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Downtown Cincinnati is highlighted by the Skywalk, which connects hotels and the convention center with shops, theaters and restaurants.

## The Queen City comes alive for conventioners

CINCINNATI, OHIO: I have been to the Queen City before, as a tourist. Like most vacationers, I was interested in the impromptu musical activities in Fountain Square, the most intimate fine restaurants and where to catch the riverboat on the Ohio River.

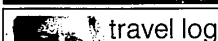
I came to Cincinnati this week for a different reason: to explore it as a convention city. As a businesswoman, my priorities are quite different. How many hotel rooms are available in a small downtown area? How accessible is the convention center loading dock? Can conventioners get their job done efficiently and enjoy a little leisure during off-hours?

A tourist can learn something by looking at a city from the convention traveler's point of view. For example: Is the business of a city concentrated in the downtown area, as it is in Cincinnati, or is it spread around diverse suburban areas as it is in Detroit?

What puts this city into focus, from both the tourist and the convention point of view, is the Skywalk, which connects the four major hotels and the convention center with shops, theaters and restaurants in a 2½-block area in downtown Cincinnati.

Most of the Skywalk is covered, so it serves its purpose in summer and winter. Hotels cater to tourists on weekends, but their main income is from business travelers during the week; tourists can learn something from that, too.

STOUFFER'S CINCINNATI Towers, at the west end of the Skywalk, next to the convention center, is the largest hotel in town with 900 guest rooms, 750 of



travel log

**Iris Sanderson Jones**  
contributing travel editor

them "committable" to conventions at any one time. It's a great convention hotel, the lowest price of the four big ones downtown, a nice combination of contemporary-cum-elegant.

You can rent a room for two for \$52, and enjoy all the amenities built for convention travelers, but don't expect good personal in-room service. A hotel like this focuses its attention on convention details, not room service.

The Weston Hotel, at the east end of the Skywalk, on Fountain Square, has 450 rooms above the atrium-glass-green plant lobby we have grown used to in contemporary city hotels. It costs \$5 to \$10 a night more, is more luxurious, and opens onto the noon-and-night people activities of Fountain Square rather than the convention center.

The two hotels in between also have their own personality: the Terrace Hilton, its bottom eight floors occupied by American Telephone & Telegraph Co. offices, has large sleeping rooms and small meeting rooms in a nice but not memorable setting; the Netherlands will reopen in 1984 with its expensive turn-of-the-century elegance restored and huge ballrooms glittering under crystal chandeliers.

Meeting planners pick a hotel depending on the size and other needs of their meeting. Tourists get the same downtown convenience at any of the

four, so they pick according to the ambience and price desired. Just remember that big hotels do not like to be empty on the weekend, and they will offer great bargains to avoid it.

IF YOU PICK a city with this kind of downtown focus, you can walk or take short cab rides to most restaurants and tourist sites.

In the Queen City, that means the Maisonette, rated five stars by Mobil Guide; the Gourmet Room or Pigall's,

both four-star, Mike Fink's Riverboat five minutes away across the river; Izzy's Deli, with the best reubens in town; or Skyline Chili, where famous Cincinnati chili means a plate of spaghetti with add-ons of chili, onions, beans and other exotic foods.

Ten minutes' drive away in Mount Adams, site of the Cincinnati Art Museum and Playhouse in the Park, you can eat gigantic hamburgers in a National Historic Registry setting called Rookwood Pottery, or go fine French next door at the Celestial.

As a regular tourist, you may not care that exhibit space costs 35 cents a

square foot in the Cincinnati Convention Exposition Center, and that big trucks can drive off the street on to the convention floor, but those little statistics affect you.

Conventioners bring hotels, shops and other facilities that you enjoy. For example, they broke ground this week for the new Hyatt Hotel/Saks Fifth Avenue complex, which will plug into the Skywalk when the complex opens in September 1984.

For information, contact the Greater Cincinnati Convention and Visitor's Bureau, 200 W. Fifth St., Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

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