

# Ride upside down, splash, be dazzled at Ohio fun parks

BY MARY QUINLEY  
CORRESPONDENT

## OHIO AMUSEMENT PARKS

Are the kids bored? If so, perhaps a trek south of the Michigan border to check out the Buckeye State's amusement parks will help to ease the summertime blues.

There's something for everyone. Whether you're a coaster-crazed enthusiast, a water-park lover or a wildlife fan, Ohio's three parks offer families a host of fun-packed adventures.

Here's a rundown on what's new at our neighbor's theme parks as well as a peek at some of the familiar rides and attractions:

**Cedar Point**  
Liz Psaila of Livonia admits that she used to be wary of amusement park rides that went upside down. Not anymore.

"I like to go on all of the rides," said Psaila, who visited Cedar Point last month with three of her friends.

She described the park's new scream machine, Wicked Twister, as fun.

"I was a little scared because I didn't know what to expect, but the ride turned out pretty good."

The Wicked Twister is the park's 15th roller coaster. The 216-foot-tall steel thriller reaches a speed of 72 m.p.h.

"It is the tallest and fastest double-twisting impulse roller coaster in the world," said Bryan Edwards, public relations representative.

The focus of Cedar Point, said Edwards, is on thrill seekers and families. The park is home to

**What:** Cedar Point  
**Where:** Sandusky, Ohio  
**Cost:** Ages 4-59, 48 inches and taller, \$42, age 4 and older, under 48 inches tall, \$20, age 60 and older, \$25.  
**For information:** Call (419) 627-2350 or visit the web at: [www.cedarpoint.com](http://www.cedarpoint.com).

**What:** Six Flags Worlds of Adventure  
**Where:** Aurora, Ohio  
**Cost:** General admission, \$39.99, children under 48" tall, \$19.99, children two and under, free, seniors 61 and older,

more coasters than any place else in the universe.

But if dives, spins and twists are not on your agenda, no problem.

Check out a live stage show, high dive act or the boardwalk. Take the kids to the water park, the area with pint-sized rides or the go-kart racetrack.

Also new for the 2002 season is *Snoopy Rocks! On Ice*.

In the show, the skating beagle and his pals re-create some favorite Peanuts classics. The dazzling ice display, explained Edwards, is geared "to appeal to the wide range of ages of our guests."

**Six Flags Worlds of Adventure**

\$19.99.  
**For information:** Call (330) 562-8303 or check online at: [www.sixflags.com](http://www.sixflags.com).

**What:** Paramount's Kings Island  
**Where:** Off Interstate 71 (exit 24), 24 miles north of Cincinnati, Ohio  
**Cost:** Ages 7-59, \$41.99, ages 3-6 and under 48" tall, \$24.99, ages 2 and younger, free, seniors 60 plus, \$24.99.  
**For information:** Call (800) 288-0808 or (513) 754-5700 or check the web at: [www.pki.com](http://www.pki.com).

Bernadette Diroff didn't hesitate when family members invited her to spend the day at Six Flags Worlds of Adventure in Aurora.

"I enjoyed the park very much," said Bernadette of Westland, who preferred the easy-paced, low-key attractions at the park.

Six Flags is a mix of scream machines, a wild-and-wet water park, thrill rides, and an educational wildlife park.

The complex, separated by a small lake, is comprised of two areas — Wild Rides (formerly Geauga Lake) and Wildlife (formerly Sea World). Guests have three options to get from one side of the park to the other: Ferry boats, a floating walkway and a walking path.

One of Bernadette's favorite attractions was the *Pirates* movie.

"I was shocked when I felt water hit me!" she said, laughing. Twice during the hilarious, 4-D multi-sensory/dimensional show, the audience is sprinkled with a spray of water. Young children may find that some of the scenes in the movie are too intense.

**What's new at Six Flags?**  
**Tiger Island.**

This fascinating exhibit features an interactive demo between Bengal tigers and their trainers.



PHOTO 5 BY MARY QUINLEY

The water park is a popular attraction at Six Flags World of Adventure in Aurora, Ohio.

"The tigers did cool stuff," said ten-year-old Danny Diroff of New Hudson, Bernadette's grandson.

Danny, his four-year-old sister, Nicole, their mom, Nancy, grandma, and Danny's ten-year-old friend from South Lyon, Andrew Mapley, were in awe as they sat in the bleacher-style seats watching the tigers chase objects, frolic in a pool and play with each other.

Danny and Nicole like sharks, so a visit to the Shark Experience was a must-do. As the two siblings and their buddy, Andrew, gazed into a 340,000-gallon habitat, four species of sharks and two sawfishes slowly cruised before the kids' eyes. The youngsters also enjoyed the sea lion show, the dolphin tank and the midway games of skill.

**Paramount's Kings Island**  
As you ramble along Interstate 71 between Dayton and Cincinnati, be on the lookout for the largest theme and water park in the Midwest, Paramount's Kings Island.

Packed with a variety of entertainment for all ages, the park features more than 40 rides, a 15-acre water park, two kids'

areas, musical productions and lots more.

New this year, said Jeff Siebert, spokesperson, is *Tomb Raider: The Ride*.

"It's our most ambitious attraction ever in 30 years," Siebert said.

The adventure ride was inspired by the film *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*.

The riveting experience begins with a walking journey into a foreboding ancient temple decorated with mysterious chambers, stone walls and runic symbols. The only possible escape is via a vehicle that flips over several times in total darkness.

There are plenty of scream machines for the coaster lovers in the group including the longest wooden roller coaster in the world, *The Beast*. And, just for kids (and their parents), there are four thrilling, but low-key, coasters.

As you stroll around the park, watch for the new Nickelodeon characters. Don't miss the Explorer and Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius love to have their picture taken with the young guests.

Suggestion to park-goers: For discount tickets, check with



Danny Diroff, 10, of New Hudson (left), his sister, Nicole, 4, and their friend, Andrew Mapley, 10, of South Lyon, enjoy Six Flags.

AAA, a city parks and recreation department, grocery stores, or hotels in the vicinity of the parks.

Mary Quinley is a Livonia resident and writes about food and travel for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. You can reach her at [MQuinl@aol.com](mailto:MQuinl@aol.com).



Seals and sea lions entertain at Six Flags Worlds of Adventure.

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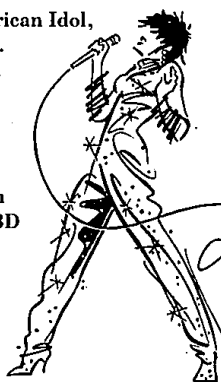
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