Porcupine Mountains Vacation – Seven days, six nights of history, scenery, outdoor adventure and relaxation.

The Porcupine Mountains is home to a vast array of incredible vacation experiences. The area has so much to offer—one week in the Porkies just scratches the surface!

The Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park* is home to 87 miles of the most striking trails in the Midwest. While visiting the area, take a stroll or go beachcombing along 51 miles of pristine beaches on the shores of Lake Superior. Tour the lighthouses, copper mines, ghost towns and breathtaking waterfalls. Many area activities are offered for no additional expense. With so many lodging and dining options, you can’t beat the Porcupine Mountains for a memorable vacation experience.

For a couple, total costs for this trip would range from $800 to $1200. For a family of four, the estimate would be $1200 to $1500. Reasonable cottages, cabins and motels and affordable restaurants and attractions make the Porcupine Mountains an excellent travel value. Plan to prepare your own meals in the comfort of your lodging to keep meal costs down for added savings.

Below you’ll find a sample itinerary for a weeklong vacation in the Midwest’s last great escape.

**Day 1 – Lighthouses, History and Waterfalls**

**Morning** – Start with breakfast in Ontonagon, then walk the main street and visit the unique shops and tour the Ontonagon Historical Museum. Take a tour of the Ontonagon Lighthouse – Tours run at 11:00am, 1:30pm and 3:30pm.

**Afternoon** – Visit the Rockland area Historic sites and Museum, Old Victoria Falls and Dam, O Kun-de-kun Falls, Agate Falls and Bond Falls. The Porcupine Mountains area has dozens of excellent waterfalls. There are 90 waterfalls in the Porcupine Mountains State Park alone. We’ll be visiting some of the biggest falls located south of the park. Our trip will begin in Rockland, which features several historic sites as well as a museum. We’ll head south from Rockland on Route 45 towards the Old Victoria Falls and Dam. Stop at the Old Victoria Restoration site where miners once lived. Then we’ll head south and stop at O Kun-de-kun Falls, then Agate Falls, then finally Bond Falls, one of the largest and most beautiful falls in the area. For locations of more area waterfalls, visit www.porcupinemountains.com. Bring a camera and be ready to be awed.

**Evening** - Stop at Pat’s IGA and pick up hot dogs and buns and cook them over a campfire at the beach.

**Sunset** - Head toward Lake Superior in time for the sunset! During June and July, the sun does not set until after 10pm. By August, you will want to be at the beach by 9pm for the magnificent show. Have a bonfire and stay up late to catch the Northern Lights.

www.porcupinemountains.com
Day 2 – Wilderness Trails

Morning – Start the day with breakfast in White Pine and have the restaurant pack you a lunch for the day’s hikes. Then head to the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park* for hiking and outstanding scenery. Explore some of the 87 miles of quality trails that run throughout the park. The park encompasses 92 square miles and protects one of the largest remaining tracts of virgin wilderness left in the U.S. There are a number of trail choices, with lengths ranging from just under a mile to over 17 miles. One of the most stunning of all the trails is the Lake Superior Trail, which runs for much of its length along the shore of Lake Superior, offering stunning waterscapes and great views of the towering hills. But for this morning’s hike, take on the shorter trails at the Summit Peak Scenic Area, located off South Boundary Road. From the parking areas, access several different trails that give wonderful views of the area, including the 1.2-mile Beaver Creek Trail, 3-mile South Mirror Lake Trail, 2.5-mile Lily Pond Trail and the half-mile Summit Peak Side Trail. The truly ambitious hiker can connect to nearly every other trail in the park.

A must-see vista is Lake of the Clouds, a blue gem in the middle of a lush green wilderness. Head to the easily accessible boardwalk just off the 107th Engineers Memorial Highway for some stunning views of the lake as the sun rises over the hills.

Late Afternoon – Check out the eclectic shops that dot Silver City. Be sure to buy food for tomorrow’s picnic lunch.

Evening – Dinner in Silver City or another trip to the beach to watch the sunset. Pack your picnic lunch for tomorrow before heading off to bed.

Day 3 – Lake Superior Waterscapes and Waterfalls

Early Morning – Grab your granola bar and head for Lake of the Clouds and watch the sun rise! It’s a breathtaking way to begin your day.

Morning - Continue your journey through the Porkies on South Boundary Road. There are many trail heads along the way. Stop where the spirit moves you or continue to the west end of the park to Presque Isle. This end of the park offers some glorious views of Manabezho Falls, Manido Falls and Nawadaha Falls. Stand on the suspension bridge for a great picture the potholes created in the basalt by the rushing waters.

Lunch - Hike out to Lake Superior and enjoy your lunch.

Afternoon - From Presque Isle, continue south out of the state park on 519, then west on 28 and west on 2. Visit beautiful Bakers Falls. Then continue west on 2 to 513 North and stop and see Copper Peak, the world’s tallest ski jump. Continue North to Black River Falls and Harbor.

Evening – Head back towards your hotel and catch a relaxing dinner along the way.

www.porcupinemountains.com
Day 4 – Head to the Mines

Morning – Have breakfast in Ontonagon, then head to the Caledonia Mine to dig for your own copper, silver, datolite, and more. Caledonia tours are available Memorial Day through Labor Day on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The mines are a great place to be on a hot day! To schedule a Caledonia Mine tour, call 906-884-6618.

Afternoon – Head southeast on 38 to the Adventure Mine. Choose from one of three underground tours of a historic mine. Tours range from an easy stroll to an exciting three-hour excursion that includes rappelling down a mine shaft. Costs for underground tours begin at $7 for children and $12.50 for adults. For more information, call 906-883-3371 or visit www.exploringthenorth.com/mine/coppertours.html.

Evening – Head back to town, enjoy a relaxing dinner and don’t forget to watch the sunset!

Day 5 – Beachcombers Paradise

Morning – After breakfast, hit the beach! No trip to the Porcupine Mountains would be complete without a day of beachcombing. Spend the day wandering the beach, searching for rocks and enjoying the serenity of the great Lake Superior. Ontonagon County beaches were voted one of the eight cleanest beaches in the country. Be sure to pick out a good spot for an evening bonfire.

Afternoon – Take some time to revisit some of your favorite shops and restaurants or check out the ones you missed.

Evening – Head back to the beach to relax, enjoy the sunset and sit around the bonfire.
Day 6 – Keweenaw Peninsula Here We Come!

Morning – A relaxing breakfast is the perfect way to start this laidback day of driving up the coast. Our first stop will be in Houghton to visit the A.E. Seaman’s Mineral Museum on the Michigan Tech campus (admission by donation). Stop along 26 at the Jampot, where the monks still make the jams, jellies, breads and muffins. A short drive from there will bring you to the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse & Museum.

Afternoon – Continue your trek north toward Copper Harbor. Visit Fort Wilken’s State Park for a tour of a restored fort. After that, we’ll head back along Brockway Mountain Drive. If you need to stretch your legs, stop in Calumet and visit the Red Jacket Brewery, and walk the cobblestone streets to a variety of galleries.

Evening – Spend one last night on the beach, enjoying a fire and reminiscing about all you have seen on your trip to the Porcupine Mountains.

Day 7 – Bid Farewell to the Porkies—Until Next Time!

Other Porcupine Mountains Activity Suggestions:


Paddling – Paddlers can canoe or kayak the Ontonagon River, which offers an amazing variety of paddling experiences along more than 150 miles. Kayaking is also a popular activity on Lake Superior. Canoe and kayak rentals are available through the Porcupine Mountains Ski Shop, 1025 Superior Drive in White Pine. For more information, call 906-885-5612 or 906-885-5401. They also offer shuttle service.

Bicycling – There are several mountain biking trails in the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. The quiet area roadways are also good for bicycling. Bicycles can be rented at the Porcupine Mountains Ski Shop (see above).

Birdwatching – The Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park protects the largest tract of old-growth hardwood forest west of the Adirondacks. Because of this outstanding natural habitat, birdwatchers enjoy an incredible variety of rare birds who are drawn to this pristine habitat. And the shoreline along Lake Superior offers great birdwatching for both shorebirds, diving ducks and raptors.

Pack Your Lunch – Save by packing your own lunch when you go out hiking, paddling, beachcombing or sightseeing. Grocery stores in the area offer plenty of lunch options.

*Vehicle permit required for entering the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - Passes available at Park Visitor Centers. Resident daily pass is $6, non-resident is $8. For more information, visit /www.michigan.gov/dnr.
www.porcupinemountains.com