

Wisconsin Offers “Boatloads” Of Water Recreation

(NAPSA)—With 15,000 lakes, two Great Lakes and more than 33,000 miles of streams and rivers, Wisconsin has endless opportunities for boaters, sailors, anglers and paddle-sports enthusiasts. Wisconsin also offers ample choices for more passive aquatic recreation, including charter opportunities and nationally acclaimed water-ski shows.

Boating & Sailing

It's easy to understand why Wisconsin consistently ranks among the nation's leaders in boating registrations. The state's landscape is dotted with inland lakes, most of which are equipped with public launch ramps, making it easy to trailer and launch a boat within 30 minutes or less from any city or town. Over the past decade, many Wisconsin communities have invested in state-of-the-art marinas, which have helped make the state a premiere boating destination.

Although lakes can be found everywhere in Wisconsin, nowhere are they more numerous than in the Northwoods' counties of Vilas and Oneida, which have 3,200 bodies of water between them (more than the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah combined). Wisconsin is famous for its lake chains, such as the Eagle River, Waupaca and Lake Winnebago systems; and its huge manmade impoundments, including the Chippewa and Turtle-Flambeau flowages and Castle Rock Lake. For captains interested in open-water passage making, the inland seas of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior offer true “big water” adventure and a link to the Atlantic Ocean through the St. Lawrence Seaway. River navigation opportunities are also abundant, from picturesque creeks to major waterways such as the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers.

Those who'd like to experience fishing or sailing but prefer to have a professional along to ensure the trip's safety and success can find a



Photo credit: Bob Queen, Wisconsin DNR

Among Wisconsin's many waterways are picturesque rivers that are ideal for canoeing, including this one in Big Bay State Park.

wide variety of charter companies to choose from in Wisconsin. The state's charter fishing and sailing fleets are concentrated on the waters of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. Charter trips are usually half- or full-day excursions, with guides providing all of the necessary equipment and know-how.

Kayaking, Canoeing & Rafting

Paddle-sports enthusiasts find an incredible array of opportunities in Wisconsin, from Class I whitewater to lazy streams. A unique area is the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, a chain of 21 islands with sea caves that draw kayakers from around the world. Carved out of sandstone by the incredible forces of Lake Superior, the caves are accessible only by kayak.

Canoeists are drawn to a number of pristine waterways in the state, including the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and the Flambeau, Bois Brule, Peshtigo and Brule rivers. Among the state's best whitewater areas are the Wolf, Peshtigo and Menominee rivers.

Rafting is also popular in Wisconsin. From lazy rivers to Class I rapids, Wisconsin has suitable rafting adventures for all ages

and abilities. The Sugar, Apple and Wolf rivers are among the state's hot spots for rafting.

Water-Ski Shows

Since its inception, Wisconsin has been at the forefront of “show skiing.” The granddaddy of all ski shows, Tommy Bartlett's Amazing Thrill Show is the longest-running, live, outdoor-entertainment show of its kind in the world. In front of a 5,000-seat amphitheater on Lake Delton, the Bartlett Thrill Show is held three times daily throughout the summer. The Min-Aqua Bats in Minocqua rank as the oldest amateur water-ski show in the country, celebrating their 52nd season this year. In Madison, the Mad City Ski Team entertains guests with jumping, swiveling, backwards barefoot skiing and other tricks; while in Janesville, the Rock Aqua Jays show off the abilities that have won them the National Show Ski Championship.

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