

THINK LAKE COUNTY FOR LAKE ERIE EAST GETAWAYS

Lake County's bounty will surprise and delight visitors seeking fresh getaways.

Lake County has Ohio's largest beach, Headland's State Beach Park, and great fishing. But Lake Erie provides a perfect micro climate resulting in the largest winery region in Ohio.

The Wine & Vine Trail attracts about 10,000 leisure travelers every week during the height of tourist season. The wineries are now a 12-month destination with weekly and monthly activities, including an ice wine festival.

About 22 wineries surround the Grand River Winery District. From the largest, Chalet Debonne, Ohio's largest estate winery, to the smallest, St. Joseph's Winery, producing hand picked, select European style award winning wines. Lake County also features an urban winery in the center of Perry Ohio, Bene Vino Urban Winery. A New York City wine writer visiting Lake County's wineries called Bene Vino's Malbec one of the best he's tasted. Bene Vino was voted Best of Cleveland in 2010 for its urban wine concept and fine wines, by Cleveland Magazine. So Lake County wine is about quality and fun.

Quail Hollow Resort and nearby B&B's offer vineyard transportation.

Lake County is the location for the Vintage Ohio Wine Festival, August 3-4, 2012, at Lake Metroparks Farmpark. Vintage Ohio has been selected several times by USA Today as One of America's Top Wine & Food Events. Over 20 Ohio wineries offer samples, attracting 30,000 attendees from across the region.

Lake County is a quiet, scenic east side of Lake Erie and often confused with Western areas of Lake Erie. Lake County is a relaxed destination a coastal getaway Lake Erie oasis, offering a wide ranging array of beaches and nature preserves, country and metropolitan attractions, niche visitor venues, boutique and renovated or new hotels plus renowned special events.

Lake County accommodations range from luxurious to value oriented, from a golf resort to a boutique hotel, to Victorian bed and breakfasts.

Lake County has a Frank Lloyd Wright Vacation House, a restored Usonian home. It is listed with the National Register of Historic Places. Frank Lloyd Wright designed the house, one of only 100, to express his principals of organic architecture. The typical Usonian floor plan includes small entryways, narrow passages, large central fireplaces and floor to ceiling

windows. The designs were tailored to each individual client, which is why the Penfield House is unique among Wright designs. Louis Penfield was six feet eight inches tall. When meeting Mr. Wright for the first time, he asked if Wright could build a house for someone as tall as him. Wright was silent for a moment, then replied, "Yes, but we will have to design a machine to tip you sideways first."

Louis Penfield's son, Paul restored the home as a vacation rental house, not a museum. The Louis Penfield House is living architecture, not a house museum, he noted.

Quail Hollow Resort, nestled in 700 wooded acres is an elegant retreat with two championship designer courses.

A boutique hotel, Best Western Plus Lawnfield Inn & Suites, has the ambiance and décor of a 50-room B&B, with a new restaurant, Skye.

A converted, state-of-the art Holiday Inn Hotel is open after Memorial Day with the latest cutting edge architecture and room design in Mentor.

Another elegant hotel, close to Headlands State Beach Park, is the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Hotel LaMalfa with 82 suites and seven penthouses.

Lake Metroparks rents two cabins in secluded location in Madison.

Lake County, Ohio is a charming historic destination to plan two to three days to fully enjoy its historic resources. Within five miles of each other is one of the most authentic presidential home sites in the nation, The James A. Garfield National Historic Site; the Kirtland Temple, the only temple built by members of the Church of Latter-day-Saints that non-members may enter, authentic 1830's Ohio frontier community, and the 1900's home of one of N. E. Ohio's multi-millionaires, Mooreland on Lakeland Community College campus. A few miles east is the Lake County History Center containing hundreds of square feet of Civil War exhibits, Magical Musical Machines (turn of the century music boxes) a world of miniatures and a year round calendar of special events. Throughout Lake County are historic restaurants, and hand crafted shopping.

The newly opened Willoughby Welcome Center and Madison Historical Society offer surprising major developments and inventions from Lake County.

Lake County also has an Indian Museum, one of the few in the state featuring prehistoric Lake County artifacts from 10,000 B.C. to 1650 A.D. and Indian crafts from North America from 1800-2009.

Many Indian tribes settled in Lake County and the surrounding area after the Wisconsin Glacier, which covered most of Ohio, retreated.

Lake Erie's nature based venues include a state park sand dunes next to Headlands State Beach Park, 450-acre Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve and Marina and Mentor Marsh.

Most unusual is a city, Mentor, Lake County's largest, acquired upland forest and a marina to protect the unique preserve from developers. The preserve has a mile and a half shoreline with rare dune plants, a riverine marsh, nature oak bluff and crescent-shaped open waterways. Birding is rated number one in Mentor and other coastal areas of Lake County because of the migratory bird path crosses the southern shores of Lake County's Lake Erie.

Birding is also spectacular at Lake Metroparks and Holden Arboretum and numerous Lake Metroparks.

Created in 1931 with a gift from Albert Fairchild Holden, Lake County's Holden Arboretum offers guests the opportunity to explore stunning floral gardens and peaceful woodland trails. With more than 3,600-acres, Holden also serves as a living museum of woody plants, one of the largest in USA for both students and researchers interested in discovering more about the way our environment functions.

With over 20,000 accessioned plants, Holden's collection is extensive. Collections of note are the conifer, Magnolia, Crabapple, Nut Tree, Lilac and Viburnums.

More than 600-acres at Holden are dedicated to cultivated gardens, ranging from the formal landscape of Lantern Court to the wooded pathways of the Helen S. Layer Rhododendron Garden where more than 1,200 rhododendrons bloom each year. From the rich scents of lilacs in the Display Garden, which bloom in April and May, to the lively activity of butterflies and humming birds drawn to the Arlene and Arthur S. Holden Jr. Butterfly Garden in the months July and August.

The Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden, where native plants from around the state bloom in the spring and summer; and Holden's Display Garden, a wonderful source of inspiration for home landscapers, providing an ever-changing environment to explore.

The Holden Butterfly Garden, Holden Wildflower Garden and Display Garden are all a short walk from the Warren H. Corning Visitor Center, offering visitors on a schedule plenty of opportunities.

The natural areas include the Daus Overlook Trail, with spectacular views of the Pierson Creek Valley below. This important ecosystem is a favorite spot for birdwatchers.

The Woodland Trail and the Pierson Creek Valley Trail take guests deeper into the woods. On the Woodland Trail, Molly Offutt Memorial Boardwalk follows the cool fresh waters of Pierson Creek, and with native flora growing along this meandering stream.

Bole Woods is one of two National Natural Landmarks to be found at Holden, featuring a nature beech-maple forest, plants and animals. Holden's second National Landmark is Stebbins Gulch, which can be visited on one of the guided tours offered each month throughout the year.

Holden has been named an Important Bird Area by Audubon Ohio and more than 200 species of birds have been spotted on the grounds.

Children can enjoy Buckeye Bud's Discovery Tower, open in the spring, summer and fall, with activities viewing turtles in Buttonbush Bog.

Birding is booming in Lake County, especially on the shores of Lake Erie. Over 280 species of birds have been spotted by avid birders, some who drive from up to 400 miles away. Lake County is part of the Mississippi migration zone for Northern Bound Migration for spring birding, and Southern Bound Migration for fall and winter viewing. Although species can be spotted all year round and some permanent residents, especially in Mentor Marsh. Sightings include the rare purple sandpiper, siskins, red polls and other flocking birds; Le Conte's, Nelson sparrows, plus 19 additional species of sparrows, plus many more. Favorite locations include Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve, Mentor Marsh, Holden Arboretum, Headlands State Beach Park, and Fairport Harbor.

Lake Metroparks was formed to leave a green legacy, inspire future generations and protect the economic and ecological health of Lake County. Portions of two state designated wild and scenic rivers - and many tributaries - flow through and are protected by Lake Metroparks. In addition to protecting watersheds and open space, Lake Metroparks annually provides nearly 2.5 million visitors with countless recreational and educational experiences at diverse facilities including an agriculturally themed park, a nature center, a state-of-the-art education and wildlife rehabilitation center, two golf courses, a 4.8-mile paved bike/hike trail, five parks on Lake Erie's shoreline and a cross-country ski center.

On the waterfront at Lake Metroparks Fairport Harbor Lakefront Park, visitors can enjoy kayaking, canoeing, sailing, and boating. Lake Metroparks offers a wide variety of

boating programs year-round for all ages and abilities. Their fleet of over 60 boats includes canoes, sea kayaks, single and double sit-on-top kayaks, Jon boats, mono-hull and Hobie-Cat sailboats, and personal watercraft or PWCs (wave runners). Lake Metroparks offers all levels of instruction with every type of boat in its fleet, from the never-ever boater to avid boat owners who wish to improve their boating skills. Kayak rentals are also available.

During the winter months, the lake-effect snows of Northeast Ohio transform Lake Metroparks into a winter wonderland; the beauty of the fresh-fallen snows along the trails is such a beautiful sight to see. Recreational opportunities include cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and sledding.

Approximately six miles of terrain challenges every ability from Novice to Intermediate. The Pine Lodge Ski Center is opened and staffed when weather, snow accumulation, and conditions warrant opening (four inches of snow needed to ski on).

Before visiting the center, call the Winter Sports Hotline for daily ski conditions and snow accumulation reports and to confirm the center is open for the day at 440-954-4178 or follow daily updates on Facebook and Twitter.

The trails at Chapin Forest Reservation are groomed regularly. Approximately one mile of lighted trail will be lit nightly to accommodate the skiing public, weather permitting. The lights stay on until 9 pm when the ski conditions are good for skiing.

Snowshoes and cross-country skis are available for rent on a first-come, first-served basis. Lake Metroparks offers cross-country ski rental equipment and lessons, groomed ski trails, snowshoe rentals, fireplace, accessible restrooms and concessions. The ski center is open during the winter months; weather permitting, from approximately November 15 to March 15. Cross-country skiing is also available at Holden Arboretum.

Two historic lighthouses, the Fairport Marine Museum and Lighthouse and the Lighthouse at the Grand River point are signature historic attractions. The Fairport Marine Museum Lighthouse allows visitors to climb to the top for great views of Lake County.

Waterfront dining on the Grand River and Lake County include Pickle Bills, Brennan's and Sunset Harbor Bar & Grill the closest restaurant to Lake Erie.

Shopping in Lake County includes Great Lakes Mall in Mentor, undergoing a multimillion dollar renovation. Great Lakes Mall has five department stores plus 125 stores and several restaurants.

The Craft & Antique Co-op in Painesville has 47,000 square feet of antiques and a restaurant. Quaint shopping districts are also in Willoughby, Madison and Painesville.

Rabbit Run Theater, a barn theater, is in Lake County in Madison. It is one of the few operating barn theaters left in the country. During the summer months, top play productions are performed with the side wall lifted so the audience can enjoy the Lake Erie summer breezes. The Fine Arts Association in Willoughby also presents many performances throughout the year.

With the 10th anniversary of 9/11 just past, Lake County has a unique, America Remembers Memorial, with steel beams from New York's trade center, grass from Shanksville, Pennsylvania and granite from the Pentagon in an elegant memorial plus a Boulevard of 500 Flags, the largest permanent display of American Flags in the USA at Eastlake City Hall.

Three million baseball fans have attended the Cleveland Indians Class A Lake County Captains baseball games, started play in 2003 at the \$27 million Classic Park, also in Eastlake.