

# 10 Great Wolf Lodge, Sandusky

by Rin-rin Yu

At the Great Wolf Lodge in Sandusky, Ohio, safety comes first. “Every day we have in-service training for a half-hour before the shift starts,” says Derrek Kinzel, general manager. The lifeguards go through monthly training and are expected to maintain the highest standards.

But customer service is just as important, making the Sandusky location of this growing brand No. 10 on the “It” list.

Technically, safety is a part of customer service, and both are the bread-and-butter of the resort, says Sarah Wysong Miller, director of sales and marketing.

“It’s very important for all our employees to create a cozy environment ... for our guests,” she says.

Those guests, who hail from Cleveland and Detroit, followed by Toledo and Columbus, Ohio, come to the resort mainly for its 34,000-square-foot, indoor waterpark. They pack the two-person slides, where a parent often rides with a child or siblings ride together.

“Having the two-person inner tube eliminates that fear [by] parents and children about attempting that attraction,” Miller says. “It makes it more of a family experience as opposed to an individual one.”

That family connection is vital to achieve because that’s usually the purpose of the resort vacation. As the region’s first waterpark resort, Great Wolf Lodge strives to maintain its reputation and revenue by emphasizing that point.

“It’s tough for families to connect at home,” Kinzel says. “They are so busy with [jobs] and soccer practice and dance. We provide a place for them to reconnect, and we’re going to strive to make that happen.” ■



**Year opened:** 2001  
**No. of waterparks:** 1  
**Square footage:** 34,000  
**Amenities:** Rock-climbing wall, dry-play area, fitness center, arcade