

Fall Travelers Find Wisconsin's Lighthouses Picture-Perfect

(NAPSA)—Travelers who are fascinated by the history and romance of lighthouses need look no further than Wisconsin, where these beautiful, charming structures remain after more than a century of guiding navigators. In addition, visitors find that Wisconsin's backdrop of striking autumn colors makes fall the perfect time to enjoy the maritime treasures that grace its shorelines.

Known for its quaint waterfront towns, specialty shops, fish boils and cherry and apple orchards, picturesque Door County has more miles of shoreline, and more state parks than any other county in America, and one of the greatest concentrations of lighthouses found anywhere in the world. Built in 1869, Cana Island Lighthouse is one of the Door Peninsula's most photographed landmarks. Standing 86 feet tall, the white, iron-clad tower overlooks Lake Michigan near Bailey's Harbor. Located on a rocky, nine-acre island, the lighthouse is accessible from the mainland via a limestone causeway. Adventurers can trek across the 300-foot causeway and tour the lighthouse grounds. The original Fresnel lens is 5 feet tall and still in operation today, with the automated light visible for 17 miles offshore.

Keeping watch over Door County's Green Bay shores, 43-foot-tall Eagle Bluff Lighthouse in Fish Creek is perched on a five-story limestone cliff. The lighthouse was constructed in 1868 of Cream City brick, with a square tower and 10-sided lantern room. Today, it stands in popular Peninsula State Park and is among the most conveniently accessible of all of Wisconsin's Great Lakes lighthouses. The keeper's quarters have been restored to appear as they did in the late 1800s. Visitors



can take guided tours of the quarters as well as climb the circular, iron staircase to just below the level of the original Fresnel lens. Since this lens is no longer functional, a modern, solar-powered light atop the tower now emits a flashing, white beacon visible for seven miles.

Made up of 21 islands that dot the Lake Superior shoreline at Wisconsin's northern tip, the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is home to one of the nation's most impressive collections of lighthouses. Seven historic lighthouses, many still operational, are accessible by boat, and visitors can take advantage of cruise services that offer lighthouse excursions. All of the lighthouses are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and have been preserved by the National Park Service. The grounds are open to the public, and park rangers and volunteers provide guided tours of some of the lights at specified times.

At the western end of the archipelago, Sand Island Lighthouse sits on a red, rocky shore. The tower was built in 1881 of locally quarried brownstone and features

an attached keeper's dwelling. Its charming appearance has led some to liken it to a gingerbread house. In 1921, Sand Island became the first lighthouse on the Apostle Islands to be automated; today, the original lantern room contains a solar-powered, white light that is visible for seven miles.

The oldest lighthouse on the Apostle Islands, the original Michigan Island Lighthouse was mistakenly built in 1857 on Michigan Island even though its intended site was Long Island. The 64-foot, whitewashed stone tower with a black lantern was closed after only one year of operation and returned to service in 1869. In 1929, a 112-foot light tower was built on Michigan Island to replace the original structure. The skeletal tower is the tallest and newest lighthouse on the Apostle Islands. Its white beacon still flashes today.

For free travel guides as well as information about lighthouse tours in Wisconsin, including dates of operation and locations, call the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's 24-hour, live-operated toll-free number at 1-800-432-TRIP/8747 or visit travelwisconsin.com.