Michigan’s coastline boasts an amazing collection of more than 120 lighthouses, lighting the length of our state’s spectacular Great Lakes coastline. These iconic landmarks are widely recognized as beacons of our state’s coastal history and maritime heritage.

Around northern Lake Huron, these lighthouses reflect particular value for communities seeking to encourage sustainable coastal tourism opportunities. Local residents’ value family visits to a lighthouse, and as a source of community pride, many help protect these historical landmarks by volunteering with local historical societies or lighthouse friends groups. A recent guide to Sustainable Coastal Tourism in Northeast Michigan, by Michigan Sea Grant and Michigan State University Extension, illustrates the benefits of community investment in protecting these resources, while promoting awareness and education that incorporates maritime heritage as part of the coastal tourism experience for visitors to the region.

Northeast Michigan, known for spectacular coastal natural resources, reflects a growing culture of maritime heritage tourism. The region boasts the NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary — the only such sanctuary in the Great Lakes that is focused solely on protecting and promoting maritime heritage. Locals share their enthusiasm for lighthouses by hosting the Annual Great Lakes Lighthouse Festival in Alpena each October. Statewide Pure Michigan maritime tours and local U.S. 23 Huron Shores Heritage Route partnerships also promote lighthouse tours across this region. These tours offer information online for those interested in learning more about visiting these landmarks.

**Great Lakes lighthouses serve as beacons of Michigan’s rich maritime heritage, offering a window to explore Great Lakes history, tourism development opportunities for coastal communities, and a great deal of family fun.**

**Lake Huron Lighthouses: Beacons of Coastal Tourism Opportunities**

**Thunder Bay Island**  
**Presque Isle**  
**Charity Island**

Plan your trip: [www.us23heritageroute.org](http://www.us23heritageroute.org)
A visit to northeast Michigan is an historical adventure for lighthouse enthusiasts. Community members and visitors, alike, can explore the best of the region’s coastline by way of these historic lighthouses, where you can:

- Savor an evening dinner cruise on Saginaw Bay and out to the Charity Island Lighthouse with the Charity Island’s “1857 Island Lighthouse Dining Adventure Cruise”.

- Grab your binoculars for a bird watching stop at Tawas Point State Park where you can stay the night as light keeper at the Tawas Point Lighthouse.

- Stroll the beach in search of prized Petoskey stones along the shores of Sturgeon Point Lighthouse (built in 1869).

- Climb the 130 stairs of the tallest lighthouse in the Great Lakes — the New Presque Isle Lighthouse (built in 1870) — and only a stone’s throw away visit the limestone cobble shores of the Old Presque Isle Lighthouse (dating earlier to 1840).

- Explore the shipwreck of the Joseph S. Fay, stranded onshore in 1905 and lying along the shores of the 40 Mile Point Lighthouse.

- For more of an island experience, visit Alpena County’s Middle Island Lighthouse, where you can stay overnight on the island, or the Thunder Bay Island Lighthouse, the second oldest lighthouse on Lake Huron (constructed in 1832).

Lighthouses offer an adventure in learning and family fun. Whether appreciating a lighthouse in your local coastal community or as a visiting tourist, lighthouses are a worthwhile stop as part of your summer adventures along our Great Lakes shorelines. A variety of possibilities awaits your next lighthouse visit:

- Family fun — climb the lighthouse, enjoy the view, and explore the waterfront.

- Experience history first hand — many lighthouses offer historical exhibits and interpretive learning opportunities.

- Enjoy the amazing wildlife and coastal habitats of the shorelines, ranging from sandy beaches and dunes, cobble shores and coastal wetlands.

- Visit them all — and keep a lighthouse passport!

- Contribute to stewardship, support agencies or local organizations that care for these historic landmarks.

For more photos of Michigan lighthouses, visit Michigan Sea Grant’s Flickr page.

To learn more about touring northern Lake Huron lighthouses, visit the ‘Lights of Lake Huron’ driving tour.

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