

Courtesy of Lakeland BOATING * June 2004

The historic Hack-Ma-Tack Inn on the Cheboygan River is a favorite food stop for Inland Waterway cruisers just west of Cheboygan.

Excerpts from:

Michigan's Chain o'Lakes WATERWAY

Take it easy
on this scenic
daytrip.

story by Dan Armitage

For boaters who don't mind backing off the throttle between lakes to soak up its considerable appeal, the Inland Waterway offers a long and eventful daytrip. Threading through the deep woods of northern Michigan, powerboats can follow in the paddle-strokes of Ottawa Indians who traded fur from birchbark canoes along this remote passage four centuries ago.

The winding waterway covers only about 40 miles as the gull flies, through a combination of three inland lakes—Crooked, Burt and Mullett—connected by narrow, twisting rivers that flow east from the headwaters at the village of Conway in north-central Michigan to Lake Huron at Cheboygan...

Room & board for boaters

You'll soon come upon the historic Hack-Ma-Tack Inn, an eatery where, during the prime summer months, most customers arrive by boat. No Inland Waterway tour is complete without a stop here for a hearty lunch, or at least a quick gander at the rustic North Country decor.

It's about a six-mile cruise from the Hack-Ma-Tack to the coastal town of Cheboygan, an Indian word meaning "a place for going through." And that's what you must do to access the waters of Lake Huron by passing through another set of locks. Many small-boat owners end their trip before entering the locks, either staying overnight at Cheboygan or turning around and heading back.

If you spend the night here, you can sleep aboard your boat at the city docks or one of six marinas in the area. You also can pull into the docks behind the Days Inn or the Best Western

River Terrace, the city's two boat-accessible motels.

Whether you do the waterway in day or make a weekend out of it, go east to west or vice-versa, you're sure to enjoy one of the most remarkable "road trips" for boaters in the entire Midwest.