



**C**olumbus is the capital of Ohio and is most known as being home to The Ohio State University. However, the area is so much more. When I set out to make this top ten list, I struggled with getting it down to just ten. I decided to go outside the city and list locations and attractions that are for all ages. Plus, many have parking for oversized vehicles.

## 10

While Holmes County two hours to the north is home to the largest population of Amish in Ohio, a trip to Plain City just 20 minutes west of Columbus will satisfy your hunger for Amish food. Der Dutchman Plain City is one of five locations for this authentic Amish food. With delicious baked goods and a buffet

that features fried chicken, noodles, real mashed potatoes, pot roast, and a great salad bar, this is one of our favorite restaurants when my husband and I are in the area. And it happens to be a Harvest Host location!

## 9

Located about 40 minutes west of Columbus in Marysville is a large Honda complex. Across from the manufacturing plant is the Honda Heritage Center. This walk through the history of Honda in central Ohio was very interesting. There are twelve Honda plants in four states, and this particular plant is the location where the first Elsinore motorcycle (used in Motocross) was built. Along with cars, there is also a Honda plane, Indy cars, and a robot simulator in the heritage center.

## 8

Columbus is home to the Crew pro soccer team, Blue Jackets pro hockey team, Clippers minor league baseball team, and now the Columbus Fury, a women's professional volleyball team. No matter the time of year, there is something for the sports enthusiast in your family.

## 7

Located less than an hour's drive west of Columbus near the quaint town of Yellow Springs is Young's Jersey Dairy. This family-run farm, where you can see the cows being milked, also makes their own delicious ice cream with that milk. From single scoops to milkshakes and sundaes, you won't be disappointed. And after that treat, play a round of putt-putt golf, enjoy a ride on the merry-go-round, or walk around and check out the animals. This family-friendly location is worth the drive.

## 6

It may seem strange that a bookstore is on my top ten, but this isn't an ordinary bookstore. The Book Loft is located in a pre-civil war era building and has 32 rooms full of books. All are organized by genre, and each room is numbered. However, even with the map they provide, be prepared to get lost in this hidden gem.



**THE BOOK LOFT**



THE GERMAN VILLAGE



CENTER OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY (COSI)



BICYCLING THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL



OHIO STATE STADIUM AND WOODY HAYES CENTER



COLUMBUS ZOO

5

4

3

2

1

If you find your way out of The Book Loft, just to the east is The German Village. This walkable neighborhood has homes dating back to the late 1800s and is home to probably Columbus' most famous restaurant – Schmitz's Sausage Haus. If you like authentic German food, this is your place. There are also several coffee shops, bakeries, and other eateries in the village. Check out the quaint shops hidden amongst the homes as well.

COSI is located along the west side of the Olentangy River and is very family oriented. With 320,000 square feet, COSI has interactive rooms for math, science, and exploration that kids of all ages will enjoy. Plan to spend at least four hours here.

If you love rail trails, you'll love Columbus. The Ohio to Erie Trail which goes from the Ohio River near Cincinnati to the Erie Canal east of Cleveland runs right through Columbus along the Olentangy River. There are also many offshoots that take you to quaint towns like Dublin and Hilliard on the west side of the city.

Whether you're an Ohio State fan or not, a visit to OSU should be on your list. In fact, you can ride your bike right up to the stadium (just not on game day!). OSU Stadium is also now open for tours. The Woody Hayes Center is in the athletic center for OSU. Here you'll find displayed all the trophies OSU Football has won over the years, including Heisman trophies and all the National Championship trophies. There is even a display of the rings presented to the team. They're huge!

Made famous by Jack Hanna who helped bring this zoo to life, the Columbus Zoo is home to over 10,000 animals and 650 species. The zoo focuses on conservation, education, preservation, and rehabilitation with its many exhibits. If you're around during the Christmas holidays, they do an amazing Zoolights display.

**Along with these locations, Columbus has a wonderful arts scene in the Short North and a fabulous Theater District. Add Columbus to your travel list.**