

by Joannetta Hendel

GREAT LAKES GETAWAYS

Magnificent landscapes, spectacular panoramic views and an endless variety of year-round activities set the Great Lakes Region apart. The Lakes — Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario — attract visitors by the thousands, providing a unique maritime vacationland in the heart of the North American continent. These lakes cover 95,000 square miles — one-fifth of the world's surface fresh-water supply — and are home to the largest pleasure-boat fleet in America.

Aside from the Great Lakes themselves, surrounding states contain several thousand crystal-clear glacial lakes, along with numerous streams and rivers. These vast waterways provide the backdrop for sailing, swimming, skiing, sunning, scuba diving, canoeing and kayaking. And the sportsman is drawn to these plentiful waters, because they overflow with trophy-sized walleye, northern pike, trout, bass and salmon.

Because the Great Lakes are dotted with more than 3,000 unique islands, visitors find "island hopping" a favorite pastime. As the largest urban island park in the United States, Detroit's

Belle Isle provides a shaded, tranquil refuge in the middle of one of the world's busiest waterways. Isle Royale, in the far north reaches of Lake Superior, is the United States' only island national park and is reached exclusively by boat or floatplane. Mackinac Island, off Michigan's coast, takes visitors back to the 19th century. Automobiles are banned, and visitors delight in the nostalgia of horse-drawn carriages.

During the warm-weather months, travelers who seek solitude journey through northern Minnesota's unspoiled lands and waters of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area wilderness. This is one of the choicest canoeing and fishing areas in the world and stretches for 150 miles along the northeastern Minnesota and Canadian borders.

On dry land, golf courses in the Great Lakes Region are second to none. Michigan, in particular, provides some of the finest golf courses in the country — many world-class. Tenthousand greens exist on nearly 600 public golf courses. The world's finest turf grass thrives in this part of the country, and the lakeshore influence

provides a surprisingly long golf season — up to seven months. A number of local resorts host national golf tournaments and cater to convention business. Boyne Mountain Resort in Boyne Falls, Mich., for instance, provides five 18-hole courses and an executive par-three course. These courses are rated in the top 100 in the United States by *Golf Digest*.

Fall makes its mark on the Great Lakes by setting the countryside ablaze with color. This area sports the widest variety of deciduous trees found in America. Color tours by railroad and hot-air balloon supplement self-guided automobile tours. Many travelers circle the lakes by car in the fall of the year.

The Great Lakes are never more grand than during the winter season. With the onset of snow, this region is transformed into a crystal wonderland, and winter becomes a high point of the year.

Ski enthusiasts are drawn to the slopes of this north country. Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and upstate New York provide some of the best downhill skiing available. Hundreds of local ski resorts abound, where the

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