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Ohio Invites Visitors to Experience a World of Discovery

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Once on the leading edge of western expansion, Ohio is now at the leading edge of expanding visitor experiences through its myriad vacation offerings. Visitors to the Buckeye State will find an unrivaled variety of attractions, destinations and features that provide the chance to enjoy great getaways that are close to home, yet away from it all.

In fact, vacationers to Ohio can travel from ancient Indian cultures to the birthplace of aviation to the world's fastest roller coaster in less than three hours. There's no reason to choose just one place to visit in Ohio when the entire state is easily accessible. Located within a day's drive of 60 percent of the U.S. population, Ohio is quite possibly the perfect vacation destination.

Vacationers to Ohio will find offerings that fall within four key areas: family travel, arts and culture, history and heritage and outdoor adventure. Each of these provides a wealth of sites and activities from which travelers can customize a trip that best fits their interests.

Family Travel

Ohio has long been known as a family travel destination. With its world-renowned theme parks, acclaimed zoos, interactive children's museums and scores of unique educational stops, Ohio offers families enough activities for a lifetime of vacations. And, because Ohio is so conveniently located, parents won't have to endure the consistent "Are we there yet?" groans, because they are.

Cedar Point and Paramount's Kings Island have been raising adrenaline levels for generations of thrill seekers. In 2003, Cedar Point dared to reach beyond the boundaries of roller coaster construction with the "Top Thrill Dragster" that is now the one of the world's tallest, at a height of 420 feet, and fastest steel coaster, reaching speeds in excess of 120 miles per hour. Paramount Kings Island's "Son of Beast" also has a record as the world's fastest and highest wooden roller coaster with its daddy, "The Beast" identified as the world's longest wooden coaster. Opened in 2009 is Diamondback, the tallest and fastest coaster in the Kings Island park.

Families also can see some of the world's most exotic animals at Ohio's acclaimed zoos and animal research facilities. Visitors to Ohio can find a spectacular zoo in each of its major cities. The Wilds, outside Zanesville, offers a tremendous opportunity to experience a research and educational facility with animals from around the world in a safari-like preserve environment.

Families also can enjoy extensive outdoor and educational sites throughout the state that make scrapbook memories last a lifetime.

Arts and Culture

Vacationers seeking a more urban vacation experience can find it in Ohio's dazzling cities. Here, visitors can find the very best in the arts, cultural neighborhoods, fine dining and luxurious accommodations.

Ohio's cities are experiencing a cultural renaissance that beckons former visitors to rediscover a new vitality. Recently named one of the 10 "safest and most culturally fascinating cities" by *Travel Smart!*, Cleveland continues to rocks its visitors with new attractions, world-class museums and arts facilities,

eclectic ethnic neighborhoods and a world of special events. For the first time since 1997, Cleveland made its presence in the music-world known again when the city hosted the 2009 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in April 2009. Opened in early 2009 is the worlds first-ever Bruce Springsteen exhibit at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

In the past decade, Cincinnati has become a city unlike any other. Home to some of the world's finest restaurants and lodging properties, renovated neighborhoods and mesmerizing museums, visitors will marvel at the changes that have taken place in this vibrant city.

Located in the center of everything, Columbus is a city with style. This style is about being confident, diverse and open to new things. From its unique historic neighborhoods to funky arts areas to hip entertainment districts, Columbus offers a distinctive urban experience.

Visitors to all of Ohio's mid-sized cities have long flocked to acclaimed arts, aviation and sporting legacy landmarks, but are now discovering fine dining and great theater at refurbished arts and dining districts.

Ohio's arts, culture and culinary experience also can be found beyond its city limits. Vacationers can discover Ohio's flourishing wine business in the northeast and fine dining at luxury inns dotted across the state. Even in the small communities, visitors will find first-rate dining, master artisans and one-of-a-kind antiques.

Whether applauding an orchestral masterpiece, or exploring the Appalachian arts trail, Ohio has a rich arts and cultural experience for visitors to discover.

History and Heritage

Ohio is uniquely situated so that a wide depth and breadth of history, from ancient Indian civilizations to Civil War heroes to presidential birthplaces, can be found within her borders. Vacationers seeking the chance to connect with and learn from the past can find extraordinary sites throughout Ohio.

Fort Ancient features 18,000 feet of earthen walls built 2,000 years ago by American Indians using shoulder blades of deer, split elk antler, clam shell hoes and digging sticks. Fort Meigs, one of the largest log forts in America, was built to protect Ohio and Indiana from the British. In 2004, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center opened in Cincinnati, commemorating the historic impact of the Underground Railroad and showcasing the efforts of modern-day heroes of freedom movements from around the world.

The Newark Earthworks, a National Historic Landmark, is a place where visitors can explore the 2,000 year-old geometric earthworks that served as both cathedral and astronomical observatories for the people known to archaeologists as the Hopewell culture. In January 2008, the Newark Earthworks was submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage List by the United States Department of Interior for inclusion. The Newark Earthworks State Memorial includes the Great Circle Earthworks State Memorial, Octagon Earthworks, and the Wright Earthworks. Visitors to the Great Circle Museum are invited to watch an interactive video explaining the significance of the site and tour a 1,000-square-foot exhibit that includes a timeline of Ohio's ancient cultures and an explanation of why American Indians regard the Newark Earthworks as a sacred site.

Not only does Ohio have a wealth of historical sites, but it also takes great pride in its history and in offering a glimpse into its extraordinary legacy of heritage to its visitors.

Outdoor Adventure

Possibly Ohio's most undiscovered asset is its spectacular outdoors. From great lakes, to scenic bike

paths to mysterious caves, Ohio has outdoor adventure opportunities for all travelers. Make sure to check out the Hocking Hills Canopy Tours in Rockbridge and the Ozone Zipline Adventures in Warren County's Little Miami River Valley.

Ohio's 74 state parks and national forests provide access to some of the best caving, hiking, canoeing, birding and exploring to be found anywhere. And the waterways from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River offer activities galore.

More than 500 miles of picturesque bike paths invite biking enthusiasts of all ages to enjoy a multi-day bike adventure along rolling terrain. Scenic railroads provide passengers the chance to revel in Mother Nature's work while enjoying a relaxing trip through the countryside.

Ohio truly too much fun for just one day, and visitors to the state have a wealth of experiences from which to choose. Information and travel planning resources can be found at www.DiscoverOhio.com or by calling 1-800-BUCKEYE.

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