



Editor's Choice Award:
The Newark Museum of Art is a
Thought-Provoking Date Venue
With an Inclusive Spirit

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Editor's Choice Award: The Newark Museum of Art is a Thought-Provoking Date Venue With an Inclusive Spirit



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The Short Version: [The Newark Museum of Art](#) can offer many enriching experiences to intellectually curious singles, couples, and families from all walks of life. Since 1909, this museum has amassed a one-of-a-kind collection that includes artwork and artifacts representing African, Asian, American, and Mediterranean cultures. The Newark Museum of Art is the state's largest museum and a fantastic place to enjoy a date (even a virtual date) with a significant other.

A librarian and reformer named John Cotton Dana founded [The Newark Museum of Art](#) in 1909 to showcase pieces of art, science, history, and technology for public education and enjoyment.

According to his mission statement, Mr. Dana hoped to encourage the study of arts and sciences by offering interesting pieces that would naturally spark curiosity and discussion.

The Newark Museum of Art is an uplifting place to learn about history, science, art, and world cultures.

Today, anyone with a thirst for knowledge, an appreciation for history, or an eye for beauty can stroll through The Newark Museum of Art and find many wondrous conversation starters on display. The museum is the largest museum in New Jersey, and it has the 12th largest collection of artifacts in the nation.

The Newark Museum of Art takes pride in having something for everyone. It features art from all over the world, and the collection runs the gamut from ancient artifacts to contemporary work. The museum has a planetarium, a garden, and a hall of science. The museum's [Tibetan art exhibit](#), which spans eight galleries, is world-renowned and includes over 5,000 objects as well as a Buddhist altar on display.

In 1974, The Newark Museum of Art began hosting the Newark Black Film Festival to support and promote diversity in filmmaking. This annual event is free to the public and is the longest-running festival of its kind in the U.S. This film festival had to be canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the team expects it to be back next year.

The Newark Museum of Art has a diverse and vibrant team led by Director and CEO Linda C. Harrison, who became the first African-American to fill that role in early 2019. She is the fifth woman to hold the position of director. By prioritizing inclusivity and openness to new ideas, Linda has reaffirmed the museum's position as a cultural bastion and community hub.

A Quiet Space Dedicated to Artistic Excellence & Education

Since its founding in 1909, The Newark Museum of Art has dedicated itself to meeting the cultural, educational, and civic needs of the diverse communities in New Jersey. Its visitors come from all walks of life, and they all come together at the museum to learn and enjoy themselves.

In 2019, the museum saw over 100,000 visitors, including 55,000 local students and teachers who participated in academic programs and professional development training sessions.

One of the museum's most distinguished out-of-town visitors is the XIV Dalai Lama, who has visited The Newark Museum of Art on four separate occasions from 1979 to 2011. The XIV Dalai Lama consecrated the in-situ Buddhist altar displayed in the Tibetan art gallery. This remains one of the most popular must-see exhibits at the museum.



The Newark Museum of Art sees more than 100,000 visitors per year.

In addition to its extensive art collections, The Newark Museum of Art is dedicated to exploring the wonders of the natural world. Its science exhibits include the [Alice and Leonard Dreyfuss Planetarium](#) and the Victoria Hall of Science, which features selections from the Museum's 70,000 specimen Natural Science Collection.

Each gallery and exhibit encourages visitors to “make room to wonder,” and it's a lovely place to lose yourself in conversation with a significant other.

“I am downright thrilled to have The Newark Museum of Art included in discussions on where to plan the ideal date,” remarked Linda C. Harrison, Director and CEO of The Newark Museum of Art. “Our mission is to welcome everyone with inclusive experiences that spark curiosity and foster community, so having the public plan their social calendars with the Museum as the backdrop makes perfect sense to me.”

Community Programming & Exhibitions Spark Conversations

The Alice Ransom Dreyfuss Memorial Garden, which is located behind the Museum, has many works of contemporary sculpture on display, and it is also home to a 1784 Old Stone Schoolhouse and the Newark Fire Museum.

The garden has given many visitors a peaceful place to take pictures or just sit outside among the greenery. This picturesque area is also the setting for many community programs, concerts, performances, and wedding ceremonies.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum had to temporarily close its doors, reschedule its exhibits, and cancel its community programs; however, it continued to fill its role as a cultural center for the public.



While its doors are closed, the museum developed virtual programming to keep the public engaged.

The [#NMOAatHOME programming](#) is bringing art, science, and cultural experiences to people adhering to stay-at-home orders or social distancing guidelines. Many favorite programs, including Storytime Live and Science Pill Live, transitioned from live events to video conference events, and the museum team received much praise from families with young children. Meanwhile, team members from the planetarium took part in [Ask an Astronomer](#) sessions on Facebook Live, where they fielded questions from young children and adults alike.

The Newark Museum of Art has two popular programs called “[Norman Bluhm Bit by Bit](#)” which is a look at art in the current exhibition that opened just before Valentine’s Day, and “[Museum Crawl](#),” which is a partnership with other museums around the world, including Hong Kong, India and the U.K.

The museum’s virtual programs, which you can find on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#), have enabled learning at home and given people a reason to engage with one another online.

“We are making #NMOAatHOME the next best thing to visiting us in person,” said Silvia Filippini Fantoni, Deputy Director, Learning and Engagement at The Newark Museum of Art. “No matter your age or expertise level of art, we are working hard on programming that sparks curiosity and makes you want to explore more. Being told to restrict the places we go doesn’t mean we can’t expand our minds.”

Providing a Beautiful Backdrop for Couples to Make Memories

The Newark Museum of Art is an excellent date venue because it is full of diverse and interesting exhibits that give couples plenty to talk about. The galleries were designed to foster an open dialogue about cultural experiences, artistic viewpoints, and diverse

perspectives, and that atmosphere is naturally conducive to building strong emotional connections.

The galleries surround visitors with breathtaking artwork and curious artifacts, and couples can spend many contented hours walking from room to room. Some romantic individuals have even been inspired to get down on one knee and propose here!



The museum has been the backdrop for proposals and weddings over the years.

From the expert-led tours to after-hours wine tastings, The Newark Museum of Art has a lot of tempting activities on its docket, and the ever-rotating schedule of exhibitions means there is always something to see and do here.

The Billie Holiday exhibit has been pushed back to summer 2022 because of the pandemic, but the curators promise it'll offer a lot of music, culture, and history for visitors looking to discover Newark's jazzy roots.

The Newark Museum of Art does a great job at transporting visitors to different times and places. Couples can imagine what life was like during the Victorian Era by touring [the Ballantine House](#) — a brick and limestone mansion built in 1885 — and then they can travel through the universe at the planetarium virtual stargazing show.

“In my mind, the best dates include sharing a moment, starting a wonderful conversation or creating a unique experience together,” Ms. Harrison said. “Here at the Museum, you can discover the history of one of Newark's prominent Victorian homes (Ballantine House), make something inspired by our global collections in the MakerSPACE, stroll the Dreyfuss Memorial garden, find a bit of tranquility at our Tibetan altar or just take in the power of a provocative image in our contemporary galleries. Whether here on a first meeting or an anniversary, we think this is a pretty great date for just about anyone.”

The Newark Museum of Art Welcomes People of All Backgrounds

John Cotton Dana believed that art can be found everywhere and belongs to everyone, and that philosophy has been at the heart of The Newark Museum of Art for over a century. From the diverse exhibits to the innovative programming, the curators use technology and artistry to engage with the public and expand their knowledge of the world.

The Newark Museum of Art can offer a great environment for having a conversation, getting to know someone, and enjoying a dynamic experience. Plus, thanks to its virtual programming, daters don't even have to go to the museum to take part in events and activities.

As they explore the museum's digital collections or seasonal exhibits, daters can ask questions, give their opinions, and foster an open dialogue about what art, history, and culture means to them. It's a great opportunity to share your thoughts while also listening and learning something new.

"Talking about exhibitions and artwork provides a glimpse into the other person's thoughts and perspective," Sylvia said. "The purpose of a date is to get to know one another and determine similarities and shared interests with your date. What better way to do that than by describing what you see in a piece of art?"



Amber Brooks

Amber Brooks is a Contributing Editor at DatingAdvice.com. When she was growing up, her family teased her for being "boy crazy," but she preferred to think of herself as a budding dating expert. As an English major in college, Amber honed her communication skills to write clearly, knowledgeably, and passionately about topics that interest her. Now with a background in writing, Amber brings her tireless wit and relatable experiences to DatingAdvice.com.

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