

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR YOUR GENERATION

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LIVING WELL *50 Plus*

ENTERTAINMENT • HEALTH • BARGAINS • LIFESTYLE



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ISLAND NATION'S ROADS

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Break Out the Bikes

Cars are not allowed on Grand Mackinac Island

This is one of the few places in the world where the only transportation allowed is by bike, horses or foot.



by Jan Ross,
Staff Writer

The first thing you need to know about friendly little

Mackinac Island is that no matter whether you spell it Mackinac or Mackinaw, it is pronounced with an “awe” at the end, not an “ack.” Blame the British, the French or the local Native Americans who called the island Michinnimakinong, which the British and French of course immediately shortened to Mackinac (British) or Mackinaw (French). But however it is spelled, it is still pronounced Mackinaw.

There are only two ways to get to Mackinac Island, which is perched comfortably in the middle of expansive Lake Michigan, and neither involves driving because there are no bridges to the island. And even if there were, cars are not allowed anywhere on the island. This is one of the few places in the world where the only transportation allowed is by bike, horses or foot. This makes

Mackinac one of the most pleasant places you can imagine. You can arrive by ferry, cruise line or plane – there is a small airport on the island.

You step off that ship or plane and arrive at a place where the pace of life slows down and your only decision will be choosing the best way to leisurely find your way around the island. Take a bike ride along the seven-mile trail that is placed right beside the lake – an absolutely gorgeous and scenic way to get some exercise – and then bike around the small downtown area, at least long enough to pop into one of the many fudge shops – you can afford it after you burned all those calories.

If you prefer to be chauffeured around the island, book a tour with Mackinac Island Carriage Tours and relax as the horses do all the work. You’ll see historic Fort Mackinac and Mackinac Island State Park, two locations with beautiful butterflies, and the incredible Grand Hotel.

Leave plenty of time to see the Grand Hotel. Made famous by the movie *Somewhere in Time*, it is a sprawling resort located high atop the island with an amazing view of the lake. If you are not staying at the hotel, be prepared to pay for the privilege of strolling around inside the Grand: The proprietors prefer not to have hundreds of tourists milling about and disturbing their guests. That is entirely reasonable.

We were on a weeklong cruise of the lake with Blount Small Ship Adventures, and we were lucky enough to be invited for lunch and a tour of the hotel as members of the press. We took full advantage of the invitation, sampling as much of the great array of food available as possible, then enjoying our tour as

we tried to figure out just which parts of the hotel had been featured in the movie.

The Fourth of July was the perfect time to visit the island. We enjoyed fireworks from the deck of our cruise ship and made plans to return as soon as possible to this idyllic location.

