

*Parks and beaches*

**FROM PAGE 54**

**Power Island** In West Grand Traverse Bay off Bowers Harbor, this park island is ringed with sandy beaches. The island has 11 miles of hiking trails, picnic areas and five rustic campsites. You need a boat to get there.

**Sunset Park** On West Grand Traverse Bay behind the senior center in Traverse City, off Hope St. adjacent to the Great Lakes Maritime Academy.

**Traverse City State Park** Across U.S. 31 North from the huge Traverse City State Park campground, which is accessible via an elevated walkway. Picnic tables, grills, rest rooms, lifeguard during posted hours. Long and very popular beach. Water gets deep gradually - perfect for kids. At the west end of the beach, the Mitchell Creek drains into West Bay. State park permit required to park, but foot access is free.

**West End Beach** Along Grandview Parkway in downtown Traverse City, just west of the Open Space Park. Stretches for about a mile along the south end of West Grand Traverse Bay. The eastern end features a landscaped greenbelt that separates the beach from the road, and a lifeguard is on duty during posted hours. The western end of the beach is closer to the road, has a

couple of drainage pipes running across it, fades into marshy ground to the west, but is usually less crowded than the eastern end. Restrooms near lifeguard tower. The popular Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trail runs along the beach, so bicyclists and in-line skaters can partake of a refreshing dip. Operated by the City of Traverse City.

*LEELANAU COUNTY*

**Cold Brook Beach** On the south end of Lake Leelanau, near the town of Fouch.

**Elmwood Township Park** Off M-22 on West Grand Traverse Bay, a mile north of M-72. Playground, picnic tables and restrooms.

**Empire Beach** Lake Michigan Beach and Cannon Park. Just west Empire. Includes a beach on Lake Michigan and a beach on South Bar Lake. From here, you can walk either north or south on the beach for miles. Playground, picnic tables, historical marker, restrooms. There's a dock on Bar Lake that's perfect for diving from.

**Leelanau State Park** 15310 North Lighthouse Point Rd., north of Northport. This beach is rocky and perhaps more suitable for hiking and wading than for swimming - but wear wading shoes, the rocks are sharp. Playground and picnic area near lighthouse and parking area. Follow trail to the

beach. Coastal dunes, hiking trails and rustic campsites.  
**North Bar Lake** In the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, north of Empire. Access via unpaved Bar Lake Rd. Restrooms at paved parking area. Short hike over dunes, past North Bar Lake, to Lake Michigan shore. Swimming possible in both lakes.

**Peterson Park** In the village of Northport. Along the breakwater on West Grand Traverse Bay. Adjacent to city park and marina. Playground, picnic tables and restrooms.

**Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore** The mother of all beaches. Part of the National Park system, the lakeshore includes miles of beach. For a parking permit and specific directions, stop by the visitor center in Empire. Popular spots include Good Harbor Bay, Pyramid Point and Glen Haven beach. If you have lots of energy, tackle the dune climb south of Glen Haven, then slog through miles of gorgeous dune trails to the isolated Lake Michigan beach (if you do, allow several hours for the journey, use lots of sunscreen and bring shoes to protect your feet from the hot sand). Also part of the national lakeshore, North and South Manitou Islands (Access by passenger ferry from Leland) are ringed with miles of secluded beaches. Off South Manitou, snorkelers and scuba divers can view the shipwreck of the Three Brothers, a 162-foot

wooden lumber hooker that was stranded in 1911, which sits in water from eight to 45 feet deep. There are more national lakeshore beaches listed in the Benzie County section of this page.

**Suttons Bay Municipal Park and Beach** Downtown Suttons Bay. Beach, picnic area, adjacent marina. Site of several summer special events.

*MANISTEE COUNTY*

**First St. Beach/Douglas Park** In the City of Manistee. playground, basketball courts, tennis courts, picnic tables, grills, fishing pier, fish-cleaning station. At the end of First St. Lifeguard on duty during posted hours.

**Fifth Avenue Beach** Picnic area, tennis courts, volleyball courts, playground. At the end of Monroe St. in the City of Manistee. The catwalk leading to the Manistee North Pier Lighthouse is one of only four remaining lighthouse catwalks on Michigan's Lake Michigan shore; it is listed in the State Registry of Historic Sites. The Manistee U.S. Coast Guard Station is adjacent to the beach. Lifeguard on duty during posted hours.

**Lake Michigan Recreation Area** Manistee National Forest, nine miles south of City of Manistee on U.S. 31, then another nine miles west on Forest Trail. Mile-long beach,

camping, picnic facilities, gravel hiking/biking trails.

*OTSEGO COUNTY*

**Otsego Lake County Park** Off West Otsego Lake Dr. in Gaylord. Beach, picnic tables, grills, playground, pavilions.

*WEXFORD COUNTY*

**Cadillac Lakefront Park.** One block west of downtown Cadillac on Lake Cadillac. Paved pathway, historic Shay Steam Locomotive, floating dock for anglers.

**Kenwood Heritage Park** On North Boulevard off M-115 in Cadillac, just northeast of Mitchell State Park. Sandy, shallow beach on Lake Cadillac. Huge playground, picnic tables, pavilion, disc golf, restrooms. Adjacent to Heritage Cadillac Nature Study Area, which include a boardwalk and observation tower.

**Missaukee County Park** Sandy, shallow beach on Lake Missaukee in Cadillac. 117-site campground, beach house, boat launch, playground, picnic tables, grills, pavilion. Open May through October.

**William Mitchell State Park** In Cadillac. Swimming in both Lake Mitchell and Lake Cadillac. Bathroom on Lake Mitchell. Large campground.

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