



Cana Island Lighthouse

# Door County Fact Sheet



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- Door County, Wisconsin is approximately 70 miles long. It's about 18 miles wide at its widest point in the southern part of the county and narrows to less than 2 miles across at the northern tip of the peninsula.
- Door County has 300 miles of shoreline and is surrounded by water on three sides. Lake Michigan lies to the north and east, and the bay of Green Bay (part of Lake Michigan) lies to the west.
- It takes more than an hour to drive from the county line in the southern part of the peninsula to the end of Hwy 42 at Northport, the northern tip of the peninsula.
- Door County has 34 named outlying islands, the largest of which is Washington Island, which lies off the northern tip of the peninsula. Washington Island covers approximately 35 square miles and has a year round population of around 700 people. A vehicle/passenger [ferry](#) connects Washington Island (via the *Death's Door* water passage) with the rest of the world 365 days a year, weather permitting.
- Founded in 1851, Door County is named after Death's Door, the aptly named water passage that lies off the tip of the peninsula where the waters of Lake Michigan and Green Bay converge. Death's Door is the English translation of *Porte Des Morts*, the name given to this treacherous water passage by early French explorers based on Native American stories they heard and their own perilous experiences. Given the right (or wrong) conditions, navigation in this narrow stretch of water can be tricky thanks to the clashing lake and bay currents. Numerous 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century shipwrecks can be found there...none recently!
- Door County has 11 historic lighthouses that dot the peninsula's shores, one of the largest concentrations of lighthouses for any county in the United States. Three are regularly open for [tours](#).
- Door County has 5 state parks, 19 county parks and a large number of local parks, nature preserves and state natural areas that give visitors a variety of options to explore Door County's natural beauty. Add it all up and there is more than 23,000 acres of public and preserved land in Door County to explore and enjoy.
- Door County has 53 Lake Michigan and Green Bay public swimming beaches with around 6.5 total miles of sandy shoreline for visitors to enjoy. A list of beaches can be found on [DoorCounty.com](#).
- Door County has seven [local wineries](#) and an expanding grape growing industry. A total of eight wineries have a presence in Door County and have joined together to create the Door County Wine Trail, complete with a specially created Door County Wine Trail [map/website](#). Over 50 acres of grapes are planted in D.C.
- 11 different [golf courses](#) give golfers the chance to tee off at 180 different holes in Door County. Courses are located from the southern portion of the peninsula all the way to Washington Island, off the northern tip of the peninsula. Courses range from 9 to 36 holes.
- Door County is among the top cherry producing regions in the country with more than 2,500 acres of [cherry orchards](#). The cherry trees normally bloom in mid to late May with cherries ready for picking in mid July to early August. Door County typically harvests anywhere between 8-12 million pounds of cherries per year.

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- Door County is increasingly becoming well known for its' culinary delights. A culinary tour menu featuring everything culinary related in the county (food, wine, recipes, etc) is available at [DoorCounty.com/culinary](http://DoorCounty.com/culinary).
- Door County has a rich maritime heritage and there are several hundred 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century shipwrecks along Door County's 300 miles of coastline, some of which are part of the [Wisconsin Maritime Trail](#) system. Trail kiosks are located along shorelines throughout Door County.
- A mile-long shipping canal, which opened in the early 1880s southeast of Sturgeon Bay, connected the bay with Lake Michigan and created a shorter and safer route for ships between Green Bay and Milwaukee/Chicago. It also turned the northern two-thirds of Door County into an island, accessible only by bridge.
- Door County is known for its [artistic and cultural communities](#) and boasts over 100 art galleries, museums and performing arts venues. These can be found throughout the county.
- Biking is a very popular activity in Door County. A bicycle and other silent sports map is available at the Door County Welcome Center (and on [DoorCounty.com](http://DoorCounty.com)), and gives information about various scenic bike routes along with kayak launch sites that are available throughout the county.
- Door County's estimated year-round population is around 28,000. Sturgeon Bay, the county seat and its only city, has an estimated population of around 9,100 (2012 census data).
- Door County, one of the Midwest's premier tourism destinations, attracts around 2 million visitors per year.
- Roughly three quarters of Door County's tourists visit between the beginning of May and the end of October, but the shoulder seasons are becoming increasingly popular thanks to special events and the quiet romantic serenity offered November – April.
- Roughly half of Door County's visitors come from within Wisconsin, about one third from Illinois (mostly greater Chicago, which is 4-5 hours away) and about 5% come from Minnesota (mostly the Twin Cities region, which is about 5 hours away). In all, over 90 percent of Door County's overnight visitors come from within the six-state Midwest region of the United States, however, a growing number of visitors from all corners of the U.S. are finding out about the area and visiting Door County.
- While shipbuilding, light manufacturing and agriculture continue to play important roles in Door County's economy, tourism is the primary economic engine. According to research conducted by *Tourism Economics*, in 2012 the tourism industry in Door County generated \$289 million in visitor spending, which supported 2,948 jobs. Tourism also put \$31.8 million in state and local tax coffers and generated nearly \$20 million in federal tax revenue in 2012. Tourism is definitely big business in Door County.
- Despite development pressure of recent decades, a vast majority of Door County's land mass remains undeveloped.

## Door County, Wisconsin

(on the map in red)

More information can be found at  
[www.DoorCounty.com](http://www.DoorCounty.com)

