to do, so many people to please. This summer, plan your getaways nearby. Order up an escape for just the two of you. Discover an exciting destination for the whole family. Take off with a group of friends for a resort weekend of golf, spa luxury, shopping and more. We've found more than 40 ways to get away this summer. Just pick the ones that are right for you.





# Windy City Retreat

Chicago is a haven for couples looking for a romantic escape. **By Kelly Aiglon**



## Take the Kids

Have the whole family in tow? Chicago can accommodate just about any size crew. Bring the

kids to the **Essex Inn**, a tall glass tower that faces Grant Park and the lake. If affordable rates don't lure you (high-season room rates rarely exceed \$200/night), its rooftop swimming pool will. The retractable roof overhead lets sun pour in and makes views all the more majestic.

The **Essex Inn** is located within blocks of Chicago's Museum Campus — a triumvirate of cultural institutions that includes **The Shedd Aquarium & Oceanarium**, **The Field Museum** and **The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum**. Of these, kids are most drawn to the **Shedd Aquarium**, where sharks dart behind glass in a simulated underwater reef. This spring and summer, dragon-like reptiles from Indonesian islands are also on view as part of the "Komodo" exhibit.

A few miles north at the **Notebaert Nature Museum**, butterflies flit overhead and sometimes land squarely on your head within the **Judy Istock Butterfly Haven**. Kids delight in these close encounters and also revel in interactive exhibitions such as "Hands-On Habitat," where they explore faux animal homes.

For dinner, visit **Scoози**, a traditional Italian joint that offers free pizza-making for kids ages 12 and under on Sunday evenings (mom or dad must order an entrée). Watch as tots



Historically, Chicago — a city once dominated by stockyards, spliced by a lakeside maze of train tracks, and nearly razed by fire — did not have the trappings of a romantic hamlet. Today, things are a bit different. Chicago's tumultuous past, while the stuff of great stories, is overshadowed by a lighthearted energy apparent in everything from the leisure boats that drift in and out of its harbors, to the trolley cars making their way through the streets of downtown.

Romantic retreats, during which couples carve out quiet time, are popular in Chicago. Book a room at **The Fairmont Hotel** if you want full-on romance. Its corner suites — with their sweeping lake views and calming neutral color schemes — invite cooing. But twosomes are

best served by the hotel's bath sommelier. For \$60, an aromatherapy expert whisks a silver cart laden with fragrant bath salts to your room and customizes your own aquatic escape. Bottles of mineral water and a plate of fresh fruit sweeten the deal.

Stick around the hotel for an intimate dinner at **Aria**, where "The Love Chef," **Brad Parsons**, cooks for couples. Parsons consults with couples, deciphers what kind of ingredients would spark their romances, and customizes their dinners (think hot-and-sour baked rock shrimp for those who want to stoke the fires of their relationship).

Give the hotel one hour's notice, and the staff can arrange to have a bicycle-pulled rickshaw pick you up and ferry you across town. For an alternate dinner option, alight the rickshaw at **Opera**. A former storage facility for major motion picture studios, the restaurant has private seating in vaults where film reels were



**The Fairmont Hotel**, 200 N. Columbus Dr., 312/565-8000. [www.fairmont.com/chicago](http://www.fairmont.com/chicago). Rates \$180-\$389.

**Aria**, 200 N. Columbus Dr., 312/444-9494. [www.ariachicago.com](http://www.ariachicago.com). Breakfast & lunch daily 6 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; dinner Sun.-Thur. 5:30-10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat. 5:30-11 p.m. Dinner entrees \$15-\$25.

**Opera**, 1301 S. Wabash Ave., 312/461-0161. Sun.-Wed 5-10 p.m.; Thur., 5-11 p.m.; Fri.-Sat. 5-midnight. Entrees \$15-\$25.

**Shoreline Sightseeing**, cruises depart from Ogden Slip at

Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand Ave., 312/222-9328. [www.shorelinesightseeing.com](http://www.shorelinesightseeing.com). Architecture cruise tickets weekdays: \$20, seniors \$17; children under 12 \$9. Weekends: \$22; seniors \$18; children \$10.

**The Art Institute of Chicago**, 111 S. Michigan Ave., 312/443-3600. [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu). Mon.-Fri. 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Thur. 10:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission \$12; seniors, students and children \$7. Free on Tues.

**Essex Inn**, 800 S. Michigan Ave., 312/939-2800. [www.essexinn.com](http://www.essexinn.com). Rates \$89-\$199.

**Shedd Aquarium & Oceanarium**, 1200 S. Lake Shore Dr.,



once housed. Draw your vault's red silk curtains and enjoy dishes like steamed red snapper and Peking duck.

Keep an easy pace throughout the day aboard an architecture-themed boat cruise. There are nearly a dozen tour vessels that snake up and down the Chicago River, including those of Shoreline Sightseeing. A guide narrating the history of buildings, such as the Civic Opera House and the Chicago Tribune tower, enlivens Shoreline's hour-long architecture cruises. Tours depart from Navy Pier on weekends beginning in April, and daily starting in May.

Strolling the galleries of The Art Institute of Chicago, where beautiful Impressionist paintings by Georges Seurat and Vincent Van Gogh hang, is another way to invite serenity.

312/939-2438. [www.sheddaquarium.org](http://www.sheddaquarium.org). Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat.-Sun. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Call for ticket prices.

**Notebaert Nature Museum**, 2430 N. Cannon Dr., 773/755-5100. [www.naturemuseum.org](http://www.naturemuseum.org). Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sat.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission \$7, children 3-12 \$4; seniors and students \$5.

**Scoozi**, 410 W. Huron St., 312/943-5900. Pizzeria every Sun. 5-6:30 p.m. Entrees \$12.50-\$23.95.

# Country Air

Charming B&Bs, shops and historic attractions are unexpected pleasures in eastern Pennsylvania.

By Gerald Bartell



Just an hour north of Pittsburgh, Butler County's rural charm attracts visitors looking for diverse vacation possibilities. Couples will find cozy inns and a full slate of outdoor recreation, along with small villages that are rich with historic sites and distinctive shops for browsing. And for those who bring along the kids, farms and playgrounds await.

Couples may be content to spend an entire weekend enjoying one of the county's B&Bs, many of them occupying historic farmhouses. Heather Hill, for example, occupies a 180-acre estate that's home to Peruvian and Arabian horses, peacocks, ducks and geese. Heather Hill offers tennis, hiking and a lovely Japanese water garden, the perfect place to sip an afternoon iced tea. Guest rooms at the Inn on Grandview befit a farmhouse dating to the 1800s. One room has a four-poster bed, exposed-beam ceilings and a fireplace. Other lodgings feature claw-foot tubs and antique furniture. The Inn Between at Briar Rose Farms boasts a waterfall and a gazebo for picnics. Activities include fishing, tennis and even old-fashioned horseshoes. Days come to a tranquil end with a massage and glasses of homemade wine.

Sometime over the weekend, a visit to Osiris Wellness and Day Spa in Evans City should smooth out the wrinkles of the workweek. Named for the Egyptian god of rejuvenation, and located in a restored, 131-year-old rustic cabin, the spa is the place for reiki, shiatsu and massage therapies as well as skin care services using products made from natural ingredients.

The best place for visitors to get oriented to the area is the Harmony Museum in the village of Harmony. The museum reaches back to the 1700s when Major George Washington, on a mission to warn the French against further occupation of the region, narrowly escaped death when a "French Indian" shot an arrow at him. The region was settled in the 1800s by German immigrants who were eager to establish a community where church and state were separate and who formed a communal village. The museum features Harmonist furniture, a kitchen and wine cellar.

The new Maridon Museum in Butler



devotes its attentions to Chinese and Japanese art and culture. On exhibit are ornate jade and ivory sculptures, tapestries, and landscape paintings (some on silk).

The center of the county's outdoor life is Moraine State Park, where visitors can fish, boat, bike, hike and hunt. Boat cruises on the *Nautical Nature* survey the park's abundant wildlife habitats.

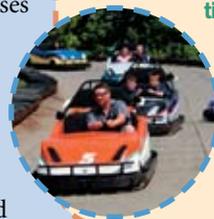
Shopping in Butler County proves that one-of-a-kind, family-owned stores still survive. At the Alpaca de Moda Boutique, you can shop for alpaca clothing. The boutique is located outside Butler on Sunset Hills farm, where Accoyo and Peruvian Alpacas are bred.



## Take the Kids

Kids will happily roam the aisles at **Baldinger's Market** near Zelenople; the store sells 100 types of penny candy. Pry them away from the candy and take them to **Worsley's**, in Butler, for its extensive selection of puppets and collectible dolls.

In fact, finding engaging pastimes for the kids should be no problem. **Cheeseman Farm** in Portersville schedules hayrides over its hills. On scheduled tours, the folks at **Marburger Farm Dairy** show how eggs, bread and ice cream are made. A mini-



**Butler County Tourism and Convention Bureau**, 724/869-0740. [www.visitbutlercounty.com](http://www.visitbutlercounty.com).

**Heather Hill B&B**, 268 Rader School Rd., Renfrew, 724/789-7911. [www.heatherhillbnb.com](http://www.heatherhillbnb.com). Rooms \$70-\$120

**Inn on Grandview**, 310 E. Grandview, Zelenople, 724/452-0469. [www.innongrandview.com](http://www.innongrandview.com). Rooms \$85-\$140

**Inn Between**, 161 Deer Creek Rd., Ivy Wood, 724/352-4899. [www.innbetween.us](http://www.innbetween.us). Rooms \$70-\$125.

**Osiris Wellness and Day Spa**, 1511 Mars-Evans City Rd., Evans City, 724/538-4004. [www.osiriswellness.com](http://www.osiriswellness.com)

**Harmony Museum**, 218 Mercer St., Harmony, 888/821-4822. [www.harmonymuseum.org](http://www.harmonymuseum.org)

**Maridon Museum**, 322 N. McKean St., Butler, 724/282-0123. [www.maridon.org](http://www.maridon.org)

**Alpaca de Moda Boutique**, 1120 Three Degree Rd., Butler, 724/586-2412. [www.sunsethillsalpacas.com](http://www.sunsethillsalpacas.com).

**Baldinger's Market**, 22105 Perry Highway (U.S. Rte. 19 and St. Rte. 528), Zelenople, 724/452-9310.

**Cheeseman Farm**, 226 Cheeseman Rd., Portersville, 724/368-3233. [www.cheesemanfarm.com](http://www.cheesemanfarm.com)

**Marburger Farm Dairy**, 1506 Mars-Evans City Rd., Evans City, 724/538-4800. [www.marburgerfarm.com](http://www.marburgerfarm.com)

**Fun Fore All**, 8 Progress Ave., Cranberry Township, 724-779-2270. [www.funforeall.net](http://www.funforeall.net).

# Head to the Beach

Pack the cooler, smear on the sunscreen, and don the shades. Whether it's just the two of you or you're traveling with friends or family, we've found the beach that's right or you.

By Amy S. Eckert Illustration by Ingo Fast

## 10. Silver Lake Sand Dunes, Michigan

Even more than its gorgeous Lake Michigan beaches, it is the 1,200 acres of dunes that draw people to **Silver Lake State Park**. Like something out of "Laurence of Arabia," the dunes seem to go on forever, dry and windswept and starkly beautiful. The park draws thousands of people who love the thrill of speeding over the dunes in their off-road vehicles. (This is the only beach in Michigan where it's legal.) Keep your eyes open for fulgarites in the sand, glassy, molten-sand tubes formed when lightning strikes the dunes. The lodging of choice at Silver Lake is camping — there are a number of private campgrounds in the area but the state park is the best. If you prefer a hotel, try the **Dunes Waterfront Resort** in nearby Mears, with its own private beach. *Silver Lake Sand Dunes*, [www.silverlakecvb.org](http://www.silverlakecvb.org).

## 1. Saugatuck, Michigan

**Oval Beach** is the place to go in Saugatuck for those who like activity: people watching, eating shaved ice and hot dogs, and parking on the sand. **Saugatuck Dunes State Park**, on the other hand, may be Saugatuck's most romantic spot. A mile-long, wooded stroll ends at a secluded sugar-sand beach, uncluttered by bathhouses and food vendors and remarkably free of people. The romance continues downtown, where dozens of galleries, boutique shopping, quaint cafes and coffee shops line the small-town streets. At dinnertime, consider French favorite **Restaurant Toulouse**, British pub **Chequers** or the contemporary **Copper Grille**. The **Wickwood Inn** is the perfect B&B choice, with rich linens, gourmet breakfasts and iced tea on a quiet, ivy-embraced screen porch. *Saugatuck Convention and Visitors Bureau*, [www.saugatuck.com](http://www.saugatuck.com)

## 2. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Indiana

Only 50 miles from Chicago, **Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore** includes 25 miles of unspoiled Lake Michigan shoreline in an area better known for its industry than tourism. The 2-lane, twisting **Dunes Highway** (U.S. Rte. 12) cuts through the heart of the park, winding through hardwood forests and offering glimpses of dunes and water along the way. Four beaches lie within the park's boundaries, as well as picnic facilities, hiking and bridle trails, and an interpretive center. Also part of the park is **Chellberg Farm**, a turn-of-the-century farmstead. Visitors tour the house and barn, and on weekends help feed the livestock. Most overnight visitors make use of the park's campground, but if you prefer a hotel, you'll find many chain options in Michigan City, Chesterton and Portage. *Porter County Convention, Recreation & Visitor Commission*, [www.indianadunes.com](http://www.indianadunes.com).

## 3. Maumee Bay State Resort Park, Ohio

So you can't agree on what to do at the beach? Go to **Maumee Bay** and do it all. Jet skiing, windsurfing, swimming, fishing, golfing, biking, hiking, bird watching and kayaking, this state park has something for everyone. A groomed sandy beach, manmade ponds, paved bike paths, wild wetlands, nature trails, and a first-rate golf course offer opportunities for everyone. Eat Lake Erie whitefish and enjoy lake views at the park's **Water's Edge Restaurant**. For those on a tight budget, Maumee Bay's **campground** offers group sites with beautiful views and shaded, grassy lots. If you want something a little more upscale, check out the park's **deluxe cottages** — they sleep up to 14, have full kitchens, hot tubs, screened porches and lots of privacy. *Maumee Bay State Resort Park*, [www.dnr.state.oh.us/parks/parks/maumeebay.htm](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/parks/parks/maumeebay.htm)



## 4. Put-In-Bay, Ohio

The best beach near **Put-in-Bay** is at **South Bass State Park**, but don't be surprised if you never make it there. During the day, Put-in-Bay's streets hum with golf carts cruising the island streets and pedestrians checking out the island's shops. But when the sun goes down, the town really wakes up. Dinner at **The Boardwalk** is a favorite, where seafood and Lake Erie views dominate. Afterward there's room for all your friends to belly up to the world's longest bar at the **Beer Barrel Saloon**. The round, century-old **Roundhouse Bar** livens up the night with live dance music and beer served in buckets for sharing. Stay at the **Grand Islander Hotel**, a perfect hotel for groups, with swimming pools and the world's largest swim-up bar. *Put-In-Bay*, [www.lake-erie.com](http://www.lake-erie.com)

## 9. Sleeping Bear Dunes Ntl' Lakeshore, Michigan

There are a half-dozen beaches near Traverse City, but **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore** tops the list. The park is home to some of the highest sand dunes you're likely ever to see. Extensive hiking trails wend through forested dunes, but a car trip along **Pierce Stocking Drive** offers great shots for shutterbugs. For a unique beach experience, rent a canoe and paddle down the **Platte River**. The river passes through woods where canoes scare up deer and herons. At the end of the trip, the Platte empties onto a sugar-sand beach in the southern reaches of the national park. Your best bet for accommodations lies in Traverse City, where **Great Wolf Lodge** offers kid-friendly rooms and an indoor water park. *Traverse City Convention and Visitors Bureau, www.nps.gov/slbe/*

## 8. Mackinac Island, Michigan

The ferry ride is as much a part of a **Mackinac Island** weekend as the island stay: Deep blue lake and sky, a crisp breeze, and the graceful **Mackinaw Bridge** spanning Michigan's peninsulas to your west. Lake Huron's cold water and rocky shore make for chilly swimming. These island beaches are better for beachcombing and stone skipping. Better still, rent a tandem bike and tour the eight miles of lakeshore leisurely. Don't miss the opportunity to stay at the **Grand Hotel**; its richly decorated, balconied rooms, exquisite dining and a first-rate staff are fit for royalty. At day's end, head to the beach again, the only place in the world where you can watch the sun rise over one Great Lake and set over another. *Mackinac Island Tourism Bureau www.mackinacisland.org*

## 7. Sandbanks Provincial Park, Ontario

Eighty-foot sand dunes and the finest beaches in southern Ontario are the primary draw at **Sandbanks Provincial Park**. Whether your family is interested in active sports — like swimming, canoeing or fishing — or prefers relaxing with a book in the summer sun, Sandbanks offers something for everyone. Local canoe, kayak or rowboat rentals help get the family out on the water. But if you tire of swimming, you can always visit the **Ameliasburgh Historical Museum** nearby, which includes 15 pioneer-era buildings with daily handcraft demonstrations. Camping is the lodging of choice — Sandbanks includes five campgrounds with more than 500 campsites. The **Isaiah Tubbs Resort** in nearby Picton and a host of good chain options in Belleville provide overnight options. *Ontario Tourism, www.ontarioparks.com*

## 6. Sodus Point, New York

A historic old lighthouse, a cozy B&B, sweeping Lake Ontario vistas and winery tours. **Sodus Point** has all the ingredients for a romantic getaway. Stay at the **Carriage House Inn**, comprised of two historic homes turned guesthouses. The inn's 1870 building sits on four quiet acres, but the stone Carriage House is closest to the beach; its rooms provide views of Lake Ontario and the **Sodus Point Lighthouse**. Outdoor concerts are held on summer Sunday afternoons at the base of the light. Downtown, an assortment of shops and small restaurants rounds greets visitors. And an easy one-hour drive will take you to **Seneca** or **Cayuga Lakes**, the heart of the Finger Lakes wine region. *Sodus Point, www.seawaytrail.com*

## 5. Presque Isle, Pennsylvania

Sandy hook-shaped **Presque Isle** juts out into Lake Erie from Pennsylvania's tiny lakefront panhandle near Erie. It's the only true beach property in the Keystone State, providing more than seven miles of swimming beaches, hiking trails, paved biking and in-line skating paths, and plenty of water for fishing and boating. Kids especially enjoy watching Great Lakes freighters ply the waters between Pennsylvania and Ontario; visitors of all ages like to test their bird watching skills. From early spring through autumn, thousands of birds migrate by way of Presque Isle. For fun on the mainland, visit the **Erie Zoo and Botanical Gardens**. **Splash Lagoon** is a great hotel choice in Erie; if the weather turns gray, the resort's indoor water park provides a great alternative to the beach. *Erie Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, www.visiteriepa.com*



# The More the Merrier

Resort destinations please crowds with many options for fun and relaxation.

By Gerald Bartell



Traveling with a group of friends, neighbors or family can lend a trip a party atmosphere. But first you have to agree on a place, and that process may have you echoing a classic Irving Berlin song. You say “tomato” and your friends say “to-mah-to” — meaning you want tennis and they want gambling.

But before you call the whole thing off, consider resorts that offer a varied slate of activities, something, as they say, for everyone.

## Greens and grapevines

Toftrees Resort in State College, Pennsylvania, for example, ought to please golfers. Designed by renowned golf course architect Ed Ault, the 18-hole course garnered a four-and-a-half-star

rating from *Golf Digest*. The ninth hole challenges the best of them: it’s a 240-yard shot over a lake with fountains. When the lake’s herons start dining on your golf balls, get help from resident golf instructors.

Those less than fascinated with fairway greens can explore the green of central Pennsylvania’s mountains and valleys on trips to nearby wineries. One of the closest is Mount Nittany Vineyards and Winery in Centre Hall. The open slope of Mt. Nittany and the excellent air drainage protect the vineyards here from early and late frosts. Seven varieties can be sampled in the tasting room, which has a panoramic view of the Tussey Mountain Range.



Shade Mountain Vineyards, in the broad, verdant Susquehanna Valley near Middleburg, specializes in fruit wines — peach, strawberry, apple. And Brookmere Farm Vineyards, housed in a 19th-century stone and wood barn, has picnic spots where you can enjoy their French hybrids and vinifera varieties.

Back at Toftrees, golfer and wine connoisseurs can share a game of tennis, have a swim in the lighted, heated outdoor pool, and then settle in for dinner at Le Papillon restaurant.

## Sand trails and spa treatments

Indian Oak Resort and Spa in Chesterton, Indiana, offers visitors a choice between



# More Fun in Motown

Gourmet dining, posh lodgings, arts events, shopping and more make Detroit a great getaway.

By Amy S. Eckert



Detroit has drawn automobile and sports fans to its downtown for decades, promising the fun of hot cars and a great game. But the Motor City is also an ideal destination for a romantic getaway.

The Marriott Renaissance Center is the best base from which to explore the city; ask for a riverside room on the 10th floor or above and you’ll enjoy Detroit’s finest views, too. Stroll Detroit’s RiverWalk from the Ambassador Bridge

to Belle Isle See and the river up close. There’s great shopping at Wintergarden, the Renaissance Center’s glass shopping atrium and downtown’s newest shopping center. A few blocks north, Campus Martius combines a city park with music stages and an outdoor café where you can enjoy the city’s newest sparkling high-rises.

The Detroit Institute of Arts lies several miles north on Woodward Avenue in the heart of the museum district. Visit in spite of the DIA’s ongoing construction project; all of the museum’s finest works, including Diego Rivera’s landmark “Detroit Industry” murals, are still on display. For modern African American art, step around the corner to N’Namdi Gallery. You’ll also see contemporary works at the Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit or the Detroit Artists Market. In the evening head back to the Renaissance Center for dinner at romantic Seldom Blues. The menu is dominated by contemporary continental cuisine with a French influence, and the air is filled with sultry live jazz.

Once you’ve seen Detroit’s highlights, head south to Windsor, Ontario. Just a few miles from downtown Detroit,



revving up or cooling down.

Travelers who must burn carbs can do just that. For a good start, hike the mostly level trails surrounding the resort's private lake.

Hamstrings stretched, hikers can then head two miles north to Indiana Dunes State Park, the site of some of the most fascinating hiking trails in the Midwest. Stop at the visitors' center to learn of the stunning variety of terrain and wildlife a walker can see. Then strike out across the mapped trails. Skirting the shore of Lake Michigan, the dune walks rise as high as 180 feet above the lake and move through a desert-like terrain of driftwood and prickly cactus. Away from shore are

bogs, swamps and marshes, as well as the remnants of an 1822 homestead.

The nine-mile Calumet Trail also cuts through the park, its wide sand and gravel paths open for walking, biking and cross-country skiing. Oak, maple and sumac trees line the way, with wildflowers — butterfly weed, wild bergamot and fringed gentians — adding flecks of color in late summer.

The trail also passes several marshes that provide a home for hawks, owls and egrets. But watch your step — you may share a side path with a hognose, a non-venomous reptile with a Cobra-like head.

Less intrepid, less active travelers can enjoy Indian Oak's spa. You can start a

full day of treatments with a choice of massages. Aromatherapy treatments work with scented oils; hot stone sessions apply warm, then cool stones to stress pressure points; and barefoot Swedish massage involves controlled, gliding foot pressure.

The spa also offers body treatments that soothe and smooth. The sea salt glo treatment exfoliates with sea salts and jojoba oil, the micro-buff body polish uses an apricot based body exfoliant to lift away dry skin. Also available are two masks. An anti-stress back treatment applies a seaweed mask and oils to relieve tension. And the seaweed and French green clay body mask wraps clients in marine clay infused with amino acids and vitamin E.

### Hiking, biking and history

It's hard to escape history in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, but guests at the town's handsome Bavarian Inn can pursue it casually or aggressively. Those who feel vacation is synonymous with exercise can hit the C&O (Chesapeake and Ohio) Canal towpath, which skirts the town on its 184-mile journey from Washington, DC, to Cumberland,

Branteaney's B&B offers a surprisingly rural experience: Lush gardens and a generous hot breakfast are surpassed only by the room with the hot tub that looks out on Malden Park.

Enjoy Detroit's skyline from Windsor's Riverside Park, and include time to enjoy its Odette Sculpture Park. The small, independent Walkerville Brewing Company is well worth stopping for; take a quick tour, sample a few brews and take a 6-pack home. In the afternoon, head south toward Kingsville to visit several Ontario wineries. (Sanson, Colio and Pelee Island Wineries are the best.) If you decide to overnight in Kingsville, don't pass up Vintage Goose Inn & Spa. The inn's Victorian bedrooms are cozy, and its spa services are first-rate. But even better is a dinner at Vintage Goose Restaurant. The winemaker's dinner, a five-course meal paired with Ontario wines, is a treat you won't forget. If you decide to dine in Windsor, head for La Cuisine, where the proprietor-chef will prepare your lavish dinner before your eyes in his open



### Take the Kids

While in Detroit, be sure to take your kids on the **People Mover**, an elevated monorail.

They'll enjoy the ride, the views and the public art at each station. The **People Mover** is a great way to travel to **Comerica Park** for Detroit Tigers' baseball. A tiger-themed carousel and a baseball-car Ferris wheel help pass the time before the first pitch. Out in the suburbs, see real tigers at the **Detroit Zoo**, also home to the world's largest polar bear exhibit, a Great Ape exhibit and a butterfly garden.

**Detroit CVB**, 211 W. Fort St., Suite 1000, Detroit, 800/DETROIT. [www.visitdetroit.com](http://www.visitdetroit.com)

**Windsor/Essex County CVB**, 333 Riverside Dr. W., Suite 103, Windsor, Ontario, 800/265-3633. [www.visitwindsor.com](http://www.visitwindsor.com)

**Marriott Renaissance Center Detroit**, Renaissance Center, Detroit, 313/568-8000

**Branteaney's B&B**, 1649 Chappus Street, Windsor, Ontario, 800/966-1405

**Vintage Goose Inn & Spa**, 31 Division St. S., Kingsville, Ontario, 877/737-5557

**Vintage Goose Restaurant**, 24 Main Street West, Kingsville, Ontario, 519/733-6900. Wed.-Sun. 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m.

**Seldom Blues**, 400 Renaissance Center, Detroit, 313/567-7301. Mon.-Thurs. 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Fri. 11:30 a.m.-midnight, Sat. 5p.m.-midnight, Sun. 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

**La Cuisine**, 417 Rue Pelissier St., Windsor, Ontario, 519/253-6432. Tues.-Sat. 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., 5 p.m.-9 p.m.

**Colio Estate Wines**, 1 Colio Dr., Harrow, Ontario, 800/265-1322. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Pelee Island Winery**, 455 Seaciff, Co. Rd. 20, Kingsville,

**The Henry Ford Museum has something for everyone, but its centerpiece is, not surprisingly, cars. Kids love the Oscar Meyer Wienermobile. Make time for Rosa Parks' bus and the presidential vehicles, including the limousine in which President John F. Kennedy was shot. Next door, Greenfield Village houses 100 genuine 17th-, 18th-, and 19th-century structures, including The Wright Brothers' bicycle shop and Thomas Edison's laboratory. Or take a Ford Rouge Factory Tour, showcasing the production of the F-150 pickup. Consider staying overnight in suburban Detroit's Best Western Sterling Heights. The indoor water park is a hit with kids.**

Ontario, 800/597-3533. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Sanson Estate**, 9238 Walker Rd., McGregor, Ontario, 519/726-9609. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Art Gallery of Windsor**, 401 Riverside Dr. West, Windsor, Ontario, 519/977-0013, Wed., Sat.-Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Thur.-Fri. 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

**The Henry Ford**, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn, Mich., 800/835-5237. [www.thehenryford.com](http://www.thehenryford.com). Open daily 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Extended evening hours in Greenfield Village, June 18-Aug. 21, Fri.-Sat. until 9 p.m. Museum admission \$14; Greenfield Village \$20; Factory Tour \$14. Combination packages available.

**Detroit Zoo**, 8450 W. 10-Mile Rd., Royal Oak, Mich., 248/398-0900. [www.detroitzoo.org](http://www.detroitzoo.org). Daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission \$11, seniors \$9, children 2-12 \$7

**Comerica Park**, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit, 313/471-2000. <http://detroit.tigers.mlb.com>. Tickets \$5-\$60

**Best Western Sterling Inn**, 34911 Van Dyke Ave., Sterling Hts., Mich., 800/953-1400

Maryland. The 12-foot-wide path, shaded and mostly level, is ideal for mountain biking. Remains of bridges, aqueducts, and lock houses line the way. A journey 10 miles south leads to Harper's Ferry, the village made famous in 1859 when abolitionist John Brown tried to incite a slave revolt.

Those who take their history at a more leisurely pace will be rewarded by strolling through Shepherdstown. On the National Register of Historic Places, Shepherdstown's historic district features intact Greek Revival, Federal and Victorian buildings dating to the 1734. The Shepherdstown Museum, housed in what in 1786 was the Entler Hotel, traces the town's history back to its beginnings. There's a re-created hotel bedroom, a Victorian sitting room and a collection of Civil War artifacts.

More detail on the Civil War can be found at the George Tyler Moore Civil War Center. One hundred twenty victims of the Battle of Antietam are buried nearby in Elwood Cemetery.

Shopping can bring an afternoon in Shepherdstown into the present tense. Four Seasons Books is that rarity — an independent, family-owned bookstore that sells new and used books. O'Hurley's General Store is the place to stock up on housewares. One Two Kangaroo has toys to divert younger travelers not all that fascinated by the Civil War. And German St. Coffee and Candlerly is the place for a mid-afternoon caffeine jolt.

Back at the hotel, historians active and casual will agree that the view from the deck down to the bending Potomac is splendid. Tales of the day's discoveries can be swapped over sauerbraten or jaeger schnitzel in the informal Rathskeller or the more sedate Library Dining Room.

**Toftrees Resort and Four Star Golf Club**, One Country Club Lane, State College, Pa., 800/252-3551. [www.toftrees.com](http://www.toftrees.com)

**Central Pennsylvania wineries**, 800/358-5466. [www.visitpennstate.org](http://www.visitpennstate.org)

**Indian Oak Resort and Spa**, 558 Indian Boundary Rd., Chesterton, Ind., 800/552-4232. [www.indianoak.com](http://www.indianoak.com)

**The Bavarian Inn**, 164 Shepherd Grade Rd., Shepherdstown, W. Va., 304/876-2552. [www.bavarianinnwv.com](http://www.bavarianinnwv.com)



# Time Travel

Pack up the car and take the family on a trip to remember.

By Betsa Marsh



Like modern pioneers, families can hop in the van and retrace the westward push of the American frontier across three states and three centuries. They can “fort up” in a log stockade and glide along a river in a canal boat, then fast-forward to a high-splashing amusement park.

What was it like to flee an Indian attack, race to the fort and long to hear the slam of the gates behind you? Children and parents can imagine the perils of frontier life at Prickett's Fort State Park, north of Fairmont, West Virginia.

Jacob Prickett and his family moved to this rich wilderness along the Monongahela River in the early 1770s, and by 1774, settlers had built the log fort to shelter up to 80 families. The Shawnee and Delaware Indians had been fur trading with Europeans for a century or more, but weren't willing to give up their land. Although there are no records of an attack at Prickett's, white women and children headed to

the stockade to “fort up” against any threat, staying in the tiny cabins while their menfolk roughed it outside the cabin doors.

Today, a Native American guide talks to visitors about the fur trade in the Store, a replica of Jacob Prickett's original trading post. A gunsmith crafts muzzleloaders on a bench nearby.

At the Meeting House, costumed interpreters spin wool, dry herbs and cook meals on the hearth. Outside, a blacksmith hammers the axes, knives, tomahawks and kitchen utensils essential for pioneer life.

Just outside the fort, a converted rail trail calls walkers and cyclists, and the Monongahela River lures boaters and fishing enthusiasts.

Heading farther west like America's settlers, the family van enters another state and another world. It's only 60-some years later, but the hand-dug canals linking the fertile farms of Ohio with eastern markets opened new realms to people in the heartland of the infant nation.

Much of that vital network has vanished with time, but in Historic Roscoe Village outside Coshocton, Ohio, it's always the 1830s, and the Ohio & Erie Canal is the most exciting thing any-



one's ever seen.

The first canal boat arrived in 1830, launching the town's heyday as a port. Families can glide back into that era just by stepping onto the "Caldersburg Pearl" replica canal boat and letting the large draft horses tow them along a quarter-mile of the original canal.

"Children get to pet the horses and talk to them," says Angie Ianniello, public relations coordinator for the village. "The seats on the canal boat look right out the windows to the water, and we ask kids to look for snakes." At the visitor center, children can try some canal-era skills, such as tin punching, weaving and candle dipping, for just \$2 per craft, and swing by the Roscoe General Store to shop for wooden toys, peppermint sticks and licorice.

This year, the spirit of Dr. Maro Johnson will return to the village he served for 50 years. An interpreter speaking as the good doctor will lead visitors through his office and pharmacy and out back to his wife Eliza's healing herb garden. Children can listen for heartbeats with his old-style stethoscope, and those who dare



can peek at the medicinal leeches.

Did somebody mention daredevils? Westward ho, into another state and another century.

In 1946, Santa Claus Land opened among the hills of southern Indiana's Spencer County, and in the 60 years since, generations of daredevils have ridden the rides, splashed in the pools and headed home, happily exhausted and loaded with memories.

The theme park became Holiday World in 1984, and added Splashin' Safari to its name with its first giant pools. The Freedom Train is the only ride to have chugged through the park over all the decades.

For its diamond anniversary, Holiday World & Splashin' Safari has added a vast new Thanksgiving theme section to its other areas, such as Fourth of July, Halloween and, of course, Christmas. In the new Gobbler Getaway, riders are given a turkey call and charged with rounding up all the turkeys on an 1800s farm.

Holiday World, famous for its wooden roller coasters, is pushing the boundaries with the new Voyage, among the three longest and fastest wooden coasters in the world—with the steepest drop.

The Voyage will be the biggest of the park's three coasters, at 1.2 miles long. Riders will feel weightless for 24.2 seconds—an ultimate rush for some, an eternity of torment for others.

The Voyage joins The Raven and The Legend, both renowned among coaster

fans. The Raven races through trees and tunnels at 60 mph, earning it the No. 3 ranking from readers of *Amusement Today* in its 2004 poll. The Legend recreates Ichabod Crane's frantic flight through the woods of Sleepy Hollow away from the Headless Horseman. It's No. 5 on the readers' list.

But Holiday World is not all about adrenaline. Many of its rides, such as Dasher's Sea Horses and Paul Revere's Midnight Ride, are gentle enough for little travelers. The round tube floats of the Raging Rapids can hold an entire family for a quick, wet cool-off.

At Splashin' Safari, the new Bahari action river joins the Bahari-themed wave pool, which surprises swimmers with spray jets and geysers. Families can zoom down rafts on the Jungle Racer slides, or twirl together down eight stories through the Zinga tunnel.

Ready for the world's tallest enclosed water slide? Then climb right up for Zoombabwe and hold on tight.

Eventually, even the boldest daredevils have to wind down for the evening, and the perfect thing may be a spot of Christmas. At Santa's Storytime, the Jolly Old Man regales the children with stories of his exploits and spins a little holiday magic as only he can do.

**Prickett's Fort State Park**, St. Rte. 3, Fairmont, W. Va., 304/363-3030. [www.prickettsfort.org](http://www.prickettsfort.org)

**Historic Roscoe Village**, 381 Hill St., Coshocton, Oh., 800/877-1830. [www.roscoevillage.com](http://www.roscoevillage.com)

**Holiday World & Splashin' Safari**, 452 E. Christmas Blvd., Santa Claus, Ind., 877/463-2645. [www.holidayworld.com](http://www.holidayworld.com)

# Relaxing Rochester

Take a breather in Western New York — cruise the Erie Canal, stay in a luxury hotel or pack a gourmet picnic in the park. **By Ellen Clark**

Rochester, New York's third-largest city, has some surprising attractions for couples seeking a weekend respite.

For starters, how about a luxury hotel on the Erie Canal? The Renaissance Del Monte Lodge Hotel & Spa, located in the toney little village of Pittsford, is the perfect place to feel pampered. An attentive staff, a spa and rooms that boast such upscale amenities as orthopedic mattresses, leather recliners and luxury linens — what's not to like?

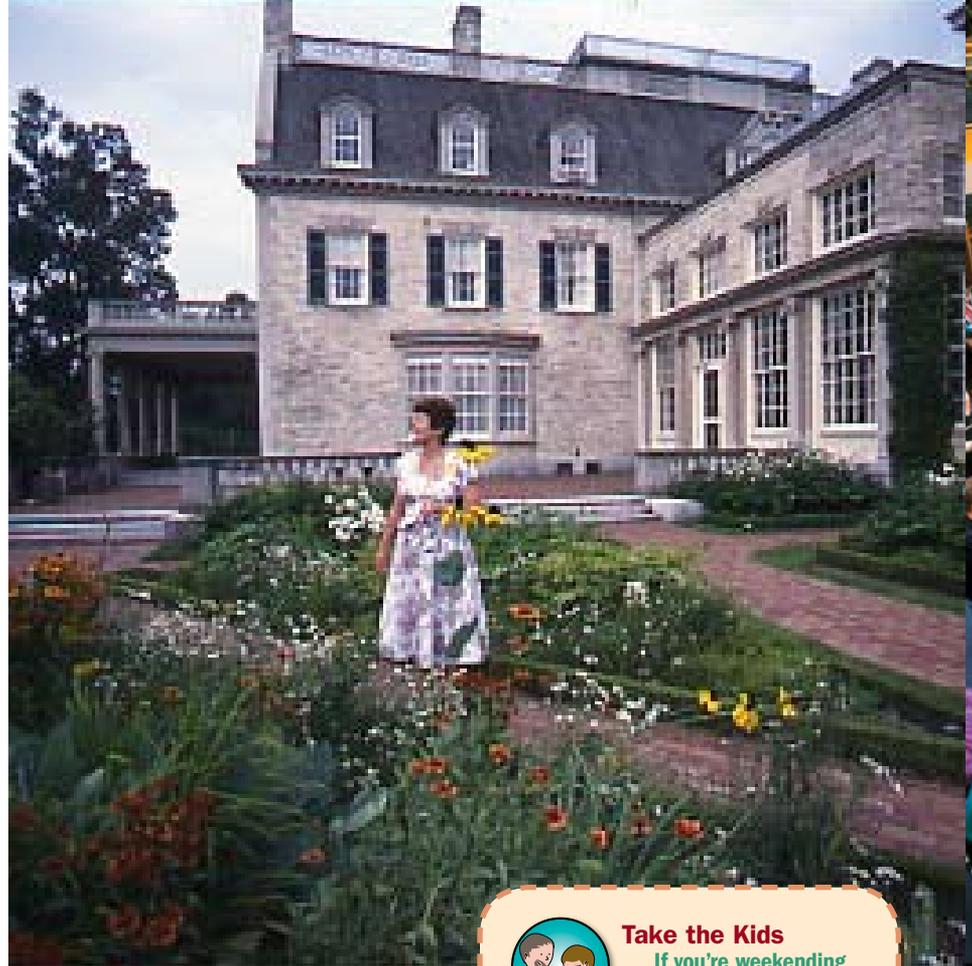
After an oh-so-relaxing spa treatment, head for Pittsford's center. Stroll the tiny historic downtown and browse through the pristine boutiques before breaking for a latte at one of the upscale cafes.

Feeling energetic? Stop by Towpath Bike Rentals, where you can helmet-up and get a map of bike trails along the canal. Or, if a leisurely cruise sounds more relaxing, amble down to the town dock and book an hour-and-a-half trip aboard the Sam Patch, a replica packet boat.

For another view of the canal, dine al fresco at the Richardson Canal House at Pittsford's Bushnell Basin. Built in 1818, it is the oldest working tavern on the canal, and if the air is too nippy for the canal-side patio, grab a burger and a brew at the Cobblestone Pub or enjoy continental favorites in one of the indoor restaurant's cozy rooms.

Once you've exhausted all that Pittsford has to offer, head for Rochester, only a 15-minute drive away.

If a picnic in the city's largest park sounds intriguing, stop by Wegman's Pittsford on your way. More like a French street market than a grocery store, this



family-owned food emporium has an overwhelming array of foodstuffs and gourmet take-out for every taste. Armed with a sumptuous selection of Wegman's finest, find a shady spot in Highland Park and tuck in. Designed by renowned park designer Frederick Law Olmsted in the late 19th century, the 155-acre park is filled with paths that snake through groves of trees, past flowering bushes and offer some lovely views of the city.

No trip to Rochester would be complete without a visit to the George Eastman House and Museum. Home of the founder of Eastman Kodak, the graceful stone house is full of original furnishings and has a variety of exhibits and lovely gardens.

Before heading back to Pittsford, have



## Take the Kids

If you're weekendening with the kids, never fear, Rochester can rise to the occasion.

occasion.

**Homewood Suites by Hilton**, in the suburb of Henrietta, couldn't be more family-friendly. The suites have two telephones with dataports per unit and an indoor pool, and there's a mall within walking distance. Plus, with full kitchens and a Wegman's down the street, parents can save money on meals.

There are several excellent kid-oriented attractions in Rochester. First, for kids of all ages, the **Strong Museum** is a must-see. Among the museum's eclectic collections you'll see dolls, games and toys from your childhood, whenever it was. Interactive exhibits include everything from radio hosting out of a kid-sized recording studio to shopping at a mock grocery store, complete with merchandise and kid-level checkout stands.

**Rochester Museum and Science Center** offers three floors of hands-on science and technology exhibits, while at **Strasburgh Planetarium**, giant-screen films highlight everything from the scientific reasons for natural disasters to exploring the black-hole phenomenon.

It may not be as glitzy and pristine as Disneyland, but for good old-fashioned fun, **Seabreeze Amusement Park**, in business since 1879, can't be beat. Rides range from calm to hair-raising, and the waterpark is teeming with activity on a hot summer afternoon.

**Greater Rochester Visitors Association**, 800/677-7282. [www.visitrochester.com](http://www.visitrochester.com).

**Renaissance Del Monte Lodge Hotel & Spa**, 41 North Main St., Pittsford, 585/381-9900.

**Towpath Bike Shop**, 3 Schoen Pl., Pittsford, 585/381-2808, [www.towpathbike.com](http://www.towpathbike.com).

**Sam Patch Canal Tours**, Corn Hill Navigation, Rochester, 585/262-5661. [www.samandmary.org](http://www.samandmary.org).

**Wegman's Pittsford**, 3195 Monroe Ave., Rochester 585/586-6680. [www.wegmans.com](http://www.wegmans.com).

**Richardson Canal House**, 1474 Marsh Rd., Pittsford, 585/248-5000. [www.richardsonscanalhouse.net](http://www.richardsonscanalhouse.net).

**Highland Park**, 485 Highland Ave., Rochester

**George Eastman House**, 900 East Ave., Rochester, 585/271-3361. [www.eastmanhouse.org](http://www.eastmanhouse.org). Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m. -5

p.m., Thur. until 8 p.m., Sun. 1-5 p.m. Admission \$8, seniors \$6, students \$5, ages 5-12 \$3.

**Rio Bamba**, 282 Alexander St., Rochester, 585/244-8680. [www.theriobamba.com](http://www.theriobamba.com).

**Homewood Suites by Hilton Rochester/Henrietta**, 2095 Hylan Dr., Rochester, 585/334-9150. <http://homewood-suites.hilton.com>. Call for rates.

**Rochester Museum & Science Center**, 657 East Ave., Rochester, 585/271-4320. [www.rmssc.org](http://www.rmssc.org). Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 12-5 p.m. Admission \$8, students and seniors \$7, children 3-18 \$6.

**Sea Breeze Park**, 4600 Culver Rd., Rochester, 800/395-2500. [www.seabreeze.com](http://www.seabreeze.com). Summer only, call for times. Admission \$19.95, those under 48 tall \$15.95, after 5 p.m. \$12.95, spectator pass \$7.50.



# Kids Rule

There are some great regional destinations for kids and grandparents to enjoy some time together. In fact, many of these spots are great for a couple's getaway, too. **By Amy S. Eckert**

Grandparents love spending time with grandchildren, and vice versa. Those visits can be extra special on a weekend trip. Meanwhile, parents might enjoy being kids again themselves on a fun-filled holiday.

## Cedar Point, Sandusky, Ohio

■ **Send the Kids:** Cedar Point is home to the wildest rides on the planet. Your kids would love a weekend there. But their grandparents? There's plenty for everyone at Cedar Point. Antique cars, the Ferris wheel and Cedar Downs don't rank among the park's most exciting attractions, but they're fun when shared with the right people. All that time in line means plenty of time for conversation. And who knows? Maybe the grandparents will enjoy the roller coasters. Cap off the trip with a night at one of Cedar Point's resorts, each with spacious family suites.

■ **Be a Kid Yourself:** Remember driving for hours with friends to spend all day at Cedar Point, riding the wildest rides, eating junk food and getting sunburned?



## Houseboating on Lake Cumberland, Kentucky

■ **Send the Kids:** On the back of the houseboat is a water slide and swimming platform. On the top deck, patio furniture and a hot tub. Inside, a TV, DVD player, full kitchen and comfortable living room. A houseboating vacation offers something for everyone. Grandpa and the grandkids can fish off the swimming platform while grandma reads; grandma can play board games with the kids while grandpa cooks; and everyone can enjoy a movie together before heading off to separate bedrooms. And with modern models up to 80 feet long and sleeping up to 14, togetherness doesn't have to feel crowded.

■ **Be a Kid Yourself:** Rent a houseboat

Relive your youth with a trip to the park this summer. You can find out whether you're as brave as you used to be. Relax afterward at the very grown-up, historic Hotel Breakers, maybe taking a spa treatment instead of a roller coaster ride.

## Great Wolf Lodge, Traverse City, Mich.

■ **Send the Kids:** Great Wolf's indoor water park will hook your kids the minute they see it: the four-story tree fort, twisting water slides, pools and a 1,000-gallon deluge from an overhead bucket every five minutes. Chances are the grandparents will be as mesmerized as the kids, and they may want to join in. If not, no need to worry. Each activity is supervised by several lifeguards, so adults can just grab a good book and relax in chaise lounges. Great Wolf's rooms are also kid-friendly, each with a refrigerator and microwave, and some even have bunk beds and tree houses for the kids to sleep in.

■ **Be a Kid Yourself:** When was the last time you played on a water slide or shot someone with a water gun? A quick look around Great Wolf's water park reveals plenty of adults enjoying some water fun. If that's not enough to entice you, consider the full-service spa and romance packages with a wine and cheese tray.

and take along your fishing boat, water skis or jet skis — you can tow them behind your boat. At night, tie up the houseboat near one of hundreds of Lake Cumberland waterfalls for a terrific view out your picture window.

## Indianapolis, Indiana

■ **Send the Kids:** Indianapolis has more than its share of great museums and cultural institutions, but the Children's Museum is among the best in the world. The 400,000-square-foot facility offers everything from toddler sensory play to exhibits on the physical and natural sciences and history. Hands-on exhibits make the subjects comprehensible and use floating balls, buried fossils and bugs to give kids insights on science. Nearby, the Indianapolis Zoo houses more than 350 species and includes an underwater dolphin exhibit. You may think the museum and zoo are just for kids, but grown-ups have just as much fun playing water games and learning about baby giraffes.

■ **Be a Kid Yourself:** Do you understand physics? How about gravity? Chances are you could learn something at the Children's Museum, and you can enjoy good deli sandwiches and Starbucks coffee for lunch. Then there's the zoo. Observing baby animals' antics or watching an elephant bathe eases stress and puts things in perspective. It's also a whole lot of fun.

- Cedar Point**, One Cedar Point Dr., Sandusky, Ohio, 419/627-2350. [www.cedarpoint.com](http://www.cedarpoint.com)
- Great Wolf Lodge**, 3575 N. US-31, Traverse City, Mich., 866/GR8-WOLF. [www.tc.greatwolf lodge.com](http://www.tc.greatwolf lodge.com)
- Lake Cumberland**, 6465 State Park Rd., Jamestown, Ky., 888/782-8336. [www.statedock.com](http://www.statedock.com)
- Children's Museum of Indianapolis**, 300 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, Ind., 317/334-3322. [www.childrensmuseum.org](http://www.childrensmuseum.org)
- Indianapolis Zoo**, 1200 W. Washington St. Indianapolis, Ind., 317/630-2001. [www.indyzoo.com](http://www.indyzoo.com)



# Queen (City) For a Day

Bridge climbs, baseball and more along the Ohio River.

By **Betsa Marsh**



Who knew that a couple's escape to Cincinnati would require the wisdom of Judge Judy?

Should we glide on the Ohio River and admire the sun glinting off the hillsides? Or pick a bank and watch the river's waves dance the sun to bed?

Don't worry, it's a cinch to do both. Just book a lunch or dinner cruise on a paddleboat and play on the water. Then, revert to landlubber and pack a picnic or choose a table with a great river view.

So much geography and heritage are crammed into such a small space at this juncture of Ohio and Kentucky, separated by just the width of the mighty Ohio. By taking a leisurely amble across the Newport Southbank Bridge — lovingly called the Purple People Bridge — couples can savor different states, traditions and cuisines.

And new this summer, they can climb over the top of the Purple People Bridge — 140 feet above the Ohio River. Beginning in May, the bridge is set to join its thriller cousins in Sydney, Australia, and Auckland, New Zealand, as America's only climbing bridge. Walkers will be tethered to the purple steel, crossing on a see-through glass walkway.

Alighting in Cincinnati, it's an easy

walk to the Great American Ball Park for a Reds game or a stop in the Reds Hall of Fame and Museum.

Stepping off on the Kentucky side, it's just paces from the shops and restaurants of Newport on the Levee and the Newport Aquarium.

Chef Jean-Robert de Cavell will be offering post-climb meals at his elegant Jean-Robert at Pigall's, a romantic little evocation of Paris that just joined the prestigious Relais & Chateaux association. His seasonal dishes, set against maple paneling and Italian marble, garnered the highest Zagat ratings in the country.

After a celebratory meal, it's time for another climb, just one mile by car up to Mount

Adams. The little bohemian neighborhood clings to its hillside, with fabulous river views from the clubs and from the back of Holy Cross Immaculata Church.

Just around the corner, Playhouse in the Park, winner of the 2004 Regional Tony Award, will wrap its season with "Witness for the Prosecution" through June 4 and the comedy "Squeezebox," through June 25. Its Mount Adams neighbor, the Cincinnati



## Take the Kids

Bringing kids to the Queen City? Greater Cincinnati ranks as one of the best places for families, so it's a natural for kids on the go, too.

First stop is **Cincinnati Museum Center** on the western edge of downtown Cincinnati. The 1933 Art Deco landmark began life as a train station, but for 15 years has bundled some of the city's greatest museums under its giant domed roof, and is now the most-visited museum in Ohio.

Young children zoom down the escalator to the **Cinergy Children's Museum**, to play diner or crawl through the limbs of a huge tree house. Some kids enter the ball bin — helping to keep hundreds of balls in constant motion. Older children zero in on the dinosaur at the **Museum of Natural History and Science**, then clamber aboard a steamboat replica in the **Cincinnati History Museum**.

Across the Ohio River at Newport on the Levee, kids refuel over a junior burger at **Johnny Rockets** and ice cream at **Cold Stone Creamery**. Parents stretch their food and lodging dollars at **Holiday Inn Eastgate**, where children stay free in their parents' room. They also dine free from a special children's menu, up to age 12. Eastgate is close to **Paramount's Kings Island** theme park, always a popular stop before or after exploring Greater Cincinnati.

Art Museum, will exhibit "Rembrandt: Master Printmaker" through June 11.

And one of the coziest nests away from home? The Cincinnati, downtown, is a Mobil four-star, AAA four-diamond renovation of one of the city's oldest hotels. The atrium is intimate for a tea or a drink together, and the rooms sleekly welcoming. ●

**Purple People Bridge Climb**, [www.purplepeoplebridgeclimb.com](http://www.purplepeoplebridgeclimb.com).

**Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame and Museum**, 100 Main St., Cincinnati, 513/765-7000. [www.cincinnatireds.com](http://www.cincinnatireds.com).

**Newport Aquarium**, **One Aquarium Way**, Newport, Ky., 859/261-7444. [www.newportaquarium.com](http://www.newportaquarium.com)

**Jean-Robert at Pigall's**, 127 W. Fourth St., Cincinnati, 513/721-1345. [www.pigalls.com](http://www.pigalls.com).

**Holy Cross Immaculata Church**, 30 Guido St., Cincinnati, 513/721-6544.

**Playhouse in the Park**, 962 Mount Adams Circle, Cincinnati, 513/345-2242. [www.cincyplay.com](http://www.cincyplay.com)

**Cincinnati Art Museum**, 953 Eden Park Dr., Cincinnati, 513/721-2787. [www.cincinnatiartmuseum.com](http://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.com).

**Cincinnati Hotel**, 601 Vine St., Cincinnati, 513/381-3000. [www.cincinnatihotel.com](http://www.cincinnatihotel.com).

**Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal**, 1301 Western Ave., Cincinnati, 513/287-7000. [www.cincy-museum.org](http://www.cincy-museum.org).

**Johnny Rockets**, One Levee Way, Newport, Ky., 859/581-0700. [www.johnnyrockets.com](http://www.johnnyrockets.com).

**Cold Stone Creamery**, One Levee Way, Newport, Ky., 859/291-5380. [www.coldstonecreamery.com](http://www.coldstonecreamery.com).