



## Cleveland Vacation EXPO is your pass to exclusive AAA discounts

For full details, see pages 14-15

**YOU DON'T NEED A PASSPORT TO SEE THE WORLD** at AAA's Cleveland Vacation Expo. The world comes to you!

Our highly anticipated Cleveland Vacation Expo is back and will be held Sunday, October 22, at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South, 6001 Rockside Road, Independence. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free and so is the parking!

There is NO better place to plan your next trip than at the Expo, where travel experts and opportunities combine to provide ideas to fulfill your travel dreams. Take advantage of convenient one-stop shopping and a golden ticket to exclusive AAA savings! These show-only savings await visitors who book their next trip onsite. Simply put, enter with an open mind and leave knowing you just closed a fantastic deal!

AAA Travel Advisors will be on-hand to do the work and research for you and make sure you're ready for your trip. Their knowledge comes from first-hand experiences,

allowing them to informatively suggest a variety of options meant to make your wishes come true!

So, let's begin to dream.

Close your eyes and imagine the powdery snow of the Swiss Alps beneath your skis while the scent of pine trees tickles your nose. Imagine the pink sand of Bermuda's pristine beaches nestled between your toes. Envision yourself at the top of the Eiffel Tower or the Leaning Tower of Pisa. A comforting breeze adds to the ambiance as you stand under a blue sky dotted with puffy, white clouds or twinkling stars that illuminate the clear nighttime heavens. Look out and witness France or Italy saying hello and welcoming you.

No destination is out of reach at the Cleveland Vacation Expo! Experts don't only tell you about the destinations, they tap into their own travel experience and give you an insider's look at your next cruise, all-inclusive resort, train excursion, safari, group tour or a host of other options that you're waiting

continued on pg 20



EXCLUSIVE EXPO 1-DAY-ONLY TRAVEL SAVINGS OFFERS!

VISIT //AAA.com/VacationEXPO

Images: Adobe Stock

### Free Battery Wellness Clinics from AAA

October is Fall Car Care Month and AAA East Central is hosting Free Battery Wellness Clinics to celebrate. State-of-the-art diagnostic equipment will confirm whether your battery will hold a charge. If a new battery is needed, one can be installed on the spot. The high-quality, AAA-branded battery comes with a three-year, free-replacement warranty, and AAA members receive a discount. Battery checks will be available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at these AAA office locations:

#### Thursday, Oct. 12

Niles

• 937 Youngstown-Warren Rd., 330-652-6466

No appointment necessary. If your battery fails the test, new batteries will be available for purchase and installed on the spot at a special AAA Member price.

### FREE CarFit Clinic

Motor-vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury-related deaths in adults over 65, and as people age, changes in our physical and cognitive functions can significantly affect our driving performance. AAA East Central will be conducting a FREE CarFit Clinic in October. Trained professionals will help you adjust the comfort, safety and fit of your vehicle through a 12-point checklist. Key areas include mirrors, pedals, seats and the proximity to the steering wheel. CarFit is an educational program created by the American Society of Aging and developed with AAA, AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association. A CarFit clinic will be held on Wednesday, October 18 at AAA Boardman (1275 Boardman-Canfield Road) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call 330-726-9083.

### ID Theft Program to be Held November 15

AAA East Central is hosting a FREE identity-theft program Wednesday November 15, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at AAA Boardman (1275 Boardman-Canfield Road). Learn about identity theft, how thieves steal your identity and steps you can take to prevent identity theft. For more information, call 330-726-9083 then 0 for the operator. Reserve your spot. Seating is limited.

### Travel Smarter with TSA PreCheck®

Enrolling in TSA PreCheck® creates a smarter travel experience with fewer hassles and less stress. Enrollment opportunities are provided by IDEMIA. Enrollment is \$78 and is valid for five years. An IDEMIA agent will conduct enrollments October 16-20 daily from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the AAA East Central Massillon branch office located at 1972 Wales Rd. NE. in Ohio. Appointments can be made online 40 days prior to the event. Registered appointments will take priority over walk-ins. To schedule an appointment, visit AAA.com/TSA.

## Cleveland Vacation Expo

*continued from page 1*

to check off your **Bucket List**.

At the Vacation Expo, the canals of Venice and Amsterdam will seem like they are only a gondolier away. The midnight sun of Iceland is lighting the path to fjords, lagoons and waterfalls. Fields of purple Alaskan lupine and unique, friendly villages help make this island a rising star among destination hotspots.

Barcelona, Budapest, London, Dublin, Berlin, Rome, Paris, Copenhagen ... The list goes on and on and on, and the Cleveland Travel Expo is here to make sure each and every adjective will be available to describe these wonderful places down to the very last detail.

Don't forget about Asia, Africa, Australia and Antarctica. These places alone are premier **Bucket List** destinations, and we haven't even gotten out of the A's! Questions abound; the Cleveland Vacation Expo has the answers. Indulge your imagination. You're on the high seas or a famous river. A luxury cruise on the Mediterranean will have you witnessing firsthand the Ancient Greek Ruins. A river cruise will put you on the Rhine, Danube or Nile. How does visiting the Egyptian Pyramids and Sphinx sound? We already know the answer.

The Cleveland Vacation Expo will make sure you're face-to-face with King Tut's tomb. And not all top destinations are outside of the United



Image: Maridav. Adobe Stock.

States of America. How does Hawaii sound? How about Alaska? Maybe California?

Whet your palate on a trip through Wine Country in Northern California. Tour by train, bus or rented vehicle. Also at the Vacation Expo, learn about what America's national parks have to offer. Utah is home to Moab

and Arches National Park. It's a red-rock wonderland that sits in the foreground of the snowcapped Rockies. Geysers let off steam by the hour in Yellowstone. The sightings of elk, bison, bears, moose and a bevy of other animals enhance the experience.

Mount Rushmore is a majestic stone portrait of history in South

Dakota. See the northern lights at Montana's Glacier National Park or Denali National Park and Reserve in Alaska, where you'll witness the highest point in North America.

Train excursions barrel through the Rocky Mountains. The scenery lights up your senses. A desolate barn may rest in the untouched snow of an abandoned field. Mountains rest in the background and a calm lake snuggles with the front door, with the hilltops reflecting off the water.

How's that for variety? It's a time to recharge your curiosity to travel to all of these destinations, and many more! The Cleveland Vacation Expo will guide you in the right direction.

Plan a destination wedding. Imagine tying the knot while standing barefoot in the soft sand of the Caribbean or Hawaii. Or how about under the bright lights of Las Vegas? Or a cruise ship – the moon dotting the sky while you exchange vows on the top deck?

Group tours could take you through the dashing surroundings of the Canadian Rockies by motorcoach. Journese by Pleasant Holidays unlocks a treasure chest of opulence that will take you to all corners of the globe, and vendors will be on hand to tell you about your options.

Pack your bags and put in that PTO. Choose your destination and allow AAA Travel to take it from there.

# Sphere is a venue unlike any other

## Las Vegas' newest arena lights up your senses

The Las Vegas Strip is a catwalk for architectural opulence. It's the only place worldwide where you can visit Paris, Egypt, ancient Rome and New York City all on the same roadway. So, it should come as no surprise that its newest entertainment venue puts an exclamation point on its celebrated reputation.

Sphere is as unique as it innovative. The world's largest spherical venue – to no one's surprise – boasts a commanding presence. The structure stands 366 feet high and is 516 feet wide; enough volume to conceal the Statue of Liberty.

It's more than twice the height of the domes on Spaceship Earth at Walt Disney World® Resort's Epcot. Does it get anymore Las Vegas?

Sphere's 580,000-square-foot Exosphere is comprised of 1.2 million LED lights that are each the size of a hockey puck, making it the largest LED screen on Earth. Each diode is capable of displaying 256 million different colors.

Essentially, the surface is a blank palette for creativity in animation and it will be illuminated every day and night.

"Sphere Exosphere is a 360-degree canvas for brand storytelling that will be seen around the world," said David Hopkinson, president and chief operating officer of MSG Sports. "There's



**GLOBAL IMPACT** – Sphere is a futuristic entertainment venue in the heart of the Las Vegas Strip. Image: Sphere Entertainment.

nothing comparable to the impact from displaying innovative brand and immersive content on the world's largest video screen."

Nothing is out of question. Sphere could share the appearance of a basketball. It could be an eyeball, a jack-o'-lantern, the moon, Christmas snow globe,

sayings ... The options are unlimited and the future sits in the present.

"The Exosphere is more than a screen or a billboard," said Guy Barnett, senior vice president of brand strategy and creative development at MSG Sphere. "It is living architecture, and unlike anything that exists anywhere in the world.

There are possibilities for artists, partners and brands to create compelling and impactful stories with audiences in new ways."

Sphere, which opened on September 29, with "U2:UV Achtung Baby Live at Sphere", cost \$2.3 billion to build. It seats more than 18,000 and sits a block east of the Strip and will be connected by a pedestrian walkway to the Venetian resort complex. Guests will be able to enjoy immersive shows, concerts, sporting events and other entertainment productions.

The acts onstage are dwarfed by a towering 16K LED screen that wraps around much of the audience and can augment the concert experience with trippy animations or close-ups of performers.

There are more than 160,000 speakers spread throughout the bowl that deliver pristine sound to every seat – no matter where you are sitting. The venue also is equipped with haptic seats that can vibrate to match whatever is onscreen and 4D machines that can create wind, temperature and scent effects.

Sphere is a venue unlike any other. No stone is unturned or door unopened. It's an opening meant to peek into the future of entertainment.

In other words, it's Las Vegas, through and through.

# Exercise helps keep older drivers on road

## Fatigue, other issues cause aging adults to stop driving

Keeping physically fit has a host of benefits. Staying behind the wheel of vehicle is one of them.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that increased fatigue and poor physical functioning are leading factors that can result in older adults limiting their driving. Simple steps, though, like weekly exercise and stretching, can improve safe driving abilities and keep older adults on the road longer.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety commissioned researchers from Columbia University to evaluate eight domains – depression, anxiety, fatigue, sleep disturbance, pain interference, physical functioning, pain intensity and participation in social activities – to determine how changes in physical, mental and social health affect driving mobility for older adults. The report found that fatigue and poor physical functioning are most common among older drivers who spend less time behind the wheel.

"Older adults who give up the keys are more likely to suffer from depression than those who remain behind the wheel," said Dr. David Yang, executive director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. "It is important that we find ways to keep older drivers



**GOOD CONDITION** – AAA research finds that exercising and stretching are factors in keeping older drivers behind the wheel. Image: Robert Kneschke. Adobe Stock.

in good physical health in order to extend their mobility."

Research shows that daily exercise and stretching can help older drivers improve overall body flexibility and move more freely to observe the road from all angles. Physical strength also helps drivers remain alert to potential hazards on the road and perform essential driving functions, like:

- Braking
- Steering
- Parking
- Looking to the side and rear
- Adjusting the safety belts
- Sitting for long periods of time

"Some decline in physical fitness is inevitable as we age," said Jake Nelson, AAA director of traffic safety advocacy and research. "But research shows that exercise doesn't have to be strenuous

to produce positive results. You can spread out the time you spend being physically active over the course of your day and week. A few minutes at a time can be sufficient. Simple steps to keep active can keep you driving safely for longer."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends older adults, who are physically able, get between 2-5 hours of moderate-intensity exercise each week or between 75 minutes to 2.5 hours of high-intensity physical activity.

Older adults should consult their doctor before beginning the new exercise regimen. They also should talk with a healthcare provider about ways to combat fatigue. Prioritize getting at least seven hours of sleep each night to stay focused while driving.

AAA recommends a series of stretches to improve neck, shoulder, trunk, back and overall body flexibility. AAA also offers a variety of programs and resources to help older adults improve their driving performance and avoid crashes.

For more information on AAA resources for older drivers, such as RoadWiseonline/classroom courses or other programs that help seniors better fit with their vehicles, visit SeniorDriving.AAA.com.

# Barbie-themed getaways hide in plain sight

## Pink settings engulf gorgeous homes; make for magical trip

“**B**arbie” is the hottest movie of 2023 and one of the highest-grossing films of all-time. So, it should come as no surprise that there are Barbie-themed vacation spots across the U.S.

The dwellings are unique, welcoming and, of course – pink. They’re scattered throughout the U.S. and make for a perfect getaway.

Barbie’s favorite location is California. To no one’s surprise her Dream House in Malibu sits on a beautiful hillside and overlooks the Pacific Ocean. It’s nearly impossible to gain access, but fortunately, there are destinations from which to choose, including:

**Barbie’s Bachelorette Dream House (Scottsdale, Arizona)** – It’s the perfect place for a girls trip. It has five bedrooms and sleeps 12 guests and is a modern take on Barbie’s pad. The backyard is ideal for a pool party, with a hot tub, grill, lounge chairs and lawn games.

**Luxurious Barbie Dream Cottage (Tybee Island, Georgia)** – Not far from the beach, this Barbie-inspired cottage features three bedrooms, a heated pool and tropical vibes.



**DOLL HOUSE** – Barbie-fever has hit the U.S. Barbie-themed homes are open to rent across the country. *Image: Vrbo.*

**Barbie’s Pink Garden (Los Angeles)** – Barbie’s Garden Cottage exudes outdoor vibes. There is no other place at which Barbie would prefer to host a garden party. It has an enclosed garden area, pool that reaches 12 feet in depth and an outdoor bar.

**Pink Paradise (Austin, Texas)** – This location couldn’t have a better name. It’s pink, and it’s paradise. It’s near a variety of breweries, distilleries and wedding venues. It’s an ideal place for

a bachelorette party. The entire property is pink – from the exterior to the couch, curtains and bathroom sinks.

**Pink Castle (Hudson, Wisconsin)** – A Victorian mansion built in 1883, it’s loaded with glamour and pink settings. The massive home comfortably sleeps 40 guests, making it one of the most unique rental properties nationwide.

**Pink House (West Palm Beach, Florida)** – Located near downtown

and the famed Clematis Street, this newly constructed pink house is, simply put, perfect. In case you had your doubts, listen to palm trees swaying through the breeze on the patio, cook a meal in the fully equipped kitchen or just sink into a luxurious setting.

**Pink 7-Bedroom Home (Michigan City, Indiana)** – Never thought there would be a reason to visit Michigan City? How about to stay at a Barbie home? The bright pink home is complete with a hot tub, coach house, sports room and golf cart for exploring the surroundings. Barbie’s domicile sleeps 19.

**Bayfront Home (Port Isabel, Texas)** – Pink and luxurious might best describe this waterfront Texas estate. It’s paradise for anyone looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the everyday grind. Listen to the water, watch pelicans soar above or fish in the bay. Not exactly Barbie’s kind of place, but Ken could use a place of his own.

Planning the perfect bachelorette party or just a getaway? No problem. Just follow Barbie’s lead. It’s sure to take you to a treasure trove of good times and memories – even if Ken comes along, too.

# Lifeless trees come to life in Petrified Forest

## Arizona national park a mysterious land where time stands still

**F**ew things have aged better than Petrified Forest National Park. Its history dates nearly 220 million years.

Located in northeast Arizona, the park features one of the world’s largest and most colorful arrays of petrified wood. It’s as stunning as it is unique. Fossils tell tales of prehistoric Earth and its inhabitants. Early dinosaurs and reptiles roamed the area.

The trees – nearly pure quartz – stoke curiosity, opening your eyes to a land few places on Earth can match. The rainbow-like coloring and intricate patterns are the results of the minerals and imperfections found in the wood.

Step back in time to a place before humans existed. The sights are profound. Eons of history lay before you in a variety of shapes and sizes. Artifacts bring to life the Triassic Period.

Interest in the area began to grow during the late-19th century, prompting the Arizona Territorial legislature to petition Congress to protect its resources. By 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt created Petrified Forest National Monument. It was elevated to national park status in 1962.

This geological playground encompasses 220,000 acres. The location receives fewer than 10 inches of rain annually, allowing a clear, blue sky to



**ROCKIN’** – The fiery red Painted Desert glistens at Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona. The park is populated with trees and rock formations more than 200 million years old. *Image: Jerry Ginsberg/Danita Delimont. Adobe Stock.*

mesh perfectly with the desert terrain.

There are many ways to explore the park. View it by vehicle and take advantage of stops at overlooks. Walk one of the many short trails or hike the backcountry along one of the Off the Beaten Path routes. Crystal Forest Trail and Giant Logs Loop provide up-close visuals meant to leave lasting impressions.

There are fossils, badlands, buttes and mesas, ancient petroglyphs, wildlife and wildflowers and vast vistas. The Painted Desert offers solitude, allowing you to collect your thoughts while exploring the mysterious surroundings.

Sightsee via bicycle or horse – you just have to bring your horse. Rangers, scientists, cultural demonstrators and

other field experts lead guided tours. Their knowledge enhances the experience.

There are plenty of sights to visit, including:

- Newspaper Rock that has more than 650 petroglyphs that are believed to have been created between 1499 B.C. and 1000 A.D.
- The Teepees, rock formations comprised of bands of crimson, gray, blue, purple and white rock.
- Agate Home, a reconstructed Puebloan domicile created primarily from petrified wood.
- Blue Mesa, a landform that is considered to be one of the best ways to see the beautiful blue, pink, gray and purple hills.
- Agate Bridge, a petrified log that rests over a washed-out hollow.

Myths abound. Perhaps none more popular than claims of bad luck to anyone who takes petrified wood past the park’s boundaries. A curse awaited those eager to bring home souvenirs.

The legend became so deep that hundreds of people have returned chunks of wood with apology letters, according to the book “Bad Luck, Hot Rocks.” Park officials named the stack of returned rocks the “conscience pile.”

That shouldn’t be surprising. Petrified wood is scarce. It doesn’t need to be scary.