



CLEVELAND

More Than Rock 'n Roll

By Melissa Wolcott and Al Martino

You know about the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, but do you also know about the art and culture in Cleveland?

Most American cities have acquired an uncomplimentary nickname through the years which makes Chambers of Commerce bristle. Back in the day, Cleveland's was "The Mistake By The Lake". That moniker certainly doesn't apply to today's Cleveland, which we visited recently. Indeed, Cleveland was a very pleasant surprise.

A nonstop flight on Continental Airlines took us from Tampa to Cleveland, and a 20-minute ride from the airport to our destination, the Intercontinental Hotel and Conference Center — a most amazing complex.

The luxury hotel serves guests of many varied cultures, and although it is a great place for the tourist and business person, the main appeal is its proximity to the world-famous Cleveland Clinic, which is located right across the street, and is accessible both by street and an enclosed sky walk. People come from all over the world to visit the huge Clinic for diagnosis and operations, and it is Cleveland's number one employer with over 25,000 employees.

The two-year old Intercontinental Hotel accommodates the patients and their families with the utmost care and consideration. Guest rooms, as well as all the public areas, were designed with elegance, warmth and comfort in mind. Since the hotel caters to a worldwide clientele, they are conscious of the different cultures that pass through their doors and specifically cater to their customs — such as the availability of separate entrances for men and women, and different ethnic cuisine's in their three restaurants. The hotel's "Classics" Restaurant is Ohio's only AAA Five Diamond award winner, with white glove service and live entertainment.

Ever mindful of guests' comfort, the hotel is very well

thought out. It has an outstanding art collection spread throughout the whole complex, and, according to the hotel's art consultant, Teresa DeChant, every piece was chosen to be calming and promote healing. Eighty percent of the collection is by Ohio's finest artists.

The location of the hotel is also very convenient to most of the attractions, University and museums.

Whenver we visit a city for the first time, we usually try to take an overview tour to scope out what's what. In Cleveland, it's the Lolly The Trolley tour. We learned about Cleveland's history aboard the fun trolley, and some interesting tidbits along the way. Cleveland was founded by Moses Cleaveland from England, "Cleave" was his original name, descended from Ann of Cleaves (married to Henry VIII, she was one of the fortunate ones that got to keep her head.)

Between 1850 and 1910, Euclid Avenue had 252 fabulous mansions — only 4 of the originals are left today. Most were torn down by their owners because they didn't want anyone else living in their homes.

Lolly The Trolley also has a clever private tour called "This Is Your Life," where families and friends can rent the trolley to celebrate someone's birthday and take them all around town to personal meaningful places.

Photos Upper L to R: Classics Restaurant, Blue Point Restaurant - Wolcott; Cleveland Orchestra, Palace Theatre - CVB of Greater Cleveland.
Bottom Photo: Rock and Roll Hall of Fame - Jeff Greenberg.



Guest Room Inter-Continental

Much is made of the amazing Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (Cleveland scored big-time in landing this one) but don't forget at the other end of the musical spectrum, Cleveland is also home to the magnificent Severence Hall and the Cleveland Orchestra — one of the most respected in the world. To become a member of the orchestra, you must be invited to audition, and it's a tough one. When we toured the building, we heard beautiful violin music coming from the ladies restroom. We thought someone was practicing there because bathroom acoustics are so great, but found out that auditioners try to find any place to be alone to practice before their audition. They were all over the place, and small rooms and hallways were filled with music.

Most cities have a museum or two, but Cleveland has some really different and fascinating ones, such as the Western Reserve Historical Society, and the Maltz Museum of



A 1935 Auburn at the Crawford Auto Museum

Photos on this page by Wolcott

Jewish Heritage.

The Western Reserve is actually a conglomeration of seven historical sites located in northeast Ohio. Located in Cleveland is the Hay Mansion and the Crawford Auto and Air Museum. The mansion is an Italian villa built in 1910 for \$325,000, which reflects the lifestyles of the rich and their servants. The Chisholm Halle Costume Wing is just terrific, displaying exquisite garments from the late 1700s to present. They are so perfect you'd swear they are reproductions, but they are the real deal.

More than 100 antique and classic autos and aircraft are on display in the Crawford Auto and Air Museum. This auto collection is one of the finest and most unique in the world, mainly because 80% of the autos still run and are in great condition. Cleveland was the auto capital of the world until 1930.



Agnes, Lolly The Trolley Tour Operator

The brand new 24,000 square foot Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage just opened a few months ago and presents the stories of Americans through Jewish history who come to life through exhibits and films. This wonderful museum possesses one of the most important collections of Judaic in the world. Limestone was even brought over from Jerusalem to be used extensively throughout the museum's construction. From April 1 through October 22, 2006, the museum will present the Cradle of Christianity: Treasures



The Maltz Museum is covered in limestone imported from Jerusalem.

from the Holy Land, which presents artifacts drawn from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem (which houses the foremost collection of Biblical Archeology in the world.) The exhibition will showcase objects that will be seen in the U.S. for the first time, including a section of the Temple Scroll, one of the most important of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which has never before been displayed outside of Israel.

If "the play's the thing" for you, there are several quality theaters in Cleveland. Playhouse Square Center is the oldest repertory in the U.S., with a history dating back to 1921, including 4 wonderful theaters that barely escaped the wrecking ball several times through the years. Renovations have brought the theaters to their former glory. We caught a performance of Amadeus at the Ohio Theatre starring Andrew May as Salieri, and Ben Nordstrom as Mozart. Fine acting makes or breaks this play, and both actors were outstanding.

Cleveland has art galleries galore, and a particular gallery that we enjoyed a lot was The Murray Hill Galleries, an old schoolhouse that was turned into space for artists.



Artist Lisa Meek in the Murray Hill Galleries

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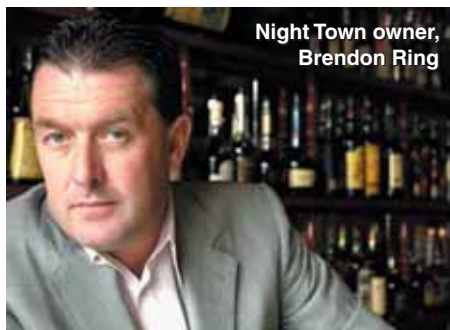
All white walls and huge windows afford the artists spectacular lighting for painting and showing their work. It is located in the charming Little Italy section of Cleveland, where you will find more galleries, shops, and charming restaurants. Cleveland has a huge gallery hop yearly in September. More than 100 art venues participate in the weekend event, and you can walk, drive or take the trolley.

The Cleveland Museum of Art was unfortunately closed for renovation and expansion during our stay, but it is reputed to be one of the best in the U.S.

We dined in some of Cleveland's varied restaurants, from very casual to elegant, and enjoyed every one.

Shooters is located on the Cuyahoga River, and is very popular — especially at night, when they clear away the tables for dancing. Boats pull up and dock up to 3 deep. We had Coconut Shrimp with Mango Sauce and an Artichoke Dip that disappeared quickly!

Owned by an affable Irishman, Brendon Ring, Night Town is the premier jazz place in Cleveland and also has great food. Their most



Night Town owner, Brendon Ring

Photo by Brynne Shaw

popular dish is the “Dublin Lawyer” - Lobster sautéed in mild cayenne butter with Mushrooms, Scallions, Irish Whiskey and Cream. Their homemade Apple and Walnut Pie alone is worth the trip. Jazz greats such as Maynard Ferguson, Benny Green and Ahmad Jamal have graced the stage at Night Town.

Considered by locals as the best restaurant in town, the Blue Point Grille had a lot to live up to, and it did. Great service and delicious food served in an elegant nautically-themed atmosphere with dark woods, and navy blue and white accents. We enjoyed a tiered appetizer of different shellfish, and dinner of Grouper with Lobster Mashed Potatoes, followed by a sinful Flourless Chocolate Cake dessert.

For the true Italian experience, we went to Castaldi's, where all the waiters are also fine singers, and break into opera or a Broadway tune every now and then. Not only do you have to know how to balance a tray, you have to pass a rigorous vocal audition to work at Castaldi's. About 200 people audition, and 8-10 are chosen. The owner, Michael Castaldi, came to the U.S. from Pompeii when he was 16, and all the recipes are from his family. The restaurant's walls are

38 ACCENT on Tampa Bay

Michael Castaldi with his tomato and mozzarella appetizer

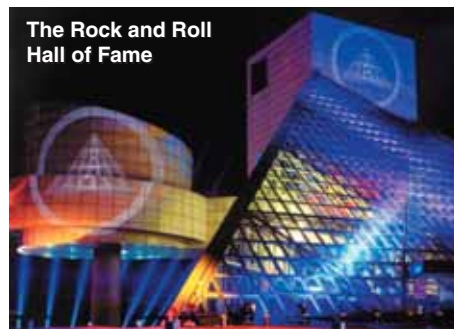


Photo by Wolcott

filled with Castaldi family photos from the early 1900s to the present day. There is a Castaldi's right here in our own Tampa area back yard, at Citrus Park Mall.

Our most fun dining experience had to be the Sunday Gospel Brunch at the House of Blues. “Praise the Lord, and pass the biscuits!” Get there early so you have a chance to digest that good ol’ southern food before they raise the roof with energetic Gospel music.

Cleveland — It'll Rock You!” is the city's adopted theme, which, of course references the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. Set on the edge of Lake Erie, the \$92M building is 6 stories of rock and roll history, encompassing just about everything imaginable. The term “rock and roll” was coined in Cleveland by the famous disc jockey Alan Freed. If you are a rock fan, it is a great experience. We are both former/retired musicians who played during the 60s and 70s, so it was a trip down memory lane for us. Especially interesting is the section that shows you how certain artists were influenced by other earlier artists. With supplied headphones, you can listen to the earlier artist, then how the newer one utilized the sound. Such as: The Rolling Stones were



The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

Photo courtesy Greater Cleveland CVB

influenced by Muddy Waters and Chuck Berry; The Beatles by Little Richard and Carl Perkins; Jimmy Hendrix by Curtis Mayfield (you can especially hear Mayfield's guitar influence in Hendrix' All Along The Watchtower). Sly and the Family Stone took “Gonna Take You Higher” right from an Alpha Stewart church song.

There is one showcase dedicated to John Lennon, containing among other things, clothing, instruments, passports, and old report cards. According to several teachers, he was — to put it kindly — “unattentive” in certain classes (math, science and French). One teacher went so far as to say he was “doomed to failure”. He did rather well in art, though.

Of course there are loads of costumes, instruments, movies and much more throughout the museum.

Next door to the R'n'R Hall of Fame is the Great Lakes Science Center, which has 3 spacious floors of interactive exhibits. The virtual soccer and basketball games are fun, and they have an Omnimax Theater in the complex as well.

Located close by is the Cleveland Browns Stadium. Football's coveted Heisman Trophy is named for native Cleveland John. W. Heisman, who coached at 9 colleges from 1892-1927 and won 185 games.

Once a polluted nightmare, Cleveland's Cuyahoga River is now a thriving district with nightclubs, trendy shops, galleries and restaurants. At night all the different styled bridges are beautifully lit. A drive along Fairmount Boulevard and Euclid Avenue takes you past some gorgeous old homes — Beaux Arts, Georgian and Tudor style — and pristine lawns. Cleveland also has wonderful little ethnic villages, such as Asian, Slavic, and Little Italy. Situated on Lake Erie, with a population just under 500,000, and very affordable housing in today's market, Cleveland is becoming more and more attractive.

Cleveland *did* rock us!

If You Go...

Blue Point Grille - 216-857-7827

Castaldi's - 216-241-2232; www.castaldis.com

Continental Airlines - 800-525-0280; www.continental.com

Cleveland Convention & Visitors Bureau - www.travelcleveland.com

Cleveland Museum of Art - www.clemusart.com

Cleveland Orchestra and Severance Hall - www.clevelandorch.com

Great Lakes Science Center - www.glsc.org

House of Blues - www.hob.com

Intercontinental Hotel and Conference Center - www.intercontinental.com

Lolly the Trolley - 800-848-0173; www.lollytrolley.com

Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage - 216-593-0575; maltzmuseum.org

Murray Hill School House Galleries - 2026 Murray Hill Road

Night Town - 216-795-0550; www.nighttowncleveland.com

Playhouse Square Center - (216) 771-4444; www.playhousesquare.com

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum - www.rockhall.com

Shooters - www.shootersflats.com

Western Reserve - 216-721-5722; www.wrhs.org