



Up your travel game with a trip to the U.P.

Looking for a different travel adventure this summer? Try a trip to the UP of Michigan. Many people never make the trip because they think the drive is too long. To be honest the drive is long. Being a troll living in SE Michigan and having a business in the Keweenaw Peninsula I have been making the trip up and down most weekends this summer but if you plan a week or so you can break it up and see parts of Michigan you never knew about.

Back in 2019 my godchildren wanted to go on a RV adventure. Being one who can never say no I sat down with their dad Brian and he came up with a trip that showed us the best the UP had to offer. You can use all of it or just bits and pieces but it will set you on a trip that you will remember forever.

Day 1

Sault Ste. Marie and the Soo Locks



Start your trip with a 4.5 hour drive up I75 to Sault Ste. Marie and the Soo locks. The locks date back to the mid 1800's and were instrumental with the growth of copper and ore mining on the great lakes. The boats move through the locks by the force of gravity alone. You can do as much or as little as you want. You just want to have a plan for your evening lodging. AN overnight stay keeps you fresh for the next day.

1. Go to the [visitor center](#) and learn about the locks and hopefully see a few freighters transit them.
2. Take a [boat tour of the locks](#). The tours leave regularly and transition you from Lake Huron to Lake Superior and back again.
3. Explore the [Museum Ship Valley Camp](#). This is a retired freighter that plied the waters of the Great Lakes.

Day 2

Munising and The Pictured Rocks



Get an early start and head the two hours towards Munising. Here you will find boat rides out to the famous Pictured Rocks. On the drive over you have a few side trips if you want.

1. Make a stop at Tahquamenon Falls. The Upper falls are the second largest east of the Mississippi River.
2. If you are traveling with younger kids or just enjoy animals make a stop at Oswald's Bear Ranch in Newberry.
3. The best way to see Pictured Rocks is from the water via a Cruise. Cruises last around 2 or 3 hours depending on the one you pick. They start as early as 10 am so plan ahead.
4. Continue on to Marquette where you can spend the night. On the way is a free outdoor sculpture park called Lakeland. It has some very unique metal work and is worth a 30 minute stop along the way.

Day 3 & 4

Keweenaw Peninsula



Destination Keweenaw Peninsula. It is around a two hour drive to Houghton and for this portion you have a little planning to do. First and most important is where to stay. There are a handful of hotels in the Houghton area but if you want to stay a little farther out of town an Airbnb is a good option. You can easily spend a few days in the region exploring all that it has to offer.

1. Just over the bridge in Hancock you will find the Quincy Mine. The Shaft house up on the hill is iconic for anybody from the area. The Quincy Mine offers a variety of tours for you to choose from. They offer a great interpretation of advanced mining in the early 1900's. These tours are guided and book up fast so plan ahead.
2. If you wanted to go south you could visit the Adventure Mine near Ontonagon. This is another copper mine tour but it is very different from the others. It provides a guided tour illuminated only by the headlamp on your head. The Stopes or caverns are huge and you can even opt for an expanded tour that has you rappelling to a lower level.



3. A trip up the peninsula to Calumet is a great way to spend the better part of a day. The Keweenaw National Historical Park is based here. This is a unique National Park because it really is not made up of much land. Instead the park is made up of “Heritage Site Partners” that are contributing sites and attractions to the park.

4. Farther up US 41 is the Delaware Mine. This is our little piece of the Keweenaw. We offer self-guided underground and above ground tours of a copper mine dating back to the mid 1800’s. We even have preserved a site dating back almost 5000 years when indigenous peoples were mining the land.

5. If you have made it this far you might as well head the additional 21 miles into Copper Harbor. This is a neat little town with some great gift shops and restaurants. If you continue past the town you can get to Fort Wilkins State Park and just a little farther up the road the official starting marker for US41.

6. If you want to see more of what there is to do in the Keweenaw Eric Hergenreder put together a great site called MI Roadtrip. He is a photographer in the area and has captured a lot of interesting things to do. I plan to use it this summer as Laurie and I do a little more exploring.

Your trip today is the longest at about 6 hours. Head over to Mackinaw City. There are plenty of lodging options but we always like one that is on the water so we can walk the beaches at night and in the morning. Once you get in town there is plenty to do.

Day 5

Mackinaw City



1. The Icebreaker Mackinaw is a Maritime museum and is very cool if you have never been on a big ship.

2. A walk over to historic Colonial Michilimackinac. Here you will step back into the lives of early settlers of the region. They have reenactments and exhibits depicting the era.

3. If you’re interested in Light Houses there are a few that you can visit. McGulpin Point Lighthouse is about a 30 minute drive and Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse is just a short walk .

4. In the evening plan a simple dinner and a walk up and down Central Ave. Here you will find all kinds of souvenirs, Fudge and Ice cream. If you picked the right lodging you can justify all the above by the nice leisurely walk you will have back to.

Day 6

Mackinac Island



Make the trip over to Mackinac Island. The island is steeped in history and even if you visited it in the past, putting a fresh set of eyes on it with friends or family is well worth it.

1. Ferries to the Island leave almost hourly so you should not have any issues. If you thought to bring your bikes on the trip, taking them across is an easy way to explore. If you did not bring bikes there are plenty of rental options once you get there.
2. Plan to visit Fort Mackinac. It was founded in 1780 and really takes you back to that time. Try and snag a brochure for the fort when you first get there so you can plan around any events at the fort that may interest you.
3. No trip to the island would be complete without a horse-drawn carriage ride. There are a variety of tour options that you can choose from depending on what you want to see.
4. A hike, bike or ride out to Arch Rock is always on our list of things to do.
5. Take a walk up to see the Grand Hotel so you can see the true splendor of it. They do sell day passes so you can go on a self-guided tour of the property. It seems a bit much but since you made it this far why not take in everything you can. It is way cheaper than getting a room which is typically over \$1,000 a night but that does include a meal.
6. Grab a meal on the island and then head back to the mainland for a good night's sleep.

Day 7

Home



On the 7th day you get to rest, well not quite yet. If all you had were these 7 days, take the 3.5 hour ride back to home wherever home may be. Hopefully the trip was refreshing, educational and fun. The Great State of Michigan is vast and has many things to share with Trolls, Yoopers and maybe even some Buckeyes.