

*City on the Move*  
DETROIT'S UNWAVERING SPIRIT

*Shaking Things Up*  
DYNAMIC WAYS TO CAPTIVATE & ENGAGE

# michigan meetings + events

MEETINGSMAGS.COM // SUMMER 2022

*Raise  
a Glass!*

VINEYARD  
AND WINERY  
VENUES

Waterside amenities abound  
at The Inn at Bay Harbor

## MEET ME ON THE **WATERFRONT**

ENERGIZE & INSPIRE WITH THESE GORGEOUS VENUES ON THE WATER



ON THE

WATER

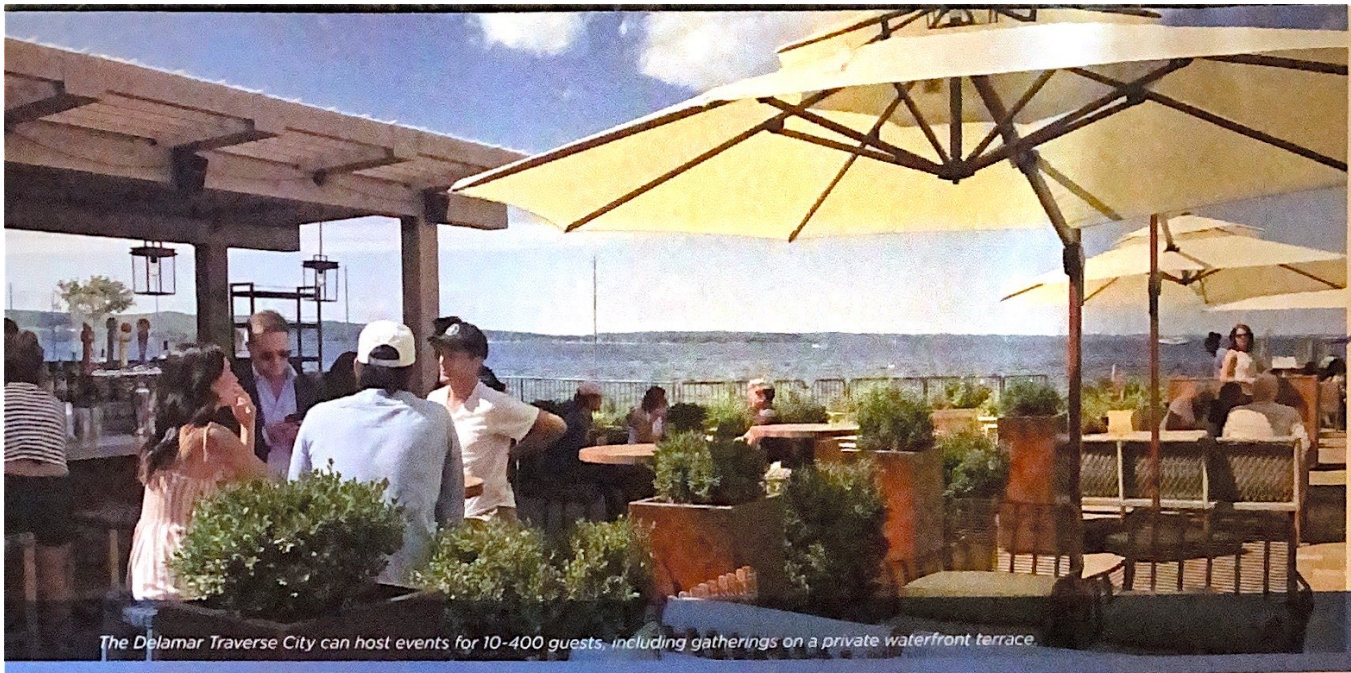
*The Delmar Traverse City has meetings and events spaces that look out or to the blue waters of the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay*



## SIX VIEW-PACKED PLACES TO GATHER IN THE GREAT LAKES STATE

BY **DIANNA STAMPFLER**

When it comes to meeting on the waterfront, Michigan is hard to beat. Surrounded by four of the five Great Lakes, the state has the longest freshwater coastline—3,288 linear miles—in the United States. What's more, the state is home to 11,000-plus inland lakes and 36,000 miles of rivers and streams. Whether you're planning a board meeting, conference, banquet, or cocktail reception, Michigan offers a variety of venues with water views that exhilarate, energize, and inspire.



The Delamar Traverse City can host events for 10-400 guests, including gatherings on a private waterfront terrace.

## BLUE WATER CONVENTION CENTER

### PORT HURON

The 34,000-square-foot Blue Water Convention Center opened in early 2015 at the foot of the iconic Blue Water Bridge, which spans the St. Clair River and connects Port Huron to Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. Offering views of Canada and passing freighters, the strikingly modern facility is available for gatherings that range from meetings and seminars to full-scale conferences and trade shows.

At more than 20,000 square feet, Lake Huron Hall, the largest space within the Convention Center, can accommodate up to 1,600 people. The more intimate River-view Suites, ideal for board meetings, have direct access to Blue Water's international deck and a total capacity of 140. For banquets or exhibitions, the Grand Ballroom has a maximum capacity of 350 for theater seating, 184 for a reception, and 175 when configured classroom-style.

The attached 149-room DoubleTree by Hilton boasts an additional 4,470 square feet of meeting space with five distinct meeting rooms, as well as on-site dining or catering from Freighters Eatery & Taproom.

Given its size and flexibility, the Blue Water Convention Center has hosted a

range of events, from the Port Huron Boat Show and Mid-Michigan Gun & Knife Show to the Faith Lutheran Couples Retreat and Michigan Fine Arts & Quilters Convention. State associations representing broadcasters, libraries, veterinary technicians, county officials, and more have chosen to host their annual conferences at the convention center. In November, the Michigan Festivals & Events Association heads to Port Huron for its annual convention, which draws hundreds of attendees with dozens of breakout sessions, catered meals, a vendor trade show, and a full-scale musical showcase with bands, comedians, and other entertainers.

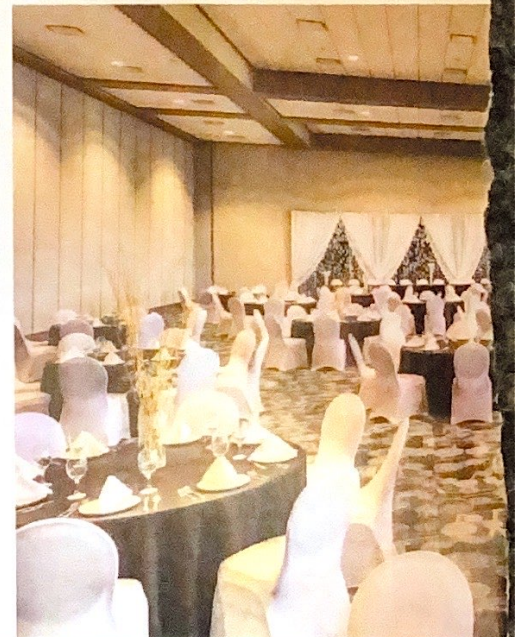
Board consultant Brian Wolters helped plan last fall's annual gathering of the Michigan Society for Healthcare Engineering, which drew more than 300 attendees to the Blue Water Convention Center. "I've always been more drawn to Northern Michigan," Wolters says, "but I was pleasantly surprised by both Port Huron and Blue Water. The water views were terrific; some of our meeting rooms, as well as a patio, were right on the water. We'll be returning to Blue Water in September for this year's conference." [bluewaterconventioncenter.com](http://bluewaterconventioncenter.com)

## NORTHPORT BAY RETREAT

### NORTHPORT

Off the beaten path near the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula and just steps from Grand Traverse Bay sits Northport Bay Retreat, an exclusive and private four-season corporate sanctuary. If a remote environment is what you're looking for to keep your team focused and on task, you'll want to consider this venue, which boasts 16 guest rooms. McDonald's, Quicken Loans, and Medtronic are among the companies that have held retreats here.

PHOTOS: (THIS PAGE AND PRECEDING SPREAD) DELAMAR TRAVERSE CITY



At 22,000 square feet, the mansion-like venue features several private meeting spaces, including a conference room. The spacious great room offers cozy seating, a fireplace, and plenty of windows that let in natural light and provide panoramic views of the bay, including the spectacular sunrises. The lower level is devoted to recreation with a wet bar, fitness center, pool table, pingpong table, air hockey table, foosball table, big-screen television, and stereo system.

Northport Bay Retreat's dining room accommodates 64, while the fully equipped kitchen provides plenty of space for meal prep. For stress-free gourmet options, Epicure Culinary in Traverse City can handle catering orders of all sizes.

Just outside the doors, guests of Northport Bay Retreat have access to a lakeside deck, dining patio with a large gas grill, hot tub, fire pit, and plenty of lawn seating, and a boat slip, along with more than 6 acres of property and 340 feet of bay frontage for exploring. On the Leelanau Peninsula, more than two dozen wineries,

breweries, cideries, and distilleries—along with unique restaurants and retail shops—provide off-premises entertainment. [antonco.com/northportbay](http://antonco.com/northportbay)

## DELAMAR TRAVERSE CITY

### TRAVERSE CITY

Along the southern edge of Grand Traverse Bay in Traverse City, the former West Bay Beach Holiday Inn recently unveiled its \$10-million renovation and rebranding as the Delamar Traverse City. Touted as a "full-service upscale resort," this 173-room property has the look and feel of a boutique hotel with common areas that blend an eclectic vibe with an industrial flair.

The meeting rooms, for groups up to 200, have been enhanced in design and technol-

ogy, with state-of-the-art services for both in-person and hybrid events. Corporate packages are designed with the specific groups in mind, taking experiences beyond the boardroom with a series of curated team-building activities like sommelier-led wine-pairing dinners, mixology cocktail classes, boat cruises on the bay, and off-site tours to the area's award-winning wineries.

"The Delamar was suggested due to its location on the water and because it was close to where we could do an outdoor activity," says Vicky Glossa, who recently coordinated a gathering for a group of 10 Starbucks team leaders from around Michigan. "It didn't disappoint! We went tubing on Mount Holiday and had a blast."

Delamar guests will find a welcoming lobby (and a complimentary glass of bubbly upon check-in); heated indoor and outdoor pools (as well as cabanas, a hot tub, and a sauna); a garden terrace featuring fire pits, lush greenery, and lawn games (like bocce and cornhole); on-site yoga classes; e-bike and watercraft rentals; live music (Thursday through Sunday); and upscale dining at Artisan Waterfront Restaurant. Upcoming projects include a full-service spa and private docking facilities for guests arriving by boat. While Delamar offers everything guests need under one roof, the hotel is within walking distance from downtown Traverse City's expanding collection of restaurants, shops, and attractions. [delamar.com/traverse-city](http://delamar.com/traverse-city)



Northport Bay Retreat boasts 340 feet of frontage on Grand Traverse Bay.



The Blue Water Convention Center in Port Huron sits at the foot of the Blue Water Bridge between Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

## THE INN AT BAY HARBOR

### PETOSKEY

Stretching out along Little Traverse Bay 4 miles southwest of downtown Petoskey, The Inn at Bay Harbor is the most luxurious and picturesque venue in the region. More than just a pretty facade, this is one of only two Marriott Autograph Collection hotels in Michigan, with 116 guest rooms and suites (including two- and three-bedroom units), a full-service spa, afternoon tea service, a fine-dining restaurant and wine bar, world-class golf, and an array of elegant meeting spaces both on and off the property, including, seasonally, at the nearby Bay Harbor Golf Club.

The 3,504-square-foot Arlington Room is the largest meeting space, accommodating between 140 (classroom) and 250 (reception). It is one of five spaces on the Inn's lower level, next to the Occidental (1,200 square feet), Clifton (1,508 square feet, divisible into two rooms), and the 390-square-foot Boardroom. The main-level Sagamore Room has the best views and is ideal for banquets of up to 80 or recep-

tions of up to 100. The 2,205-square-foot Tower Suite and 5,400-square-foot Penthouse Suite offer an exclusive event experience, and, like all the inn's event spaces, provide state-of-the-art technology.

*We really like the beauty of the area—it's a treat for the attendees as well.*

—Diane Dick, Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators

Outside of business, there are plenty of regional activities to educate and entertain. Within walking distance, guests will find the Great Lakes Center for the Arts, which offers a variety of musicals, concerts, and theatrical performances. The Little Traverse Bay Ferry docks overnight in Bay Harbor, providing service to both Harbor Springs and Petoskey between Memorial Day and September (or October, weather permitting). The Bay Harbor Golf Club recently added scenic golf cart tours along Little Traverse Bay, in addition to its stellar golf options on

three courses—The Links, Quarry, and Preserve (with unmatched views of the bay). The Petoskey Wine Region includes 14 distinct wine-tasting rooms, many with outdoor patios, small plate offerings, and live music.

Groups interested in taking a step back in time can enjoy a guided walking tour with local tour company Petoskey Yesterday, focused on the early resort history, haunted sites in downtown Petoskey, and one of the area's most famous summer residents, Ernest Hemingway.

"Our association has been using The Inn at Bay Harbor for the past few years for our Women in Leadership Conference and our Small and Rural Conference," says Diane Dick, of the Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators. "We really like the beauty of the area—it's a treat for the attendees as well. There are lots of options for fun activities to do with your attendees, depending on the time of year. This year, we are going to try a 'Petoskey Stone' walk on our own to see if we can find any of the coveted state stones." [innatbayharbor.com](http://innatbayharbor.com)

PHOTOS: AARON PETERSON; (OPPOSITE) CAITLYN ANDERSON / DRUMMOND ISLAND RESORT

The picturesque Inn at Bay Harbor is one of two Marriott Autograph Collection hotels in Michigan.



Top to bottom: The charmingly rustic Drummond Island Resort and Conference Center on northern Lake Huron nestles into its 2,200 woody acres. A private meeting room within the Pins Bar & Grill at the Drummond Island Resort.



### DRUMMOND ISLAND RESORT AND CONFERENCE CENTER DRUMMOND ISLAND

For a rustic island experience, the Drummond Island Resort and Conference Center, located on northern Lake Huron, delivers on all counts. Situated on 2,200 acres with both waterfront and woodland venues, this year-round property is accessible via a short 15-minute ferry ride from Detour Village on the eastern Upper Peninsula mainland. The Charlton Group came here for a company retreat and Jeep Jamboree held an event on the property.

The resort offers several event spaces for small- to medium-sized groups, including the Mackinac Room with a boardroom setting for 15, the log Annex, with a capacity of 80; and the farmhouse-chic Brooder House, with exposed beams and a seating capacity of 175. There is a private room in the Pins Bar & Grill (adjacent to the resort's bowling alley) as well as additional small group spaces inside the main restaurant.

Drummond Island Resort offers a variety of northern-inspired accommodations, including The Lodge with its 40 log cabin-style rooms. The property also features 16 distinctive cottages and cabins, like the four-bedroom Wright Cottage with a secluded setting overlooking a private pond or two-bedroom Sparky Anderson Cottage named after the legendary Detroit Tigers manager and broadcaster. Resort activities include paintball, clay and skeet shooting, kayaking, hiking, tennis, volleyball, and pickleball.

"Our championship golf course, The Rock, is absolutely beautiful with spectacular views and abundant wildlife," says Caitlin Anderson, sales manager at the resort. Drummond Island itself is an outdoor paradise, with plenty of opportunities for off-roading, biking, paddling, and exploring for both group attendees and the friends and families who have the good fortune of joining them.

[drummondisland.com](http://drummondisland.com)



## INFINITY AND OVATION YACHT CHARTERS DETROIT

For groups that want to meet *on the water*, Infinity and Ovation Yacht Charters in Detroit operates two stylish vessels that deliver a memorable experience on the international waters of the Detroit River.

“From product launches to team building off-site and annual award ceremonies, Infinity and Ovation Yacht Charters is the destination Detroit-area businesses choose for high-impact events,” says Laura Stewart, director of sales, managed venues, at Infinity. “With countless ways to customize a cruise, we’re able to ensure

any experience aligns with a company’s vision. Branded ice sculptures, choreographed dances, highly tailored food and bar menus—we’ve really done it all, and we’ve entertained companies across all major industries, including the automotive industry, health care, tech, finance, real estate, and more.”

The 117-foot bi-level vessel Infinity accommodates 130 passengers for a mingling reception. There are intimate seating areas on the open-air decks, while the main level is equipped to host plated dinners.

At 138 feet, the tri-level craft Ovation caters to larger groups of up to 300 guests.

Overlooking the bow, the main-level Atrium features a VIP head table with seating throughout the space for another 60-plus. The mid-level is adorned with more casual seating areas for after-dinner networking, and the wide-open upper deck is an inviting place for gathering on warm summer evenings.

Both yachts cruise between April and September, with docking options at four different downtown Detroit locations. There are also options for pairing an excursion with activities at Waterview Loft for a “land and sea” event **m+**

[infinityandovation.com](http://infinityandovation.com)

PHOTO: COURTESY INFINITY AND OVATION YACHT CHARTERS

*We’re able to ensure  
any experience  
aligns with a  
company’s vision.*

—Laura Stewart,  
Infinity and Ovation Yacht Charters

*Yachts from Infinity and Ovation Yacht Charters cruise the Detroit River with the Renaissance Center looming in the background.*

