

Midwest – Cruising Lake Michigan

Lake Michigan's name is derived from the Ojibwa tribe word *mishigami*, which means "large lake". The French entrepreneur and woodsman, Jean Nicolet, was the first European to explore Lake Michigan in 1634. Since that time the number of people living along the shore of Lake Michigan has grown to 12 million. Even with the major port cities of Chicago, Milwaukee, Gary and Green Bay giving an urban flavor to parts of the coast, Lake Michigan offers over 1,500 miles of pristine coastline for cruisers to enjoy. Marshes, prairies, forests and even sand dunes that can reach several hundred feet, provide excellent habitats for all types of wildlife on Lake Michigan. Trout, salmon, walleye, and smallmouth bass are the most popular catches for fishermen on the lake. The lake is also home to water birds such as ducks, geese and swans, as well as bald eagles. Nearly four-dozen lighthouses stand along the beaches of Lake Michigan, a testament to the shipping history of the Great Lakes. This cruise begins in Chicago and the estimated mileages between destinations for this itinerary are calculated running counterclockwise around Lake Michigan. Since it is the only Great Lake that is entirely in the United States, boaters do not have to be concerned with customs and immigration clearances with Canada.

1. - Estimated Mileage: 0

DuSable Harbor



Chicago, IL

312-742-3577

HIGHLIGHTS

Docking in the Chicago Loop offers cruisers the best that the third most populous city in the U.S. has to offer. Museums, parks, public art and a magnificent waterfront are just a short walk from the marina. DuSable Harbor is adjacent to the Navy Pier, an iconic city landmark over 100 years old. Navy Pier has 50 acres of attractions for an authentic Chicago experience. Extending along the shoreline for 18 miles is the paved Lakefront Trail. Run, walk, bike or rollerblade with the waters of Lake Michigan on one side and green zones on the other. Go on an urban trek while traversing through several lakefront neighborhoods or just pick a spot off the trail to relax, picnic and enjoy the cityscape.

2. - Estimated Mileage: 54**Anchors Way Marina***St. Joseph, MI*

269-982-0812

HIGHLIGHTS

St. Joseph is nestled on the southern tip of what has been termed "The Riviera of the Midwest." This deepwater port town is a growing resort community, part of a "small town" chain stretching from the state line in a spectacular arc up along Lake Michigan. The lakeshore is peppered with remarkable sand dune formations and lined further inland with a lush countryside that produces some of the nation's finest orchards and vineyards. It is the largest non-citrus fruit growing region in the nation.

3. - Estimated Mileage: 490**Sergeant Marina**

Saugatuck, MI

269-857-2873

HIGHLIGHTS

There's something very special about Saugatuck. It is home to Oval Beach, one of Conde' Nast Traveler's "Top 25 Beaches in the World" and recognized as USA Today's "Best Small Coastal Town". Saugatuck is located along the Kalamazoo River. The best way to reach the beach is to cross the narrow river by the Chain Ferry, first built in 1838. It is hand cranked and the ride takes only five minutes. From there, climb the 282 steps to the top of Mount Baldhead, a forested sand dune with spectacular views. Descend the pleasant sloping western side of this large dune to experience the pleasures of Oval Beach on Lake Michigan.

4. - Estimated Mileage: 83**Harbor View Marina**



Ludington, MI

231-843-6032

HIGHLIGHTS

Located where the mouth of the Pere Marquette River meets Lake Michigan, Ludington became a major Great Lakes shipping port in the late 1800's due to nearby logging operations and sawmills in town. To keep shipping safe, lighthouses were built along the lake extending 30 miles north and south of Ludington. Today, these four historic lighthouses, Big Sable, Ludington North Breakwater, Little Sable, and White River, are maintained by volunteers and open for tours.

5. - Estimated Mileage: 72

South Manitou Harbor Anchorage

HIGHLIGHTS

South Manitou Island is part of an island chain that extends north to the Straits of Mackinac. This island features unique sand dune formations, 10 miles of pebble beaches and a grove of old growth white cedars that date back over 500 years. The Manitou Passage State Underwater Preserve was established in 1988 to conserve the historic and archeological value of over fifty known shipwreck sites, dating from 1835 to 1960. Just off South Manitou Island there are the five shipwrecks, in shallow water, easily accessible by scuba divers.

6. - Estimated Mileage: 15

Leland Township Harbor



Leland, MI

231-256-9132

HIGHLIGHTS

Fishtown is Leland's major attraction. This old working waterfront for commercial fishing operations included net-mending sheds, icehouses, smoke houses, and storage. It has now been transformed into a tourist destination. Many of the original weathered fishing shanties now house small shops along the mouth of the Leland River, as it flows into Lake Michigan. A wonderful way to spend the day is exploring the unique shopping opportunities and restaurants of Fishtown.

7. - *Estimated Mileage: 36*

Suttons Bay Village Marina



Suttons Bay, MI

231-271-6703

HIGHLIGHTS

The village of Suttons Bay lies midway up the eastern shore of the Leelanau Peninsula. It has a quality all of its own, with nature trails and a historic shopping district. The Leelanau Peninsula is home to two dozen vineyards and wineries all open for tours and tastings. Follow the Peninsula Wine Trail and sample the fare to your heart's content.

8. - Estimated Mileage: 30

Charlevoix City Marina



Charlevoix, MI

231-547-3272

HIGHLIGHTS

Charlevoix was a popular resort community for wealthy and middle class Chicagoans in the early 1900's. During Prohibition, Chicago's infamous gangsters made Charlevoix's Colonial Club their summer destination of choice. One of the most popular attractions in Charlevoix is the guided walking tour of the Mushroom Houses. These landmark homes were designed by the architect Earl Young, and have unique boulder exteriors and rounded, wavy roofs of cedar shakes.

9. - Estimated Mileage: 18

Harbor Springs Municipal Marina



Harbor Springs, MI

231-526-5355

HIGHLIGHTS

Golfing and bicycling are popular activities while visiting Harbor Springs, but it is the unparalleled shopping experience that is the biggest draw. Fine art galleries, unique apparel stores, intimate gift boutiques and local specialty shops abound along the waterfront and nearby streets.

10. - Estimated Mileage: 33

Beaver Island Marina



Beaver Island, MI

231-448-2300

HIGHLIGHTS

In the mid-1850's Irish fisherman from around the Great Lakes and as far away as County Donegal in Ireland, came to Beaver Island. As Irish immigration increased, Beaver Island became known as "America's Emerald Isle". Gaelic was spoken in church and even in everyday conversations. Today, the Shamrock Restaurant and Pub, Donegal Danny's Pub, and McDonough's Market help to reminisce about the island's Irish heritage.

11. - Estimated Mileage: 81

Fayette State Park Dock



Garden, MI

906-644-2603

HIGHLIGHTS

Located on the Garden Peninsula, the Fayette Historic Townsite harkens back to the mid-1800's when iron ore was mined in the Upper Peninsula. It once was a bustling industrial community that manufactured charcoal pig iron for economical shipping to the Great Lakes steel companies. Today the blast furnaces, charcoal kilns and residences have been turned into an interpretive museum.

12. - Estimated Mileage: 31

Shipyard Island Marina



Washington Island, WI

920-847-2533

HIGHLIGHTS

Washington Island is popular for its tranquil landscapes and laid-back way of life. Don't miss a visit to the stunning wooden stavkirke church, constructed by hand by local craftsmen and based on a 12th-century Norwegian structure.

13. - Estimated Mileage: 21

Alibi Marina



Fish creek, WI

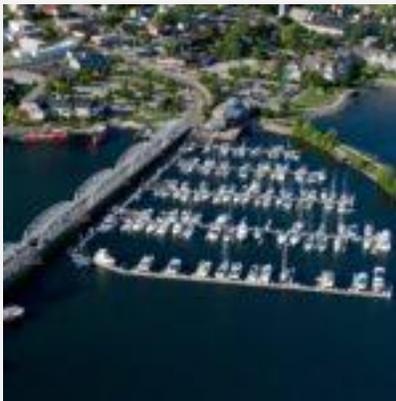
843-363-8335

HIGHLIGHTS

Founded by farmers, lumberjacks and fisherman, Fish Creek is a small, walkable village with tree-lined streets that's a wonderful place to spend a few days. Since 1935, the Peninsula Players Theater Company has been bringing top-notch plays and performances to the area. It's said to be the oldest professional resident summer theater in the country.

14. - Estimated Mileage: 22

Harbor Club Marina



Sturgeon Bay, WI

920-743-6900

HIGHLIGHTS

Sturgeon Bay is the regional hub and has a vibrant nautical heritage. Don't miss the Door County Maritime Museum, the 20,000-square-foot waterfront space features the John Purves, a restored 1919 red tug, plus exhibits about the Great Lakes' haunted lighthouses and Sturgeon Bay's World War II shipbuilding boom.

15. - Estimated Mileage: 54

Manitowoc Marina



Manitowoc, WI

920-682-5117

HIGHLIGHTS

The Wisconsin Maritime Museum is the main reason to visit Manitowoc. And the museum's jewel in the crown is the USS Cobia, a World War II US Navy submarine. The Cobia has been fully restored from stem to stern. Take the tour and see the bunks where men slept above torpedoes, learn why most of the crew showered with their clothes on and hear why submariners were the best-fed members of the military.

16. - Estimated Mileage: 49

Port Washington Marina



Port Washington, WI

262-284-6606

HIGHLIGHTS

Port Washington has one of the largest charter fishing fleets on the Great Lakes, and is the home of Fish Day, billed as the "World's Largest One Day Outdoor Fish Fry". Main Street is the port's historic downtown district with the feel of New England. Ample dining, entertainment and shopping possibilities are available for the most tireless visitor.