

Mackinac Island, Michigan Peninsular & Great Lakes



Departing Friday August 4 10 days / 9 nights

Escape the rally!!!

Join us on this fantastic tour as we travel to Holland - MI, Mackinac Island, Frankenmuth – MI, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron & Lake Superior.

It's easy to succumb to the Mackinac Island's magic - carriages, picturesque Victorians, the world's longest porch... And did we mention fudge? Temptation drifts on the wind in this enchanted island in northern Michigan. Seventeen fudge shops crowd the downtown area, and delectable scents escape every time a door opens. Chocolate, peanut butter, more chocolate.

The good people of this lovely island banned motor vehicles in the early 1900s. The island, between "mainland" Michigan and its upper peninsula, is one of those rare places that gives you a glimpse into a simpler life. A little fudge, some exercise, a chance to see beautiful scenery. What more could a vacationer want? Maybe a touch of magic.... Mackinac has that covered too. Close your eyes and you'll swear you've stepped back into the late 19th century.

Victorian inns and homes with wide verandas, long wood balconies and conical turrets march up the verdant hillsides. And the absence of cars and other motor vehicles gives the island a dreamy ambience. Horses clip-clop along the street pulling carriages; couples roll by on bicycles built for two; American flags and bright flower boxes decorate homes and street lamps.

Itinerary:

Day 1 Black Hills to Brandon, SD (407 miles)

We start our day with pickups in Spearfish, Sturgis, Rapid City & points east to Sioux Falls and Brandon. Overnight Brandon – Supper included.

Overnight Brandon, SD – Supper included

Day 2 Brandon, SD to Oshkosh, WI (447 miles)

This morning, we depart Brandon and head into Minnesota and Wisconsin. Our destination today is Oshkosh on Lake Winnebago. Enjoy supper overlooking the Lake...

Overnight Oshkosh – Breakfast & Supper included

Day 3 Oshkosh, WI to Saulte Ste Marie, MI – (363 miles)

Today we follow the north western shores of Lake Michigan. En route we make convenient comfort stops together with picture & meal stops along the way. Late afternoon we arrive at the town of Saulte Ste Marie, where the waterway connecting Lake Michigan and Lake Huron saw both booming commerce and some pretty spirited conflicts during the active fur-trading era. The Soo Locks have been referred to as one of the great wonders of the world and it is still the largest waterway traffic system on earth.

Overnight Saulte Ste Marie, MI – Breakfast & Supper included

Day 4 Soo Locks – Mackinac Island & overnight (80 miles)

After breakfast, we load up our suitcases ready for the next leg before embarking on our 2 hour narrated tour of the Soo Locks. Our tour boat will ride the water as it is raised twenty-one feet, straight up, to the level of Lake Superior. You will then cruise under the International Bridge and Railroad Bridge before crossing into Canadian waters (no passport required) where we see one of Canada's largest steel plants in operation. We return to the lower harbor through the historic "newly restored" Canadian Lock and cruise past the St. Mary's Rapids. Our boat will continue along the international shoreline of the lower harbor letting us experience all the sights, sounds, and excitement of Michigan's oldest city. After re-boarding our vehicle and take the short journey south across the historic Straits of Mackinac. We cross the "Big Mac" Bridge, a 100 million-dollar structure completed in 1957. The 8,344 feet between cable anchorages make it one of the world's largest suspension bridges. On arrival in Mackinaw City we will have a little time to explore and grab a bite to eat for lunch before parking our vehicle at the ferry port and transferring to Mackinac Island and The world renowned Grand Hotel. When you step off of the Island Ferry Dock, you will be in a living Victorian village. Please cross streets on straight angles rather than diagonally and be aware of horses, bikes and people stepping off of carriages, and then enjoy the downtown hustle and bustle of the early 1800s. Our luggage will have been tagged prior to getting on the ferry and will be delivered to your room at the Grand Hotel. Please remember, this is an historic Hotel so rooms may not be as spacious as a modern hotel. We transfer from the ferry to the hotel in a horse and carriage and arrive in-time to check in and freshen up before enjoying a delicious five course supper. **(Gentlemen, a jacket and tie is requested at supper time)**. After supper you are free to explore this amazing hotel before retiring.

Overnight Grand Hotel – Mackinac Island – Breakfast & Supper included

Day 5 Mackinac Island Tour by Horse and Carriage then travel to Frankenmuth, MI – (215 miles)

After breakfast, we depart the hotel by horse & carriage for a 2 hour tour of the island. Prepare yourself for a tour like no other! What you will experience is by far the most enjoyable and authentic way to view the island. We conclude the tour of Mackinac Island at the ferry terminal where we return to the mainland and our 21st century transportation. After time for lunch we head south to the German village of Frankenmuth known as Michigan's little Bavaria. We arrive late afternoon and check into our hotel for the next 2 nights.

Overnight Frankenmuth, MI – Bavarian Inn - Breakfast included

Day 6 Frankenmuth, MI

A full day to explore this delightful village which was founded in 1845 by a group of fifteen German-Lutheran missionaries who came to this area for the purpose of teaching Christianity to the Chippewa Indians.

Franken depicts the province from which the settlers came and *Muth* means courage in German. The name Frankenmuth means "Courage of the Franconians." Today, Frankenmuth is a thriving community of 4,900 residents who take great pride in preserving the German heritage. Area homes, businesses and surrounding farms remain neat and clean reflecting this German ethic. Well-tended flowers and lush greenery abound in what many visitors describe as the most authentic Bavarian architecture to be found anywhere in the United States. This morning we take a tour of Frankenmuth before exploring this delightful village on our own.

Tonight, it's the start of Frankenmuth's 53rd Annual Bavarian Festival It's not just an event... it's a feeling of "Gemutlichkeit", combined with the warmth and friendship of Michigan's charming Bavarian Village. It all started in 1959 with a Grand Opening Celebration of the Bavarian style addition to Fischer's Hotel on Main Street. Back then "Tiny" & Dorothy Zehnder gambled on "Bavarianizing" their restaurant and re-naming it Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn. Several years later the event out-grew the parking of the restaurants. The Civic Events Council of Frankenmuth took over the operation of what has become an annual Bavarian Festival! Come and enjoy the Gemutlichkeit of Old Bavaria blended. From 5pm to midnight hear infectious Bavarian music, enjoy a variety of delicious German foods and desserts & finally top it all off with plenty of refreshing ice-cold beer - Imported and Domestic! Return to the hotel at your leisure.

Overnight Frankenmuth, MI – Bavarian Inn - Breakfast included

Day 7 Frankenmuth, MI to Holland, MI (160 miles) – then to Ludington, MI (90 miles)

Our journey today takes us to the west shoreline of Lake Michigan to the picturesque town of Holland, MI. It's both easy to see and hard to imagine that Holland, Michigan has its roots in the most solemn aspects of Dutch culture. Much of the religious conviction remains, as does the traditional Dutch architecture, and ambiance. But like its pioneers, Holland has reinvented itself without letting go of its heritage. Today's Holland is alive with diverse cultures, whose influence has created an exciting, thriving community that has never lost its charm. During our tour of Holland, we visit DeKlomp Wooden Shoe & Delft Factory .

De Klomp Wooden Shoe and Delft Factory is a store that words cannot describe. From the time you walk into the door, your eyes will not believe the beauty and splendor of the items on our shelves. Talk with the staff as they explain how they make the product from beginning to end. See the detail and pride of work that goes into each piece of product they make. Wooden shoes are a very practical footwear for gardening, getting the mail, and general use. See the shoe maker produce wooden shoes from block of poplar wood using authentic Dutch machinery (still used in Europe today) designed especially for making wooden shoes.

"We have not forgotten the past completely; our wooden shoe hand carver was specially trained and received his diploma in wood carving from the Netherlands." De Klomp, a longtime favorite of West Michigan visitors, produces several thousand pairs of wooden shoes each year, in a variety of ways. De Klomp is Holland's only factory to offer the three styles of carving: Hand carving with Elmer, visitors get a real feel for wooden shoes as Elmer starts with a solid block of wood, chops it into a rough form of a shoe, clean cuts its outsides with a special tool brought in from the Netherlands. Style 2 takes the block of wood and carves the pair of shoes on semi-automatic machines. Style 3 finishes carving the shoes on fully automatic Dutch machines.

Overnight Ludington, MI – Breakfast & supper included

Day 8 Ludington – Ferry SS Badger across Lake Michigan to Manitowoc, WI (4 hours) to Tomah, WI. (168 miles)

After breakfast this morning, we depart the hotel at 7.45am and head to the ferry terminal in time to catch the 9am ferry across Lake Michigan. Our ship is the SS Badger.... She is the largest car ferry ever to sail Lake Michigan, and has provided a fun and reliable shortcut across the huge inland sea for more than fifty years. The S.S. Badger is a national treasure, offering a cruise experience that links us to an earlier time when a sea voyage was the ultimate travel and vacation adventure. The 410' S.S. Badger entered service in 1953, and was built primarily to transport railroad freight cars, however, the Badger reigned as Queen of the Lakes during the car ferries' Golden Era in the late Fifties, with Manitowoc, WI as her Wisconsin port of call. The crossing is 4 hours so please take your lunch break before disembarking – we change to Central Standard Time when we arrive in Manitowoc so our arrival time will be 12 noon. After disembarking the ship, we continue our journey by road to Tomah, WI (170 miles) arriving late afternoon. After checking into our hotel, it's time for supper.

Overnight Tomah, WI – Breakfast & supper included

Day 9 Tomah, WI to Austin, MN (Spam Museum) & finally Sioux Falls, SD (348 miles)

We leave the hotel at 8am and head west on I-90 to Austin, MN (140 miles) where we stop at the "Spam" museum - The SPAM Museum is dedicated to the delicious meat first created at the Hormel Foods Corporation plant in 1937. It's a fun and informational destination with interactive and educational elements designed for all ages. The museum features 16,500 square feet of SPAM® artifacts, history and fun—and all for free! Yes, that's right— it's free admission to check out vintage advertising, answer SPAM® trivia, try your hand at canning SPAM® products, stock up on collectible SPAM® memorabilia, and learn about all the SPAM® products, even the hard-to-find varieties. From details on the role of SPAM® Classic in World War II, to exciting videos and much more, the SPAM® Museum offers something fun for everyone! Upon leaving Austin, we have just 206 miles to go before arriving at our last overnight, Sioux Falls. Meal and comfort stops will be made along the way.

Overnight Sioux Falls, SD – Breakfast & Farewell Supper included

Day 10 Sioux Falls, SD to Rapid City, Sturgis & Spearfish, SD

After breakfast we leave the hotel at 8.30am and head to The Falls of the Big Sioux River have been a focus of life in the region throughout history. Native American peoples were the first to visit the falls and bring stories of them to European explorers. They have been the focus of recreation and industry since the founding of the city of Sioux Falls in 1856. Today the park covers 123 acres. Each second, an average of 7,400 gallons of water drop 100 feet over the course of the falls. We leave the park at 10.15pm and head west to Al's Oasis at Chamberlain for our lunch break. After lunch we continue back to the Black Hills and make comfort stops along the way.

Breakfast included.



Itinerary at a glance:

Price: \$2,995 (pp based on double occupancy)

Single Supplement: \$895

Starts: Friday August 4 2017

Ends: Sunday August 13 2017

What's included?

- This is a small group tour – minimum 6 passengers, maximum 12 passengers – book early!
- 9 night's accommodations
- 9 Breakfasts
- 7 Suppers (including Grand Hotel)
- All transportation / taxes to and from the Black Hills
- All sightseeing / touring / entrance fees as listed in itinerary
- Baggage handling and taxes
- Escorted

How to book

- Deposit of \$500pp due at time of booking
- Balance due June 4 2017

What you'll need

- A camera is a must
- Binoculars would be a great idea
- Photo ID
- A light jacket as temperatures cool off in the evenings

Weather

The weather in Michigan is normally pleasant at this time of year, but can cool down into the 40s at night, so don't forget to bring appropriate clothing. Check out weather.com for average temperatures.

Travel Advice

Please visit the travel advice section of this site for further information and government advisories and warnings.



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