

MICHIGAN

YOU HAVEN'T LIVED HERE UNTIL ...

You take a summer drive along U.S.-31

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A lake shore drive, eh? Well, most of the time, this 356-mile-long highway runs parallel to Lake Michigan. Unlike the Pacific Coast Highway, which meanders along California's coast, U.S.-31 often veers inland and doesn't offer such dramatic views. However, Michigan's west coast route takes you through wide-open farmland and numerous communities so quaint they look like movie sets. Take that, Golden State!

So, an eclectic adventure...? Exactly. In addition, U.S.-31 becomes an actual freeway three times — between the Michigan-Indiana border and Benton Harbor, then where it overlaps with I-196 to Holland and finally between Grand Haven and Ludington.

DOESN'T IT ALSO CHANGE NAMES? Not recently. Until 1926, parts of what would be rechristened U.S.-31 were called M-11 and M-58. Those route names were then recycled — M-11 around the Grand Rapids area and M-58 by Saginaw.

WHERE DOES U.S.-31 START? At the Indiana state line near Niles. It courses north to where the Leelanau Peninsula begins to jut out. Then, it heads east to Traverse City, up along the east arm of the Grand Traverse Bay to

Charlevoix and then Petoskey before heading inland. It ends at I-75 at Exit 336, just south of Mackinaw City.

ANY INTERESTING BRIDGES? If you reach the Charlevoix Memorial Bridge on the half-hour during the summer, you'll see it opened to allow boats through. The span crosses the Island Lake Outlet, also known as the Pine River Channel, which connects Lake Charlevoix to Lake Michigan through Round Lake. It's one of just two drawbridges that the Michigan Department of Transportation operates, according to the Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce.

HIDDEN RIVER GOLF & CASTING CLUB
Exit at Maple River Road: Brutus
800-325-4653
www.hiddenriver.com

PASS THROUGH PETOSKEY: LOOK FOR PETOSKEY STONES IN THE EPONYMOUS CITY
petoskeyarea.com/petoskey-stone-73/

EAT LOCALLY MADE MAPLE SYRUP AT PARSONS CENTENNIAL FARM
Exit at Brown Road: South of Charlevoix
231-547-2038
maple-syrup-michigan.com

PASS THROUGH TRAVERSE CITY: WALK AROUND THE FUNKY DOWNTOWN
www.downtowntc.com

LUDINGTON STATE PARK
Exit 166: North of Ludington
231-843-2423,
visitludingtonstatepark.com

POINT BETSIE LIGHTHOUSE
Exit at M-115: North of Frankfort
231-352-7666
www.pointbetsie.org

RIDE THE HARBOR TROLLEY
Exit at Franklin Avenue (south of Exit 104A): Grand Haven
616-842-3200
www.grandhaven.org

GO JET-SKIING OR WATER-TUBING
Exit 34 (I-196): South Haven
269-639-7901 or 214-6723
southhavenboatrentals.com

PLAY BEACH VOLLEYBALL AT SILVER BEACH
Exit 15B: St. Joseph
berriencounty.org

FERNWOOD BOTANICAL GARDEN & NATURE PRESERVE
Exit 7: Niles
269-695-6491
fernwoodbotanical.org

MICHIGAN'S ADVENTURE amusement park
Exit 121: Muskegon
231-766-3377,
miadventure.com

OX-BOW SUMMER SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
Exit 41 (I-196): Saugatuck
269-857-5811
ox-bow.org

Next Sunday: Mid-Michigan along M-46

Photos by DOUG COLDWELL, KEN BOSMA and CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
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