



Awakenings

Long abandoned, one of the state's most intriguing historic sites comes to life in August.



FOR 24 YEARS in the mid-to late 1800s, the community of Fayette was a bustling company town tucked beneath towering limestone bluffs along Bay de Noc at the Garden Peninsula's Snail Shell Harbor. The community of nearly 500 grew up around two blast furnaces, a large dock and several charcoal kilns used by the Jackson Iron Company, which produced

230,000 tons of charcoal pig iron over 24 years before closing in 1891.

The abandoned town — with its hotel, company store, town hall, employee housing and production facilities — changed hands several times before it was purchased by the State of Michigan in 1959.

Today, the Historic Fayette Townsite is one of Michigan's most unique state parks. Nearly 20 structures, some in various states of ruin, are open for tours from May through October. Scheduled guided tours are also



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN MCCORMACK (TOP & BOTTOM);
COURTESY ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN (MIDDLE)



available on select dates.

One to mark: Saturday, Aug. 10. On Heritage Day, Fayette is far from a ghost town. Travel north to celebrate life in the 19th century with activities including a children's watermelon eating contest, traditional music performances, period displays and a silent auction. Visitors ages 13 and up can also take part in a vintage "base ball" game with the Fayette team, playing by 1860s' rules on the town's original field.

Admission to Heritage Day is free of charge, although a Michigan State Parks Recreation Passport is required for park entry. Learn more at michigan.gov/Fayette. Uncover more of Michigan's ghost towns at ghosttowns.com/states/mi.

— Tai Alexander



Journey to the Garden Peninsula

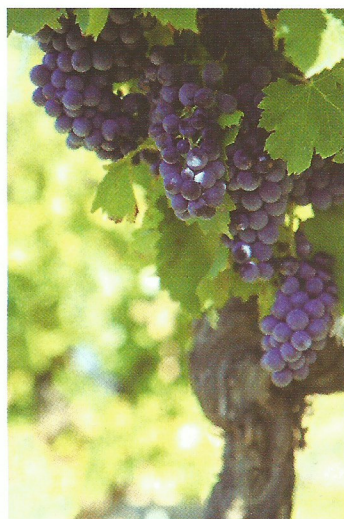
The Upper Peninsula's southern Garden Peninsula juts into Lake Michigan, forming the scenic Big and Little Bays de Noc. While off the beaten path, this region offers activities and attractions that are worth a trip, including those below.

World-Class Fishing. With almost 250 miles of shoreline, the Bays de Noc is a year-round fishery and sponsors a number of renowned walleye tournaments — but you'll find plenty of trophy Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, Perch, Salmon and Trout, too (baysdenoc.com/charters-guides.shtml).

Fayette Historic State Park. Beyond the 711-acre park's 1880s' town site, enjoy a mile-long sandy beach, playground, picnic area, five miles of hiking trails and 61 semi-modern campsites. Or, check into the fully-furnished Furnace Hill Lodge, built in the 1970s as a manager's residence in woods near Fayette's historic structures. Open year-round, the state-owned retreat — an ideal home base for many recreational pursuits — sleeps up to 10 and features central air (\$100 to \$125 per night; 906-644-2603).

Monarchs of the North. The cedar trees and lands surrounding Peninsula Point Lighthouse Park between Little and Big Bay de Noc become the stop-off-point for thousands of Monarchs in August and early fall. The butterflies gather for their flights across the open waters of Lake Michigan and Green Bay (travelbaysdenoc.com; 906-474-6442, ext. 110).

Village of Garden. About eight miles south of U.S. 2 between Escanaba and Manistique, this farming and fishing village is home to The Village Artisans, Inc., whose featured works can be perused in the Garden Gallery (villageartsofgarden.com; 906-644-2025).



Canoe Trips & Sea Kayaking. Uncle Ducky Paddling Adventures offers guided sea kayaking trips on Lake Superior to Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, the Hiawatha Water Trail from Big Bay to Munising, the Huron Islands, Isle Royale, Keweenaw Bay, Presque Isle and other Upper Peninsula shorelines. Kayak and canoe trips are also offered on inland lakes and rivers including the Two Hearted, Au Train and Fox, along with half- to multi-day wilderness adventures (paddlingmichigan.com).

Rapid River County Park. Featuring picnic tables, grills and a playground plus four tiers of scenic waterfalls cascading over limestone, this Delta County site 10 miles north of Rapid River off U.S. 41 is a family favorite.

Threefold Vine Winery. Just south of Garden, tours, wine tasting and wine made from grapes grown in the Upper Peninsula are all part of this working family farm. Email or call ahead for hours (threefoldvine@hotmail.com; 906-644-7089).

Discover other adventures at baysdenoc.com and travelbaysdenoc.com.

— Compiled by Cymbre Foster and Lisa M. Jensen