

Central Cincinnati Walkabout

Cincinnati City Hall

Cincinnati City Hall is the seat of the municipal government of Cincinnati. Designed by locally famous Samuel Hannaford and completed in 1893, this Romanesque structure is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Black Lives Matter Mural on street in front of City Hall



The Black Lives Matter mural honors the social and political movement Black Lives Matter. This movement advocates against racism and in favor of fair play and justice for Americans of African descent, who have often been discriminated against by limited opportunity and a criminal processing system that is unjust.

St Peter in Chains Cathedral

Cathedral Basilica of Saint Peter in Chains is the cathedral of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The basilica is a Greek revival structure is dedicated to Saint Peter's imprisonment and liberation. The church's cornerstone was laid in 1841 and the church was formally dedicated in 1845, as the first large church west of the Allegheny Mountains. On June 29, 2020 Pope Francis conferred the title of Minor Basilica on St. Peter in Chains.

St. Peter in Chains' striking single spire, made of pure white limestone, rises 224 feet (68 m) above street level, which made the church the tallest man-made structure in the city for many decades. The interior of St. Peter in Chains is distinctly unique among Roman Catholic cathedrals in America, with its Greek-themed mosaics, its ornate Corinthian columns and its massive bronze doors.

Isaac M. Wise Temple

The Isaac M. Wise Temple is the historic synagogue erected for Rabbi Wise and his congregation. Wise was among the founders of American Reform Judaism. The temple building was designed by prominent Cincinnati architect James Keys Wilson. Its design was inspired by the Alhambra at Granada. It was built chiefly during the Civil War (1860-65) and is among the oldest synagogue buildings still standing in the United States.

The temple is across Plum Street from the historic Saint Peter In Chains Cathedral. In 1972, the Isaac M. Wise Temple was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and it was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975 for its architecture and its role in the Reform movement.

Cincinnati Convention Center (seen from a distance at the end of Plum Street)

Turn left on 8th St.

Piatt Park

Statue of former President of the U.S., William Harrison



Turn left on Race St.

Art Works –

ArtWorks is an award-winning Greater Cincinnati nonprofit that transforms people and places through investments in creativity. The organization collaborates with community organizations and residents, businesses, governments, foundations and nonprofits to build creative works of art that bolster the region’s global reputation as an arts destination.

ArtWorks employs professional artists who inspire and mentor diverse teams of youth, ages 14-21, helping them build 21st century career-readiness skills. These teams have

completed more than 12,500 public and private art projects in its 25 years, including more than 200 permanent outdoor murals.

Fiona and Bibi at the Cincinnati Zoo Mural, by Lucie Rice 2018

Turn right on Court St

Cincinnati Toy Heritage Mural, by Jonathan Queen 2016

Kroger grocery store chain headquarters building – largest grocery chain in U.S.

In this block, note the historic 19th century buildings, which are common in the “Over the Rhine” neighborhood of Cincinnati, which is a short walk farther north.

Turn right on Walnut St.

Black & White Face Mural

Art Works, Homecoming (Blue Birds) Mural, honoring Cincinnati artist Charley Harper, 2012

Note the Courthouse – straight ahead. We will turn without going to the Courthouse.

Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County This is the “main branch” of this large library system.

Self-Portrait Mural, by Elizabeth Nourse, 2015

Aronoff Center, to the left along Walnut Street between 7th St and 6th Street

The Aronoff Center is a fine arts performance venue designed by architect Cesar Pelli and opened in October 1995. Today, the Aronoff Center houses three theaters and an art gallery and space for Broadway musicals, ballet, drama, and comedy performances.

Mural in alley to right

Neil Armstrong Mural, by Eduardo Kobra 2016 Armstrong was the first man on the moon and grew up near Cincinnati and later lived and worked in Cincinnati.

Contemporary Arts Center (CAC)

The CAC is a ground-breaking contemporary art museum. It was opened in 1939, being located in a six-story building, a fascinating artwork by itself. The center is well-known for thought-provoking and original works, and for focusing on new developments in sculpture, photography, architecture, and new media. It displays "the art of the last five minutes," promoting artists in their early careers.

5th 3rd Bank Tower

Built in 1969, Fifth Third Tower was the first building in Cincinnati to be designed in the International architectural style. Today, it is the tallest building on Fountain Square. The west side of the skyscraper facing Fountain Square houses gift shops, restaurants, and more.

Turn right and cross Fountain Square

Graeter's Ice Cream Shop

A trip to Cincinnati is incomplete without trying its popular local dessert, Graeter's Ice Cream.

Graeter, the son of German immigrants, opened the first ice cream shop for the business in 1870 and quickly gained a following. Growing with the advent of the premium ice cream market in the decades after, the company has been managed by four successive generations of the Graeter family, expanding its retail shops to Columbus, Louisville and other cities. Deals with major supermarket chains including Kroger have brought Graeter's Ice Cream to more than 6,200 grocery stores nationwide, also.

The ice cream maker is known for its "French pot" process that produces denser than average ice cream. Its national recognition for this ice cream grew over time, in particular after Oprah Winfrey declared it the best ice cream she had ever tasted in 2002. Graeter's has been featured on shows on the Travel Channel, Food Network, and others.

Fountain Square

Fountain Square is considered to be the heart of the City of Cincinnati. The city square was founded in 1871 in what was then the center of the city. The plaza is surrounded by shops, restaurants and hotels.

The defining feature of Fountain Square is the fountain itself. The Tyler Davidson Fountain, also known as The Genius of Water, is one of the most visited attractions in the city. It was a gift to the city from businessman Henry Probasco. The bronze-cast fountain is 43 feet tall. It features a nine-foot cast of a woman with her arms outstretched and four representations of the uses of water. An inscription on the fountain reads "To the People of Cincinnati."

Fountain Square is an easy walk from a number of other locations in Cincinnati. It is only minutes away by foot from the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and Smale Riverfront Park.

Carew Tower

Turn left on Vine St.

Walk down the hill, cross Fort Washington Way and walk past the:

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center is a museum that covers the origins and history of slavery in the U.S. and the underground railroad, which was a series of secret homes that hid people to help them escape slavery. The museum is located near the banks of the Ohio River because many enslaved people found their freedom by crossing the river and seeking refuge in Cincinnati and farther north. Kentucky was a “slave state” and Ohio was a “free state.”

Look to the right to see:

Bengal's (American football) Paul Brown Stadium and near it, **Music Center**

Also, notice the sign: **“Sing, The Queen City”** by Art Works, a good place for photographs.

Roebling Bridge

The John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge crosses the Ohio River between Cincinnati and Covington, Kentucky. The bridge is known for being the longest suspension bridge in the world when it was originally built in 1866. John A. Roebling was the architect hired for this job because his previous work, including the Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge, had shown that he was able to design a bridge of the substantial length required.

The suspension portion of the bridge is 1,643 feet in length. It no longer sees the heavy vehicle traffic that it once did, but it continues to be a popular pedestrian bridge. Visitors can enjoy views of the Ohio River while on their way to or from the Great American Ballpark, Paul Brown Stadium and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

Turn L on Freedom Way. Walk to Jimmy John's to pick up lunch!

Art Works – The Cobbler's Apprentice Plays Ball, Tim Parsley 2011

Look to the left to see:

Cincinnati Red's (Baseball) Great American Ballpark

We can visit Crosley Terrace with statues of Reds stars and note the Hall of Fame Museum there.

National Steamboat Monument

Near the ballpark, the National Steamboat Monument includes a 30-foot replica of the paddle wheel of the famous steamboat American Queen and two dozen stainless steel columns. It plays music and discharges steam when visitors pass by. The monument, which rises above the Ohio River, is a reminder of Cincinnati's past.

Enter Smale Park

For farther exploration, to the left is the Purple People Bridge

The Newport Southbank Bridge, popularly known as the "Purple People Bridge", stretches 2,670 feet over the Ohio River, connecting Newport, Kentucky to downtown Cincinnati. The original bridge first opened in 1872 and was Cincinnati's first railroad bridge spanning the Ohio River. The current bridge was constructed in 1896 and accommodated streetcar, pedestrian and automobile traffic. In 2001, the bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Turn right to walk through Smale Park

Smale Park

Smale Riverfront Park is on the banks of the Ohio River between Paul Brown Stadium and the Great American Ballpark. The park connects Bicentennial Commons and Sawyer Point to create almost three miles of green space along the river, which was formerly an industrial area. The park was created through a \$20 million gift from John Smale, former CEO of Procter & Gamble, which is headquartered in Cincinnati.

Construction on the park began in 2008 and it opened to the public in 2012. The 40 acres of park include bike and walking trails, boat docks, playgrounds, water features, a promenade, festival space and a carousel. Tourists to Cincinnati enjoy Smale Riverfront Park for the views of the river and easy access to downtown Cincinnati. It is a good stopping place while visiting Cincinnati's numerous historic sites and entertainment venues.

Marion Spencer Statue



This statue honors Marion Spencer, who promoted progress for all people in Cincinnati throughout her long career in public service. She focused most on opportunities for all children, especially those from backgrounds that had been denied equal opportunity previously. Her advice to other advocates was "Be smart, be polite, vote, and keep on fighting."