

ISLE ROYALE

Michigan

THE GREAT LAKE STATE



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Michigan

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Michigan, the official 26th state of America, is sometimes called the “Great Lakes State,” the “Water Winter Wonderland” and even the “Wolverine State.” While there aren’t actually any wolverines in Michigan, the five great lakes (remember H.O.M.E.S.: Lake Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior) and four true seasons help create one of the most unique landscapes in America. The resurgence of entrepreneurship, which once made Michigan’s economy strong, is boldly on display throughout the state. This is evident through the rebirth of the auto industry, and even on the smaller scale with local business, such as the Detroit Bicycle Company. From any angle, you can’t help but fall in love with Michigan.

POPULATION: About 10 million. Nearly half of Michigan’s population lives in Detroit and its surrounding communities. Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, called the U.P. by Michiganders, has only 311,000 residents. Michigan is the 10th most populated state in America.

TOTAL SIZE: About 97,000 square miles. Michigan is the 11th largest state in America.

OFFICIALLY ADDED TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: 1837





History

The first inhabitants of Michigan consisted of three Native American tribes: the Ojibew, Ottawa, and Potawatomi. These three tribes existed as a confederation called the Counsel of Three Fires.

1700S

The first European explorers to reach modern day Michigan were from France. Their primary settlements were along the Detroit River, which helped make the region an important international trading port. The dominance of French inhabitants and trade discouraged British economy throughout the Great Lakes during the early 1700s. Great Britain's victory over France during the Seven Year's War, otherwise known as the French and Indian War, prompted the Treaty of Paris (1763). This, in turn, handed Great Britain total control of New France, which included Michigan. As the Revolutionary War drew to a close, Great Britain gave this land to the U.S.

1800S

By the 1830s, Michigan had a population greater than 80,000 which allowed them to apply for statehood. After disputes over the land surrounding Michigan, Congress awarded what is now the Upper Peninsula to Michigan, which led them to enter the Union on January 26, 1837. Michigan was at the forefront of the railroad economy throughout the mid-late 1800s. This was in part to the nation leading lumber production as well as abundant iron and copper supplies.

1900S

Michigan's greatest contribution to the world began in the early 1900s. While the automobile was not invented in Michigan, the processes and engineering that shaped the automobile



Geography

Michigan's most impressive geographical feature is its abundance of fresh water lakes. The Great Lakes of Michigan account for one fifth of the Earth's fresh water. Connecting these lakes to the mainland is over 3,200 miles of beaches that range from rocky cliffs in the U.P., flat, traditional beaches on the east coast and breathtaking dunes in the west.

Moving further inward, the true geography of Michigan surrounds you. Lush, seemingly-endless forests provide abundant natural resources and wildlife habitats. Scattered throughout the state, the metropolitan areas feature patches of nature that Michiganders view important to a happy life.

Connecting the two peninsulas is the five mile long Mackinac Bridge. The Mackinac Bridge was completed in 1957 and is the longest suspension bridge in the Western Hemisphere. Those who look to skip the bridge can always take the ferry between the peninsulas in the warmer months.

About 10 million people call Michigan home, making it one of the country's most populated states. Michigan is so abundant with water that each of these 10 million residents are never more than about six miles from a fresh water source, or 85 miles from one of the Great Lakes.





Weather

Picture the following week: Sunday is a hazy 88 degrees with a heat index of 96. Wednesday is 74 with ample sun and low humidity. Saturday is 63 and rainy. Michiganders are accustomed to such patterns, and frequently say, “That’s Michigan weather for ya.”

Traditionally, Michigan is a perfect example of a four-season Midwestern climate. The lengths of each season last long enough to keep anyone from getting bored, and always feature a few weeks of “Michigan weather.”

With the state being so heavily forested, autumn turns the state into a beautiful landscape full of earth-rich colors. Traveling to a state park in autumn is the perfect day trip. While winters in the lower peninsula can sometimes seem endless, winters in the U.P. commonly bring historic levels of snowfall. Marquette, Michigan receives an average of 150 inches of snowfall per year.





Industry

With Detroit being home to General Motors, Ford and Fiat-Chrysler (all of them commonly referred to as The Big Three), the automotive industry is what drives the Michigan economy. In recent decades, notably high concentrations of technology companies have made Michigan one of the fastest growing states for tech innovation. The state's several major public universities lead research and development with global impact, attracting on average \$1.5 billion in grants yearly. Michigan's workforce is considered to be widely skilled and educated, further attracting companies to take root.

While not the force it once was, the Motown record company played perhaps the biggest role in introducing African American musical talent to the rest of the world. The label not only created talent, but helped already established artists reach higher grounds. Motown was not only a record label, but also a style of music. The Motown sound is described as a blend of soul and pop, with its greatest ambassadors being Marvin Gaye, The Temptations, Diana Ross, and Stevie Wonder.

With automation and technology being prominent on the east side of Michigan, the west side still takes pride in being the Office Furniture Capital of the World. The industry enjoys consistent quarterly gains, as well as employing a high number of west Michigan residents. Major corporations such as Steelcase, Amway, and Meijer also call Grand Rapids home.

The economic struggles of Detroit were widespread, but the resiliency of its residents has birthed a new and independent economy that features high-quality handmade goods. New restaurants occupy once vacant properties and focus on using locally sourced goods. Breweries are becoming a staple weekend hangout not only in Detroit, but throughout the state. Michigan has several well established brewing companies, with more establishing in Michigan every year.





Life in Michigan

Michiganders will take almost any chance they get to connect with nature. Some of the most popular activities include fishing, hunting, and water and snow sports. Boats are popular in the state, with Michigan holding the highest number of recreational boat registrations in the country. Hunting is so popular in parts of the state that some schools will even be closed on the first day of deer season. These are the same schools that will likely have students arriving via snowmobile during the winter months.

The rivalry between Michigan's top two public universities, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University is so immense that the state is commonly divided during football and basketball season. These universities foster talent that often makes its way into the professional ranks. Pro sports also play a big role in the lives of residents. Michigan has sports teams for every major sport: Lions (football), Tigers (baseball), Red Wings (hockey), and Pistons (basketball).





Firsts and facts

- The name Michigan is derived from Native American words meaning Mich-gama, appropriately translating to “large lake”
- Sometimes referred to as the Wolverine state, there are no longer wolverines living in Michigan (aside from the University of Michigan Wolverines)
- Mackinac Island, located off the Lower Peninsula, offers only horse-drawn carriage transportation; there are no cars on the popular island
- Grand Haven, located on the state’s Lake Michigan coast, is known for its “whispering sand” that make a whistling sound when people walk across the beaches
- Christmas is a year-round celebration in Michigan’s Frankenmuth, a city that’s home to all-things-Christmas decorations
- Lower Peninsula residents refer to Upper Peninsula residents as Yoopers while U.P. residents refer to those who live under the Mackinac Bridge as trolls
- The Mackinac Bridge, which makes travel by car possible between the Lower and Upper Peninsulas, is often closed during winter storms for safety purposes
- Michigan has a “Michigan turnaround” on its roadways that enables changing direction with a stop sign, rather than at a stoplight
- In some school districts, classes are not in session on the first day of deer-hunting season
- Whenever you are in Michigan, you’re always within 85 miles of one of the Great Lakes and within six miles of one of the more than 11,000 inland lakes and 36,000 miles of streams

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Places to Experience

MACKINAC ISLAND

You'll find an abundance of bicycles and horse-drawn carriages but no cars on this small-town island in Lake Huron. Visitors access Mackinac Island by ferry and stay in cottages and expansive lodging facilities such as the famous Grand Hotel.

Mackinac Island offers 1800s Victorian-era preserved, natural beauty. A visit to this city is frequently described as taking a step back to visit a more relaxing, peaceful place in history. Festivals, golf courses, peaceful parks, and beaches make it one of Michigan's most popular tourist destinations. Michiganians visit this location often, bringing home famous Mackinac fudge and breathtaking sunrise and sunset photographs.





Places to Experience

THE HENRY FORD

There's no museum quite like this one. Located in Dearborn near the Ford Motor Company world headquarters, the Henry Ford shares the inspiring story of the people and technology that powered the automobile industry evolution. The museum is also home to the Rosa Parks' bus and other historically-notable automobiles and aircrafts. The adjacent Greenfield Village replicates life in the 1800s; visitors experience Main Street and the farmhouse where Henry Ford was born and where he invented the Model T automobile that changed the world.





Places to Experience

SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE

Some Michiganders will tell you that climbing Sleeping Bear Dunes is a bucket-list experience, as the view from the top is well worth the climb. Along Michigan's western coast, the 35-mile-long dunes are immensely-tall sand walls sculpted by wind and waves over thousands of years. Michigan families enjoy camping trips in one of the area's many campgrounds.





Places to Experience

TAHQUAMENON FALLS STATE PARK

Tahquamenon Falls, located in the western area of the Upper Peninsula, is ranked as a favorite among campers and hikers. The Upper Falls is about 200 feet wide and drops nearly 50 feet, leading to five smaller falls. Visitors enjoy miles of nearby hiking trails and lakes. In the winter season, visitors enjoy snowmobiling and skiing.

COMERICA PARK IN DOWNTOWN DETROIT

See a concert or the Detroit Tigers play in one of the country's most impressive ball parks. There are numerous historical references throughout the stadium, including statues of former Tigers players in stands. Michiganders often bring out-of-town guests to this venue for its incredible views of the city skyline. Comerica Park, which opened in 2000, is nestled in a bustling hub of restaurants and attractions.







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