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Northern Wisconsin's Bayfield and the Apostle Islands

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by Lynn Seldon, Boating Writer

Boating hope springs eternal every winter, making it the perfect season to plan a warm weather boating-oriented trip. That's why northern Wisconsin's Bayfield and the Apostle Islands beckon boaters with water wanderlust.

Located on the greatest of the Great Lakes—Lake Superior—the pristine Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is a boating paradise. Mighty waters meet intimate islands to make for ideal boating destinations with calm harbors that seem made for visiting boaters. And, the charming boater-friendly town of Bayfield makes for the perfect base.

Known as the “Gateway to the Apostle Islands,” Bayfield is a boater's town. Founded back in 1856 and boasting a full-time population of just 600 or so, this town on the edge of Lake Superior is 100% waterlogged. “We guard our close connection with these very special waters,” says boating mayor Larry J. McDonald.

“Having sailed more than 10,000 miles of Lake Superior's deep blue waters, I have yet to discover all the emotion and intrigue that abound in this inland sea,” continues McDonald. “Bayfield and the Apostle Islands are where the water meets the soul.”

Boaters arriving in Bayfield with or without their own boats will find a warm welcome anytime of year, but spring to fall is best (unless you're there for the ice fishing or dog sledding!). Bayfield has gallons of small-town charm—but, many amenities typically found in much bigger burgs.

Historic Bayfield has experienced boom times with lumber and commercial fishing, with today's commerce coming from tourists and boaters. While fishing tugs and lumber schooners once crowded Bayfield Harbor, it's now mostly modern pleasure craft.

Several full-service marinas make it easy to use the Bayfield area as a base, including: downtown's Apostle Islands Marina and Ship's Store; Washburn Marina, just south of Bayfield proper; and Port Superior, about 12 miles south of town.

Depending on interests, Bayfield pursuits can include: dining (lots of fresh fish, renowned traditional chowders, and the local delicacy of whitefish livers); shopping (Bayfield has developed into a mini-art Mecca); historic walking tours; museums (including Bayfield Heritage, Maritime, and Madeline Island Historical); and Big Top Chautauqua (musical productions under the big tent and often called the “Carnegie Hall of Tent Shows”). For those not sleeping on their boat, many historical homes are now B&Bs—and the Old Rittenhouse Inn is highly recommended for both sleeping and eating.

The “South Shore” of Lake Superior makes for a great daytrip or more. The town of Cornucopia provides the western entrance to the Apostle Islands National Seashore, with a picturesque harbor, fishing sheds-turned-shops, sandy beaches, and stunning sunsets all awaiting lucky visitors. Herbster is next, with the northern border of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest as its backyard. Reminiscent of a New England fishing village, Port Wing is a pleasing little port town.

North of Bayfield, boaters feeling lucky may want to head to Isle Vista Casino. Located on “Lucky Highway 13” in Red Cliff, this casino is owned and operated by the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

Just offshore and sheltering Bayfield, the Apostle Islands National Seashore features 21 islands with miles of pristine seashore and more historic lighthouses than any other park in the U.S. National Park system. Deserted beaches, towering sandstone cliffs, looming sea caves carved by the waves, old-growth forests, historic fishing camps, and the aforementioned lighthouses all await visitors.

There are a variety of ways to visit the Apostle Islands, including: private boat; bareboat or captained charter (both power and sail); fishing charter; kayaking (typically organized multi-day camping trips); and the well-respected Apostle Islands Cruise Service, with a wide variety of cruise and activity options.

This is an abridged version of this article. To read the full version, please visit the Cruising Destinations section of www.americanboating.org.



Sailing is just one of the many boating related activities in Bayfield. Photo courtesy of the Bayfield Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Bureau

15% Discount at Boat Shows for ABA Members

Although for most us the 2009 boating season has yet to start, we can still get our boating “fix” by attending any number of boat shows going on over the winter and spring months. And because you're an ABA member, you can save 15% on e-ticket adult admissions to the National Marine Manufacturers Association-sponsored (NMMA) boat shows across the country!

Visit www.americanboating.org/boatshow_offer.asp for a list of shows that are eligible for the 15% discount. To order your tickets, click on the “Order Tickets” button from this page and follow the prompts from there. Once you are linked to the show you want tickets for, you'll purchase them online and print the tickets right from your printer. Doesn't get any easier than that! ■

BOATER QUIZ – SAFETY CONCERNS

Safety is always the number one concern for boaters. A person can never know too much on the subject or practice it too often. Test your knowledge with these questions.

- How far away should a signal mirror be able to be seen?
 - 3 miles
 - 6 miles
 - 10 miles
- Why do marine whistles have no peas, those small balls found in many police whistles?
 - Allows them to work even slightly under water
 - Permits sound to carry farther
 - Provides a more shrill sound
- What do five short blasts of a whistle signify?
 - Danger or disagreement
 - Intent to overtake
 - Backing out of slip
- What is commonly called “the silent killer”?
 - Drowning
 - Excess drinking while boating
 - Carbon monoxide
- A boater may get up to 6 years in prison and up to \$250,000 fine if passing a U.S. Naval vessel closer than how many yards without radio contact?
 - 500 yards
 - 100 yards
 - 50 yards
- What is the AWW program?
 - Coast Guard Auxiliary Woman’s Web
 - America’s Waterway Watch for Security
 - Anchor Weigh Warning
- Should buoys always be relied on for determining a position?
 - Yes
 - Only if installed by the Coast Guard
 - No. Storms and wave action can cause them to move
- When is it OK to water ski after dark?
 - When safety observer has strong flashlight
 - When skier is adult and wears proper PFD
 - Never
- If caught in a downburst, it’s best to:
 - Turn craft so broadside faces the wind
 - Let the wind determine position of craft
 - Turn craft with the bow facing into the wind
- To check bilges, one of the best fuel/vapor detectors is:
 - Litmus paper
 - Human nose
 - Gas analyzer

Key to answers: 1c, 2a, 3a, 4c, 5b, 6b, 7c, 8c, 9c, 10b

Do You Have All the Auto Coverage You Think You Have?

Millions of auto owners are involved in accidents every year—and if that weren’t bad enough, some people are often stunned to find out that their auto coverage actually may not cover everything they anticipate. For instance, many auto policies will take a deduction for depreciation—even if the car is brand new and is involved in an accident while driving off the dealer’s lot!

Below are some questions you should ask before purchasing auto insurance:

- If your new car is damaged beyond repair, will your auto insurer replace the vehicle with a new one, or take a deduction for depreciation? Many insurance policies specify that they will only reimburse you for the blue book value of your vehicle, not for the vehicle’s sticker value, no matter how recently the vehicle was purchased.
- If your older auto is involved in an accident, will your auto insurer replace items like tires, batteries, steering and electrical wiring components in full, without taking a deduction for depreciation?
- If you have an accident while driving a rental car and it needs repair work, will your auto insurance pay the rental agency’s expenses for daily loss of rental income while the auto is out of service? Will it pay for the towing, storage and administrative costs the rental company may incur?

As an ABA member, you have the opportunity to apply to purchase quality auto insurance at special rates that are designed to save you money, with hassle free payment options, and personalized service.

For more information, free insurance reviews, and no obligation premium quotes, call **800-888-2308**. Be sure to mention your group code: BGX or visit www.americanboating.org/metlife.asp. ■

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MEMBER BENEFITS

Are you missing out on valuable ABA member benefits? Following is just a snapshot of member benefits available to you. For a full listing, please visit www.americanboating.org.

- Safe & Clean Boating Information
- 5% Discount at BoatersWorld.com
- Boating Life Magazine
- Boat Maintenance & Repair Program
- ABA Marina Discounts
- ABA Boat Insurance: 800-477-7140
- ABA Boat & RV Financing: Boat - 877-222-0244 RV - 866-789-4511
- Boat Value Calculator
- Marine Manufacturers Information
- Boat Towing and Education Laws
- ABA Group Auto Insurance
- Travel Discounts

GOOD NEWS, ABA MEMBERS!



Added benefits when you upgrade your membership!

Upgrade your membership and receive an annual subscription to *Boating Life* magazine and an official ABA hat.

Continue to enjoy your ABA member benefits by upgrading for only \$12 – a 20% savings off the regular membership fee.

Upgrading is easy: Go to www.americanboating.org/startupgrade.asp and follow the prompts.