



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW CHICAGO-TO-MANISTEE, MICH. JET SERVICE GIVES CHICAGO PASSENGERS INSTANT VACATION IN WEST MICHIGAN VIA 45-MINUTE FLIGHT

Jet Offers Larger, Quieter Cabin Service plus Quicker Flight Time to West Michigan Resort Region Featuring Championship Golf Courses, Gaming and Natural Resources

MANISTEE, Mich. – Aug. 22, 2018 – Vacation just got a little more within reach – 45 minutes to be exact – for Chicagoans looking to escape the city for a vacation getaway of sugar-sand beaches, championship golf courses (including the newly opened [Arcadia Bluffs South Course](#)), casino gaming and natural resources in the West Michigan resort region of Manistee County on Lake Michigan.

[Manistee County Blacker Airport \(MBL\)](#) announced a new jet service to and from Chicago Midway Airport (MDW) via [North Country Sky](#) carrier on a 30-seat Dornier 328 jet, with 45-minute direct flights between destinations. The new service provides a larger cabin than the previous 19-seat turbo prop plane for additional comfort, plus shaves off 15 minutes from the previous one-hour flight.

“We are excited to offer more comfort and capacity to bring even more people to experience our beautiful corner of the world,” said Barry Lind, director of the Manistee County Blacker Airport. “Plus, the flight saves travelers precious time to instantly start a vacation on Lake Michigan.”

Flights start at \$65 and top out at \$150 each way based on demand. Travelers with North Country Sky airline can take one free personal item, one free carry-on and one free checked bag up to 30 pounds at both ends of the trip. Curbside bag service is offered at Manistee County Blacker Airport, and parking is free in the lot immediately outside of the Manistee terminal.

Flights can be purchased at [FLYManistee.com](#), [northcountysky.com](#) or online travel websites, as well as by phone at 877.359.7595. Check [FLYManistee.com](#) for the current [flight schedule](#).

Visitors to Manistee via air can book ground transportation through two local car rental providers: Mowry Rental (231-723-4351) and [Parkdale Auto Sales](#) (231-887-4481), plus for-hire service (passenger drop-off/pick-up in minivan) through [Coastline Transportation](#) (231-398-0360). Reservations should be made in advance of the trip to ensure vehicle availability. A few Manistee destinations also include airport pickup and return shuttle service with a lodging stay, including [Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club](#) and [Little River Casino Resort](#). [Manistee National Golf & Resort](#) also can arrange for private pick-up service.

“Manistee County makes a perfect destination this fall or winter for Chicago residents looking for an easy weekend getaway along Lake Michigan,” said Kathryn Kenny, executive director of the Manistee County Visitors Bureau. “We offer a little bit of everything – from elegant, downtown dining and boutique shopping, to world-class golf, to off-the-beaten-path trails and lakes to get away from it all.”

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Attractions in/around Manistee County

Chicago travelers to Manistee can indulge in a variety of recreation activities unique to the region:

- **Golfing at championship courses** – Manistee County is home to nine golf courses, 144 holes and two golf resorts, including [Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club](#), a world-class links golf course boasting 36 holes of golf open to the public through mid-November. Avid golfers will want to check out the new [South Course](#) that opened for play Aug. 1 – an 18-hole, 310-acre course 1.5 miles south of Arcadia Bluffs designed by renowned golf course architect Dana Fry. The linear course (recently reviewed by [Golf Digest](#)) with square greens and rectangular, flat-bottom bunkers is reminiscent of the Chicago Golf Club. The property also features 37 rooms of luxurious lodging, four links-side four-bedroom/four-bathroom cottages and fine dining along 3,100 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline. The other golf resort, [Manistee National Golf & Resort](#), offers two distinctive par-71 courses, plus a 42-room inn, including 12 recently renovated suites. Learn more about [Manistee County's golf amenities here](#).
- **Natural resources** – Manistee County offers many outdoor recreation options, with 25 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, three Lake Michigan harbors, inland lakes, and 270 miles of rivers. The [Huron-Manistee National Forest](#) offers hiking, biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails. A popular destination is the [Manistee River Trail](#), a 20-mile loop hike including the North Country Trail. Cyclists should head to [Big M Recreation Area](#) with 40-plus miles of mountain biking trails (the longest singletrack in the Lower Peninsula), plus a groomed fat bike trail in winter. Cross-country skiers can enjoy 18 miles of groomed trails as well. Paddlers can ply the waters of the Little and Big Manistee Rivers or try the Pine River, the only white water rapids in the Lower Peninsula. Fishing abounds due to the [Little Manistee River Weir](#) – the only steelhead egg-take operation in Michigan and the primary egg-take facility for Chinook salmon in the state. In the fall, between 10,000 and 20,000 Chinook salmon are harvested at the Little Manistee River weir as part of the annual egg-take process, open to the public.
- **Signature events** – Manistee has a number of special events, including [Hops and Props on the River](#) Sept. 15 featuring classic Century wooden boats (originally manufactured in Manistee) and craft beer, cider and wine; and [Boos, Brews and Brats](#) Oct. 27. On October weekends, visit the historic S.S. City of Milwaukee car ferry from 1931 when it transforms into the [Ghost Ship](#), where visitors explore five decks of thrills, scares and ghostly beings. Or enjoy a bird's-eye view of Michigan's fall colors on a **scenic flight** over Lake Michigan through [Orchard Beach Aviation](#) out of Manistee County Blacker Airport. Flights are \$30 per person (two person minimum) and can be reserved by calling 231-723-8095. For a unique Christmastime getaway, the 30th annual [Victorian Sleighbell Parade & Old Christmas Weekend](#) Dec. 6-9 is a picture-perfect holiday celebration complete with Victorian parade with draft horses pulling a 30-foot Christmas tree down River Street, fireworks over the Manistee River, festively decorated downtown shops, carolers in Victorian attire, carriage rides, and chestnuts roasting on street corners.
- **Casino gaming** – [Little River Casino Resort](#) in Manistee features more than 1,300 slots and video poker games, plus table games like blackjack, poker, craps and roulette. Other amenities in addition to the hotel include dining, a spa and salon, plus year-round national entertainment acts. For those lodging elsewhere but who wish to visit the casino, Little River Casino offers free shuttle service from area hotels plus a stop in downtown Manistee by calling the valet service at 231-398-4040.
- **Gateway to other destinations** – Manistee County also is a great jumping off point to drive to Michigan destinations further afield while saving the 4.5-hour, one-way drive around Lake Michigan, including [Frankfort](#), [Ludington](#) and [Traverse City](#), along with popular attractions like [Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore](#), [Crystal Mountain](#) and [Interlochen Center for the Arts](#) – all within 70 miles of Manistee.

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About the Manistee County Visitors Bureau

Incorporated in 1997, the Manistee County Visitors Bureau is the official travel and tourism organization to promote Manistee County as a travel destination and build the local tourism economy through overnight visits. The visitors bureau is a partner in the Pure Michigan campaign and member of the West Michigan Tourist Association, Circle Michigan, Michigan Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association and the Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce. More information is available at VisitManisteeCounty.com.

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