

Follow along with us as we cruise onboard our  
56' Ocean Yacht.

# Somewhere on the Water

Our Great Loop

Friday, August 8, 2025

Drummond Yacht Haven, Drummond, MI to Mackinac Island, MI

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

We are back in the USA. We had an incredible 35 days in Canada. 27 days of cruising, adding up to 582.16 miles. Undeniably, the most impressive scenery, beautiful waters, and friendly people provided us with lifelong memories. Canada can keep their bugs and big-ass spiders and pricey liquor, but we thank them for sharing their amazing country with us in all other aspects.

There was a thunderstorm this morning. I videoed several minutes of it and was able to screenshot some good lightning bolts. It was an impressive storm. Once the storm passed, we disembarked and cruised towards Mackinac Island, MI. Still on Lake Huron, we anticipated a 5-hour cruise.

It was embarrassing to find out that I had been pronouncing Mackinac Island wrong for days.

*Fun Fact* (that I wish I knew before recording myself saying it wrong 100x or more)

Mackinac is pronounced "Mackinaw" due to 17th-century French explorers translating the original Ojibwe name, *Michilimackinac*, into their language. In French, the terminal "c" is often silent or pronounced as "aw," leading to a silent "c" ending, while later British settlers wrote the name phonetically as "Mackinaw".



Mackinac Island +2

## Key Reasons for the Pronunciation & Spelling:

- **French Influence (Ending in 'c'):** Early French settlers recorded the local Native American name (meaning "big turtle") with a "c," mimicking the French tendency to make final consonants, such as *c* or *ac*, silent or soft (similar to *tabac*).

- **British Influence (Ending in 'w'):**

When the British later took control of the region, they wrote the name as it sounded to them, using the phonetic spelling "Mackinaw".

- **Split Usage:** Despite the difference in spelling between [Mackinac Island](#) (original) and [Mackinaw City](#) (later), both are consistently pronounced with an "aw" sound.
- **Distinction:** The "aw" spelling for the city was sometimes chosen to create a distinct identity, particularly for the post office, separate from the island.

When Mark originally called to get dock space at the marina on the island, we were told they were sold out until the 17<sup>th</sup>. Thankfully, he decided to try again to see if anything had opened up, because luckily, a space did open up that could fit us. This was one of my top destinations to visit while on the loop, so I am thrilled it worked out.

The water is a gorgeous color, and today it was smooth cruising through DeTour Passage into Lake Huron's St. Mary River. DeTour, MI, is an optional stop for boaters to check in with the USA customs. Check-in is all done by app, but you need to be on USA soil, and/or close enough that you are recognized as being in US waters via their app GPS tracking.

As we cruise closer to Mackinack Island and the Straits of Mackinac, the commercial traffic becomes increasingly busier. This channel is part of a critical Great Lakes corridor linking:

- Lake Superior
- Lake Michigan
- Lake Huron

Freighters use it to move:

- Iron ore
- Grain
- Coal
- Stone and other bulk cargo

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The arrival at the marina went without a hitch. We backed into our slip with great ease. My enthusiasm for arriving on the island was heightened. I was anxious to get on our bikes and explore. Little did I know that our

bike ride was about to be 8.2 miles against some very strong winds, which was going to tire me more than expected. What I also did not expect was the Caribbean-like waters. Although the beaches were rocky, they were still gorgeous. Last on the list of unexpected, the overwhelming smell of fudge and horse shit. Wow, a smell that cannot be described delicately.

Our stop at the visitor's center did not prove to be helpful. If you want a map of the island, you have to get it on your phone, which we did. We planned to stop at a few of the tourist highlights, including the Arch Rock.

There were 207 steps to the Arch Rock, which we found out later we could have biked to rather than climb the stairs. We saw the Devil's Oven (no photo) and eventually made our way back to downtown. Not paying too close attention to the map, we realized too late that we missed a lot of the tourist attraction stops we wanted to see, but not bad enough to bike back around to them. We could have opted for a horse and buggy tour or rented our own horse and buggy, but the expense was a deterrent, and we talked ourselves into believing we probably did not miss that much.

Navigating the bike path was like navigating a car through heavy city traffic. The path was crowded with walkers, joggers, tandems, tricycles, bikers pulling buggies, and some motorized wheelchairs. People would stop quickly, encroach into your lane, and park their bikes along the side, narrowing your space to cycle safely past.

Downtown was super crowded. Thanks to Uncle Lee's suggestion, we went to the Pink Pony for cocktails. A fun and whimsically decorated bar with excellent drinks. Walking the crowded main street in the heat, being tired from the bike ride, and the overwhelming fragrance coming from the horses, my senses were maxed out. We went back to Valkyrie to enjoy the view from the fly bridge, had a couple more drinks, and even though we planned to go back out later in the evening to find some live music, we did not.

Many describe Mackinac as a charming, enchanted, time-less destination. It has many unique features. The biggest and most obvious is the fact that cars are banned here. The main form of transportation is by bike, horse-drawn carriage, or on foot. 80% of the island is protected parkland. One of its most iconic sites is Fort Mackinac, a military fort built

in the late 1700s overlooking the harbor. Another is Arch Rock, a massive natural arch rising about 146' above the shoreline. Mackinac is the Fudge Capital of the World. The Grand Hotel is also one of the most recognized buildings. Opening in 1887 (built in 93 days), it is still a classic historic resort that overlooks the water, and boasting the longest porch in the world allows guests plenty of opportunities to enjoy the view. Each of its 397 rooms is unique. An island visitor can pay a fee to be a guest for a day, explore the grounds, the secret garden, etc.

Did you know that even the landscapers are on bikes, and that USPS and packages are delivered by horse-drawn trailers? There are approximately 500-600 year-round residents. In the summer, the island welcomes around 1 million people. Wowza!

### *Daily Summary:*

Departed from Drummond Yacht Haven @ 7:50am

Arrived at Mackinac Island @ 12:56 pm

Days cruised: 52      Days on the loop: 73

Hours traveled:    5 hrs 6 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 41.62 for the day (1,223.74 total miles)

Average Speed: 8.2 knots

Weather: Sunny, windy, hot in the high 80's

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: Perfect location

#of locks we went through: (73 total locks)

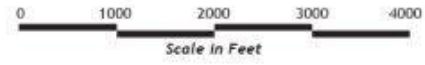
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Saturday, August 9, 2025

Wanting a new perspective on Mackinac Island and downtown, I left Valkyrie early and went for a walk. I walked the main street, Lake Shore Drive, until I could cut up to Market Street, then followed Caddotte Street up to the Grand Hotel. Once I was able to get the photo-op of the hotel, I cut across the lawn back to Lake Shore Drive (near the school), stopped to look at the Round Island Light, and continued through the main strip passing all the shops and restaurants, etc. that we walked by yesterday. It was early enough that most shops had not yet opened or were just opening for the day. The horse & buggies were just starting to fill the streets, deliveries were being made, and a few early morning café patrons were all moving about at a slow pace. This walk renewed my spirits and gave me a new appreciation for the island.

### Map Legend

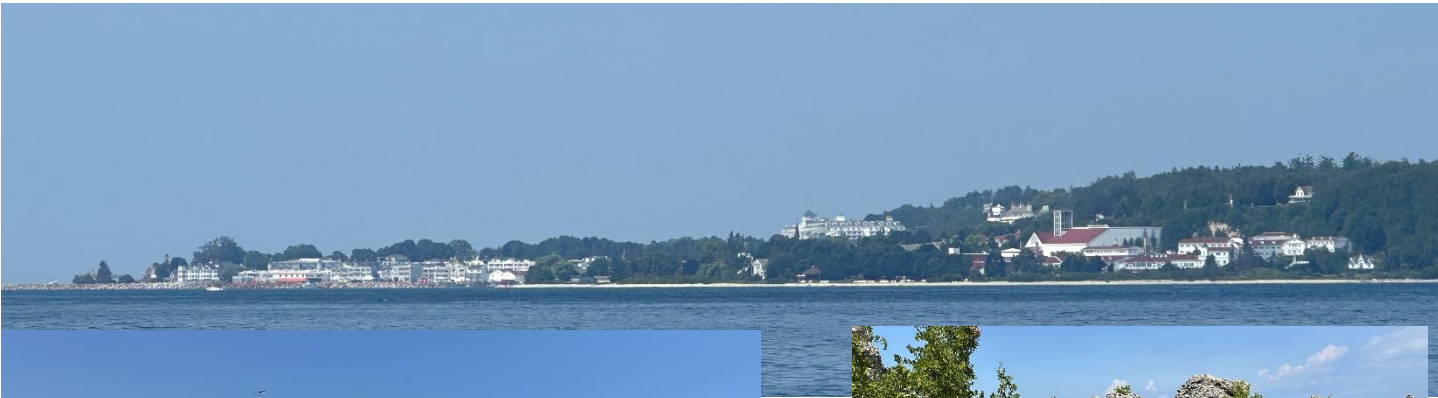
- Major Road/Street
- Secondary Road/Street
- Minor Road/Street
- Driveway/Walkway
- Foot Trail (official)
- Foot Trail (unofficial)
- Stairway
- Park/Golf Course
- State Park Boundary
- M-185 Milemarker
- Passenger Ferry
- Visitor Centers



**SUGGESTED TRAILS**

# MACKINAC ISLAND TRAIL MAP

**British Landing Nature Center RESTROOMS**  
**X NOTICE TO BICYCLISTS DO NOT TURN INLAND AT BRITISH LANDING**



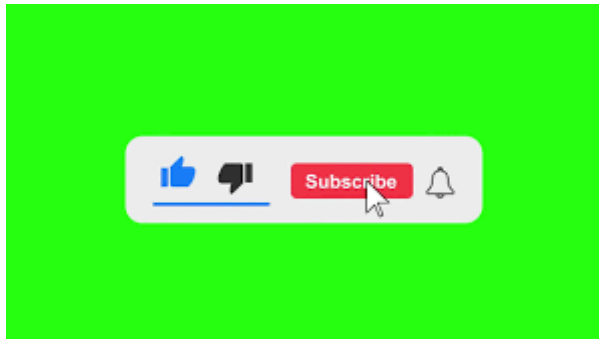




<https://youtu.be/DMWgUikQUKA>



Time is unrenewable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't!



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