

4 Great Lakes — 1 Great Tour



DAY 1: The tour begins with lunch at Angelo's Northwoods Villa Supper Club in Erie, MI. Dating from 1921, it was a notorious gambling spot in the 1920's. Still sparkling like diamonds are the crystal chandeliers and tiny white lights throughout the main dining room. The concave brass ceiling over the balcony had lookouts so someone could keep their eyes on the illegal gambling below. Men even patrolled the railings on the balcony with machine guns to watch the card games and slot machines. Following lunch, a tour of the area will introduce you to some of Lake Erie's history.



DAY 2: Continue this morning to Bay City, MI located on the Saginaw Bay of the second Great Lake, Lake Huron. The USS Edson served in the Western Pacific/Far East, operating in the Taiwan Strait and off the coast of Vietnam. Her exceptionally meritorious service in 1964 in the Gulf of Tonkin was recognized with the first of three Navy Unit Commendations. Accommodations tonight are at Thunder Bay Resort.

DAY 3: Board a glass bottom boat to explore the shipwrecks of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The crystal-clear waters and large 'glass bottom' viewing wells allow you to dive the wrecks – without getting wet. During the cruise you will experience the magnificently preserved shipwrecks and the scenic shorelines of Lake Huron. Following the cruise, visit the Thunder Bay Maritime Heritage Center. This afternoon visit Presque Isle Light Station. Located on the Lake Huron shoreline near Presque Isle Harbor, the "New Presque Isle Light" is the tallest lighthouse tower accessible by the public on the Great Lakes.

This evening, board a horse drawn carriage for a ride over the Thunder Bay River and into the woods at Thunder Bay Resort to view the Elk. Dinner is in the beautiful Elk Antler Log Cabin. Savor the delicious aromas put forth by the twin antique wood cook stoves as culinary artist Spenser James and his staff prepare your gourmet meal. Throughout your dinner, sample from nearby wineries.



DAY 4: Depart this morning for Mackinaw City where Lake Michigan and Lake Huron meet at the Straits of Mackinac. Meet your guide for a fascinating ride across the Mighty Mac. At one time this was the longest suspension bridge in the world. Continue with your guide to Mackinac Island. For 135 years, the Grand Hotel has overlooked the Straits of Mackinac. It has been the setting for Hollywood films, and a favorite vacation spot each summer. Now go behind the scenes at this idyllic resort with author Mike Fornes. The tour concludes with lunch at the Grand Hotel. This afternoon, board a carriage for a tour of the island. For anyone who has seen the movie "Somewhere in Time" there will be moments of déjà vu during the tour of this picturesque island. Accommodations tonight are on the Island.



DAY 5: The morning is free to discover Mackinac Island. Wander down Main Street and visit some of Mackinac Island's unique shops. Be sure to taste some of the famous Mackinac Island fudge. Departing the Island this afternoon, continue to SS Marie. Enjoy a cruise through the Soo Locks and cruise alongside giant lake freighters & ocean vessels. Experience "locking through" from Lake Huron and Lake Superior.

DAY 6: This morning depart for the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum at Whitefish Point. Learn about the perils of maritime transport on the Great Lakes at the Whitefish Point Light Station. See the Whitefish Point Light Tower, in continuous operation for 155 years. It is the oldest operating lighthouse on Lake Superior. The bell of the famous steamer Edmund Fitzgerald is on display and serves as a memorial to her crew. Continue back to the lower Peninsula and Petoskey, MI. A stop will be made at the National Shrine of Cross in the Woods. The shrine is one of the most famous and most frequently visited shrines in Michigan. The highlight of the shrine is a large wooden cross and bronze figure of Christ by sculptor Marshall Fredericks. It is the largest wooden Crucifix in the world. Dinner is included at Stafford's Perry Hotel. Enjoy the restored elegance of the main lobby and the breathtaking vistas that first gave inspiration to the expression "Million Dollar Sunset" for which Petoskey is now famous.



DAY 7: Depart this morning for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. World-class vistas will give you a view of Michigan that is simply spectacular! It is no wonder that in 2011 Good Morning America's viewers voted Sleeping Bear Dunes "The Most Beautiful Place in America." Continue to Muskegon, MI. Dinner tonight is aboard the USS LST 393. LST stands for landing ship tank (or as many soldiers called it a long slow target). The USS LST 393 was in many battles including D Day. It is now a ship museum that honors all veterans of the 20th Century. Someone will talk about the ship and answer any questions during the meal.



DAY 8: The tour concludes at the Silver Beach Carousel. The horses, the tigers, the hippopotamus, the panda, the clown fish – in all, 48 unique carousel figures and two chariots – are whirling with excitement to see you. Come pick your favorite and ride beneath 1000 twinkling lights as the band organ's music happily soars and dips with the gears. Following your tour of Silver Beach Carousel, depart for home.