



Adventure Across Northeast Michigan



Left photo: Alison Jakubcin rides through the Alpena Municiple Harbor, courtesy Steve Jakubcin; Top Right photo: Dinosaur Gardens fun, courtesy Anna Skowronek; Bottom Right photo: US-23 South 45th Parallel sign, courtesy Meaghan Gass. Front Cover: Summer beach time, courtesy Sara Pusateri.

Alpena
MICHIGAN
Sanctuary of the Great Lakes

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Sanctuary ^{of the} Great Lakes Adventure



49

Fun Family Adventures

There are plenty of things to keep your family busy while you visit Alpena: Sanctuary of the Great Lakes. From exploring the great outdoors, to experiencing interactive indoor activities, you won't have time to be bored. Here's our list of the top 49 family fun adventures (in no particular order). Try to check them all off the list!

- 1.) Explore a one-of-a-kind play fort with totem poles at **Shin-ga-ba Shores playground** in Ossineke.
- 2.) Test your skills on the challenging and entertaining vintage course at **Lee's Miniature Golf**; Michigan's longest running mini-golf course.
- 3.) Head down to Duck Park on the Thunder Bay River and **kayak through the 500-acre Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- 4.) Take a photo at the A-L-P-E-N-A sculpture at Mich-e-ke-wis Park.
- 5.) Stop at **Downtown Scoops** for a scoop of your favorite flavor of ice cream in a delicious handmade waffle cone, or get a root beer float with Alpena's Stoney Acres Shipwreck Soda.
- 6.) Learn how to use an outdoor sluice and **pan for gemstones** at Cedar Panning. Take home whatever you uncover, from real gemstones to arrowheads!
- 7.) **Hunt for fossils** from the Devonian Period at Rockport State Recreation Area. Bring a bucket- you can take up to 25 lbs. home!
- 8.) **Climb the tallest accessible lighthouse** in Michigan, the New Presque Isle Lighthouse, and get a spectacular panoramic view of both Grand Lake and Lake Huron sparkling under blue skies.
- 9.) **Walk the breakwall** at the Alpena boat harbor and watch the ships come in. See the Little Red Lighthouse from the end of the breakwall. Stop and play on the Kiwanis Kiddie Park playground on your way out.
- 10.) Take a leisurely stroll along the hand-hewn timbers of the **covered bridge** connecting Duck Park to Island Park, and escape into the serene wildlife of this 17-acre nature preserve.



Above: Vesper Stutzman takes a swing at Lee's Miniature Golf.



Above: Judy and Stephanie Hart hike to the Rockport Sinks.

- 11.) Test your sea legs on the life-sized recreation of a 19th Century Great Lakes wooden schooner at Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary's **Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center**.
- 12.) Glide over the inland waterways or adventure out on the big lake on **Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP)**, available for rent at the Duck Park from Alpena Pedal & Paddle.
- 13.) Rent a small motorboat from Fletcher's Landing or Jack's Landing and **cast a line into the Fletcher Floodwaters**; where the casting and reeling is fun and the fish are plenty.
- 14.) With a name like **Knaebe's Mmmunch Krunchy Apple Farm**, you are sure to have some good fall family fun! Who's up for a pony ride, or a try at the Mac'n'Squasher apple slingshot?
- 15.) Breakfast is a favorite at Nick's Southside Diner, an **authentic 1950's box car diner**, where you can request your pancakes in fun shapes like bunnies or tractors.
- 16.) Get up close and personal for a photo op with giant **Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox** in Ossineke.
- 17.) Rainy day blues? Head over to the **Thunder Bowl Lanes** for some family fun with glow bowling.
- 18.) Get your **Laser Team Challenge** on! The 90-year old National Guard Armory building sets the stage for fun with 3 floors and 45,000 square feet of challenge space.
- 19.) Enter the annual 4th of July **Cardboard Boat Regatta** at the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary Heritage Center, or Sandcastle Contest at Starlite Beach.
- 20.) Put on your water shoes and wade in the water at **Ocqueoc Falls**. Ocqueoc is the Lower Peninsula's largest waterfall, and is also the only universally accessible waterfall in the United States. An ideal destination for everyone!
- 21.) Stop into **Bob's Bullpen Comic Shop** in downtown Alpena and get your comic book or graphic novel fix. While there, check out the professional work artist Bobby LeFevre has done for TMNT and Transformers!

Friendly and Safe Adventures for the Whole Family

- 22.) Stroll the cobblestone streets on the **historic avenue of replica shops** at the Besser Museum of Northeast Michigan and pretend you are living in 1890's Alpena.
- 23.) Take the pups for some exercise at the **Thomas Stafford Dog Park** located on Fletcher St., behind the post office.
- 24.) Take a spin on a carnival ride, then pet a pig and watch turkeys strut in the animal barns at the **Alpena County Fair**.
- 25.) Grab a bucket and sand tools and **build a sandcastle** in the sugary smooth sand at Starlite Beach.
- 26.) **Climb the hand-hewn stone steps** of the Old Presque Isle Lighthouse and take in the view from the top. Keep an eye out for the ghost, said to keep the light burning.
- 27.) Visit Camper's Cove RV Park & Canoe Livery. Rent paddle boats for **simple water fun on Lake Winyah**, or take a relaxing trip down the Thunder Bay River in one of their canoes or kayaks.
- 28.) Wander through a forest with over 26 life-size dinosaurs at **Dinosaur Gardens Prehistoric Zoo** in Ossineke. Don't leave without climbing into the belly of the brontosaurus.
- 29.) Race the longest go-kart track in Michigan at **Arzo Sports & Fun Park**, or launch into space on the Spaceship Simulator.
- 30.) Dive the shipwrecks of Thunder Bay without getting wet from aboard Lady Michigan, Alpena's **glass bottom boat**.
- 31.) Skate! **Roller skate, ice skate, glow skate**- it's all about gliding at Northern Lights Arena! Check out their events calendar for skate schedules.
- 32.) Hike along the **Sunrise Coast Birding Trail** hot spots and see if you can identify a Bufflehead or a Grasshopper Sparrow.
- 33.) **Get Crafty** at Cobbygoose- the place to paint and more! There are so many fun possibilities; you'll have to check it out for yourself. Or **make your own perfume or nail polish** at Soaps & Such in Downtown Alpena.
- 34.) Grab a blanket and enjoy an outdoor cinema under the stars with the family at **Summer Movies by the Bay!**
- 35.) Lace up your adventure shoes and discover the hidden world of **Geocaching** in the Alpena area.
- 36.) Take a trip to **Besser Natural Area Beach** and skip rocks across the Lake Huron Waves. There is a shallow shipwreck just a few yards off the north end of the beach.
- 37.) **Roast marshmallows** over a fire by one of the many lakes while you listen to the soothing waves and watch the stars.
- 38.) Sit on a park bench and watch the **Second Avenue Bridge** (once voted the most beautiful bridge in America) open up over the Thunder Bay River to let boats pass through.
- 39.) Art around town! Take a drive or bike to the City marina, Alpena Community College, and Washington Ave. Park to find **public art along the shorelines**.
- 40.) Walk through the downtown Pocket Park off Chisholm Street in between Mangos Restaurant and The Local Basket Case and take a photo in front of the **Make a Splash fish mural!**
- 41.) **Rent bicycles for the whole family** from Alpena Pedal & Paddle at the Duck Park. Explore the city along the 18.5 mile Bi-Path and Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Trail.
- 42.) Take your wheels to the 9th Avenue Skate Park and enjoy a few tricks next to the rain garden along Thunder Bay River.
- 43.) Enjoy the unique family-owned restaurants and boutique shops in the **Alpena Downtown District**.
- 44.) Drop by the **Art in the Loft Gallery, My Glass Wings, or Thunder Bay Arts Gallery**, all in Downtown Alpena, to admire works by local artists.
- 45.) Hike the **sand dunes** at **Thompson's Harbor State Park**.
- 46.) Pick out your favorite flavors of handmade brats at **Nowicki's Sausage Shoppe** and grill out at one of Alpena's city parks.
- 47.) Take the kids to the **Alpena Farmers Market** and let them choose their own favorite fruits and vegetables. Check out their events schedule for fun kid activities!
- 48.) Swing by **Blair Street Pier** for a breathtaking view of Lake Huron's Thunder Bay. Even better, do it early and see what this "Sunrise Side" buzz is all about!
- 49.) Hike to the limestone pile at **Rockport State Recreation Area** for remarkable views of Lake Huron. Wait until after dark for an incredible stargazing adventure at their newly designated Michigan Dark Sky Preserve.



Above: The Cardboard Boat Regatta; family fun can't get more unique than this! Photo courtesy, Alisha Bouchard.