

# /his-to-ry/ of door county

Despite the arrival of Native American and European settlers in the past few centuries, archaeological evidence suggests that human habitation of this region dates back to 10,000 B.C.

Early permanent settlers date back 2,000 years. The dominant Native American tribe in the region were the Potawatomi. Other influential tribes include the Winnebago (or Ho-Chunk), the Ojibwe, the Sauk, the Menominee, and the Ottawa.

In 1848, Wisconsin achieved statehood, and the peninsula was designated as part of Brown County.

The area began to witness the influence of prominent white settlers, including entrepreneur Asa Thorp, who constructed the dock at Fish Creek in 1855.

By 1850, an impressive volume of nearly 2,500 cords of wood were being shipped out of Baileys Harbor each year.

Finally, in 1851, Door County had gained a sufficient number of settlers to be established as an independent county. Early inhabitants primarily relied on timber and fishing for their livelihood. However, by 1900, excessive harvesting and improved transportation led to the growth of the tourism industry.

By 1920, significant improvements in roads made automobile travel more accessible than travel by boat, resulting in a surge in visitors to the area.

During both world wars, Door County's shipyards played a crucial role in producing military vessels for the nation.

In the late 1940s, cherry picking reached its zenith with approximately 10,000 workers employed in the orchards.

To delve deeper into this rich history, consider visiting a museum or embarking on a historical tour.



Driving Distance in Door County	Miles	Mins.
Brussels to Sturgeon Bay	13	15
Sturgeon Bay to Carlsville	8	15
Sturgeon Bay to Jacksonport	15	20
Sturgeon Bay to Egg Harbor	19	25
Sturgeon Bay to Baileys Harbor	22	28
Sturgeon Bay to Sister Bay	39	45
Sturgeon Bay to Gills Rock	45	55
Sturgeon Bay to Northport	48	60
Egg Harbor to Jacksonport	12	15
Baileys Harbor to Fish Creek	12	15
Baileys Harbor to Ellison Bay	18	20
Fish Creek to Egg Harbor	6	10
Ephraim to Rowleys Bay	9	10
Peninsula Park to Jacksonport	16	20
Northport to Washington Island 30 minute Ferry Ride		

For the most current road conditions and detours visit [511wi.gov](http://511wi.gov)



# getting to door county

Approximate Mileage to Sturgeon Bay	Miles
Green Bay	40
Fox Cities	70
Milwaukee	150
Madison	175
Chicago	230
Minneapolis	310
Indianapolis	415
Des Moines	455
Detroit	505



## care for our county.

Caring for what we love isn't just a feeling, it's an action – a series of actions that benefits each of us individually and all of us collectively.



**I will respect the water's vast and unpredictable beauty**  
And practice water safety at all times

**I will honor the local culture and traditions**  
By exploring with an open heart and mind

**I will follow the trails and paths**  
Letting only my mind wander

**I will discover my sense of wonder**  
While finding new and undiscovered places

**I will embrace nature's wild spirit**  
Leaving it perfectly unchanged

**I will do my part to preserve, protect and care for Door County, always.**

## CARE FOR DOOR COUNTY

Care for Door County is the sum total of all of our cultural, quality-of-life, and eco-focused initiatives and the actions we can take to protect and care for the place we love.

It's a call for those who love and live to travel. And for those who are proud to call Door County home.

For those who live for new and unexpected experiences that broaden horizons and afford a deeper connection with the communities and environment around them.

For those who live to savor local flavors, handcrafted with care and authenticity.

For those who live for knowledge and whose curiosity drives them to uncover hidden gems and historical treasures.

For those who live to connect on a different level, not just as adventurers, but as fellow stewards of the land, the culture, and the community for now and in years to come.

For those who live for a pristine shoreline, a perfectly groomed trail, a rolling orchard, or a breathtaking sunset.

For those who live without being constrained by a single idea of when, where, and how to explore, but an openness to take the road less traveled, while preserving that road for others.

It's a call for those ready not just to feel, but to act.

**For those who care for Door County.**

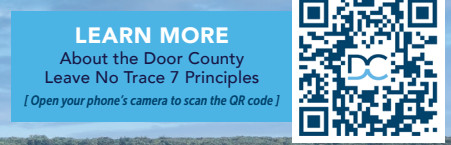


**Learn More**  
[ Open your phone's camera to scan the QR code ]  
[DoorCounty.com/Care-for-Door-County](http://DoorCounty.com/Care-for-Door-County)



**Take the Pledge**  
[ Open your phone's camera to scan the QR code ]  
[DoorCounty.com/Pledge](http://DoorCounty.com/Pledge)

## the door county leave no trace seven principles.



**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**  
Check weather, pack proper equipment, know your limits and take precaution.

**STICK TO THE TRAILS**  
Wonder at all of the natural beauty without wandering off the designated trails.

**TRASH YOUR TRASH**  
Do not leave garbage or pet waste behind and recycle whenever possible.

**KEEP WILDLIFE WILD**  
Do not feed wildlife, give them plenty of space and learn about hunting seasons and local fishing regulations.

**LEAVE IT AS YOU FIND IT**  
Do not remove or interfere with anything you find in parks and brush off your shoes and tires to prevent spreading invasive species.

**BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE**  
Always burn fire safely, extinguish it fully and only use firewood sourced within 15 miles.

**SHARE OUR TRAILS, ROADS & NATURAL RESOURCES**  
We're all here to enjoy Door County, be courteous and respectful on the trails, roads and in the outdoors.



## fun facts about door county.

1

### DEATH'S DOOR

Door County derives its name from the French phrase "Port des morts," meaning "Death's Door." This symbolic name honors the hazardous strait that stretches between the northern edge of the peninsula and Washington Island, encapsulating the intriguing maritime history of the region.

2

### SHIPWRECKS APLENTY

Beneath the pristine waters of Door County, a hidden world unfolds with over 240 shipwrecks resting in silent embrace. On a day of crystal-clear skies, adventurers paddling in kayaks or cruising in boats can catch glimpses of these maritime relics, connecting with the intriguing tales of the past.

3

### THE ORCHARDS

Nurtured by our distinctive soil and climate, Door County boasts a bountiful expanse of cherry orchards, spanning over 2,000 acres. These fruitful lands yield a remarkable 10% of all cherries cultivated in the United States, a testament to the exceptional agricultural legacy of our region.

4

### PARKS GALORE

Embracing a remarkable array of natural sanctuaries, this region unveils a captivating tapestry of outdoor havens. From 5 awe-inspiring state parks to a splendid network of 19 county parks and several dog parks scattered throughout, this locale becomes an unrivaled paradise for enthusiasts seeking to immerse themselves in nature.

5

### LUMINOUS BEACONS

The picturesque peninsula and islands boast a remarkable ensemble of 11 captivating historical lighthouses. Erected during the 1800s with the noble purpose of guiding ships to safety, these architectural gems continue to fulfill their vital role, illuminating the way for mariners to this very day.



## STATE PARKS











**Newport State Park**  
920-854-2500  
475 County Rd NP, Ellison bay  
Open daily 6am - 11pm

**Peninsula State Park**  
920-868-3258  
Hwy 42, Fish Creek  
Open daily 6am - 11pm

**Potawatomi State Park**  
920-746-2890  
3740 Park Dr, Sturgeon Bay  
Open daily 6am - 11pm

**Rock Island State Park**  
920-847-2235  
North of Jackson Harbor, Washington Island  
Open daily 6am - 11pm  
Not accessible in winter

**Whitefish Dunes State Park**  
920-823-2400  
3275 Clark Lake Rd, Sturgeon Bay  
Open daily 6am - 8pm

-  Beaches
-  Information
-  Hiking Trails
-  County/State Parks
-  Boat Ramp
-  Lighthouse
-  Public Restroom
-  Shipwreck
-  Airport
-  Ferry Route

## ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

There are numerous electric charging stations throughout the county for your electric vehicles. You'll find two EV plugs at the Door County Welcome Center, with other Tesla, Nema, and wall outlets in other locations.

Find the details at [DoorCounty.com/Recharge](http://DoorCounty.com/Recharge)

## COUNTY PARKS

- Ahnapee State Trail**, Sturgeon Bay
- Baileys Harbor Ridges**, Baileys Harbor
- Cana Island**, Baileys Harbor
- Cave Point**, Jacksonport
- Chadoir's Dock**, Namur
- Door Bluff Headlands**, Ellison Bay
- Ellison Bluff**, Ellison Bay
- Frank E. Murphy**, Egg Harbor
- Forestville Dam**, Forestville
- George K. Pinney**, Sturgeon Bay
- John Miles**, Sturgeon Bay
- Lily Bay Park**, Sturgeon Bay
- Lyle Harter-Matter Sanctuary**, Jacksonport
- Meridian**, Jacksonport
- Percy Johnson**, Washington Island
- Robert La Salle**, Sturgeon Bay
- Robert Carmody**, Little Sturgeon
- Sugar Creek**, Namur
- Tornado Memorial Park**, Southern Door



Remember to share the road. Watch for motorcyclists and bicyclists. See our interactive map online at [DoorCounty.com/Interactive-Map](http://DoorCounty.com/Interactive-Map)