



# USA'S BEST TRIPS

**52** AMAZING  
ROAD TRIPS



## Great Lakes Trips

(PDF Chapter)

Edition 2nd Edition, Mar 2014

Pages 50

Page Range 262–311

### Useful Links

Want more guides?

[Head to our shop.](#)

Trouble with your PDF?

[Trouble shoot here.](#)

Need more help?

[Head to our FAQs.](#)

Stay in touch

[Contact us here.](#)



### COVERAGE INCLUDES:

- 4 Trips







# Great Lakes Trips

## **DON'T BE FOOLED BY ALL THE CORN.**

The Midwest is more than a flat, endless field. Intrepid road-trippers will find that out as soon as they set wheels on red-cliffed, forest-cloaked Hwy 61 in northern Minnesota; on the dune-backed, lighthouse-dotted thoroughfares of western Michigan; or on the River Road rising and twisting along the Big Muddy.

The Great Lakes themselves are huge, like inland seas. Dairy farms and orchards blanket the region, meaning fresh pie and ice cream await trip-takers. Big cities such as Chicago and Minneapolis rise up and provide awesome doses of culture and entertainment.

And when the Midwest does flatten out? There's always a goofball roadside attraction to revive imaginations.

**Lake Michigan** A stretch of beach on Michigan's Gold Coast (Trip 21)  
WALTER BIBIKOW / CORBIS ©

# Great Lakes Trips

0 200 km  
0 100 miles







Split Rock Lighthouse (Trip 23)

### Classic Trip

20

#### Route 66 14 Days

America's 'Mother Road' offers a time-warped journey from Chicago to LA. (p267)

21

#### Michigan's Gold Coast 4 Days

A spin along Lake Michigan's shore features beaches, wineries and island-hopping. (p281)

22

#### Along the Great River Road 6–7 Days

Trace the Mississippi River through bluff-strewn scenery and retro small towns. (p291)

23

#### Highway 61 2–3 Days

The Minnesota byway hugs Lake Superior's rugged edge, passing waterfalls and moose. (p301)



**DON'T MISS**

### Pie

The region's prolific orchards result in flaky, scrumptious desserts at hot spots such as Crane's Pie Pantry and Betty's Pies. Try them out on Trips [21](#) [23](#)

### Hemingway Haunts

Literary buffs can find the places Papa wrote about and the bars where he tossed back drinks. Retrace the writer's steps on Trip [21](#)

### Harbor View Cafe

It's in the middle of nowhere, but foodies have been trekking to check out the riverside cafe's chalkboard menu for 30-plus years. Make a visit on Trip [22](#)

### Judge CR Magney State Park

You've never seen a waterfall like Devil's Kettle, where half the flow disappears down a hole. See it for yourself on Trip [23](#)

### Cozy Dog Drive In

Not only is the eatery crammed with Route 66 relics, it's the mythic birthplace of the corn dog. Make the stop on Trip [20](#)

*Route 66 Experience the classic US road trip cruising the 'Main Street of America'*





# Classic Trip



# 20

## Route 66

*America's 'Mother Road' offers a time-warped journey from Chicago to LA past neon-lit diners, drive-in movie theaters and roadside attractions that beg for a photo.*

### TRIP HIGHLIGHTS



**14 DAYS**  
**2400 MILES /**  
**3862KM**

### GREAT FOR...



### BEST TIME TO GO

May–Sep



### ESSENTIAL PHOTO

The Gemini Giant, a fiberglass spaceman, in Wilmington, IL.



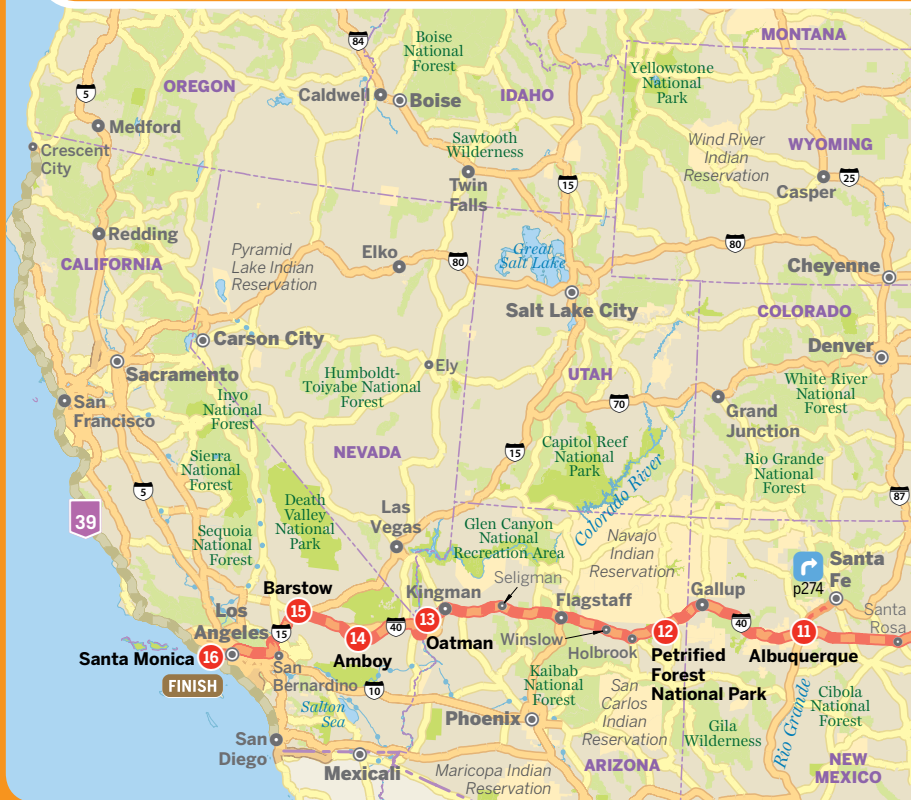
### BEST 2 DAYS

California's stretch of road offers tumbleweed landscapes, tipi motels and malted milkshakes.

# Classic Trip

## 20 Route 66

It's a lonely road – a ghost road really – that appears for a stretch then disappears, gobbled up by the interstate. You know you've found it again when a 20ft lumberjack holding a hot dog rises up from the side, or a sign points you to the 'World's Largest Covered Wagon,' driven by giant Abe Lincoln. And that's just Illinois – the first of eight states on the nostalgic, kitschy, slowpoke drive west.





**1 Chicago**

Route 66 kicks off in downtown Chicago on Adams St just west of Michigan Ave. Before you snap the obligatory photo with the 'Route 66 Begin' sign (on the south side of Adams, FYI), spend some time exploring the Windy City. Wander through the **Art Institute** (☎312-443-3600; www.artic.edu; 111 S Michigan Ave; adult/child \$23/free; ☀10:30am-5pm, to 8pm Thu; 🚿) – literally steps from the Mother Road's launching point – and browse Edward Hopper's

*Nighthawks* (a diner scene) and Grant Wood's *American Gothic* (a farmer portrait) to set the scene for what you'll see en route. Nearby **Millennium Park** (☎312-742-1168; www.

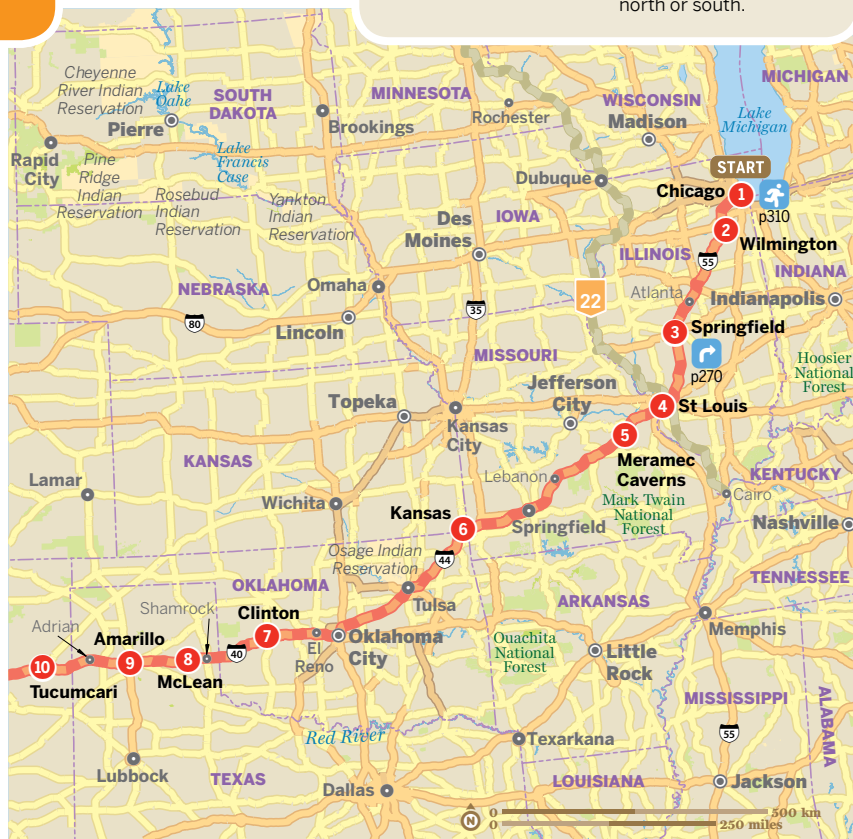
millenniumpark.org; 201 E Randolph St; ☀6am-11pm; 🚿; 🚗Brown, Orange, Green, Purple, Pink Line to Randolph) is just plain cool, with most public artworks and concerts at lunchtime

**LINK YOUR TRIP****22 Along the Great River Road**

The epic roadway (actually a series of roads) traces the meanderings of the Mississippi River. Pick it up in St Louis.

**39 Pacific Coast Highways**

This route along the edge of the continent cruises along an equally iconic numbered route: Hwy 1. When you finish Route 66, follow Hwy 1 north or south.



# Classic Trip

and most evenings June through August. Our Chicago walking tour (p310) has more suggestions.

🍴 p278

**The Drive** » Stay on Adams St for 1.5 miles until you come to Ogden Ave. Go left, and continue through the suburbs of Cicero and Berwyn. At Harlem Ave, turn left (south) and stay on it briefly until you jump onto Joliet Rd. Soon Joliet Rd joins southbound I-55 (at exit 277), and you're funneled onto the interstate.

## 2 Gemini Giant

Our first stop rises from the cornfields 60 miles south of Chicago. Leave I-55 at exit 241, and follow Hwy 44 south a short distance to Hwy 53, which rolls into the town of Wilmington. Here the Gemini Giant – a 28ft

fiberglass spaceman – stands guard outside the **Launching Pad Drive-In** (810 E Baltimore St). The restaurant is now shuttered, but the humongous green rocket-holding statue remains a quintessential photo op.

**The Drive** » Get back on I-55. Take exit 154 for Funks Grove, a 19th-century maple-sirup farm (yes, that's sirup with an 'i'). Get on Old Route 66 (a frontage road that parallels the interstate here), and in 10 miles you'll reach Atlanta and its pie-filled cafe (p278). Springfield is 50 miles southwest.

## 3 Springfield

Illinois is the Land of Lincoln, according to local license plates, and the best place to get your Honest Abe fix is Springfield, the state capital. Fans of the 16th president get weak-kneed at the holy trio of sights: **Lincoln's Tomb** ([www.lincolntomb.org](http://www.lincolntomb.org); 1441 Monument Ave;

☀9am-5pm, closed Sun & Mon Sep-May), the **Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum** (☎217-558-8844; [www.presidentiallincoln.org](http://www.presidentiallincoln.org); 212 N 6th St; adult/child \$12/6; ☀9am-5pm; ♿) and the **Lincoln Home** (☎217-492-4150; [www.nps.gov/liho](http://www.nps.gov/liho); 426 S 7th St; ☀8:30am-5pm), all in or near downtown. Oh, and Springfield's Route 66 claim to fame? It's the birthplace of the corn dog (a cornmeal-battered, fried hot dog on a stick).

🍴 p278

**The Drive** » Return to I-55, which supersedes Route 66 here as in most of the state. The **Route 66 Association of Illinois** ([www.il66assoc.org](http://www.il66assoc.org)) tells you where to veer off for restored gas stations, vintage cafes and giant Lincoln statues. Near Edwardsville get on I-270, on which you'll swoop over the Mississippi River and enter Missouri.

## 4 St Louis

Just over the border is St Louis, a can-do city that has launched westbound travelers for centuries. To ogle the city's most iconic attraction, exit I-270 onto Riverview Dr and point your car south toward the 630ft-tall **Gateway Arch** ([www.gatewayarch.com](http://www.gatewayarch.com); tram ride adult/child \$10/5; ☀8am-10pm Jun-Aug, 9am-6pm Sep-May), a graceful reminder of the city's role in westward expansion. For up-close views of the stainless-steel span and the Jefferson National



### DETOUR: OLD CHAIN OF ROCKS BRIDGE

#### Start: 3 Springfield

Before driving into Missouri, detour off I-270 at exit 3. Follow Hwy 3 (aka Lewis and Clark Blvd) south, turn right at the first stoplight and drive west to the 1929 **Old Chain of Rocks Bridge** (Old Chain of Rocks Rd; ☀9am-dusk). Open only to pedestrians and cyclists these days, the mile-long span over the Mississippi River has a 22-degree angled bend (the cause of many a crash, hence the ban on cars). Hide your valuables and lock your car if you leave it to go exploring.



Expansion Memorial surrounding it, turn left onto Washington Ave from Tucker Blvd (12th St). To explore the city in greater detail, see our St Louis walking tour (p358).

 p278

**The Drive** » From here, I-44 closely tracks – and often covers – chunks of original Mother Road. Take the interstate southwest to Stanton, then follow the signs to Meramac Caverns.

## 5 Meramec Caverns

Kitschy billboards have been touting **Meramec Caverns** ([www.americascave.com](http://www.americascave.com); Exit 230 off I-44; adult/child \$20/10; ☀8:30am-7:30pm summer, reduced hours rest of year) for miles. The family-mobbed attraction and campground has lured road-trippers with its offbeat ads since 1933. From gold panning to riverboat rides, you'll find a day's worth of distractions, but don't miss the historically and geologically engaging cave tour. Note to kitsch seekers: the restaurant and gift store are actually inside the mouth of the cave.

**The Drive** » Continue on I-44. Lebanon (p278) makes a good pit stop. Ditch the interstate west of Springfield, taking Hwy 96 to Civil War-era Carthage with its historic town square and 66 Drive-In Theatre. From Joplin, follow Hwy 66 to Old Route 66 then hold tight: Kansas is on the horizon.

## 6 Kansas

The tornado-prone state holds a mere 13 miles of Mother Road (less than 1% of the total) but there's still a lot to see. First you'll pass through mine-scarred **Galena**, where a rusty old tow truck inspired animators from Pixar to create the character Mater in *Cars*. A few miles later, stop at the red-brick **Eisler Brothers Old Riverton Store** (620-848-3330; [www.eislerbros.com](http://www.eislerbros.com); 7109 SE Hwy 66; ☀7:30am-8pm Mon-Sat, noon-7pm Sun) and stock up on batteries, turkey sandwiches and Route 66 memorabilia. The 1925 property looks much like it did when built – note the pressed-tin ceiling and the outhouse – and it's on the National Register of Historic Places. Cross Hwy 400 and continue to the **1923 Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridge**, from where it's 3 miles south to **Baxter Springs**, site of a Civil War massacre and numerous bank robberies.

**The Drive** » Enter Oklahoma. From Afton, Route 66 parallels I-44 (now a tollway) through Vinita, home to a famed fried-chicken cafe (p278). Tulsa to Oklahoma City offers one of the longest continuous stretches of Mother Road (110 miles). From here it joins Business I-40 for 20 miles to El Reno and its distinctive burgers (p278), and then parallels I-40 to Clinton.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

## 7 Oklahoma Route 66 Museum

Flags from all eight Mother Road states fly high beside the memorabilia-filled **Oklahoma Route 66 Museum** (580-323-7866; [www.route66.org](http://www.route66.org); 2229 W Gary Blvd, Clinton, OK; adult/child \$4/1; ☀9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun, with variations, closed Sun & Mon Dec & Jan; ) in Clinton. This fun-loving treasure trove, run by the Oklahoma Historical Society, isn't your typical mishmash of photos, clippings and knickknacks (though there is an artifact-filled Cabinet of Curios). Instead, it uses music and videos to dramatize six decades of Route 66 history. Last exhibit? A faux-but-fun drive-in theater.

**The Drive** » Continue west 70 miles to the Texas border. From here old Route 66 runs immediately south of I-40 through barely changed towns such as Shamrock, with its restored 1930s buildings like the Tower Station and U-Drop Inn, and miniscule McLean.

## 8 Devil's Rope Museum

The sprawling grasslands of Texas and other western cattle states were once open range, where steers and cowboys could wander where they darn well

# Classic Trip



KYLE MCARDLE / GETTY IMAGES ©



DE AGOSTINI / M. SAINI / GETTY IMAGES ©



## LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

SARA BENSON,  
AUTHOR

As you follow the National Old Trails Rd, look for the installation of recycled glass-bottle trees (over 200 of them) by folk artist Elmer Long. Then motor across the Mojave River into dusty downtown Victorville, with its Hollywood-Western atmosphere. Near Cajon Pass, I always pull over at the Summit Inn truck stop for an ostrich burger and date milkshake.

Top: Roy's Motel & Cafe, Amboj  
Left: Petrified Forest National Park  
Right: Gemini Giant, Wilmington







FRANCIS FOTOS / ALAMY ©

pleased. That all changed in the 1880s when the devil's rope – more commonly known as barbed wire – began dividing up the land into private parcels. This **museum** ([www.barbwiremuseum.com](http://www.barbwiremuseum.com); 100 Kingsley St, McLean; ☎9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm Sat Mar–Nov) in the battered town of McLean has vast barbed-wire displays and a small but homey and idiosyncratic room devoted to Route 66. The detailed map of the road in Texas is a must.

**The Drive** » I-40 west of McLean glides over low-rolling hills. The landscape flattens at Groom, home of the tilting water tower and a 19-story cross at exit 112. Take exit 96 for Conway to snap a photo of the forlorn VW Beetle Ranch, aka the Bug Ranch, on the south side of I-40. For the Big Texan, take exit 74.

## 9 Amarillo

This cowboy town holds a plethora of Route 66 sites: the Big Texan Steak Ranch (p278) (you've seen the billboards), the historic livestock auction and the San Jacinto District, which still has original Route 66 businesses.

As for the Big Texan, this hokey but classic attraction opened on Route 66 in 1960. It moved to its current location when I-40 opened in 1971 and has never looked back. The attention-grabbing gimmick here is the 'free

# Classic Trip

GREAT LAKES TRIPS **20** ROUTE 66

72oz steak' offer – you have to eat this enormous portion of cow plus a multitude of sides in under one hour, or you pay for the entire meal (\$72). Contestants sit at a raised table to 'entertain' the other diners. Less than 20% pass the challenge.

 p278

**The Drive** » Continue west on I-40. To see the Cadillac Ranch, an art installation of spray-painted cars, take exit 60 then backtrack on the southern frontage road from the Love's gas station. From there, follow I-40 west through Adrian and the Midpoint Cafe (p278) to the New Mexico border. Tucumcari is 40 miles west.

## TRIP HIGHLIGHT

### 10 Tucumcari

A ranching and farming town sandwiched

between the mesas and the plains, Tucumcari is home to one of the best preserved sections of Route 66 in the country. It's a great place to drive through at night, when dozens of neon signs – relics of the town's Route 66 heyday – cast a crazy rainbow-colored glow. Tucumcari's Route 66 motoring legacy and other regional highlights are recorded on 35 murals in downtown and the surrounding area.

Pick up a map for the murals at the **chamber of commerce** (404 W Route 66; ☎8:30am-5pm Mon-Fri).

The engaging **Mesalands Dinosaur Museum** ([www.mesalands.edu/community/dinosaur-museum](http://www.mesalands.edu/community/dinosaur-museum); 222 E Laughlin St; adult/child \$6.50/4; ☎10am-6pm Tue-Sat Mar-Aug, noon-5pm Tue-Sat Sep-Feb; 📺) showcases real dinosaur bones and has hands-on exhibits for kids. Casts of dinosaur bones are done in bronze (not the usual

plaster of Paris), which shows fine detail.

 p279

**The Drive** » West on I-40, dry and windy plains spread into the distance, the horizon interrupted by flat-topped mesas. To stretch your legs, take exit 273 from Route 66/I-40 to downtown Santa Rosa and the Route 66 Auto Museum, which has upwards of 35 cars from the 1920s through the 1960s, all in beautiful condition.

### 11 Albuquerque

After 1936, Route 66 was realigned from its original path, which linked north through Santa Fe, to a direct line west into Albuquerque. Today, the city's Central Ave follows the post-1937 route. It passes through Nob Hill, the university, downtown and Old Town.

The patioed Kelly's Brewery (p279), in today's trendy Nob Hill, was an art moderne gas station on the route, commissioned in 1939. West of I-25, look for the spectacular tile-and-wood artistry of the **KiMo Theatre** ([www.cabq.gov/kimo](http://www.cabq.gov/kimo); 423 Central Ave NW, downtown), across from the old Indian trading post. This 1927 icon of pueblo deco architecture blends Native American culture with art deco design. It also screens classic movies. For prehistoric designs, take exit 154, just west of downtown, and drive north 3 miles to **Petroglyph National**



## DETOUR: SANTA FE

### Start: 11 Albuquerque

New Mexico's capital city is an oasis of art and culture lifted 7000ft above sea level, against the backdrop of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. It was on Route 66 until 1938, when a realignment left it by the wayside. It's well worth the detour to see the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum and to fork into uber-hot green chili dishes in the superb restaurants. See our Santa Fe walking tour (p482) for more to-dos. Route 66 follows the Old Pecos Trail (NM466) into town.



**Wigwam Motel, Holbrook** Spend the night in a tipi



# Classic Trip

more than 20,000 rock etchings.

✦ p279

**The Drive** » Route 66 dips from I-40 into Gallup, becoming the main drag past beautifully renovated buildings, including the 1926 Spanish Colonial El Morro Theater. Cool murals also adorn many buildings. From Gallup, it's 21 miles to Arizona. In Arizona, take exit 311 to enter Petrified Forest National Park.

## 12 Petrified Forest National Park

The 'trees' of the **Petrified Forest** (☎928-524-6228; [www.nps.gov/pefo](http://www.nps.gov/pefo); vehicle/walk-in, bicycle & motorcycle \$10/5; ☀7am-8pm Jun & Jul, shorter hr Aug-May) are fragmented, fossilized 225-million-year-old logs; in essence, wood that has turned to stone, scattered over a vast area of semidesert grassland. Many are huge – up to 6ft in diameter.

The scenic drive has about 15 pullouts with interpretive signs and some short trails. Two trails near the southern entrance provide the best access for close-ups of the petrified logs: the 0.6-mile Long Logs Trail, which has the largest concentration, and the 0.4-mile Giant Logs Trail, which is entered through the Rainbow Forest Museum and sports the park's largest log.

North of the I-40, enjoy sweeping views of the Painted Desert, where nature presents a hauntingly beautiful palette, especially at sunset.

The park, which straddles the I-40, has an entrance at exit 311 in the north and another off Hwy 180 in the south. A 28-mile paved scenic road links the two. To avoid backtracking, westbound travelers should start in the north, eastbound travelers in the south.

**The Drive** » Take I-40 west 25 miles to Holbrook, a former Wild West town now home to

the photo-ready Wigwam Motel. Motor on through lonesome Winslow, which has an elegant hotel (p279), and college-y Flagstaff. At Seligman grab a burger (p279) before the Mother Road arcs northwest away from I-40 through scrub-covered desert, then rejoins the interstate at quiet Kingman. From here you corkscrew through the Black Mountains and Sitgreaves Pass to Oatman.

## 13 Oatman

Since the veins of ore ran dry in 1942, crusty Oatman has reinvented itself as a movie set and Wild West tourist trap, complete with staged gun fights (daily at 1:30pm and 3:30pm) and gift stores named Fast Fanny's Place and the Classy Ass.

Speaking of asses, there are plenty of them (the four-legged kind, that is) roaming the streets. Stupid and endearing, they're descendants from pack animals left by the early miners. These burros may beg for food, but do not feed them carrots. Instead, buy healthier hay cubes for \$1 per bag at nearby stores.

Squeezed among the shops is the 1902 Oatman Hotel, a surprisingly modest shack (no longer renting rooms) where Clark Gable and Carole Lombard spent their wedding night in 1939. On July 4 the town holds a sidewalk egg-frying contest. Now that's hot!



### TOP TIP: NAVIGATING ROUTE 66

Because Route 66 is no longer an official road, it doesn't appear on most maps. We've provided high-level directions, but you'll fare best using one of these additional resources: free turn-by-turn directions at [www.historic66.com](http://www.historic66.com), or maps from the National Historic Route 66 Federation ([www.national66.org](http://www.national66.org)).

**The Drive** » From here, Route 66 twists down to Golden Shores and I-40. Soon you'll enter California at Needles. About 40 miles later, the road dips south and joins with the National Old Trails Rd. This is some of the coolest stretch of road, with huge skies and vintage signs rusting in the sun.

#### **14 Amboy**

Potholed and crumbling in a romantic way, the USA's original transnational highway was established in 1912, more than a decade before Route 66 first ran through here. The rutted highway races through tiny towns, sparsely scattered across the Mojave. Only a few landmarks interrupt the horizon, including **Roy's Motel & Cafe** ([www.rt66roys.com](http://www.rt66roys.com); National Old Trails Hwy; ☺vary), a landmark Route 66 watering hole. If you'll believe the lore, Roy once cooked his famous Route 66 double cheeseburger on the hood of a '63 Mercury. Although the motel is abandoned, the gas station and cafe are occasionally open. It's east of **Amboy Crater** ([blm.gov/ca](http://blm.gov/ca); 1 mile west of Amboy; ☺sunrise-sunset), an almost perfectly symmetrical volcanic cinder cone. You can hike to the top, but it's best to avoid the midday sun – the 1.5-mile hike doesn't have a stitch of shade.

**The Drive** » Stay on the National Old Trails Rd to Ludlow. Turn right onto Crucero Rd and pass under I-40, then take the north frontage road west and turn left at Lavic Rd. Keep heading west on the National Old Trails Rd through windswept Daggett. Join I-40 at Nebo Rd. Drive for about 15 minutes before taking the exit for Barstow Road.

#### **15 Barstow**

Exit the interstate onto Main St, which runs through Barstow, a railroad settlement and historic crossroads, where murals adorn empty buildings downtown. Follow 1st St north across the Mojave River over a trestle bridge to the 1911 Harvey House, nicknamed 'Casa del Desierto,' designed by Western architect Mary Colter. Next to a small railroad museum is the **Route 66 'Mother Road' Museum** ([www.route66museum.org](http://www.route66museum.org); 681 N 1st St; ☺10am-4pm Fri-Sun), displaying black-and-white historical photographs and odds and ends of everyday life in the early 20th century. Back in the day, it was also a Harvey House.

🗝️ p279

**The Drive** » Rejoin the National Old Trails Rd. At Victorville take I-15 out of town, heading south to San Bernardino, home to an iconic Route 66 motor court. From there follow Foothill Blvd/Route 66 west through retro-suburban

Pasadena and check out the diner. Finally, for your Hollywood ending, take Arroyo Seco Pkwy to LA, where Sunset Blvd connects to Santa Monica Blvd.

#### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

#### **16 Santa Monica**

This is the end of the line: Route 66 reaches its finish, over 2400 miles from its starting point in Chicago, on an ocean bluff in **Palisades Park**, where a Will Rogers Hwy memorial plaque marks the official end of the Mother Road. Celebrate on **Santa Monica Pier** ([www.santamoniciapier.org](http://www.santamoniciapier.org); ☺☺), where you can ride a 1920s carousel featured in *The Sting*, gently touch tide-pool critters at the **Santa Monica Pier Aquarium** ([www.healthebay.org](http://www.healthebay.org); 1600 Ocean Front Walk; adult/child \$5/free; ☺2-5pm Tue-Fri, 12:30-5pm Sat & Sun; ☺☺), and soak up a sunset atop the solar-powered Ferris wheel at **Pacific Park** ([www.pacpark.com](http://www.pacpark.com); ☺11am-9pm Sun-Thu, to midnight Fri & Sat Jun-Aug, shorter hours Sep-May; ☺☺). Year-round carnival rides include the West Coast's only oceanfront steel roller coaster – a thrilling ride to end this classic trip.


🗝️ p279

## Eating & Sleeping

### Chicago 1

 **Lou Mitchell's** Breakfast \$  
 (www.loumitchellsrestaurant.com; 565 W Jackson Blvd; mains \$6-11; ☎5:30am-3pm Mon-Sat, 7am-3pm Sun; ♿; 🚗 Blue Line to Clinton) Lou's old-school waitresses deliver omelets that hang off the plate and thick-cut French toast while calling you 'honey' and filling your coffee cup. Free donut holes and Milk Duds sweeten the deal. It's located near Route 66's starting point.


### Atlanta

 **The Palms Grill Cafe** Cafe \$  
 (☎217-648-2233; www.thepalmsgrillcafe.com; 110 SW Arch St; pie slices \$3; ☎5am-8pm) Thick slabs of gooseberry, sour cream raisin and other retro pies tempt from the glass case. Then walk across the street to snap a photo with Tall Paul, a sky-high statue of Paul Bunyan clutching a hot dog.


### Springfield 3

 **Cozy Dog Drive In** American \$  
 (www.cozydogdrivein.com; 2935 S 6th St; mains \$2-4.50; ☎8am-8pm Mon-Sat) It's a Route 66 legend – the reputed birthplace of the corn dog! – with memorabilia and souvenirs in addition to the deeply fried main course on a stick.

### St Louis 4

 **Ted Drewes Frozen Custard** Ice Cream \$  
 (☎314-481-2652; www.teddrewes.com; 6726 Chippewa St; mains under \$5; ☎11am-11pm Feb-Dec; ♿) Get in line at this icicle-trimmed shack to order a 'concrete' – a super-creamy ice-cream-like treat so thick they hand it to you upside down.


### Lebanon

 **Munger Moss Motel** Motel \$  
 (☎417-532-3111; www.mungermoss.com; 1336 E Rte 66; r from \$50; ♿; 🚗) The 1940s motel has a monster of a neon sign and Mother Road-loving owners. Munger and Moss? Surnames of the original owner's first two husbands.


### Vinita

 **Clanton's** American \$  
 (www.clantonscafe.com; 319 E Illinois Ave; mains \$4-10; ☎6am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat & Sun) Clanton's dates back to 1927 and is the place for chicken fried steak and calf fries (don't ask).

### El Reno

 **Sid's** Burgers  
 (300 S Choctaw Ave; ☎11am-7pm)  
 El Reno is the birthplace of the fried onion burger, a local specialty in which ground beef is combined with raw onions and then cooked and caramelized on the grill. Sid's makes a mean one.

### Amarillo 8

 **Big Texan Steak Ranch** Steakhouse \$\$  
 (www.bigtexan.com; 7701 I-40 E, exit 74; mains \$10-40; ☎7am-10:30pm; ♿) Consume the 72oz steak, plus all the fixin's, in an hour and it's free; otherwise you pay \$72.

### Adrian

 **Midpoint Cafe** Cafe \$  
 (☎806-538-6379; cnr Business 40 & CR 22; mains \$3-7; ☎8am-4pm Mar-Dec) Vibrant vinyl chairs and 1950s-esqe knickknacks form the



backdrop of this burger joint and gift shop. It marks the halfway point between LA and Chicago, and serves some darn good 'ugly crust' pie.

## Tucumcari 10

### Kix on 66

Diner \$

(www.kixon66.com; 1102 E Tucumcari Blvd; mains \$5-10; ☺6am-2pm; 📶) A classic diner with a hint of style, Kix serves American and Southwest specialties right beside the Mother Road.

### Blue Swallow Motel Historic Motel \$

(📞575-461-9849; www.blueswallowmotel.com; 815 E Tucumcari Blvd; r from \$65; 📶📶📶) Spend the night in this beautifully restored motel and feel time slide in reverse. The place has a great lobby, friendly owners and vintage, uniquely decorated rooms.

## Albuquerque 11

### Frontier

New Mexican \$

(www.frontierrestaurant.com; 2400 Central Ave SE; mains \$3-11; ☺5am-1am; 🍴📶) Get in line for enormous cinnamon rolls and some of the best huevos rancheros in town. The food, people-watching and Western art are all outstanding.

### Kelly's Brewery

Brewery

(www.kellysbrewpub.com; 3222 Central Ave SE; ☺8am-10:30pm Sun-Thu, to midnight Fri & Sat) Come to this former Route 66 service station for patio dining, lots of local microbrews and 20-somethings hanging out.

## Winslow

### La Posada

Historic Hotel \$\$

(📞928-289-4366; www.laposada.org; 303 E 2nd St; r \$119-169; 📶📶📶) The Mary Colter-designed 1930s *hacienda* features elaborate tile work, glass-and-tin chandeliers, Navajo rugs and other details that accent its rustic Western-style elegance. The period-styled rooms are named for illustrious former guests.

## Seligman

### Snow Cap Drive-In

Burgers \$

(📞928-422-3291; 301 E Rte 66; dishes \$3-6; ☺10am-6pm mid-Mar–Nov) It's a Route

66 institution. The crazy decor is only the beginning. Beware the fake mustard bottle...

## Barstow 15

### Idle Spurs Steakhouse

Steakhouse \$\$

(📞760-256-8888; www.idlespurssteakhouse.com; 690 Hwy 58; mains \$13-27; ☺11am-9pm Mon-Fri, from 4pm Sat & Sun) This Old West steakhouse and fully stocked saloon (it's even got microbrews) will slake your desert thirst. There's a tree growing inside the dining room.

## San Bernardino

### Wigwam Motel

Motel \$

(📞909-875-3005; www.wigwammotel.com; 2728 W Foothill Blvd, Rialto; r \$65-80; 📶) This vintage motor court lets travelers sleep in concrete tepees, which have been Route 66 icons since 1949.

## Pasadena

### Fair Oaks Pharmacy

Diner \$

(📞626-799-1414; www.fairoakspharmacy.net; 1526 Mission St; mains \$4-8; ☺9am-9pm Mon-Fri, to 10pm Sat, 10am-7pm Sun; 📶) Road weary? Stop by this early 20th-century soda fountain for egg creams, hand-dipped malts and gooey-good chili cheeseburgers.

### Saga Motor Hotel

Motel \$

(📞626-795-0431, 800-793-7242; www.thesagamotorhotel.com; 1633 E Colorado Blvd; r incl breakfast \$79-99; 📶📶📶) Take a dip in the heated outdoor swimming pool surrounded by AstroTurf, and pretend it's the 1950s. The vintage property still hands out quaint metal room keys to its guests, living up to its motto 'timeless appeal with modern luxuries.'

## Santa Monica 16

### Sea Shore Motel

Motel \$\$

(📞310-392-2787; www.seashoremotel.com; 2637 Main St; r from \$110; 📶📶📶) Say 'So long!' to your retro Route 66 road trip at this time-warped motel. Although the noisy, no-frills rooms have seen better days, they're so close to the beach that you can inhale the sea-salted breezes.



*Sleeping Bear Dunes* Climb 200ft of sand  
for stunning lake vistas



21

# Michigan's Gold Coast

*They don't call it the Gold Coast for nothing. Michigan's western shoreline features endless stretches of beach, dunes, wineries, orchards and B&B-filled towns that boom in summer.*

## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

475 miles

**Mackinaw City & Mackinac Island**  
Ferry to a throwback era

300 miles

**Sleeping Bear Dunes**  
Beautiful lake vistas atop huge sand piles

120 miles

**Saugatuck**  
Spot-on blend of arts, antiques, beaches and boats

11 miles

**Three Oaks**  
Part wee farm town, part Greenwich Village



**4 DAYS**  
475 MILES / 765KM

### GREAT FOR...



### BEST TIME TO GO

July through October for pleasant weather and orchard harvests.



### ESSENTIAL PHOTO

Atop the Dune Climb at Sleeping Bear Dunes.



### BEST FOR FOODIES

Traverse City has artisan food shops selling local wines, ciders and produce.



# 21

## Michigan's Gold Coast

While Michigan's shore has been a holiday hot spot for over a century, it still surprises: the Caribbean-azure water, the West Coast surfing vibe, the French-style cider house that pops up by the road. Ernest Hemingway used to spend summers in the northern reaches, and he never forgot it. Even after traveling the world, he once wrote that the best sky is in 'Northern Michigan in the fall'.

### 1 New Buffalo

Hit the waves first in New Buffalo. While it looks like a typical resort town, it's also the Midwest's surfing hub. You heard right. You can surf Lake Michigan, and the VW-bus-driving dudes at **Third Coast Surf Shop** (📍269-932-4575; www.thirdcoastsurfshop.com; 110-C N Whittaker St; 🕒10am-6pm mid-May-late Sep) will show you how. They rent wetsuits and boards (per day \$20 to \$35). For novices they offer 1½-hour lessons (\$55 to \$75) from the public beach right out the front door. Reserve in advance.

Not a surfer? Not a problem. Lounge on the wide, sandy beach (lifeguards patrol in summer); watch boats glide in and out of the busy marina; lick an ice cream cone or three; and peruse the festive shops and the town's popular **farmers market** (cnr Red Arrow Hwy & Lakeshore Rd; 🕒9am-3pm Sat & Sun).

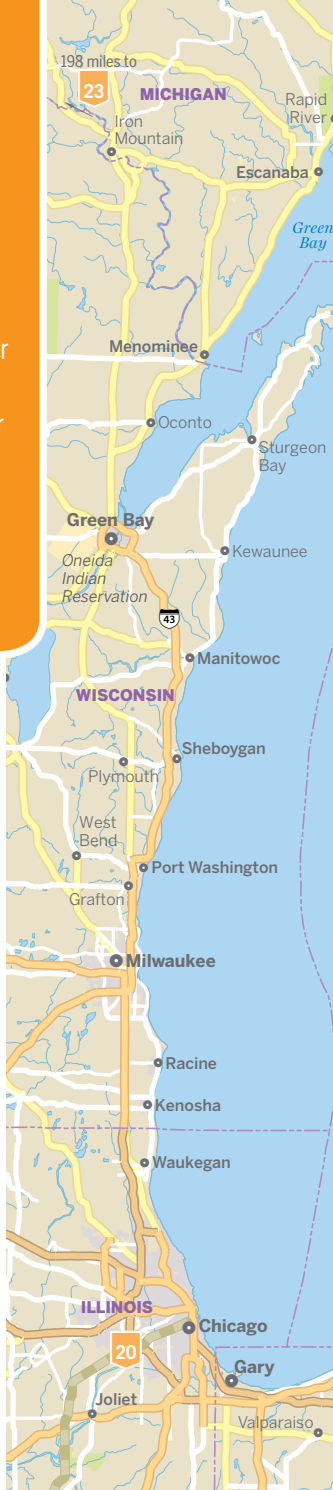
🍴 p289

**The Drive** ➤ Follow Hwy 12 as it curves inland for 6 miles to the wee town of Three Oaks.

#### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

### 2 Three Oaks

Three Oaks is where Green Acres meets Greenwich Village in





a funky farm-and-arts blend. Rent bikes at **Dewey Cannon Trading Company** (☎269-756-3361; [www.applecidercentury.com](http://www.applecidercentury.com); 3 Dewey Cannon Ave; bike per day \$20; ☀9am-5pm) and cycle lightly used rural roads past orchards and vineyards. In the evening, catch a provocative play or art-house flick at Three Oaks' theaters.

Or just swing by for an hour or two to putter around the antique stores and concrete lawn ornament shops. The whole town spans about five blocks. Be sure to stop in at **Drier's Meat Market** ([www.driers.com](http://www.driers.com); 14 S Elm St; ☀9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 11am-5pm Sun), a butcher shop that has been around since Civil War days. It's filled with antique grinders and cleavers, as well as the famous smoked meats.

**LINK YOUR TRIP**

**20** **Route 66**  
 The time-warped thoroughfare is America's original road trip, and it kicks off in Chicago, 70 miles west of New Buffalo.

**23** **Highway 61**  
 Ready to drive? It's 420 miles across the wild northwoods of Michigan and Wisconsin to your starting point in Duluth.

**The Drive** » Head north on Elm St, which becomes Three Oaks Rd. After about 5 miles you'll zig left onto Sawyer Rd, then right onto the Red Arrow Hwy. About 1 mile later, turn right on Browntown Rd. When it ends at Hills Rd turn left, and then right on Mt Tabor Rd.

### 3 Buchanan

By now you've noticed all the wineries around. A dozen or so cluster between New Buffalo and Saugatuck. Connoisseurs often regard **Tabor Hill Winery** (☎800-283-3363; www.taborhill.com; 185 Mt Tabor Rd; tours free, tastings \$6; ☀tours noon-4:30pm, tastings from 10am Mon-Sat, from noon Sun) as the region's best. The vintner provides tours and lets you belly up in the tasting room for swigs of its blood-red cabernet franc and crisp sparkling wines. There's also a restaurant overlooking the vineyard.

A mile north (take Hills Rd), **Round Barn Winery** (www.roundbarnwinery.com; 10983 Hills Rd; tastings \$8; ☀11am-6pm Mon-Sat, from noon Sun) goes beyond vino with its grapes. It also uses the fruit to make DiVine Vodka, a smoother elixir than the kind made with grains or potatoes. Try it in the tasting room. During the week, you're welcome to picnic on the grounds; there's a cafe for weekend snacking.

**The Drive** » Return to the Red Arrow Hwy. Head north until it intersects with I-94 and Business I-94. Follow the latter through downtown St Joseph. Soon it converges with shore-hugging Hwy 63, which meets the Blue Star Hwy. This scenic thoroughfare meanders north to South Haven, a fine ice-cream stop (p289), and onward to Saugatuck.

### 4 Crane's Orchards & Pie Pantry

Just before Saugatuck, turn right (east) on Hwy 89 to Fennville. It may be a teeny farm town with a lone traffic light, but pie fanatics have been swarming in for decades. The draw: **Crane's Pie Pantry** (☎269-561-2297; www.cranespiepantry.com; 6054 124th Ave; pie slices \$4; ☀9am-8pm Mon-Sat, from 11am Sun May-Oct, reduced hours Nov-Apr). Sure, you can pick your own cherries, apples and peaches in the surrounding orchards (open 10am to 6pm), but those in need of a quick fix beeline to the tchotchke-filled bakery for a bulging slice of flaky goodness.

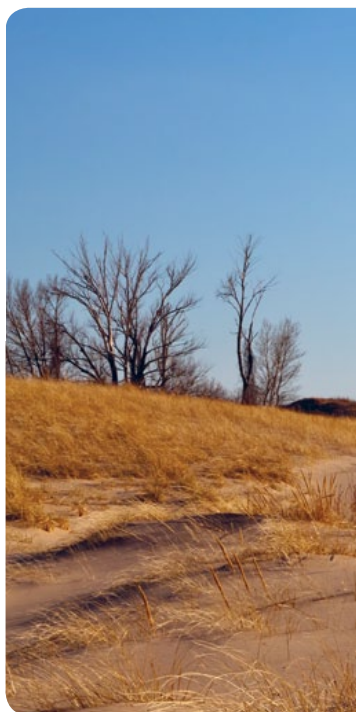
**The Drive** » Return to the Blue Star Hwy. Drive north for 4 miles to Saugatuck.

#### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

### 5 Saugatuck

The strong arts community and gay-friendly vibe draw boatloads of vacationers

CHRIS STEFENK PHOTOGRAPHY / GETTY IMAGES ©



to this pretty little village. Galleries of pottery, paintings and glasswork proliferate downtown along Water and Butler streets. Climb aboard the clackety **Saugatuck Chain Ferry** (Mary St; one way \$1; ☀9am-9pm late May-early Sep), and the operator will pull you across the Kalamazoo River. On the other side, walk to the dock's right and you'll come to Mt Baldhead, a 200ft-high sand dune. Huff up the stairs to see the grand view, then race down the north side to beautiful **Oval Beach** (Oval Beach Rd; ☀9am-10pm).





**Big Sable Point Lighthouse** Volunteer as a lighthouse keeper in Ludington State Park

Can't get enough sand?

### **Saugatuck Dune Rides**

(📞)269-857-2253; [www.saugatuckduneride.com](http://www.saugatuckduneride.com); 6495 Blue Star Hwy; adult/child \$18/10; ☀️10am-7:30pm Mon-Sat, from 11:30am Sun, closed late Oct-late Apr) provides a half-hour of good, cheesy fun zipping over nearby mounds.

🍴🚗 p289

**The Drive** » The Blue Star Hwy (aka County Rd A-2) makes its slowpoke, two-lane way northeast through farmland. It becomes Washington Ave, then Michigan Ave, then River Ave before reaching downtown Holland 12 miles later.

## 6 Holland

You don't have to cross the ocean for tulips, windmills and clogs. Holland, Michigan, has the whole kitschy package. **Veldheer Tulip Farm** ([www.veldheer.com](http://www.veldheer.com); 12755 Quincy St; ☀️9am-5pm) is a popular place to immerse in all things Dutch. A wooden-shoe factory and traditional blue-and-white pottery workshop are also on site. While it veers from the Dutch theme, be sure to stop by the **New Holland Brewing Company Pub** ([www.newhollandbrew.com](http://www.newhollandbrew.com);

66 E 8th St; ☀️11am-midnight, to 10pm Sun). The microbrewery is known for its robust beers such as Dragon's Milk stout (10% alcohol) and its housemade rums. The pub is the place to sample them.

**The Drive** » From Holland to Grand Haven, Lake Shore Ave is the back-road alternative to Hwy 31. Pick it up from Ottawa Beach Rd just before entering Holland State Park, and you're golden for 22 miles. After Grand Haven, filter back onto Hwy 31 for 75 miles to Ludington. Take exit 166 for the park.

## 7 Ludington State Park

It's time to stretch the legs at **Ludington State Park** (📞231-843-8671; tent & RV sites \$16-29, cabins \$45), beyond the city limits on Hwy 116. If you don't have one already, buy a vehicle permit (per day/year \$9/31) at the entrance booth, valid at all Michigan parks. Once inside, people simply pull over on the roadside and make a break for the beautiful stretches of beach. There's also a top-notch trail system and the renovated **Big Sable Point Lighthouse** to hike to (or live in, as the volunteer lighthouse

keeper). Tours of the 112ft fog-buster cost \$3.

**The Drive** » Get back on Hwy 31 and head to Manistee. Three miles beyond, hop on Hwy 22 which clasps the coast for the next 115 miles. Inland lakes, clapboard towns and historic lighthouses flash by en route to the Sleeping Bear Dunes.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

## 8 Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

Stop at the park's **visitor center** (📞231-326-5134; www.nps.gov/slbe; 9922 Front St; 🕒8:30am-6pm Jun-Aug, to 4pm Sep-May) in Empire for information, trail maps and vehicle entry permits (week/annual \$10/20). Then steer north for 2 miles to Hwy 109

and the **Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive**. The 7-mile, one-lane, picnic-grove-studded loop is one way to absorb the stunning lake vistas. Another is the **Dune Climb**, which entails trudging up a 200ft-high sand pile. It's likewise on Hwy 109.

There's also the **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail** (www.sleepingbeartrail.org), which paves 5 miles from the town of Glen Arbor to the Dune Climb; it's a view-alicious jaunt, which is why walkers and cyclists are all over it.

**The Drive** » Hwy 109 ends in bustling Glen Arbor, a good choice for lodging (p289). Rejoin Hwy 22 for 18 miles as it continues through the national lakeshore to Leland.



## DETOUR: GRAND RAPIDS

### Start: 6 Holland

The second-largest city in Michigan, Grand Rapids, once known for office-furniture manufacturing, has become a mecca for beer tourism. Twenty craft breweries operate in the area. **Grand Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau** (www.experiencegr.com) has maps and self-guided tour information online.

If you've only got time for one brewery, make it rock-and-roll **Founders Brewing Company** (www.foundersbrewing.com; 235 Grandville Ave SW; 🕒11am-2am Mon-Sat, noon-midnight Sun). The ruby-tinged Dirty Bastard Ale is good swillin'. Want to try one more? Head to **Brewery Vivant** (www.breweryvivant.com; 925 Cherry St SE; 🕒from 3pm Mon-Fri, from 11am Sat, from noon Sun), which specializes in Belgian-style beers. It's set in an old chapel with stained glass, a vaulted ceiling and farmhouse-style communal tables.

The city lies 29 miles inland from Holland via I-196.

## 9 Leland

Little Leland is cute as a button. Grab a bite at a waterfront restaurant downtown, and poke around atmospheric Fishtown with its weather-beaten fishing-shanties-cum-shops. **Ferries** (round-trip adult/child \$35/20, 1½hr) depart from here for the forest-cloaked Manitou Islands; day trips are doable in July and August. Check with **Manitou Island Transit** (📞231-256-9061; www.manitoutransit.com), which also runs a sunset cruise (per adult/child \$20/13) along the lighthouse-dotted shoreline four days per week.

🍴 p289

**The Drive** » Take Hwy 22 north for 4 miles. Zig right on N Eagle Hwy, then left on E Kolarik Rd. A mile onward, take the first right you come to, which is Setterbo Rd. You'll spy the cider house 3.5 miles later.

## 10 Suttons Bay

On the outskirts of Suttons Bay, **Tandem Ciders** (www.tandemciders.com; 2055 Setterbo Rd; ☎noon-6pm Mon-Sat, to 5pm Sun) pours delicious hard ciders in its cozy tasting room on the family farm. Pull up a stool at the bar and sip elixirs such as Cidre Royale (tart and high-powered) and Honey Pie (sweetened by a local beekeeper's wares). Draught ciders are free to taste; their bottled counterparts cost \$1 per tasting. In town, **Grand Traverse Bike Tours** (📞231-421-6815; www.grandtraversebiketours.com; 118 N Saint Mary's St; ☎10am-5:30pm Mon-Fri, to 4pm Sat & Sun) offers guided rides (6.5-hour tour is \$89) to local wineries, as well as self-guided tours (per person \$59) for which staff provide route planning and van pickup of your wine purchases.

**The Drive** » Hwy 22 rides down the Leelanau Peninsula and eventually rolls into Traverse City.

## 11 Traverse City

Traverse City is the region's 'big' city, with an unabashed love for cherries. It's a happening

place with kiteboarding and sailing, music and movie festivals, and brewpubs and chic restaurants.

Front St is the main drag to wander and for window shopping. Be sure to pop in to **Cherry Republic** (www.cherryrepublic.com; 154 E Front St; ☎9am-10pm). It's touristy but a hoot to see all the products: cherry ketchup, cherry-dusted tortillas, cherry butter, cherry wine – you get the point. Most of it tastes better than you think. And the shop is *very* generous with samples (hence the crowds).

🍷 p289

**The Drive** » Take Front St (aka Hwy 31) heading east out of town. When you get to Garfield Ave, turn left. It soon becomes Hwy 37, sallying through the grape- and cherry-planted Old Mission Peninsula.

## 12 Old Mission Peninsula

Taste-tripping through the peninsula's wineries is a popular pastime. With eight vineyards in 19 miles, you won't go thirsty. **Chateau Grand Traverse** (www.cgtwines.com; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Sat, to 6pm Sun) and **Chateau Chantal** (www.chateauchantal.com; ☎11am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 6pm Sun) pour crowd-pleasing Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. **Peninsula Cellars** (www.peninsulacellars.com; ☎10am-6pm), in an old

schoolhouse, makes fine whites and is often less crowded. Whatever bottle you buy, take it out to Lighthouse Park beach at the peninsula's tip and enjoy it with the waves chilling your toes.

🍷 p289

**The Drive** » Retrace your path back to Hwy 31 and head north. In roughly 50 miles, north of yacht-riddled Charlevoix, look for Boyne City Rd. It skirts Lake Charlevoix and eventually arrives at the Horton Bay General Store.

## 13 Horton Bay General Store

Ernest Hemingway fans will recognize the **Horton Bay General Store** (📞231-582-7827; www.hortonbaygeneralstore.com; 05115 Boyne City Rd; ☎8am-2pm mid-May–mid-Oct), from his short story *Up in Michigan*. Hemingway idled away some youthful summers telling fish stories on the big porch. His family had a cottage on nearby Walloon Lake. Next door to the general store, the erratically open **Red Fox Inn Bookstore** (05156 Boyne City Rd; ☎late May–early Sep) holds the mother lode of Hemingway books and souvenirs. The proprietor is a font of local lore.

**The Drive** » Head east on Boyne City Rd. Take the second left onto Sumner Rd, and then left again on Camp Daggett Rd. The latter meets Hwy 31 in 6 miles, which carries you to Petoskey.



## DETOUR: BEAVER ISLAND

### Start: 13 Horton Bay

For an alternative to Mackinac Island, sail to quieter **Beaver Island** ([www.beaverisland.org](http://www.beaverisland.org)), an Irish-influenced enclave, home to 600 people, that offers hiking, fishing, kayaking and snorkeling to shipwrecked schooners. The **ferry** ([231-448-2500](tel); [www.bibco.com](http://www.bibco.com)) departs from downtown Charlevoix. The two-hour journey costs \$29/90 one-way per person/car.

([231-436-5564](tel); [www.mackinacparks.com](http://www.mackinacparks.com); adult/child \$11/6.50; ☀9:30am-7pm Jun-Aug, to 5pm May & Sep-mid-Oct), a National Historic Landmark that features a reconstructed stockade first built in 1715 by the French; the visitor center is beneath the enormous Mackinac Bridge.

Mackinac Island floats a few miles offshore and is the big draw up here. Cars are banned, and all travel on the 3.8-sq-mile isle is by horse-drawn carriage or bicycle. It's a charming, old-time place, speckled with fudge shops, Victorian cottages and 18th-century forts. The ferry ride over takes 15 to 30 minutes, so it's easy to do as a day trip. Better yet, spend the night.

Three ferry companies, **Arnold Line** ([800-542-8528](tel); [www.arnoldline.com](http://www.arnoldline.com)); **Shepler's** ([800-828-6157](tel); [www.sheplersferry.com](http://www.sheplersferry.com)); and **Star Line** ([800-638-9892](tel); [www.mackinacferry.com](http://www.mackinacferry.com)) make frequent trips and charge the same rates: round-trip adult/child \$25/13. They have parking lots where you can leave your car.

  p289

### 14 Petoskey

Petoskey is yet another resort town with a yacht-filled marina and compact downtown dotted with gourmet restaurants and gift boutiques. It also has a couple of Hemingway sights. The **Little Traverse History Museum** ([231-347-2620](tel); [www.petoskeymuseum.org](http://www.petoskeymuseum.org); 100 Depot Ct; admission \$3; ☀10am-4pm Mon-Fri, from 1pm Sat late May-mid-Oct) has a collection dedicated to the author, including rare first-edition books that Hemingway autographed for a friend when he visited in 1947. Afterward, toss back a drink at **City Park Grill** ([231-347-0101](tel); [www.cityparkgrill.com](http://www.cityparkgrill.com); 432 E Lake St; ☀11:30am-midnight), where Hemingway was

a regular. Just north of town you can hunt for famed Petoskey stones (honeycomb-patterned fragments of ancient coral) at **Petoskey State Park** ([231-347-2311](tel); 2475 Hwy 119; tent & RV sites \$27-29).

**The Drive** » Time for a choice on this final stretch: take the "fast" way to Mackinaw City via Hwy 31, or dawdle on narrow Hwy 119. The latter dips and curves through thick forests and along bluffs as part of the Tunnel of Trees scenic route.

#### TRIP HIGHLIGHT


### 15 Mackinaw City & Mackinac Island

Touristy Mackinaw City serves mainly as the jump-off point to Mackinac Island, but it does have an intriguing sight: **Colonial Michilimackinac**




# Eating & Sleeping

## New Buffalo 1


 **Redamak's** Burgers \$  
(www.redamaks.com; 616 E Buffalo St; burgers \$5-10; ☀️ noon-10:30pm Mar-Oct) This burgers-and-beer roadhouse dates from the 1940s; the spicy curly fries reign supreme. Cash only.

## South Haven

 **Sherman's Dairy Bar** Ice Cream \$  
(☎️ 269-637-8251; www.shermanicecream.com; 1601 Phoenix Rd; cones from \$3; ☀️ 11am-11pm Mon-Sat, noon-11pm Sun, closed Nov-Feb; ♿) Beloved Sherman's scoops massive cones in 50 flavors (try the Mackinac Island fudge). It can't get any fresher, since it's made in the onsite factory. Lines can be lengthy.

## Saugatuck 5


 **Wicks Park Bar & Grill** American \$\$  
(☎️ 269-857-2888; www.wickspark.com; 449 Water St; mains \$11-25; ☀️ 11:30am-9pm) Located by the chain ferry, Wicks gets props for its lake perch and live music.

 **Pines Motorlodge** Motel \$\$  
(☎️ 269-857-5211; www.thepinesmotorlodge.com; 56 Blue Star Hwy; r incl breakfast \$139-199; 📶) Retro tiki lamps, pinewood furniture and communal lawn chairs create a fun, social ambiance amid the fir trees.

## Glen Arbor

 **Glen Arbor B&B** B&B \$\$  
(☎️ 231-334-6789; www.glenarborbnb.com; 6548 Western Ave; r \$131-196; ☀️ closed mid-Nov-Apr) The owners have renovated this century-old farmhouse into a sunny, French country inn with six themed rooms.

## Leland 9

 **Cove** Seafood \$\$\$  
(☎️ 231-256-9834; www.thecoveleland.com; 111 River St.; mains \$20-29; ☀️ 11am-10pm, closed Nov-Apr) The Cove's specialty is whitefish that it prepares four ways (baked with almonds, stuffed with crab, encrusted with garlic, and foil-baked with peppers).

## Traverse City 11

 **North Peak Brewing Company** Brewery \$\$  
(☎️ 231-941-7325; www.northpeak.net; 400 W Front St; mains \$10-20; ☀️ 11am-11pm Mon-Thu, to midnight Fri & Sat, noon-10pm Sun) Munch pizzas, mussels and pretzel-crusted walleye with the housemade suds. A five-beer sampler costs \$6. North Peak also makes root beer.

## Old Mission Peninsula 12

 **Grey Hare Inn** B&B \$\$\$  
(☎️ 231-947-2214; www.greyhareinn.com; Carroll St; r \$185-285; 📶) It's an intimate, three-room B&B on a working vineyard, with French-style decor and bay views. Many of the peninsula's other vineyards also double as B&Bs.

## Mackinac Island 15

 **Horn's Bar** Burgers, Mexican \$\$  
(☎️ 906-847-6154; www.hornsbar.com; Main St; mains \$10-19; ☀️ 11am-2am) Horn's saloon serves American burgers and south-of-the-border fare, and there's live entertainment nightly.

 **Cloghaun B&B** B&B \$\$  
(☎️ 906-847-3885; www.cloghaun.com; Market St; r incl breakfast \$112-197; ☀️ mid-May-late Oct; 📶) The garden-encircled Victorian home offers 11 rooms, some with shared bath. It's an easy walk from the boat docks.

**Dubuque** *The river road unfurls  
through Iowa farmland*





22

# Along the Great River Road

*This epic roadway edges the Mississippi River. In its northern half, it passes pine forests and eagles' nests, 18th-century forts and the World's Largest Six-Pack.*

## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS



**6-7 DAYS**  
1075 MILES /  
1730KM

### GREAT FOR...



### BEST TIME TO GO

June through  
September for snow-free weather.



### ESSENTIAL PHOTO

Paul Bunyan and his blue ox Babe in Bemidji.



### BEST FOR TWO DAYS

The road between stops four and 10 offers bluff-strewn scenery, historic towns and foodie pit stops.

# 22

## Along the Great River Road

It happens time and again. The road curves around a bluff and Old Man River appears, wider than you remember, a swift-moving expanse dotted with woodsy islands and behemoth barges. An eagle swoops overhead, diving to the water and rising with a floppy fish. Every once in a while you reach a city, say Minneapolis or Dubuque, but mostly the road unfurls through forgotten towns where it becomes Main Street.

### 1 Itasca State Park

Begin where the river begins, in Minnesota's **Itasca State Park** (☎218-266-2100; [www.dnr.state.mn.us/itasca](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/itasca); off Hwy 71 N; per vehicle \$5; 🇺🇸🐾). A carved pole denotes the headwaters of 'the Mighty Mississippi' – a good thing, because it's puny enough to mistake for a creek. Wade in the knee-deep flow and hop over a couple of stepping stones, then boast you walked across the Father of Waters. The park also offers canoeing, hiking, biking and camping, plus a lodge and hostel, all operated according to the principles of 'Minnesota

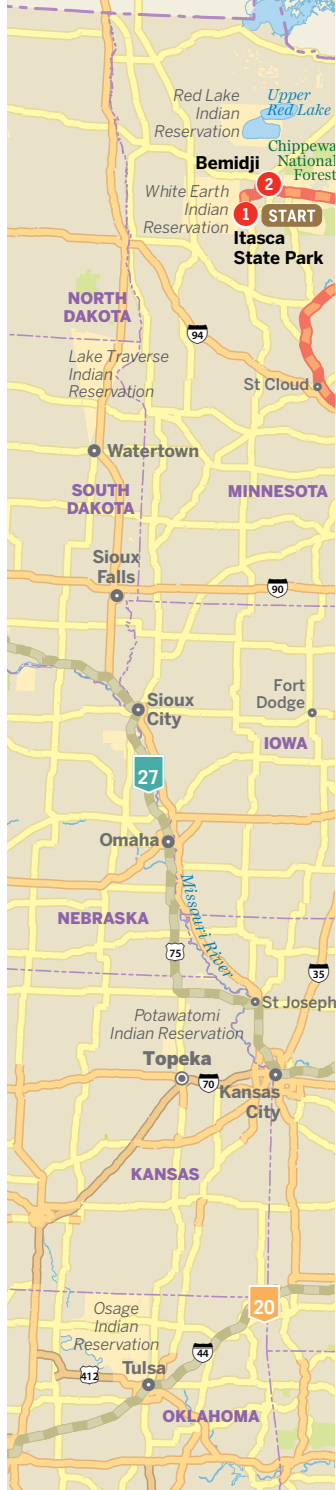
nice' (the state's proverbial hospitality).

🏠 p299

**The Drive** » Drive northeast, zigzagging on various county roads. Take County Rd 2 to 40 to 9, through Becida. Turn left onto 169th Ave, which becomes County Rd 7 and rolls into Bemidji (an overall trip of 30 miles). For free maps that help navigation, see [www.mnmississippiriver.com](http://www.mnmississippiriver.com).

### 2 Bemidji

In this piney northwoods region of Minnesota, the towns are known for lakes, lumberjacks and fishing. A classic example is Bemidji, where an enormous, mustachioed **Paul Bunyan statue** awaits. Standing 18ft and weighing 2.5 tons, he





raises his concrete head by the **visitors center** (☎218-759-0164; [www.visitbemidji.com](http://www.visitbemidji.com); 300 Bemidji Ave N; 🕒8am-5pm, closed Sat & Sun Sep-May), flanked by Babe, his faithful blue ox. Together they make a mighty photo op. Did we mention they created the Mississippi? As legend has it, Babe was hauling the tank wagon that paved the winter logging roads with ice. One day it sprang a leak, which trickled down to New Orleans and formed the Big Muddy.

**The Drive** » The road drifts east then south for 350 miles, taking strides on remote Forest Service lanes, gravel roads and county highways that skirt wee communities like Palisade, a sweet cafe stop (p299), and Cuyuna, home to wood-tick races each June. The road eventually drops into glassy, high-rise Minneapolis.



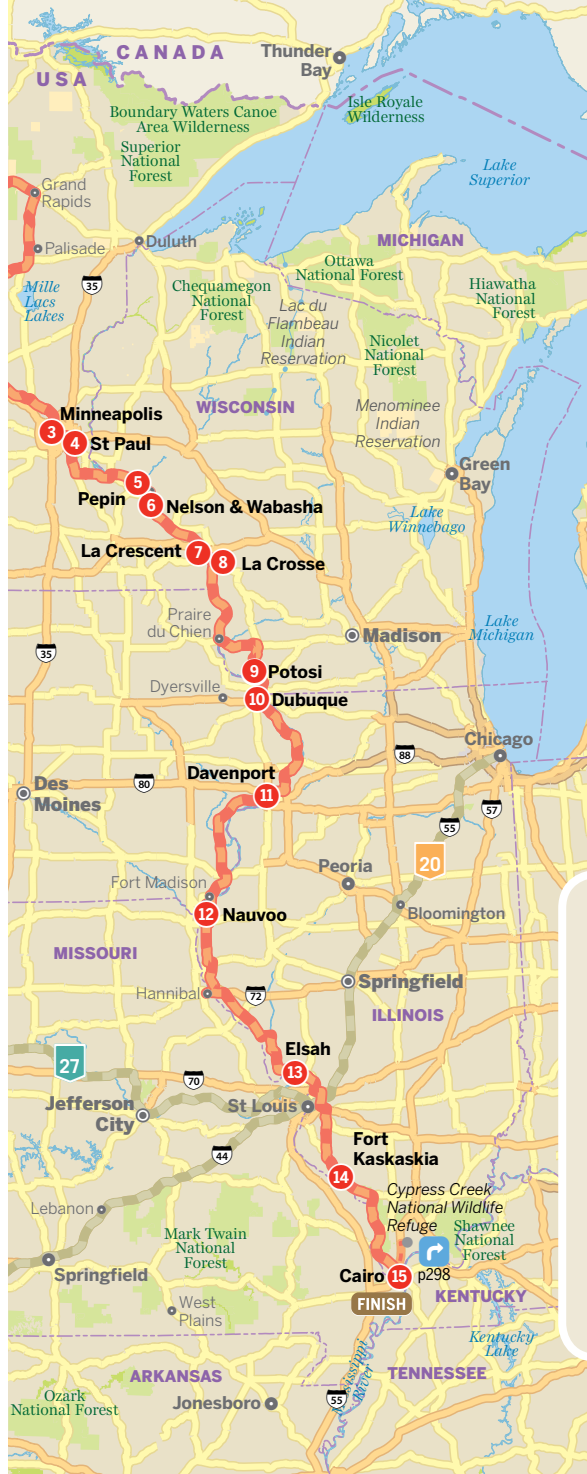
## LINK YOUR TRIP

### 20 Route 66

Join the Mother Road in St Louis and mosey 2100 miles southwest to LA or 300 miles northeast to Chicago.

### 27 The Mighty Mo

Here's another one to pick up in St Louis, a history-studded trip along the Missouri River heading northwest to the Dakotas.



## TRIP HIGHLIGHT

## 3 Minneapolis

The Riverfront District at downtown's northern edge makes a fine pause with its parks, museums, bars and polka clubs.

At the foot of Portland Ave is the car-free

**Stone Arch Bridge** over the Mississippi, from which you can view the cascading St Anthony Falls. A few blocks east is the cobalt-blue **Guthrie Theater** (☎612-377-2224; www.guthrietheater.org; 818 2nd St S). Make your way up to its 'Endless Bridge', a cantilevered walkway overlooking the river. You don't need a theater ticket – it's intended as a public space.

A stone's throw downstream, 50,000 students hit the books (and live-music venues) at the University of Minnesota. The uni's **Weisman Art Museum** (☎612-625-9494; www.weisman.umn.edu; 333 E River Rd; ☀10am-5pm Tue-Fri, to 8pm Wed, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun) occupies a swooping, silver waterfront structure by architect Frank Gehry. It's worth a peek for its airy galleries of American art.

🍴 p299

**The Drive** » Take I-94 E to exit 241B for downtown St Paul. It's about a 10-mile drive.

## 4 St Paul

Smaller and quieter than its twin city Minneapolis, St Paul has more of a historic character.

The **Mississippi River Visitors Center** (☎651-293-0200; www.nps.gov/miss; ☀9:30am-5pm Sun-Thu, to 9pm Fri & Sat) occupies an alcove in the science museum's lobby. Stop by to pick up trail maps and see what sort of ranger-guided activities are going on.

Up on Cathedral Hill, named for – that's right – the hulking church that marks the spot, a string of Gilded Age mansions lines **Summit Ave**. This is the old stomping ground of author F Scott Fitzgerald, who lived in the brownstone at 599 Summit Ave when he published *This Side of Paradise*. A block south, Grand Ave holds a slew of foodie cafes and shops.

🍴🍷 p299

**The Drive** » 25 miles beyond St Paul, near Hastings, the River Road splits into eastern and western sections as the Mississippi becomes the border between states. It's the Minnesota-Wisconsin line at this juncture, and our trip starts flip-flopping between the two to cover the best sights.

## 5 Pepin

Stay on the Minnesota side (Hwy 61) of the river to shoe and pottery purveyor Red Wing,

then cross to Wisconsin (Hwy 35) where some of the Mississippi Valley's prettiest landscapes begin. A great stretch of road edges the bluffs around Pepin. *Little House on the Prairie* fans can make a pit stop at the **Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum** (www.lauraingallspepin.com; 306 Third St; suggested donation adult/child \$2/1; ☀10am-5pm mid-May–mid-Oct). This is where she was born and the abode that starred in *Little House in the Big Woods*. There's not a lot in the museum (and the building itself is a replica), but die-hards will appreciate being on the authentic patch of land once owned by Ma and Pa Ingalls.

🍴 p299

**The Drive** » Continue 8 miles southeast on Hwy 35 to Nelson.

## 6 Nelson &amp; Wabasha

These two towns are across the river from each other. Nelson is on the Wisconsin side and home to the **Nelson Cheese Factory** (www.nelsoncheese.com; \$237 N Main St; ice cream scoops from \$1.50; ☀9am-6pm Sun-Thu, to 7pm Fri & Sat; 🍷). The name is a bit misleading: the refurbished building no longer produces cheese, but the shop carries a big stash of Wisconsin hunks, and the cozy wine



**Itasca State Park Camp**, hike and canoe where the mighty Mississippi begins

## ROAD RESOURCES

Turn-by-turn directions for the Great River Road are complex, spanning an incredible number of highways and byways. We've provided some road information here, but for nitty-gritty instructions you'll need additional resources. **Minnesota** ([www.mnmississippiriver.com](http://www.mnmississippiriver.com)), **Wisconsin** ([www.wigreatriverroad.org](http://www.wigreatriverroad.org)), **Illinois** ([www.greatriverroad-illinois.org](http://www.greatriverroad-illinois.org)) and **Iowa** ([www.iowagreatriverroad.com](http://www.iowagreatriverroad.com)) each maintain their own River Road website. Or check the **National Scenic Byways** ([www.byways.org/explore/byways/2279/directions.html](http://www.byways.org/explore/byways/2279/directions.html)) for designated sections. The one constant, wherever you are: the green paddle-wheel sign that marks the way.

bar serves 'em on tasting plates. The queues, though, are for the ice cream (emphasis on cream, which is used in abundance in the mega-rich treat).

Across the water in Wabasha, Minnesota, is the **National Eagle Center** (☎651-565-4989; [www.nationaleaglecenter.org](http://www.nationaleaglecenter.org); 50 Pembroke Ave; adult/child \$8/5; ☀10am-5pm). Large populations of bald eagles flock to the area each winter, where they nest in waterside trees and catch themselves fat silvery fish. The center has the lowdown. It also introduces you to Donald, Harriet and the other rehabilitated birds who live on-site.

🍴 p299

**The Drive** » From Wabasha, stay on Hwy 61 as it opens into a gorgeous drive for nearly 60 miles past sandbars, marshes and untamed green hills en route to La Crescent, Minnesota.

### 7 La Crescent

It's no wonder it's nicknamed 'the Apple Capital'. Orchards sprout from the land and roadside stands sell the tart wares, particularly bountiful from August through October. Strawberries, sweet corn and pumpkins fill baskets during other seasons. **Hardy Bauer's Market** (☎507-895-4583; [www.bauersmarketplace.com](http://www.bauersmarketplace.com); 221 N 2nd St; ☀8am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sat & Sun) is open year-round selling local produce as well as garden supplies and giftware – say, a fish-toting gnome or giant mushroom – many painted by a local artist.

**The Drive** » Cross the Mississippi again via Hwy 61 to La Crescent's twin city La Crosse, Wisconsin.

### 8 La Crosse

The road (which becomes 3rd St S on the Wisconsin side) swings by the **World's Largest Six-Pack**. The 'cans' are actually storage tanks for City Brewery, formerly G Heileman Brewing, maker of Old Style lager. As the sign in front says: they hold enough to fill 7.3 million cans, or enough to provide one lucky person with a six-pack a day for 3351 years. Yowza.

The historic center of **La Crosse** ([www.explorelacrosse.com](http://www.explorelacrosse.com)) nestles several restaurants and pubs downtown around Main St. **Grandad Bluff** offers grand views of the river. It's east of town along Main St (which becomes Bliss Rd); follow Bliss Rd up the hill and then turn right on Grandad Bluff Rd.

**The Drive** » Return to Hwy 35, which clasps the river for 24 miles to the Iowa border, then 35 miles more to the old fur-trading post of Prairie du Chien. Continue to Bloomington, then turn right on Hwy 133 for 40 rural, rolling miles to Potosi.

### 9 Potosi

The River Road becomes Main St as it meases into town. The **Potosi Brewing Company** (☎608-763-4002; [www.potosibrewery.com](http://www.potosibrewery.com); 209 S Main St; ☀10:30am-9pm) is your one-stop shop for food,



drink, memorabilia and historical information. The thick-stone building began brewing beer in 1852. Imbibe indoors amid neon-lit beer signs or outdoors in the pretty beer garden. Supplement with a burger and the famous beer cheese soup.

The building also holds the **National Brewery Museum** (admission \$5), stuffed with old beer bottles, cans, coasters and advertising signs, and a **transportation museum** (admission free) that shows early beer-hauling equipment. And there's one more item of interest inside: the **Great River Road interpretation center**, which offers maps, history and internet kiosks.

**The Drive** » Go east on Hwy 133 to Hwy 35/61; turn right. Follow it for 8 miles to the junction with Hwy 151. The three roads merge into one for 10 miles. Veer off for Dubuque at the 9th St-11th St exit.

#### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

### 10 Dubuque

Dubuque has some surprises up its sleeve. Nineteenth-century Victorian homes line its narrow and lively streets between the Mississippi River and seven steep limestone hills. The **4th Street Elevator** ([www.dbq.com/fenplco](http://www.dbq.com/fenplco); cnr 4th St & Fenelon; adult/child round-trip \$3/1.50; ☀8am-10pm Apr-Nov), built in 1882, climbs a steep hill for huge

views. Ring the bell to begin the ride.

### At the hands-on **National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium** ([www.rivermuseum.com](http://www.rivermuseum.com);

350 E 3rd St; adult/child \$15/10; ☀9am-6pm summer, 10am-5pm rest of year), at the Port of Dubuque, enjoy a big-screen soar over the river, pilot a simulated barge, or touch river-dwelling creatures in a wet lab. An American alligator lurks in the Mississippi Bayou aquarium, one of six creature-filled habitats.

 p299

**The Drive** » Take Hwy 52 south for 45 miles toward Sabula, then follow Hwy 67 to Davenport for 55 miles.

### 11 Davenport

Davenport is arguably the coolest of the 'Quad Cities' ([www.visitquadcities.com](http://www.visitquadcities.com)), a foursome that also includes Bettendorf in Iowa and Moline and Rock Island in Illinois. Downtown, the glass-walled **Figge Art Museum** ([www.figgeart.org](http://www.figgeart.org); 225 W 2nd St; adult/child \$7/4; ☀10am-5pm Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat, to 9pm Thu, noon-5pm Sun; ) sparkles above the River Road. The museum's Midwest Regionalist Collection includes the only self-portrait by *American Gothic* painter Grant Wood; you can also stroll through the world-class

Haitian and Mexican Colonial collections.

**The Drive** » A leisurely network of roads continues south in Iowa, with Hwy 61 rolling into Fort Madison. Cross the Mississippi on the Fort Madison Toll Bridge (\$2), a double-decker swing-span accommodating trains and cars on separate levels. On the Illinois side, take Hwy 96 into striking Nauvoo.

### 12 Nauvoo

Little Nauvoo ([www.seenauvoo.com](http://www.seenauvoo.com)) has long been a pilgrimage site for Mormons. Joseph Smith, the religion's founder, brought his flock here in 1839 after they were kicked out of Missouri. Nauvoo (Hebrew for 'beautiful place') grew quickly. Almost 12,000 Mormons took up residence, rivaling Chicago's population. By 1846 they were gone. Tension rose, Smith was killed, and Brigham Young led the group west to Utah. Today the tiny town is a historic district loaded with impressive structures, such as the homes of Smith and Young. The centerpiece is the gleaming white temple, built in 2002 on the site of the Mormons' burned-down original sanctuary.

**The Drive** » Follow Hwy 96 south to I-72, taking it west across the Mississippi to Hannibal, Missouri (p354), hometown of writer Mark Twain. Back in Illinois, take Hwy 96 to Hwy 100. The road becomes incredibly scenic



## DETOUR: CYPRESS CREEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

**Start:** 15 **Cairo**

You certainly don't expect to find southern-style swampland, complete with moss-draped cypress trees and croaking bullfrogs in Illinois. But it's here, at **Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge** (📞618-634-2231; [www.fws.gov/midwest/cypresscreek](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/cypresscreek)). For River Road-trippers who aren't going onward to Louisiana, this is an opportunity to see the eerie swamp ecosystem in action. From Cairo drive north 25 miles on Hwy 37 to Cypress, and stop in at the **Cache River Wetlands Center** (📞618-657-2064; 8885 Hwy 37; ☀️9am-4pm Wed-Sun). Staff can sort you out with hiking, biking and canoeing information.

around Grafton. As you slip under wind-hewn bluffs, watch for the turnoff to Elsah.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

#### 13 **Elsah**

You can't help but slow down in itty-bitty Elsah ([www.elsah.org](http://www.elsah.org)), a hidden hamlet of 19th-century stone cottages, wood-buggy shops and farmhouses. Most of the town sits on two parallel streets. Around the bend lies Principia College, a small liberal arts school and one of the few for Christian Scientists. Outdoors enthusiasts can zip line and cycle bluff-side trails.

🏠 p299

**The Drive** » Take Hwy 100 to Alton. After that, the River Road gets lost around St Louis (see our walking tour (p358) if you plan to make it a stop). A good place to pick up the trail again is Ellis Grove, Illinois, 75 miles

south via I-255, Hwy 159 and Hwy 3.

#### 14 **Fort Kaskaskia**

A few miles south of Ellis Grove, **Fort Kaskaskia** (4372 Park Rd; ☀️9am-5pm Wed-Sun) sits on a bluff beside the river. The French built it around 1759 to defend against British attacks. All that remains today are lonely earthworks around the perimeter, a cemetery from the late 1800s, and a view-tastic overlook. It's a great spot for a picnic, with tables and grills. If you're into French colonial architecture, take the footpath down to ogle the **Pierre Menard Home**, built in 1802 for the gent who eventually became Illinois' first lieutenant governor. Trivia tip: the town of Kaskaskia was Illinois' first capital,

though its tenure barely lasted a year.


**The Drive** » About 6 miles down Hwy 3 you'll roll through Chester. It's the hometown of EC Segar, creator of the cartoon character Popeye – hence the statues of the spinach-eating sailor and pals Wimpy, Olive Oyl and Sweet Pea throughout town. Continue south on Hwy 3 for 85 miles until it ends at Cairo.

#### 15 **Cairo**

It's the end of the line for the Great River Road's northern half. The town – pronounced *kay-ro* – has seen better days, but the surrounding area's swampy parklands are nifty. For those continuing on the thoroughfare, this is roughly the half-way point. The next 1000 miles meander past blues joints and barbecue shacks, steamboats and plantations, en route to New Orleans.

# Eating & Sleeping

## Itasca State Park 1

 **Douglas Lodge** Lodge \$\$  
(📞)866-857-2757; r \$95-140; (📶) The venerable Douglas Lodge, run by the park, offers rustic charm in its rooms; some share a bathroom. The Douglas also has cabins and a good restaurant.

## Palisade

 **Palisade Cafe** American \$  
(210 Main St; mains \$5-11; ☀️ 7am-7pm Mon-Sat, to 2pm Sun) This woody little joint in the middle of nowhere is a welcome respite, whipping up stuffed hash browns (as in stuffed with gooey cheese) and killer pies.

## Minneapolis 3


 **Butcher & the Boar** American \$\$\$  
(📞)612-238-8887; www.butcherandtheboar.com; 1121 Hennepin Ave; mains \$25-32; ☀️ 5pm-midnight; (📶) The coppery, candlelit room is carnivore nirvana. Get your carving knife ready for wild boar ham with country butter, chicken-fried veal sausage and more house-crafted meats. The 30 taps flow with regional brews, backed up by a lengthy bourbon list. Reservations are essential.

## St Paul 4

 **Mickey's Dining Car** Diner \$  
(www.mickeysdiningcar.com; 36 W 7th St; mains \$4-9; ☀️ 24hr) The art-deco-styled, vintage diner is the kind of place where the friendly waitress calls you 'honey' and satisfied regulars line the bar with their coffee cups and newspapers. The food has timeless appeal, too: burgers, malts and apple pie.

 **Covington Inn** B&B \$\$  
(📞)651-292-1411; www.covingtoninn.com; 100 Harriet Island Rd; r incl breakfast \$150-235; (📶) This four-room, Harriet Island B&B is on a tugboat floating in the Mississippi River; watch the river traffic glide by while sipping your morning coffee.

## Pepin 5

 **Harbor View Cafe** American \$\$\$  
(www.harborviewpepin.com; 314 First St; mains \$19-26; ☀️ 11am-2:30pm Mon & Thu-Sun, closed mid-Nov-mid-Mar) The book-stuffed Harbor View is a Slow Food stalwart. Staff write the changing menu on a chalkboard twice daily – once for lunch, once for dinner. Cross your fingers the list shows the four-cheese stuffed mushrooms, caper-sauced halibut, and lemon cake with ginger. Deck chairs line the sidewalk outside, each with a water view. Cash only.

## Nelson 6

 **Stone Barn** Pizzeria \$\$  
(📞)715-673-4478; www.nelsonstonebarn.com; S685 Country Rd KK; pizzas \$11-19; ☀️ 5-9pm Fri-Sun mid-May-late Sep) Browse the antique store or amble through the herb garden while waiting for your wafer-thin-crust pizza to emerge from the wood-fired oven. All tables are set outdoors, surrounded by hilly farmland.

## Dubuque 10

 **Hotel Julien** Historic Hotel \$\$  
(📞)563-556-4200; www.hoteljuliendubuque.com; 200 Main St; r \$110-250; (📶) The eight-story hotel was built in 1914 and was once a refuge for Al Capone. A lavish renovation has turned it upscale and it's a real antidote to chains.

## Elsah 13

 **Maple Leaf Cottage Inn** B&B \$\$  
(📞)618-374-1684; www.mapleleafcottages.com; 12 Selma St; r \$90-110; (📶) Iron-rail beds, claw-foot tubs and other antique accoutrements throw the Maple Leaf back in time. Cash or check only.

***Split Rock Lighthouse*** *Picture-perfect  
clifftop views of Lake Superior*







# Highway 61

# 23

*Waterfalls, moose and Bob Dylan vestiges roll by on Minnesota's Hwy 61. The road grips Lake Superior's shore, tucked between red-tinged cliffs and towering firs from Duluth to Canada's edge.*

## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

150 miles

### Grand Portage

Windblown spot where the voyageurs started walking

110 miles

### Grand Marais

Artsy town with fish, donuts and characters aplenty

Tofte

Split Rock Lighthouse

Two Harbors

START

1

### Duluth

Dramatic, freighter-filled port and Bob Dylan's hometown

1 mile

13 FINISH

2-3 DAYS

150 MILES / 241KM

GREAT FOR...



BEST TIME TO GO

July to mid-October for pleasant weather and fall colors.



ESSENTIAL PHOTO

Split Rock Lighthouse on its perfect cliff-top.



BEST FOR WILDLIFE

Drive the Gunflint Trail and watch for moose.

# 23 Highway 61

Mention Hwy 61 and many folks hum Bob Dylan. But this North Shore road is not about murder, poverty or any other mean-street mumblings from his 1965 album *Highway 61 Revisited*. Instead it's a journey dominated by water, where ore-toting freighters ply the ports, little fishing fleets haul in the day's catch, and wave-bashed cliffs offer Superior views if you're willing to trek.

## TRIP HIGHLIGHT

### 1 Duluth

Dramatically spliced into a cliff that tumbles down to Lake Superior, Duluth is one of the busiest ports in the nation. Canal Park downtown is a good spot to see the action. Start at the **Aerial Lift Bridge**, Duluth's landmark that raises its mighty arm to let horn-bellowing ships into port. About 1000 freighters a year glide through. The screens outside the **Maritime Visitors Center** (☑)218-



720-5260; www.lsmma.com; 600 Lake Ave S; ☎10am-9pm Jun-Aug, reduced hours Sep-May) announce when the big boats come and go; inside holds first-rate exhibitions on Great Lakes shipping and shipwrecks.

Duluth is also the birthplace of Bob Dylan, though the town is pretty laid-back about its famous son. You're on your own to find **Dylan's childhood home** (519 N 3rd Ave E), up a hill a few blocks northeast of downtown. Dylan lived on the top floor until

age six, when his family moved inland to Hibbing. It's a private residence (and unmarked), so all you can do is check it out from the street.

🔨🏠 p309

**The Drive** » Take London Rd, aka Hwy 61, heading northeast out of town. Follow the signs for the North Shore Scenic Dr (also called Scenic 61 or Old Hwy 61). There's a Hwy 61 expressway that also covers the next 20 miles, but steer clear and dawdle on the original, curvy, two-lane route instead.

## 2 Knife River

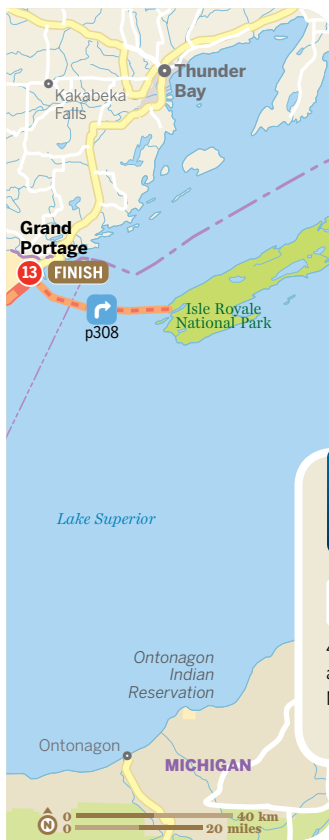
Unspoiled shoreline and fisherfolk casting at river mouths are your companions along the way until you reach **Russ Kendall's Smoke House** (☎218-834-5995; 149 Scenic Dr; salmon per pound \$17; ☎9:30am-5:30pm) in Knife River. A groovy neon sign beckons you in. Four generations of Kendall folk have cooked up the locally plucked trout and line-caught Alaskan salmon. Buy a brown-sugar-cured

slab, staff will wrap it in newspaper, and you'll be set for picnics for miles to come.

**The Drive** » Continue northeast on Hwy 61. The Knife River fish may well be demolished by Two Harbors, a couple of miles up the road.

## 3 Two Harbors

Minnesota's only operating **lighthouse** (www.lakecountyhistoricalsociety.org; admission \$3; ☎10am-6pm Mon-Sat, to 4pm Sun) rises up over Agate Bay. The 1892 fog-buster sticks to a rhythm – 0.4-second flash, 4.6 seconds of darkness, 0.4-second flash, 14.6 seconds of darkness. That's how it goes all day, every day; check it out. You can also watch iron-ore freighters maneuvering around the docks that jut into Agate Bay, and there's an old tugboat you can tour (per person \$3). Oh, the other harbor that gives the town its name? Burlington Bay, around the point to the north.



### LINK YOUR TRIP

#### 20 Route 66

It's a haul to Chicago – 470 miles – but the payoff is a slowpoke ride on America's Main Street.

#### 22 Along the Great River Road

Pick up the Mississippi River-edged route in Grand Rapids, about 83 miles east via Hwy 2.

Hiking buffs should stop in the **Superior Hiking Trail Headquarters** ([www.shta.org](http://www.shta.org); 731 7th Ave; ☎9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun). The awesome 290-mile footpath follows the lake-hugging ridgeline between Duluth and the Canadian border. Trailheads with parking lots pop up every 5 to 10 miles, making it ideal for day hikes. Overnight hikers will find 81 backcountry campsites and several lodges along the way. The headquarters has maps and information.

🗺️ 🚗 p309

**The Drive** » Motor onward on Hwy 61, past the hamlet of Castle Danger (named for a boat that ran aground nearby) to Gooseberry Falls State Park, a 13-mile drive.

#### 4 **Gooseberry Falls State Park**

The five cascades, scenic gorge and easy trails draw carloads of visitors to **Gooseberry Falls State Park** (☎218-834-3855; [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us); 3206 Hwy 61; per vehicle/campsites \$5/\$20; ☎8am-10pm; 🗺️). Several cool stone and log buildings, built by Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, dot the premises and hold exhibits and concessions.

The **Lower and Middle Falls** offer the quickest access via a 0.6-mile paved walkway. Hardier

types can trek the 2-mile **Gooseberry River Loop**, which is part of the Superior Hiking Trail. To embark, leave your car at the visitor center lot (at milepost 38.9). Follow the trail to the Upper Falls, then continue upstream on the Fifth Falls Trail. Cross the bridge at Fifth Falls, then return on the river's other side to where you started. Voila! It's one

of the simplest Superior trail jaunts you'll find.

**The Drive** » Yep, it's back to Hwy 61 heading northeast, this time for 6 miles.

#### 5 **Split Rock Lighthouse**

**Split Rock Lighthouse State Park** (☎218-226-6377; [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us); 3755 Split Rock Lighthouse

AMERICA / ALAMY ©







**Gooseberry Falls State Park** Follow the Superior Hiking Trail to the Upper Falls

Rd; per vehicle/campsites/  
lighthouse \$5/12/8; ☀️10am-  
6pm) is the most visited  
spot on the entire North  
Shore. The shiner itself is  
a state historic site with  
a separate admission  
fee. Guided tours are  
available (they depart  
hourly), or you can  
explore on your own. If  
you don't mind stairs,  
say 170 or so each way,  
tramp down the cliff to

the beach for incredible  
views of the lighthouse  
and surrounding shore.

The lighthouse was  
built after a whopping  
storm in November 1905  
battered 29 ships in the  
area. Modern navigation  
equipment rendered it  
obsolete by 1969. No  
matter. It remains one of  
the most picture-perfect  
structures you'll come  
across.

**The Drive** » Onward on Hwy  
61 for 10 miles. Not long after  
cruising by taconite-crazed  
Silver Bay, watch for the sign to  
Palisade Head.

---

## 6 Palisade Head

**Palisade Head** is an old  
lava flow that morphed  
into some awesomely  
sheer, rust-red cliffs.  
A narrow road winds  
around to the top, where

## HIGHWAY 61'S OTHER INCARNATION

Hwy 61 is also used to reference the fabled Blues Highway that tracks the Mississippi River en route to New Orleans (see our Blues Highway trip (p209). That road is actually US 61, and it starts near St Paul, Minnesota. Our Hwy 61 is the state scenic road that starts in Duluth.

there's a small parking lot. The view that unfolds is tremendous. On a clear day you can see Wisconsin's Apostle Islands. Rock climbers love the Head, and you'll probably see a lot of them hanging around.

**The Drive** » Return to Hwy 61. Palisade Head is actually part of Tettegouche State Park, though it's not contiguous. The park's main span begins 2 miles up-road.

### 7 Tettegouche State Park

Like most of the parks dotting the North Shore, **Tettegouche State Park** (☎218-226-6365; www.dnr.state.mn.us/tettegouche; 5702 Hwy 61; per vehicle/ campsites \$5/20; ☀9am-8pm) offers fishing, camping, paddling and hiking trails to waterfalls and little lakes, plus skiing and snowshoe trails in winter.

There are two unique to-dos, both accessed near the park entrance (milepost 58.5). Leave your car in the parking lot by the new visitors center, then hit the trail to **Shovel Point**. It's a

1.5-mile round-trip jaunt over lots of steps and boardwalks. It pays off with sublime views of the rugged landscape from the point's tip. Watch the lake's awesome power as waves smash below. And keep an eye out for peregrine falcons that nest in the area. Tettegouche's other cool feature is the idyllic **swimming hole** at the Baptism River's mouth. Walk along the picnic area by the visitors center and you'll run into it.

**The Drive** » Hwy 61 rolls by more birch trees, parks and cloud-flecked skies for the next 22 miles. Not far past Taconite Harbor (now used to load and unload coal for the adjacent power plant), you'll come to Temperance River.

### 8 Temperance River State Park

Get ready for another gorgeous, falls-filled landscape. The eponymous waterway at **Temperance River State Park** (www.dnr.state.mn.us; 7620 Hwy 61; per vehicle/ campsites \$5/20; ☀9am-8pm) belies its moderate name and roars

through a narrow, twisting gorge. The scene is easy to get to, with highway-side parking. Then hike over footbridges and around rock pools to see the action.

**The Drive** » It's a quick 2 miles up Hwy 61 to Tofte.

### 9 Tofte

The teeny town of Tofte is worth a stop to browse the **North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum** (www.commercialfishingmuseum.org; 7136 Hwy 61; adult/child \$3/1; ☀9am-3pm Sun-Thu, to 5pm Fri & Sat). The twin-gabled red building holds fishing nets, a fishing boat and other tools of the trade, as well as intriguing photos, most of them from the original Norwegian families who settled and fished here in the late 1800s.

Nearby **Sawtooth Outfitters** (☎218-663-7643; www.sawtoothoutfitters.com; 7216 Hwy 61; ☀7am-7pm late May-early Sep, reduced hours rest of the year) offers guided kayaking tours (half-/full-day tours \$50/100) for all levels of paddling. They have trips on the Temperance River and out on Lake Superior, as well as easier jaunts on wildlife-rich inland lakes. Sawtooth also rents mountain bikes (per day from \$22) to pedal over the many trails in the area, including the popular Gitchi Gami

State Bike Trail ([www.ggta.org](http://www.ggta.org)).

**The Drive** » Get back on Hwy 61 and head 7 piney miles northeast.

## 10 Lutsen Mountains

**Lutsen** (☎218-406-1320; [www.lutsen.com](http://www.lutsen.com); 10am-5pm) is a ski resort – the biggest alpine ski area in the Midwest, in fact. So it bustles in winter when skiers and snowboarders pile in for the 92 runs on four mountains.

In summer, visitors come for the **aerial tramway** (round-trip adult/child \$12/8) to the top of Moose Mountain. The red gondola cars glide at treetop level into the valley and over the Poplar River before reaching the mountain top 1000ft later. Gape at the view from the chalet and hike the paths. The Superior Hiking Trail cuts through and you can take it plus a spur for the 4.5-mile trek back down the mountain.

Kids go crazy for the **alpine slide** (per person \$8) on Eagle Mountain; it's accessed by chairlift. The resort also arranges family-friendly canoe trips in voyageur-style vessels (per person \$15; at 8:30am and 10:30am) on the Poplar River.

**The Drive** » Back to Hwy 61, past maple- and birch-cascade River State Park (particularly pretty in fall), for 20 miles to Grand Marais.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

## 11 Grand Marais

Artsy little Grand Marais makes an excellent base to explore the region. Stroll the waterfront, watch the small fishing fleet head out, and take advantage of the characterful local eateries. Do-it-yourself enthusiasts can learn to build boats, tie flies or brew beer at the **North House Folk School** (☎218-387-9762; [www.northhouse.org](http://www.northhouse.org); 500 Hwy 61). The course list, which strives to preserve local traditions, is phenomenal – as is the school's two-hour sailing trip aboard the Vikingsque schooner *Hjordis* (per person \$35 to 45).

 p309

**The Drive** » Beyond Grand Marais Hwy 61 widens, you see fewer people, and the lake reveals itself more. After 14 miles, you'll arrive at Magney State Park.

## 12 Judge CR Magney State Park

The namesake of the **park** ([www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us); 4051 Hwy 61; per vehicle/campsites \$5/20; ☎9am-8pm) was a former mayor of Duluth and Minnesota Supreme Court justice who helped preserve the area. His own patch of land is a beauty. Hiking to **Devil's Kettle**, the famous falls where the Brule River splits around a huge rock, is a must. Half of the flow



## DETOUR: GUNFLINT TRAIL

### Start: 11 Grand Marais

The **Gunflint Trail** ([www.gunflint-trail.com](http://www.gunflint-trail.com)), aka Hwy 12, slices inland from Grand Marais and ends near Saganaga Lake. The paved, 57-mile-long byway dips into the **Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness** ([www.fs.usda.gov/attmain/superior/specialplaces](http://www.fs.usda.gov/attmain/superior/specialplaces)), the legendarily remote paddlers' paradise. For Boundary permits and information, visit the **Gunflint Ranger Station** (☎218-387-1750; ☎8am-4:30pm May-Sep), a stone's throw southwest of Grand Marais on Hwy 61.

Even if you're not canoeing, the road has excellent hiking, picnicking and moose-viewing. Look for the big antlered guys and gals around dawn or dusk in wet, swampy areas.

It takes 1½ hours to drive the Gunflint Trail one way, but you'll want longer for hiking, zip-lining and moose stops. There aren't any towns along the route, but several lodges tuck in woods where you can grab a meal or snack.



## DETOUR: ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK

**Start:** 13 Grand Portage

**Isle Royale National Park** ([www.nps.gov/isro](http://www.nps.gov/isro); fee per day \$4; ☀mid-May–Oct) is technically part of Michigan, but it's easily accessed from Grand Portage by daily ferries (☎218-475-0024; [www.isleroyaleboats.com](http://www.isleroyaleboats.com); day trip adult/child \$58/32) between May and October.

The unspoiled, 210-sq-mile island is totally free of vehicles and roads, and gets fewer visitors in a year than Yellowstone National Park gets in a day – which means the packs of wolves and moose creeping through the forest are all yours.

The ferry ride takes 90 minutes. Day trips leave Grand Portage in the morning, spend four hours on the island, then return by 3pm.

Wilderness buffs will want to linger. Around 165 miles of hiking trails lace the island and connect dozens of campgrounds along Lake Superior and inland waterways. It's a full-on wilderness adventure for which you'll need a tent, camping stove, sleeping bag, food and water filter. Or you can bunk at the island's lone accommodation, the **Rock Harbor**

**Lodge** (☎906-337-4993; [www.isleroyaleresort.com](http://www.isleroyaleresort.com); r & cottages \$237-271; ☀late May–early Sep).

drops 50ft in a typically gorgeous North Shore gush, but the other half disappears down a huge hole and flows underground. Where it goes is a mystery – scientists have never been able to determine the water's outlet. It's a moderately breath-sapping 1.1-mile walk each way.

Across the road from the park is **Naniboujou Lodge**. Built in the 1920s, the property was once a private club for Babe Ruth and his

contemporaries, who smoked cigars in the Great Hall, and warmed by the 20ft-high stone fireplace. The pièce de résistance is the hall's massive domed ceiling painted with mind-blowing, psychedelic-colored Cree Indian designs. The hall is now the lodge's dining room, and you're welcome to walk in for a peek (or meal).

 p309

**The Drive** » The final 26-mile stretch of highway passes through the Grand Portage

Indian Reservation and, finally, Grand Portage National Monument.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHT

## 13 Grand Portage

**Grand Portage National Monument** (☎218-475-0123; [www.nps.gov/grpo](http://www.nps.gov/grpo); ☀9am–5pm mid-May–mid-Oct) is where the early voyageurs had to carry their canoes (hence the name) around the Pigeon River rapids. This was the center of a fur-trading empire, and the reconstructed 1788 trading post and Ojibwe village show how the community lived in the harsh environment. Learn how the original inhabitants prepared wild rice and pressed beaver pelts as you wander through the Great Hall and other buildings with costumed interpreters. A big powwow takes place the second weekend in August.

The half-mile paved path that goes to Mount Rose rewards with killer views. Or walk the 17-mile round-trip Grand Portage Trail that traces the early fur men's route.

Grand Portage is impressively lonely and windblown – fitting for the end of the road. Because with that, Hwy 61 stops cold at the Canadian border.



# Eating & Sleeping

## Duluth 1

### **Duluth Grill** American \$\$

(www.duluthgrill.com; 118 S 27th Ave W; mains \$8-16; ☎7am-9pm; 📍📺) The garden in the parking lot is the tip-off that the Duluth Grill is a sustainable, hippy-vibed place. The dineresque menu is huge, ranging from eggy breakfast skillet to curried-polenta stew to bison burgers. It's a couple of miles southwest of Canal Park.

### **Pizza Luce** Pizzeria \$\$

(☎218-727-7400; www.pizzaluce.com; 11 E Superior St; mains \$10-20; ☎8am-1:30am Sun-Thu, to 2:30am Fri & Sat; 📍📺) **Downtown** on Superior St, Pizza Luce cooks locally sourced breakfasts and gourmet pizzas. It's plugged into the local music scene and hosts bands, too.

### **Fitger's Inn** Hotel \$\$

(☎218-722-8826; www.fitgers.com; 600 E Superior St; r incl breakfast \$149-239; 📍📺) Fitger's carved its 62 large rooms, each with slightly varied decor, from an old brewery. The pricier rooms have great water views. There's still a brewhouse inside, and it makes fantastic suds.

## Two Harbors 3

### **Betty's Pies** American \$

(www.bettyspies.com; 1633 Hwy 61; sandwiches \$5-9; ☎7am-9pm, reduced Oct-May) Racks of pie are Betty's claim to fame. Consider the five-layer chocolate tinfoil, stacked with dark chocolate, cinnamon meringue, regular whipped cream and chocolate whipped cream. It's 2 miles north of town.

### **Lighthouse B&B** B&B \$\$

(☎888-832-5606; www.lighthousebb.org; r incl breakfast \$135-155) You can't beat this real-deal lighthouse for nautical ambiance and lake views. Three rooms share a bathroom; there's a fourth, en suite room in a separate building.

## Grand Marais 11

### **Dockside Fish Market** Deli \$

(www.docksidefishmarket.com; 418 Hwy 61; mains \$7-11) The boat heads out in the morning and by noon the freshly caught herring has been fried into fish-and-chips at the deli counter. Seven tables scatter on the outdoor deck, and another seven are indoors. Before leaving, check the freezer case for briny-tanged Superior Gold Caviar (aka herring roe), a local delicacy.

### **Sven and Ole's** American \$

(☎218-387-1713; www.svenandoles.com; 9 Wisconsin St; sandwiches \$6-9; ☎11am-8pm, to 9pm Thu-Sat) It's a classic for sandwiches and pizzas, plus beer at the attached pub. Go ahead: ask about the lutefisk pizza.

### **World's Best Donuts** Bakery \$

(☎218-387-1345; www.worldsbestdonutsmn.com; 10 E Wisconsin St; donuts \$1-2; ☎4:30am-4:30pm Mon-Sat, to 2pm Sun, closed mid-Oct-mid-May) Mmm, doughnuts. Staff nobly arrive at 3am each morning to fry and glaze. Try the elephant-ear-like skizzle.

### **Harbor Inn** Hotel \$\$

(☎218-387-1191; www.harborinnhotel.com; 207 Wisconsin St; r \$115-135; 📍📺) The rooms may look plain-Jane, but they're comfy and well located in town.

## Judge CR Magney State Park 12

### **Naniboujou Lodge** Lodge \$\$

(☎218-387-2688; www.naniboujou.com; 20 Naniboujou Trail; r \$95-115; ☎late May-late Oct) Rooms at the historic property vary in decor, but each offers an away-from-it-all experience.



## STRETCH YOUR LEGS CHICAGO

**Start/Finish:** Millennium Park

**Distance:** 2 miles

**Duration:** 3 hours

The Windy City will blow you away with its blend of high culture and earthy pleasures. This walk swoops through the action-packed downtown Loop, highlighting Chicago's revered art and architecture.

Take this walk on Trip

20

### Millennium Park

Where to start amid the mod designs of Millennium Park (📍312-742-1168; www.millenniumpark.org; 201 E Randolph St; 🕒6am-11pm; 🚶🏻♿️; 🚇Brown, Orange, Green, Purple, Pink Line to Randolph)? Pritzker Pavilion, Frank Gehry's rippling silver band shell? *Crown Fountain*, Jaume Plensa's splashy waterwork, where images of locals spout gargoyle-style? Or 'the Bean' (officially *Cloud Gate*), Anish Kapoor's 110-ton, silver-drop sculpture? That's the one. Join the visitors swarming it to see the skyline reflections.

**The Walk** ➤ Walk across Monroe St to the Art Institute's Modern Wing entrance. You can also take the silvery pedestrian bridge that rises from Millennium Park and arches over the street. It deposits you at the institute's free, third-floor sculpture garden.

### Art Institute of Chicago

The Art Institute (📍312-443-3600; www.artic.edu; 111 S Michigan Ave; adult/child \$23/free; 🕒10:30am-5pm, to 8pm Thu; 🚶🏻♿️) is the second-largest art museum in the country. The collection of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings is second only to those in France, and the number of surrealist works is tremendous. Download the free app for DIY tours. It offers 50 jaunts, everything from highlights to a 'birthday-suit tour' of naked works.

**The Walk** ➤ Walk south on Michigan Ave to Jackson Blvd; turn right. Pass under the rumbling El train. Four business-y blocks later you'll pass the 1930 art deco Board of Trade (look for *Ceres*, the goddess of agriculture, on top). Turn right on LaSalle St.

### Rookery

The 1888 **Rookery** (www.gowright.org/rookery; 209 S LaSalle St; 🕒9:30am-5:30pm Mon-Fri; 🚇Brown, Orange, Purple, Pink Line to Quincy) looks fortresslike from the outside, but the inside is light and airy thanks to Frank Lloyd Wright, who overhauled the atrium. You can walk in and look around for free. The Frank



Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust has a groovy shop in the lobby and offers lunchtime tours (\$5 to \$10) at noon on weekdays.

**The Walk** » Continue on LaSalle St, the heart of Chicago's financial district, to Washington St. Turn right and behold what rises up when you get to Daley Plaza.

## The Picasso

Pablo Picasso's abstract sculpture is the granddaddy of Chicago's public art. Baboon, dog, woman? Picasso couldn't decide either, which is why it's officially titled **Untitled** (50 W Washington St; **M** Blue Line to Washington).

**The Walk** » Stay on Washington St, passing the Hotel Burnham (at 1 W Washington). The building is an 1890s landmark that set the bar for modern skyscraper design. A block and a half later you'll reach Toni's place.

## Toni Patisserie & Cafe

Parisian-style **Toni Patisserie & Cafe** ([www.tonipatisserie.com](http://www.tonipatisserie.com); 65 E Washington St; ☎8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 5pm Sun; **M**Brown,

Orange, Green, Purple, Pink Line to Randolph or Madison) provides a refuge from the Loop hullabaloo. Order a coffee to sip at the close-set tables while you try to resist the eclairs, macarons and tiered cakes tempting you from the glass case.

**The Walk** » Walk a half block down Washington St and cross the street.

## Chicago Cultural Center

There's always something cool and free going on at the **Cultural Center** (☎312-744-6630; [www.chicagoculturalcenter.org](http://www.chicagoculturalcenter.org); 78 E Washington St; ☎8am-7pm Mon-Thu, to 6pm Fri, 9am-6pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; **M**Brown, Orange, Green, Purple, Pink Line to Randolph): art exhibitions, foreign films, lunchtime jazz and classical concerts. The grand building also contains the world's largest Tiffany stained-glass dome, Chicago's main visitor center and StoryCorps' recording studio (where folks tell their tale and have it preserved in the Library of Congress). Depart from the Cultural Center's Randolph St exit, and you're back where you started.

© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'