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## 2019 Lighthouse Festival Two Night ~ Three Day Itinerary

### Discovering the Blue Water Area and Michigan's Thumb

#### Lighthouses, Fine Art & Music

##### **Day One – Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019** Pick-up in Gladwin and Midland

Today we depart to discover the “Blue Water” area of Michigan where we will immerse ourselves in maritime lore along the St. Clair and Black River in Port Huron, MI. \*En route souvenir Lighthouse T-Shirts and the 2019 Michigan Lighthouse Guide will be distributed.

Upon arrival in what is known as the Maritime Capital of the Great Lakes, we take time in the Lighthouse Park for a box lunch along the St. Clair River. After lunch you will be welcomed aboard, to a bygone area as we tour the Huron Lightship Museum. Lightships were used as a floating lighthouse anchored in areas where it was too deep, expensive, or impractical to construct a lighthouse. Her history will shed a new light on the US Lighthouse Service as she was the last lightship on the Great Lakes, serving until 1970 and the only lightship of the Great Lakes to be designated a National Historic Landmark.

A visit to Port Huron would not be complete without stepping back in time at The Thomas Edison Depot Museum which is housed inside the historic Fort Gratiot Depot, built by the Grand Trunk Railway in 1858. This is the actual structure where Thomas Edison worked from 1859 to 1863 as a “news butcher” pedaling newspapers and candy to passenger riding the train. The exhibits portray Edison’s multi-faced story and will inspire you to apply your own creativity as you learn about his life and his inventions.

This afternoon finds us aboard the Huron Lady II as we cruise south down the St. Clair River. During our narrated tour you will enjoy the serene view of the river accented with the white sails and wakes of the pleasure boats and ocean ships. Fort Gratiot Lighthouse from the water will provide an excellent photo opportunity for all. (Snacks for purchase and cash bar available on board)

Back on shore we take the short ride and arrive at our hotel, where we will spend the night, the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel. Located on the banks of the St. Clair River, this magnificent location will provide an eagle’s eye view of the freighters passing by under the Blue Water Bridge.

Once at the hotel, take time to freshen up before we join other lighthouse enthusiasts and enjoy the festivities with the 2019 Lighthouse Festival kick off dinner and entertainment. Located on the grounds

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of the Fort Gratiot Lighthouse the evening under the stars begins with a Cash Bar and **Barbecue Buffet** finished with our Special Guest Speaker, **Augustine Fresnel** – “**Inventor of the Light**”!

**Augustine Fresnel** is a living history portrayal of one man’s fascination with “finding the solution to the many questions in the inexhaustible range of science”. His journey reveals a lifetime of personal challenges, scientific curiosity, and innovative achievements. Fresnel’s courage and perseverance, along with guidance from his mentor, Francois Arago, unfolds in an engaging story that brings to life Augustine Fresnel’s personal legacy of “illuminating the seas, saving lives and creating new light in new venues yet to come.”

The rest of the evening is yours to enjoy on a park bench or taking a stroll on the riverfront enjoying the amazing views of the Blue Water Bride and the St. Clair River!

### **Day Two – Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019**

Enjoy a hot breakfast buffet at the hotel prior to adventuring out to see the historical sights and enjoying the great lake breezes. For those of you that have your lighthouse passports, be sure to have them handy.

Our first stop this morning is back at the St. Clair County Park to visit the **Fort Gratiot Light Station**, the oldest lighthouse in Michigan which has been “Standing Guard since 1829”. This morning you will be able to climb the newly bricked tower with attached “dog house”, visit the duplex and shop in the fog signal gift shop.

Before departing Port Huron we visit the **Great Lakes Maritime Center** for the opportunity to learn about the history and current events of the Great Lakes. You can watch giant freighters pass right in front of you – less than a quarter mile away knowing their origin, destination and cargo. The live underwater camera will also enable viewing the activity under the St. Clair River. Before leaving “Freighter Frank” you will definitely know why this is the World Headquarters for BoatNerd.com! You may also want to take a few minutes here at Vantage Point, to check out the Farmer’s Market picking up a summer time treat.

We begin traveling the coastline known as the “Thumb” of Michigan and stopping in the quaint and charming little Harbor Village of Lexington. Promising a fantastic atmosphere for lunch on your own, the **Lexington Fine Arts Street Fair** will also provide spectacular music and over 100 artists displaying their work. A little of everything from watercolors, oils, acrylics, pottery, mixed media, fibers, stained and fussed glass, jewelry, woodworking and garden art for sale.

Continuing along the shoreline, and satisfy the Lighthouse enthusiasts we will make a stop at the **Port Sanilac Lighthouse**, which was established in 1886, and its guiding light still remains active. Privately owned and operated the light towers over 59 feet high and is octagonal in shape. The design has been called “both unique and architecturally significant in its elegance. You will have the opportunity to climb the 50 steps to the top!

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Music lovers take note 🎵 as just steps away the music will be drawing you to Harbor Park, the site of the **Port Sanilac Blues Festival**. Ample time provided to take in a performance from their tremendous lineup. Food and beverage vendors will be on site to quench your summer time thirst.

With a full day under our belt we will head to Bad Axe where we will check in to our hotel for the evening, the **Holiday Inn Express**.

This evening we head to the “Tip of Michigan’s Thumb” to have **dinner** at **The Bank 1884 Restaurant**. This two-story brick building was built to serve the burgeoning agricultural community and maintained banking services for 73 years. After being abandoned for the succeeding 25 years it was converted into a restaurant and opened its door on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1984, one hundred years after the building opened its doors for the first time! This building is noted as a Michigan Historic Site as well as on the National Register of Historic Places. Chef Matthew and staff will ensure a dining experience to be remembered.

After dinner it’s a short walk to the **Port Austin Community Players Theater** as the Port Austin Reef Light Association cordially invites all lighthouse enthusiasts for a “special” evening with **Robert McGreevy, Great Lakes historian and maritime artist! Augustine Fresnel – “inventor of the light” will also be here.**

Before heading back to the hotel take time to admire the scenic view and photo opportunity of the sunset and the **Port Austin Reef Light**. The light is situated on a shallow reef off shore and was first exhibited in 1878. It was automated in 1953 and keepers lived there until then, which brought havoc to the building and led to its decommissioning in 1984. Local citizen efforts for repairs began in 1988 and ownership was brought home as title was transferred in 2013 to the Port Austin Reef Light Association.

### **Day Three – Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

After breakfast at the hotel we head back to the coastline and the town of Harbor Beach, home to the world’s largest man made **Harbor of Refuge** for ships seeking shelter from the fury of Lake Huron’s stormy seas. Construction began in 1872 and a skeletal lighthouse was established in 1877, which proved to be inadequate, and the current **Harbor Beach Lighthouse** was built in 1885. The lighthouse stands one mile offshore and the harbor sheltered 47,460 ships from 1877 to 1899 alone. This is a photo opportunity only stop!

Our next stop will be near Port Hope which once was a bustling logging, milling and shipping port. You will learn about the two fires in the 1800’s that cleared the land and made the area the agriculture community that it is today. Port Hope takes us to the **Pointe Aux Barques Lighthouse** which was completed in 1857 and is in continuous operation today. The original Lighthouse, completed and occupied in 1848 was also a victim of one of the fires. Once on the grounds you will have sufficient time to tour the Keepers’ house and learn of the 105 wrecks that surround the point. Special vendors and

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entertainment will also be on site - Climbing of the 105 steps to the light chamber of the tower is included! In conjunction with the Lighthouse Festival, Pointe Aux Barques Lighthouse is also celebrating its Annual Heritage Days and Lighthouse Arts & Crafts will be available on the grounds. Voucher included in order to purchase a light lunch from the Lions Club while on site. \*Afternoon summer treat also included.

Working our way through the farm and agricultural areas we head inland making our way toward home with memories of our Michigan [Blue Water](#) Area and the “Thumb” Tour!

**INCLUDING:**

- 6 Meals
- 2 Nights Hotel Accommodations
- Professional Tour Director
- All Sightseeing and Admission Fees
- Round Trip Deluxe Motor Coach Transportation

**NET PRICE:**

- \$680.00 ~ Single
- \$510.00 ~ Double
- \$477.00 ~ Triple
- \$467.00 ~ Quad

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Huron Lightship Museum
- The Thomas Edison Depot Museum
- Huron Lady II Sightseeing River Cruise
- Fort Gratiot Light Station – Festival Kick-Off Dinner \*Augustine Fresnel
- Great Lakes Maritime Center and Farmer’s Market
- Harbor Village of Lexington \*Lexington Fine Arts Street Fair
- Port Sanilac Lighthouse \*Port Sanilac Blues Festival
- Dinner at The Bank 1884 Restaurant
- Port Austin Community Players Theater \*Robert McGreevy, Great Lakes Historian and Maritime artist
- Sunset View of the Port Austin Reef Light
- Harbor Beach Lighthouse and Harbor of Refuge (photo opportunity)
- Pointe Aux Barques Lighthouse \*Lighthouse Arts & Crafts

**A special thank you to Vernors, Bluewater Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Bay Mills Resort and Casino for sponsoring the 2019 Michigan Lighthouse Festival!**