

YOUR GUIDE TO AN
ACCESSIBLE
VACATION



Southwest
MICHIGAN

SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN TOURIST COUNCIL

SWMICHIGAN.ORG



LAKE BLUFF PARK

Join in our year-round fun & relaxation

Everyone needs a feel-good vacation — a few refreshing days to relax and play, browse through shops, see a show, try new foods and craft beverages, laze away the day on the beach and sleep well each night.

Southwest Michigan is a wonderful place to go on vacation, and we include everyone in our fun. Whether it's rolling your walker down a beach access mat, pushing off your kayak from an accessible launch on our scenic rivers, comfortably adding your wheelchair to a table with friends or offering an array of activities to your neurodivergent child, this is your year-round play space.

Start with this guide to make your plans. Then pack your bags and let's make some of the happiest memories together!

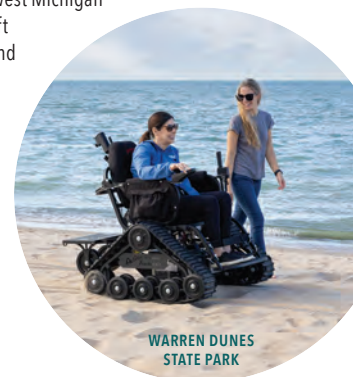
SEASONAL OUTDOOR FUN

BEACHES

One of the top reasons for vacationing in Southwest Michigan is its Lake Michigan beaches. The freshwater, soft sand, historic lighthouses, hours of recreation and night-after-night of gorgeous sunsets, bring joy to all ages. Warm weather seasons are our most popular but don't stay home in winter. Our snowy beaches and dunes, enchanting ice and sand formations, and magical ice-coated lighthouses and catwalk are enjoyable from your parked vehicle.

These are our most accessible beaches:

- SILVER BEACH COUNTY PARK, ST. JOSEPH. Free beach wheelchair & walker
- LIONS BEACH FAMILY PARK, ST. JOSEPH
- TISCORNIA BEACH, ST. JOSEPH
- JEAN KLOCK PARK, BENTON HARBOR
- WEKO BEACH & CAMPGROUND, BRIDGMAN. Free beach wheelchair & access mat
- WARREN DUNES STATE PARK, SAWYER. Free - 1 track chair & 2 beach wheelchairs
- NEW BUFFALO BEACH & LAKEFRONT PARK. Free beach wheelchair



WARREN DUNES STATE PARK



ROYALTON TOWNSHIP NATURE TRAIL

PARKS & TRAILS

There are parks, natural areas and trails throughout Southwest Michigan that you can explore with your mobility device, on foot or your bike from spring through fall. Our snowy winters make navigating parks and trails challenging for most mobility devices. However, if you can cross-country ski, snowshoe or fat tire bike, they are peaceful places to connect with nature and your inner spirit.

For a comprehensive list, visit our website's parks page or download our Hiking, Biking and Cross-Country Skiing Trail Map Guide. Some top picks for accessibility are:

- HARBOR SHORES NATURE & FITNESS TRAIL, BENTON HARBOR/ST. JOSEPH
- LAKE BLUFF PARK, ST. JOSEPH
- LINCOLN TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER PARK, STEVENSVILLE
- NORTH LAKE PARK, STEVENSVILLE
- MCCOY CREEK PARK, BUCHANAN
- INDIANA MICHIGAN RIVER VALLEY TRAIL, NILES
- VAN BUREN TRAIL STATE PARK, SOUTH HAVEN
- PAW PAW RIVER COUNTY PARK, WATERVLIET

PADDLING

Two parks offer wheelchair-accessible launches.

- CARRONDE PARK, BENTON HARBOR
- PAW PAW RIVER COUNTY PARK, WATERVLIET

If you need a kayak, canoe or paddleboard, visit these places on our website.

- SCOOTER JOE'S WHEEL & WATER RENTALS, ST. JOSEPH
- THIRD COAST PADDLING, BENTON HARBOR/ST. JOSEPH & NEW BUFFALO
- DOE-WAH-JACK'S CANOE RENTALS, DOWAGIAC

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Our most accessible outdoor activities, in addition to our parks, trails and beaches are our community splash pads. The Whirlpool Compass Fountain in St. Joseph is the largest in Michigan, measuring 200 feet in diameter. Water cannons spray 35 feet in the air and run every 15 minutes and in between you can splash beneath the ground sprinklers. Fun for the whole family, it is free fun from late May to early September.

FARM MARKETS

Another favorite activity in late spring to late fall is visiting our farm markets in our countryside and several communities. Find everything from the freshest apples to zucchini, garden flowers to Christmas trees, meats, cheeses, cider, donuts and pies - nothing tastes better! Download our FARMS & HARVEST GUIDE for locations.



PLACES TO STAY











HOTELS

Our hotels are accessible by mobility devices. When you arrive, let the staff know if there are ways they can assist you with carrying your luggage, ordering external food delivery or room service, getting wake-up calls and more.

For neurodivergent travelers, hotels with indoor or outdoor pools are sensory-friendly options. If it adds to your comfort, ask management if they would mind lowering the music volume or dimming the overhead lights in the pool area, too.

Before making your hotel choice, call for accessibility and sensory details.




BENTON HARBOR

- BEST WESTERN | 269-925-3000 
- COMFORT SUITES | 269-925-8800 
- COUNTRY INN & SUITES | 269-927-4599 
- COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT | 269-210-3000 
- HAMPTON INN & SUITES | 269-927-5878 
- HILTON GARDEN INN | 269-926-5000 
- HOWARD JOHNSON | 269-332-0122  
- QUALITY INN & SUITES | 269-925-1880
- RED ROOF INN | 269-927-2484
- SPRINGHILL SUITES | 269-338-8300 
- STAYBRIDGE SUITES | 269-371-0000 
- SUPER 8 - BENTON HARBOR | 269-926-1371 
- TRAVELODGE | 269-605-0033 

ST. JOSEPH

- THE BOULEVARD INN | 269-983-6600
- HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS HOTEL & SUITES | 269-982-0004 
- INN AT HARBOR SHORES | 269-983-1111 
- RODEWAY INN | 269-982-3333
- SILVER BEACH HOTEL | 269-983-7341 

STEVENSVILLE

- BAYMONT INN & SUITES | 269-428-9111  
- CANDLEWOOD SUITES EXTENDED STAY | 269-428-4400 
- COMFORT SUITES | 269-428-4888 
- FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES | 269-429-1111 
- SUPER 8 | 269-429-3218  
- SURESTAY PLUS BY BEST WESTERN | 269-429-2700  
- TRU BY HILTON | 269-429-4444  

Book your stay!
SWMICHIGAN.ORG/HOTELS



IT'S FUN INDOORS, TOO

FOOD & DRINKS

With all the farm-to-table opportunities, our region attracts some of the best chefs and craft beverage makers. Most [restaurants and cafes](#) offer street-level or ramp access and several offer outdoor seating in the warmer months. Hosts will accommodate you rolling up to their tables. Dietary options at several eateries ensure everyone feels welcome. Curbside pickup and delivery are also available from many locations. You won't leave Southwest Michigan thirsty or hungry!



MAKERS TRAIL



The Makers Trail introduces you to our liquid artisans of wine, beer, cider and spirits. Follow [MAKERSTRAIL.ORG](#) to over 40 accessible destinations to taste their craft and food pairings, listen to gifted musicians, join in their festival frivolity or find soothing calmness in their vineyards. Acquiring a Makers Trail Passport can help you earn some cool prizes between fall and spring.

ARTS & CULTURE



Spark your imagination at [SWMICHIGAN.ORG/CREATIVE](#), where you can find our most popular and accessible art, music, theater and culture venues. Summer creates even more opportunities with outdoor concerts and plays.

KID FAVORITES

Southwest Michigan will quickly become a favorite of your toddler to teen.

- SILVER BEACH CAROUSEL, ST. JOSEPH; Wheelchair-accessible chariot and interactive electric miniature train layout, Silver Beach Amusement Park diorama, board games and activities  



- CURIOUS KIDS' MUSEUM and CURIOUS KIDS' DISCOVERY ZONE, ST. JOSEPH; Accessible, hands-on learning exhibits and activities 
- THE LITTLE THINGS PLAY CAFE, ST. JOSEPH; Building, climbing, rideable and imagination-stimulating toys in an open, social play space for toddlers to pre-schoolers; the cafe offers coffee, tea and kids' snacks 



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Thanks to our wheelchair-accessible venues, nearby designated parking spaces and sidewalk ramps, it's tons of fun to attend our festivals and events. When possible, arrive early so it's easier to maneuver or find a comfortable spot to take in the festivities. We love being together, so check our online events calendar and social media every season!

SHOPPING

Our downtown sidewalks make it easy to roll up to browse in boutiques, art galleries and shops filled with home decor, books and toys. The big box chain stores along our major roads offer convenient parking, large selections and wide aisles. Many of our stores offer curbside pickup and some delivery, too. Go to our website for ideas of where to shop.



CANNABIS DISPENSARIES

Southwest Michigan is one of Michigan's fastest-growing destinations for recreation and remedy cannabis. You must be at least 21 years old to visit our dispensaries for a variety of flowers, cartridges, edibles, concentrates and more. Follow our Natural Route page on our website.

DOG FRIENDLY

You and your trained service dog are always welcome in Southwest Michigan. Join us at any public businesses and activities. Because of limitations, some businesses cannot accommodate your emotional support animal. Pick up a [pet friendly guide](#) at SWMTC Visitor Center, St. Joseph Today or download it from our website.



CELEBRATIONS & MEETINGS

Whether you are celebrating a wedding, birthday or anniversary or planning a small-to-midsize meeting or convention, you want to accommodate all of your guests. We do, too! Our wide variety of indoor and outdoor venues and professional caterers, bakers and photographers will help.

TRANSPORTATION

Need a way to get to our various fun spots? Looking for a ride to or from regional airports, the local Amtrak or bus stations? Reach out to *Harbor City Transportation, LLC* or *Safeway Transportation* listed on our website.



QUICK GUIDE TO SENSORY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

When you or someone you love is neurodivergent you want to vacation where you feel welcome and comfortable. Visit Southwest Michigan. Here's a short list of reasons to stay awhile:



SILVER BEACH CAROUSEL

LOW-STIMULATION ACTIVITIES

- EXPLORE **FERNWOOD BOTANICAL GARDEN AND NATURE PRESERVE**, NILES; Fragrant flowers and herbs, soothing water wheel, bird-watching station, railroad garden and more.
- PLAY ON BEACHES AT WEKO BEACH, JEAN KLOCK PARK, LIONS PARK, ROCKY GAP BEACH, ROADSIDE BEACH AND DEER LICK CREEK BEACH
- PADDLE ST. JOSEPH, GALIEN AND PAW PAW RIVERS
- HIKE SERENE GROUND-LEVEL AND TREETOP TRAILS AT GALIEN RIVER COUNTY PARK, GRAND MERE STATE PARK, SARRETT NATURE CENTER AND FRED RUSS PARK
- GO ON LANTERN-LIT CROSS-COUNTRY AND SNOWSHOE TRAILS
- STROLL IN **LAVENDER BLISS FLOWER FARM**, BRIDGMAN; Wander through rows of lavender blooms and pick a bouquet to bring home.
- **LINCOLN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY**, STEVENSVILLE; This is a Kulturecity® certified Sensory Inclusive™ venue. Pick up a sensory bag at the circulation desk with fidget tools and headphones. There is a quiet zone and headphone zone available, too.
- **MAUD PRESTON PALENSKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY**, ST. JOSEPH; Checkout sensory bags that include social stories, a weighted blanket, headphones, fidget toys and more.

- FIND PEACE WITH **NATURE THERAPY OF MICHIANA**, BENTON HARBOR; Take guided meditative walks in the forests and along beaches to reduce stress, improve health and heal trauma and grief.
- STARGAZE AT **DR. T.K. LAWLESS INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY PARK**, VANDALIA
- SOCIALIZE AT **THE LITTLE THINGS PLAY CAFE**; Open play space for toddlers to pre-schoolers with building, rideable, climbing and socially-interactive toys; cafe serves coffee, tea and kids' snacks.

MIXED SENSORY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

- **CURIOUS KIDS' MUSEUM** and **CURIOUS KIDS' DISCOVERY ZONE**, ST. JOSEPH; Sensory-friendly learning exhibits and activities for toddlers to pre-teens
- **FRIENDS GOOD WILL REPLICA TALL SHIP**, SOUTH HAVEN; Sailing excursions on Lake Michigan
- HOTEL INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOLS; You can ask management to dim lights or lower music volume if needed
- MOUNTAIN/FAT TIRE BIKE TRAILS
- **OLD RUGGED CROSS CHURCH & MUSEUM**, POKAGON; Sing old-fashioned hymns and walk the gardens; pre-visit stories outline events; light dimmers available
- **SILVER BEACH CAROUSEL**, ST. JOSEPH; Headphones & earplugs available
- SILVER BEACH COUNTY PARK AND WARREN DUNES STATE PARK
- **THE MENDEL CENTER LIVE STAGE PERFORMANCES**, BENTON HARBOR
- U-PICK FRUIT, PUMPKIN & CHRISTMAS TREE FARMS, HAYRIDES AND CORN MAZES

HIGH-STIMULATION ACTIVITIES

- BERRIEN COUNTY YOUTH FAIR, BERRIEN SPRINGS
- **EDEN SPRINGS PARK MINIATURE TRAIN RIDES**, BENTON HARBOR; Hand cart is fun to power along the tracks
- **HIDDEN POINTE MINI-GOLF, ARCADES, GO-KARTS**, BENTON HARBOR
- OUTDOOR AND INDOOR ICE SKATING ARENAS IN ST. JOSEPH, HARBERT AND SOUTH HAVEN
- OUTDOOR AND INDOOR ICE ARENAS ST. JOSEPH, HARBERT AND SOUTH HAVEN
- **PEAT'S CIDER SOCIAL**, STEVENSVILLE; Bowling and arcade games
- **SILVER BEACH PIZZA**, ST. JOSEPH; Play with cups of pizza dough. There are periodic loud noises and whistles as trains pass by the dining-room windows.
- **SLACKERS FAMILY FUN CENTER & LASER TAG**, ST. JOSEPH; Arcade games, pool tables and bounce house
- **WHIRLPOOL COMPASS FOUNTAIN** and other COMMUNITY SPLASH PADS



See You Soon!

We all need vacations from our daily routines and you will enjoy some of the most relaxing, fun-filled days here. Southwest Michigan truly is for everyone! For help planning your mobility or sensory-friendly vacation, scan the QR code, call 269-925-6301 or look for the  icon throughout our website.



SWMICHIGAN.ORG



ROYALTON TOWNSHIP
NATURE TRAIL




PET
FRIENDLY



SENSORY
FRIENDLY



ACCESSIBLE



POOL

Southwest MICHIGAN

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