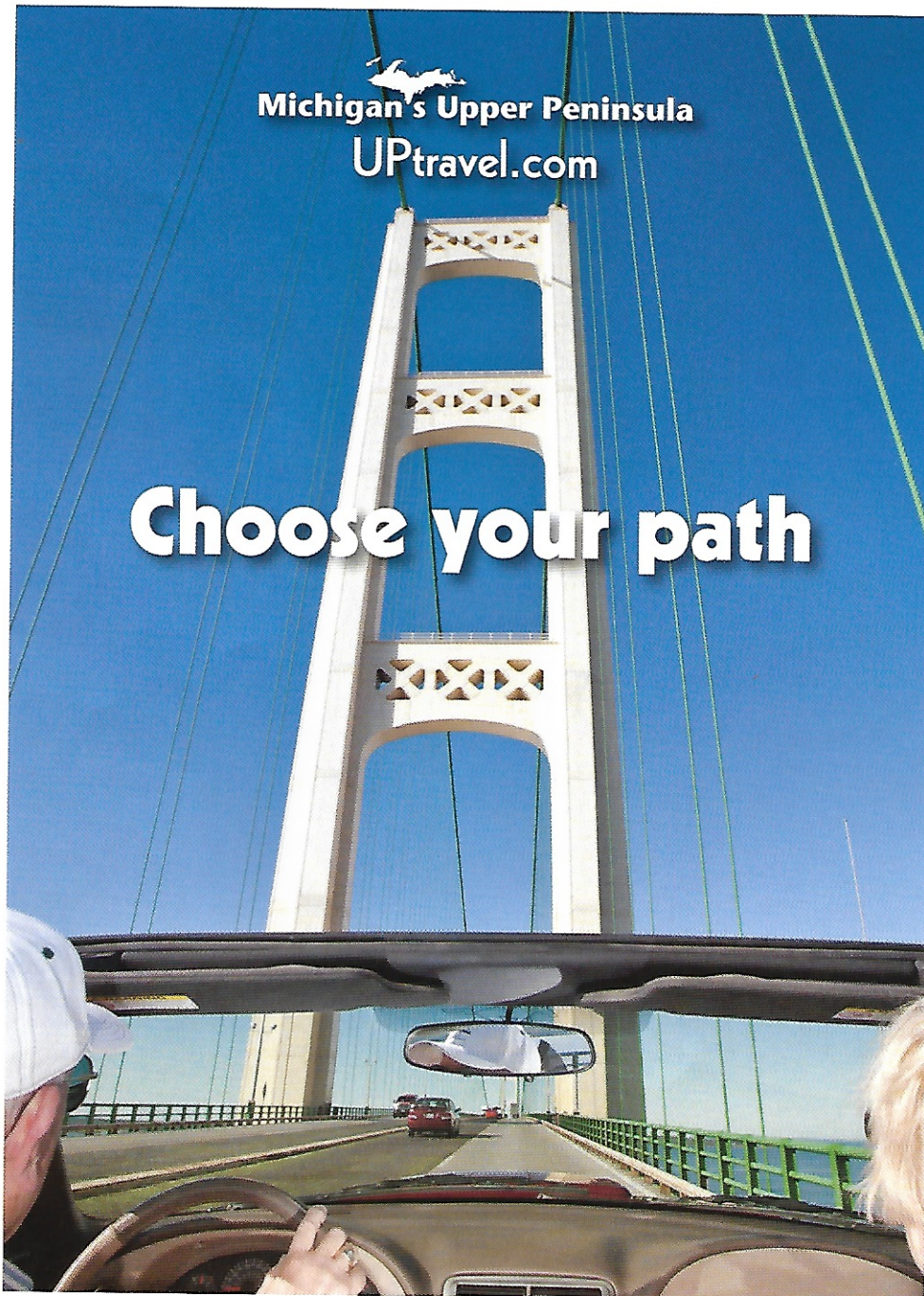


# Glamping is luxury camping with comforts



Shown above, the interior and exterior of a handcrafted



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Imagine getting up close and personal with nature during an overnight camping experience — with all the comforts of a nice hotel.

On a global scale, glamping — short for “glamorous camping” — provides the opportunity to spend the night in a safari tent, yurt, treehouse, renovated vintage trailer or teepee — some with the amenities of a four-star resort.

Settle into a handcrafted English shepherd hut at Camp Buttercup ([campbuttercup.com](http://campbuttercup.com)), near Dexter. Dating back to the early 16th century, this type of hut was a mobile shelter for shepherds. The 18-by-7.5-foot Bluebell hut has oak flooring, a wet bar with a hand-sculpted clay sink, a counter space for breakfast, tea or wine tasting, an en-suite bathroom, a full-size luxurious mattress, custom furnishings and art.

Retreat packages created by hostess and proprietor Victoria Schon, a certified holistic health coach, allow visitors to relax and reconnect with themselves and nature. Activities such as bird watching, paddling along the Portage Lake Chain of Lakes, or biking through Dexter's new riverfront park make for a unique experience.

Stretched along a 229-acre wooded site near Torch Lake and the Jordan Valley, Bella Solviva ([bellasolviva.com](http://bellasolviva.com)) is a newly opened amenity-focused luxury camp resort. Providing services to make the camping experience easier and more relaxed, the three-season property offers plenty of space between sites.

A work-in-progress under the direction of Brad and Sandy Carlson, Bella Solviva ultimately will feature about 230 sites, including safari tents, treehouses, bed and breakfast suites, vintage RVs and cabins. Themed





English shepherd hut at Camp Buttercup.

areas will provide a variety of experiences, including horseback riding, kayaking and canoeing, hiking, mountain biking and more among the property's rolling hills, nearby waterways and lush woodlands. Other amenities on the table include a fitness center, catered meals, cooking pavilions and more.

The eco-resort will be developed in several phases, with a goal of being 100 percent energy independent by the time the project is complete. Green building principles will include solar panels, wind turbines, hydro-power and heat generators.

Throughout the state, both private and public campgrounds are looking to ancient primitive cultures for lodging structures. Used as a dwelling by nomadic Mongolian people in the steppes of Central Asia, yurts are canvas-like tents built on wooden platforms. With their thin walls, occupants can hear the sounds of nature while relaxing in unique comfort including actual beds and furniture, wood-burning stoves, cooking spaces and more.

Wild Cherry RV Resort (wildcherryresort.com) in the community of Lake Leelanau offers a four-person yurt in a secluded wooded setting. The space is equipped with a queen-size bed, a twin trundle bed, a daybed, dresser, table and chairs. A portable bathroom and two-room tent shower are a short walk away. For a romantic touch, guests can request flowers, wine, cheese and fruit to be waiting upon arrival.

Three Michigan state parks (michigan.gov/dnr) also feature yurts, including Craig Lake, Pinckney Recreation Area and Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park.

— Tai Alexander

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