



Michigan Wine Tours

Packaged and ready to go

by Dianna Stampfler

Photo courtesy of Travel Michigan

Throughout Michigan's wine regions, you'll find countless lodging properties offering a variety of packages, with everything from wine dinners and guided tours to special events and unique gift baskets.

NORTHWEST

The Vineyard Inn on Suttons Bay showcases the Leelanau Peninsula with its self-guided "Mystery Wine Tour," available May through October. With an advanced reservation, you'll receive a message in a bottle by mail. The scroll inside features clues that direct you to collect treasures from area wineries, before heading off to your final romantic destination. Packages include two nights lodging in a deluxe bedroom suite and start at \$385 per couple midweek, \$425 per couple on weekends. The Vineyard Inn also offers a Leelanau Lovers Weekend and Sip, Savor, Cruise & Snooze Luxury Limo Wine Tours.

The seasonal wine weekends at The

Homestead Resort in Glen Arbor are popular for those looking for an all-inclusive package. These weekends kick off on Saturday with brunch, include a tour to area wineries and culminate with a six-course feast that evening. Packages vary based on the season, but include two nights lodging, wine tour transportation, brunch both mornings and the Saturday evening dinner. Upcoming events include the Harvest Wine Tour, on October 28.

Those looking for something nautical during the summer months will enjoy the Wine Tasting Cruises offered every Tuesday evening in July and August aboard the Tall Ship Manitou, a replica of an 1800s "coasting" cargo schooner. A selection of wines from Leelanau Wine Cellars – makers of Tall Ship Chardonnay – are served, along with a sampling of Mediterranean fare. The cost is \$55 per person for this two-hour sail. Take your adventure one step further by booking one of 12 cabins below deck for a

"Floating B&B" experience.

Over on Old Mission Peninsula, Chateau Chantal Winery B&B offers a full menu of cooking weekends, featuring everything from soups and stews to fish, sauces and salads. There's even a package just for the ladies. Prices vary depending on the theme and length of stay in the 12-room boutique property. On Thursday nights during the summer, enjoy Jazz at Sunset on the lawn outside the tasting room.

Wine packages are also offered at the following Northwestern Michigan properties: Traverse Bay Lodge, Traverse City; Black Star Farms, Suttons Bay; Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, Acme; Chateau Grand Traverse Winery B&B, Old Mission Peninsula; Grey Hare Inn Vineyard B&B, Old Mission Peninsula; Grand Beach Inn, Traverse City; Sugar Beach Inn, Traverse City; Holiday Inn West Bay, Traverse City; Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites, Acme and Country Hermitage B&B, Williamsburg.

WEST

In the Lake Michigan shoreline community of Whitehall, south of Ludington and north of Muskegon, is a quaint B&B called Cocoa Cottage, where a Vintage Michigan Wine Tasting package is offered. Starting at \$330, this package includes two nights lodging, a \$50 dinner certificate, bottle of Harvest Gold Wine from Tartan Hill Winery and a tour of the tasting room. Tartan Hill is a small, award-winning, family-owned winery that has been in operation in nearby New Era since 1985.

The Kingsley House B&B in Fennville has teamed up with its neighbors, Fenn Valley Vineyards, for a weekend event that includes a “behind the scenes” tour of the winery. This Wine Lovers Weekend includes accommodations, commemorative wine glasses and a gourmet six-course Italian dinner on Saturday evening, where a wine expert from Fenn Valley pairs and explains specially selected wines that accompany each course of the meal. Packages are offered on select weekends only and rates vary.

SOUTHWEST

Love is in the air – literally – at the Candlewood Suites in Stevensville.

Enjoy a breathtaking hot air balloon ride overlooking the valleys and vineyards at sunset, or sunrise. This Hot Air Balloon Ride Package also includes overnight accommodations in a standard studio suite and dinner for two at Tabor Hill Winery, where the restaurant overlooks the vineyard. The package also includes a bottle of Tabor Hill sparkling wine and two keepsake glasses. Packages start at \$489 or upgrade to a one-bedroom king suite for \$509, plus tax.

Next door, at the Comfort Suites in

Stevensville, you'll find the Wine, Dine & Romance Package offered December through May. This is a fully loaded package, with limo service to and from Spinnaker's restaurant, a bottle of Tabor Hill sparkling wine with two crystal flute glasses, a dozen long-stemmed roses in a glass vase, a balloon bouquet and overnight accommodations. Packages start at \$210 for a standard suite. Upgrade to a Jacuzzi suite for \$280 or the heart-shaped Jacuzzi suite for \$340.

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Above: Sign at the Fenn Valley Vineyards located near Fennville in Southwest Michigan.

Photo courtesy of Fenn Valley Vineyards.

Left: Fall at Chateau Grand Traverse vineyard and winery near Traverse City.

Photo by Ed O'Keefe III

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Wine packages are also offered at the following Southwestern Michigan properties: Castle in the Country, Allegan; Twin Gables Inn, Saugatuck; Victoria Resort B&B, South Haven; Inn at the Park B&B, South Haven; Martha's Vineyard B&B, South Haven; Holiday Inn Express & Suites, St. Joseph; and Park Inn, Stevensville.

SOUTHEAST

Sandhill Crane Vineyards in Jackson offers two Wine & Romance packages. The Chelsea package, at \$175, includes a stay at the Waterloo Gardens B&B and a \$50 gift certificate for the Common Grill Restaurant. The Pleasant Lake/Jackson package, at \$165, includes a stay at the Hankerd Inn B&B in a fireplace/Jacuzzi room and a \$40 gift certificate for Charlie's Pub & Grill. Both packages include a bottle of Sandhill Crane wine and two logo wine glasses in your room upon check-in, breakfast the following morning and a wine tasting with cheese at the winery tasting room. All packages must be purchased through the winery and are not valid during race weekends at Michigan International Speedway in nearby Brooklyn.

NORTHEAST

Experience Northern Michigan's charming back woods aboard a horse-drawn carriage or sleigh that will take you away from the daily grind. Thunder Bay Resort in Alpena offers a package that includes an up-close look at majestic bull elk as the horses make their way deep into the woods to the elegant and beautiful Elk Antler Log Cabin. Warm yourself by the fire and savor the delicious aromas put forth by the twin antique wood cook stoves as culinary artist Jan Matthias and her staff prepare your gourmet meal. Throughout dinner you will sample wines produced by nearby Stoney Acres Winery. The resort has packages all through the year, with prices varying depending on the length of stay.

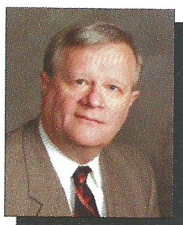
For a list of additional Michigan wine packages, log on to www.michiganwines.com.

Dianna Stampfler, president of Promote Michigan, has a passion for travel, writing and Michigan wine.

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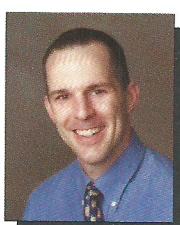
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