

Aeronautical Tours of Michigan

Written to be used with the Michigan Scenery for FS5.1, Version 1

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I've received so many positive comments about the descriptive scenery tours I included with my Scotland scenery that I decided to write a scenery tour for this Michigan scenery as well. For the Scotland tours, I tried to write them as a navigational tutorial for those who were unfamiliar with IFR navigation. For these Michigan tours I'm assuming the reader is now an experienced IFR pilot. If that is not the case, you may want to download my Scotland scenery and take the first couple of tours to get acquainted with the procedures involved in IFR navigation.

For the first tour we will begin in Chicago, the default starting place for the Flight Simulator, and then fly to each of the airline certificated airports in Michigan. When we get to each regional airport I will suggest a secondary tour that will take you to the smaller airports in the vicinity of the regional airport. After we complete that set of tours, we will take another tour to all the military airfields in the state. I suggest you use a jet aircraft to travel to all the airline certificated airports, and then switch to a prop plane for each of the secondary tours to the smaller airports. The tour of the military airfields should probably also be flown using a jet aircraft given the distances involved and the availability of long runways.

Before we begin the tour, let me tell you a little about the state. Michigan consists of two peninsulas. The Lower Peninsula has Lake Michigan to the west and north, and Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair, and Lake Erie to the east. The Upper Peninsula has Lake Michigan to the south, Lake Huron to the east, and Lake Superior to the north. You now see why Michigan is nicknamed the Great Lake State, as four of the five Great Lakes touch Michigan's borders. In fact, the state has over 3,200 miles of coastline.

The primary economic activities in the state are agriculture, tourism, and the automobile industry along with its related support industries. Much of the industrial activity is concentrated in the southern part of the state, particularly in southeastern Michigan. The agricultural activity is much more dispersed around the state, but a lot of it is still in the southern half of the state. Much of the northern part of the state is heavily forested, and that is where tourism predominates. Because of the many lakes in the state (over 11,000) and the hilly terrain in the north, Michigan is fortunate to have a strong tourist industry all year long with downhill and cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing the activities of choice in the winter; and boating, fishing, swimming, scuba diving, camping, beach combing, etc. prevalent in the summer. Fall is the primary hunting season with a wide variety of game available.

There are over 350 airports in Michigan. This set of tours will take you to 63 of the larger ones in the state.

Tour of Michigan's Airline Certificated Airports

Chicago to Kalamazoo (116 nm)

We will begin our tour in Chicago, Illinois. I suggest that you take off from O'Hare Airport, but if you'd rather use Meigs Field that will work as long as you choose an aircraft that can take off from Meigs' rather short runway. To get to Kalamazoo, we will fly toward the GIJ VOR (115.4) until we can pick up the Kalamazoo VOR (109.0), which is on the field at Kalamazoo. The GIJ VOR is at a heading of 100 from O'Hare in case you can't pick it up immediately after takeoff. Depending on when you turn toward AZO, you may see the Warren Dunes State Park near Bridgman, on the southeastern shore of Lake Michigan. On your flight across the lake you may also catch a glimpse of the Indiana Dunes State Park at the southern end of the lake.

The preferred calm wind runway at Kalamazoo is 35 (6,500' long) which has an ILS approach available on the frequency of 110.9. There is also a LOM available for that approach on a frequency of 371. The Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport is at an elevation of 874', and it has an ATIS service operating on 127.25. As you are making your final approach into Kalamazoo 35, you will be flying over Austin Lake.

Kalamazoo (pop. 80,000) is the home of the Upjohn drug company and Western Michigan University. There is a nice aviation museum at the southern end of the Kalamazoo airport, which sponsors an air show at the airport every summer. The 1995 show focused on World War II aircraft, but they also had a flyby of all the "cat" fighters (F-4 Wildcat, F-6 Hellcat, F-7 Tigercat, F-8 Bearcat, F-9 Panther, and F-14 Tomcat). The F-14 was in an incredibly high angle of attack trying to stay in formation with the others; it was fun to watch. They also had a KC-135 there on static display. I would like to have seen it take off from Kalamazoo's 6,500' runway.

At each of the airline certificated airports I will try to give you a little flavor for the kind of airliners that are scheduled into that airport. Naturally, this information is constantly changing, but it should nevertheless help you visualize what you're likely to see at each field. Northwest Airlines offers DC-9 and DHC-8 service to Kalamazoo from Detroit's Metro airport. Northwest also has one DC-9 flight to Lansing, and one to Minneapolis. American Eagle and United Express both offer service to Chicago using ATR-42's. Delta Connection flies between Kalamazoo and Cincinnati using Saab SF 340's and Embraer Brasilias. USAir also uses the Brasilias and Fokker 100's for its flights between Kalamazoo and Pittsburgh.

While at each airline airport, I will describe another tour you can take that visits all the smaller airports in that vicinity and then returns to the airline airport. Some of these secondary tours can be flown with jets, but others will require prop planes because of the short runway lengths involved. The secondary tour for Kalamazoo will take us to Sturgis, Three Rivers, Benton Harbor, and then back to Kalamazoo which involves about 115 miles of flying. Our first leg will take us from Kalamazoo down to Sturgis (pop. 10,000), the southern most airport in this Michigan scenery. Sturgis is about 26 nm from Kalamazoo, and we can get there by taking off from Kalamazoo and getting on the 170 radial of AZO (109.0); we should find Kirsch Municipal Airport in Sturgis at 26.2 nm. The elevation at Sturgis is 925' and the main runway is 18/36 and about 5,700' long. You can use the NDB (382) on the field to help you find the airport and to make your NDB approach to 18. On our flight down there you will see the town and airport for Three Rivers off to the west. That will be our second stop on this tour. The town you'll see off to the east on this leg is Coldwater.

From Sturgis we next go to Three Rivers (pop. 7,500) which is about 11 miles away. If you take off from Sturgis 36 and turn to 321, you should find it without any problem, but if you need help it is on the AZO (109.0) 187 radial at 16.8 nm, and it has an NDB on the field (407). The Three Rivers Municipal-Haines Airport is at an elevation of 826', and its main runway (09/27) is 4,000' long.

Next we head over to the Lake Michigan coast for a stop at the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport which serves the Benton Harbor/St. Joseph area (pop. 22,000). If you take off from Three Rivers 27 and turn to a heading of 285, you will find the Benton Harbor airport about 39 miles away. The airport is on the ELX (116.6) 265 radial at 13.6 nm. The preferred runway at Benton Harbor is 27 which has an ILS approach available (108.5) and a LOM (397). The airport is at 645' elevation. After visiting Benton Harbor we will return to Kalamazoo by flying to the AZO VOR (109.0) and then repeating the approach for 35 that we used before. If you take off on runway 27 at Benton Harbor, you should see one of numerous light houses that are located along Michigan's shoreline.

Kalamazoo to Jackson (49 nm)

From Kalamazoo we now fly over to Reynolds Field serving Jackson County. As we make this trip we will be flying a little south of the Kellogg Airport at Battle Creek, which we will be visiting at the end of this tour. There is a VOR on the field at Jackson (JXN, 109.6) which we can use to help us find the airport. The preferred runway at Jackson is 24 (5,344' long) which has both an ILS (109.1) and LOM (212) available. The elevation at Jackson is 1,003'. Although Jackson is one of Michigan's certificated airline

airports, there is currently no scheduled service from Jackson. It does, however, still operate its ATIS (127.95).

The Michigan Space Center is in Jackson (pop. 37,400), which contains numerous exhibits from the various phases of the NASA space program. Jackson is also famous for the Cascades, an illuminated artificial set of 15 waterfalls and 6 fountains.

Our secondary tour for Jackson will be a short one, as there is only one airport we will be visiting, and that's down at Adrian. If you take off from Jackson and get on the 148 radial of JXN (109.6), you will find the Lenawee County Airport in Adrian (pop. 22,100) about 29 miles away. It has an NDB on the field (278). The airport is at 794', and the paved runway (05/23) is 4,000' long. After we take a quick stretch of the legs, we can take off from Adrian and return to Jackson.

Jackson to Detroit Metro (49 nm)

You now need to make sure you are well rested and ready to fight the traffic, because our next stop is the Detroit Metropolitan-Wayne County Airport, the major airport in the state of Michigan, and one of the busiest in the U.S. You have lots of choices for runways at Metro, but I suggest either 21R (12,000'), the preferred calm wind runway at Metro, or if you'd like to try their brand new runway, go around and land on 27L (8,500'). The ILS for 21R is 110.7 (shared with 03L), and the 27L ILS frequency is 110.15. There is a VOR on the field at Metro (DXO, 113.4), and the elevation is at 639'. The ATIS frequency for Metro is 124.55.

Detroit (pop. 1,028,000) is known as the automobile capital of the U.S. for good reason. General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co., and Chrysler Corp. all have their world headquarters within the Detroit metropolitan area. There are also numerous automobile and truck assembly facilities in the area. Among other things, Detroit is also famous for the Motown music sound that has been so popular since the early 1960's.

It would be easier to name the airlines and types of airliners that don't fly into Detroit Metro, than those that do. Metro is one of the principal hubs for Northwest Airlines, so you tend to see more of their planes than any others. There are lots of wide-bodies at Metro because Northwest has several daily nonstop flights to the orient from Detroit, and KLM, British Airways, Continental, Northwest, and Delta all offer wide-body service to Europe from Metro. The last time I flew to the UK, we took a British Airways 747-400 out of Metro, which stopped in Montreal before continuing on to London's Heathrow. It was an especially nice trip because BA bumped us up to Club Class (I just love those sleeper seats with the television screen built into the seat back in front of you).

The secondary tour for Metro will include stops at Monroe, Ann Arbor, and Detroit's Willow Run airport. We'll begin by taking off from Metro and flying on a heading of 193, where, in about 18 miles, we'll come to the Monroe/Custer Airport. The city of Monroe (pop. 23,000) is on the western shore of Lake Erie. The sole runway is 03/21 and it is 5,000' long. The elevation at Monroe is 616'.

From Monroe we head back on a course of 322 for about 40 miles, where we should find the Ann Arbor airport. Ann Arbor (pop. 109,000) is best known as the home of the University of Michigan, one of the best public universities in the U.S. (My wife, a U of M graduate, made me say that.) It's on the 214 radial of SVM (114.3) at 13 nm. The paved runway is 06/24 at an elevation of 836' and is 3,500' long.

Next we will make a very short hop (9 miles) over to Detroit's Willow Run airport in Ypsilanti (pop. 25,000). This is the old primary airport for the Detroit area before Metro was built. It is a predominately freight airport now, used heavily by the automobile industry. One of my favorite airlines, Zantop International, is based at Willow Run. What I like about Zantop is that their fleet consists primarily of Lockheed Electras. It's one of the few places in the world where you can still see that old bird flying. There is also an excellent aviation museum at Willow Run. The airport is on a heading of 085 from Ann Arbor. Like Metro, there are lots of runways to choose from at Willow Run, but I suggest 05R which has an ILS on 109.5 (shared with 23L) and is over 7,500' long.

From Willow Run we will return to Metro before continuing our tour. Just for variety sake, you might try landing on a different runway from the one you landed on the last time you flew into Metro. After you take off from Willow Run, you'll find Metro on a heading of 096 about 9 miles away.

Detroit Metro to Detroit City (19 nm)

Although you may have thought you were in the City of Detroit, Metro airport is actually in Romulus (pop. 23,000), about 15 miles outside Detroit. We'll now fly into the city and land at Detroit's City Airport, which is about five miles northeast of downtown Detroit. The City airport is on the 327 radial of YQG (113.8) at 12 nm. The elevation at Detroit City is 628'. The preferred runway is 15 with an ILS (111.3, which is shared with 33), and a LOM (338). ATIS is on 133.0.

Scheduled service from Detroit City includes USAir flying Fairchild Merlins to Cleveland, Akron, Indianapolis, Louisville, and Chicago's Midway; Midway Connection flies to Chicago's Midway using Beechcraft 1900's; and Skycraft flies to Oshawa, Canada using Embraer Bandeirantes,

We have a rather long, and quite varied secondary tour to make while we're at Detroit City. We'll first fly down the Detroit River and land on Grosse Ile, which is an island in the middle of the Detroit River just above the river's mouth into Lake Erie. From Grosse Ile we'll head back north and fly up to the Berz-McComb airport, then over to Pontiac, and finally up to Port Huron, before returning to Detroit City.

Grosse Ile is on a heading of 202 from Detroit City about 19 miles away, and it has an NDB on the field (419). What I suggest here is to take off on Detroit City 15 which will take you out into Lake St. Clair and you will then see the Detroit River entering the Lake at the southwest corner. Follow the river west and then after it goes past downtown Detroit (off to the right) and Windsor (off to the left) it will turn south. Continue following the river south until you come to the island in the middle of the river. The airport is at the southern end of the island and you can land on either runway 17 (3,752') or runway 22 (4,978'). The elevation at Grosse Ile is 590'.

Next we head north to the Berz-McComb airport which is near the town of Utica (pop. 5,000). Take off from Grosse Ile and turn to a heading of 015. Berz-McComb is about 34 miles from Grosse Ile. It is on the 099 radial of PSI (111.00) at 25.1 nm. The sole runway at Berz-McComb is 04/22 (4,193'), and the elevation there is 606'.

From Berz-McComb we will go about 20 miles west (271 heading) and touch down at the Oakland-Pontiac Airport. Pontiac (pop. 71,200) is primarily an industrial area, although the Pontiac Silverdome (home of the Detroit Lions professional football team) and the Palace of Auburn Hills (home of the Detroit Pistons professional basketball team) are both in the Pontiac area. It is also the home of the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors. The preferred runway in Pontiac is 09R which has an ILS on a frequency of 111.1. The airport is on the 119 radial of PSI (111.0). Pontiac's elevation is 977'. The lake you will be flying over on the final approach to 09R is Pontiac Lake. The large building at the southwest corner of the airport is the Chrysler Pentastar aviation center. The terminal is in the south center part of the airport, to the right of 09R and next to the tower.

We now head northeast (069 heading) as we fly up to Port Huron. The St. Clair County International airport in Port Huron is on the 164 radial of ECK (114.0) at 22.4 nm. Port Huron is about 42 miles from Pontiac. Port Huron (pop. 33,700) is one of the oldest settlements in Michigan. It is on Lake Huron where the St. Clair River empties into the Lake. Across the river to the east is Sarnia, Ontario. Port Huron is one of numerous ports of entry into the U.S. from Canada. The airport is about 5 miles southwest of the city. The preferred runway at Port Huron is 04 which has an ILS (110.9) and a LOM (332). The elevation at Port Huron is 649'.

After another leg stretch at Port Huron, we need to fly back to Detroit City airport, get back into our airliner, and continue our tour. Detroit City is about 37 miles from Port Huron on a heading of 215. If you'd like to fly this leg VFR you can take off from Port Huron, fly east until you find the St. Clair river,

follow the river south and west until it empties into Lake St. Clair, fly west across the lake and then south along the shore until you see the airport off to the right. I suggest landing again on runway 15 at Detroit City.

Detroit City to Flint (47 nm)

We will now fly up to Bishop International Airport in Flint. There is a VOR on the field at Flint (FNT, 116.9). The preferred runway is 09 which has an ILS (109.9, shared with 27), and a LOM (269). The elevation at Flint is 783' and the ATIS is on 124.95. Our stay at Flint will be a short one as there is no secondary tour for this area.

Flint (pop. 140,700) is primarily an industrial city. General Motors has several assembly facilities here, and both Chevrolet and Buick automobiles, and Chevrolet and GMC trucks are manufactured in Flint. It is also the headquarters for the Buick Division of General Motors. Most recently, Flint is probably best known as the theme for the motion picture "Roger and Me", a purported documentary attempting to get the Chairman of General Motors, Roger Smith, to explain all the GM plant closings in Flint.

The scheduled air service from Flint includes USAir flying DC-9s, Fokker 100's, and Embraer Brasilias to Pittsburgh, Midway Connection serves Chicago's Midway with Brasilias, Northwest AirlinK flies between Flint and Detroit with DHC-8's, Fokker F-27's, and Fairchild Merlins, American West Express flies to Lansing and Columbus using Brasilias, and Midwest Express Connection serves Milwaukee, Saginaw, and Rochester using Brasilias.

Flint to Saginaw 37 nm)

From Flint we will fly north up to the Tri City International Airport serving Midland, Bay City, and Saginaw. The MBS VOR (112.9) is on the field at Tri City, and the preferred runway is 05 with an ILS (108.7, shared with 23), and a LOM (257). ATIS at MBS is on 118.6. The elevation here is 668'. As you are making your approach into 05 you will see the city of Saginaw off to the east. Bay City is off to the northeast near Saginaw Bay, and Midland is northwest of the airport.

Bay City (pop. 39,000) is a major port for Michigan sitting at the southern end of Saginaw Bay. Midland (pop. 38,000), originally a lumbering town, is probably best known now as the home of the Dow Chemical Company, and Saginaw (pop. 69,500) is primarily an industrial and agricultural processing center.

Service from Tri City International. includes United Airlines to Chicago using Boeing 737's, Northwest Airlines to Detroit using 727's and DC-9's, USAir to Pittsburgh using Fokker 100's and Brasilias, Midwest Express to Milwaukee using Brasilias, and Delta Connection service to Cincinnati using Brasilias.

The secondary tour for Saginaw is the longest one of the set. We will be flying about 255 miles and visiting seven different airports. Our first stop is at the Gratiot Community Airport in Alma (pop. 9,000), which is on a heading of 244 from Saginaw about 29 miles away. It is on the 174 radial of MOP (110.6) at 18 nm. The preferred runway at Alma is 09 (5,000' long), and it has an SDF on a frequency of 108.9 and a LOM (329). (SDF stands for Simplified Directional Finder, and it means that there is only a localizer; and no glideslope.) Alma's elevation is 751'.

Next stop is the Mount Pleasant Municipal Airport in Mount Pleasant (pop. 23,000) which is about 18 miles north of Alma. There is a VOR on the field at Mt. Pleasant (MOP, 110.6), so it will be easy to find. The paved runway is 09/27, it is 5,000' long, and at an elevation of 754'. Mount Pleasant is the county seat of Isabella County and it is the home of Central Michigan University.

We'll continue north from Mt. Pleasant and head up to Roscommon County airport at Houghton Lake (pop 3,300) which is about 44 miles away. The HTL (111.6) VOR is on the field, so again we'll have no problem finding the airport, but if you want to fly VFR to the airport, head north until you come to the lake, and you'll find the airport is on the eastern shoreline, about half way up the lake. The paved runway is 09/27 (4,000' long) and the elevation here is 1,147'. The Houghton Lake area is devoted to recreational

activities due largely to the presence of Houghton Lake and Higgins Lake immediately to the northeast.

From Houghton Lake we will fly east (108 heading) for about 22 miles until we come to West Branch Community Airport in West Branch (pop. 2,000). Again, there is a VOR on the field (BXZ, 113.2). The sole runway is 09/27 with a LOM (236) for the 27 approach, and it is 5,000' long at an elevation of 879'.

Next we'll head southwest to Zettel Memorial Airport in Gladwin (pop. 2,700). It is on the BXZ (113.2) 224 radial at 20.6 nm with an NDB on the field (209). The paved runway is 09/27 and it is 4,700' long. Gladwin's elevation is 774'.

We have a rather long leg to fly now, as we're going to fly over to Michigan's thumb area for a stop at the Huron County Memorial Airport in Bad Axe (pop. 3,500). This will be about a 66 mile trip. There is a VOR on the field at Bad Axe (BAX, 108.2). Huron County Memorial has a brand new runway (17/35; 4,300' long), so let's try it out. The elevation there is 760'.

We're ready to return to Saginaw now, but along the way we'll stop off at the Harry W. Browne Airport just east of the city of Saginaw. Browne is on the MBS (112.9) 126 radial at 11.2 nm with an NDB (385) on the field. The longer runway is 09/27; it is 3,500' at an elevation of 668'. Finally, we can return to Tri City International to pick up our airliner and continue our tour. I suggest the same 05 approach into Tri City as you made before.

Saginaw to Lansing (51 nm)

We now come to a very special part of the tour (at least for me), because we're now going to fly to the regional airport near my home, Capital City Airport in Lansing. The airport is on the 058 radial of LAN (110.8) at 5.8 nm. The preferred runway is 28L with an ILS at 110.1, and a LOM at 206. The elevation is 862' at Lansing, and ATIS can be found at 119.75. As you are coming into Lansing you may catch a glimpse of Lake Lansing which is about ten miles east of the airport.

To give you a little micro geography of the Capital City Airport, the terminal is obviously the building with the tower on it; the building to the west of the terminal is General Aviation's building. General Aviation is one of the FBO's at the airport. The other FBO is Superior Aviation, whose building is on the ramp east of the terminal's ramp. Across the ramp from Superior is United Parcel's facility. Lansing is a regional center for UPS, and during the day you will usually see a UPS 757 and a 727 on the ramp next to the UPS building waiting to take the day's packages down to the UPS hub in Louisville, Kentucky. The hangars at the far west end of the airport are the State of Michigan's facilities.

Lansing (pop. 127,300) has the distinction of manufacturing more automobiles per year than any other city in North America. (In case you're interested, Marysville, Ohio is second.) Pontiac's Grand Am, Oldsmobile's Achieva, Buick's Skylark, and Chevrolet's Cavalier are all made in Lansing. This is also the headquarters for the Oldsmobile Division of General Motors. Adjacent East Lansing is the home of my employer, Michigan State University, and there is also a lot of state and federal governmental activities in the area because Lansing is the capital of Michigan.

Several airlines fly into Lansing, including Northwest which fly's 727's and DC-9's from Detroit Metro, USAir flies DC-9's and Fokker 100's between Lansing to Pittsburgh, American Eagle flies ATR-42's and ATR-72's between Chicago and Lansing, United Express uses Beechcraft 1900's for the same Chicago to Lansing trip, Continental Express uses Embraer Brasilias to Cleveland from Lansing, and Delta Connection uses Brasilias and Saab SF 340's between Lansing and Cincinnati.

Our secondary tour for Lansing will take us to four of the surrounding airports in the area: Grand Ledge, Charlotte, Mason, and Howell. Our first stop will be to Abrams Municipal airport in Grand Ledge (pop. 7,500). This airport is just west of Capital City, and if you take off from 28L at Capital City you will quickly see the 09/27 runway for Grand Ledge because it is only about six miles straight ahead. The elevation at Grand Ledge is 839'.

From Grand Ledge we will fly over to Beach Field in Charlotte (pop. 8,000). If you take off from Grand Ledge and turn to a heading of 194, you will find Charlotte about 13 miles away. The paved runway at Charlotte is 02/20 (3,500' long), and the elevation is 891'.

Our next stop is Jewett's Field in Mason (pop. 6,800), which is the closest airport to my home (I live about 10 miles north of Jewett). Take off from Charlotte and turn to 091, and you'll come to Mason in about 17 miles. The sole runway at Mason is 09/27 (3,503') at an elevation of 921'.

After visiting Mason we will take off and turn to 079 for a 20 mile trip over to the Livingston County Airport in Howell (pop. 8,000). Howell is on the PSI (111.0) 260 radial at 20.3 nm and it has an NDB (242) on the field. The runway is 13/31 which is 4,300' long. Howell's elevation is 960'. After a leg stretch at Howell, we can climb back in and return to Lansing (about 28 miles). I suggest you again plan to land on 28L at Lansing.

Lansing to Grand Rapids 42 nm

Our flight from Lansing to Grand Rapids will be a short one. If you take off from Lansing on 28L, you'll find it's almost a straight shot over to Grand Rapids' 26L (10,000' long), the preferred runway there. The ILS for 26L is 109.7, and the LOM is 263. The elevation at Kent County International is 796', and ATIS is on 127.1. The airport is on the 347 radial of GRR (110.2) at 6.0 nm.

Grand Rapids (pop. 189,000), the second largest city in the state, is a major industrial and convention center for Michigan. It is the home of the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. Several furniture manufacturers, including Steelcase, are based in Grand Rapids.

Since Grand Rapids has the second largest airport in the state after Detroit Metro, it's scheduled service is quite varied. American, Continental, Northwest, United, TWA, USAir, and others offer a wide variety of jet and prop service to most of the regional centers in the midwest. MD-80's, DC-9's, 737's, and 727's are the most common jet aircraft serving the airport.

Our secondary trip for Grand Rapids will be a short trip over and back to Holland's Tulip City Airport on the Lake Michigan shore. Holland (pop. 31,000) was settled by Dutch immigrants, and it still retains the atmosphere of a Dutch town. The Holland Tulip Festival in May is one of the state's more famous attractions.

Holland is on the 359 radial of PMM (112.1) at 16.8 nm, and the only runway at Holland is 08/26 (5,000'). There is an ILS for the 08 approach on 110.55. The elevation here is 603'. Flying a heading of 253 from Grand Rapids should get you there without any problem. After walking around Holland to see all the tulips and folks in wooden shoes, let's fly back to Grand Rapids for the continuation of our tour.

Grand Rapids to Muskegon (35 nm)

From Grand Rapids we head northwest up to Muskegon on the Lake Michigan shore. This will be another short flight. Muskegon County Airport is on the 269 radial of MKG (115.2) at 8.7 nm. We'll plan to land on 32 which is 5,000' long, and has an ILS (109.9) and a LOM (219). Muskegon's ATIS can be found on 124.3. The elevation here is 629'.

Muskegon (pop. 40,300) used to be the lumbering capital of the state. It is still the largest city on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, and it offers a variety of industrial, tourist, and other recreational activities.

Scheduled service to Muskegon includes American Eagle from Chicago using ATR-42's and Saab SF-340's, Northwest Airlink from Detroit Metro using Fairchild Merlin's, and Midwest Express Connection from Milwaukee using Beechcraft 1900's.

Our secondary tour from Muskegon will be another long one (about 180 miles) as we will be visiting Ludington, Manistee, Cadillac, Reed City, and Fremont before returning to Muskegon. Our first stop is the

Mason County Airport in Ludington, which is on a heading of 351 from Muskegon about 48 miles away. For this leg I suggest you take off from Muskegon, and just follow the Lake Michigan coast north until you come to Ludington. The airport is on the 204 radial of MBL (111.4) at 20.3 nm. To help you find it you can home in on the NDB (341) on the field. The primary runway at Ludington is 07/25 (5,000'), and the elevation is 645'. You'll note that the town of Ludington (pop. 8,500) is right on the Lake Michigan shoreline, which makes it a popular recreation area. It is also the embarkation point for the Lake Michigan Carferry which ferries automobiles (and people) over to Manitowac, Wisconsin across the lake.

The next town we'll visit is also on Lake Michigan, although the airport is somewhat inland. The Manistee County-Blacker Airport in Manistee (pop. 6,700) is easy to find as there is a VOR on the field (MBL, 111.40). The longer runway is 09/27, and the elevation is 623'. The area around Manistee is a major fruit producing region, and much of it is shipped out at the Port of Manistee.

The next stop on this tour is Cadillac (pop. 10,000), which is about 36 miles from Manistee on a heading of 090. The Wexford County Airport in Cadillac is on the 168 radial of TVC (114.6) at 23.6 nm, and there is an NDB (269) on the field. The paved runway is 07/25 (5,000') at an elevation of 1,308'. Cadillac used to be an old lumbering center, but today it is primarily a recreational area. After seeing the sights of Cadillac, we will fly south to Nartron Field in Reed City (pop. 2,379), which is on a heading of 191 from Cadillac about 23 miles away. The only runway at Reed City is 17/35 (4,500' long), and the elevation is 1,055'.

From Reed City we'll fly southwest (217 heading) for about 34 miles where we'll come to the Fremont Municipal Airport in Fremont (pop. 3,875). The runway at Fremont is 18/36, it is over 5,800' long, at an elevation of 773'. Fremont is on the HIC (117.6) 238 radial at 14.3 nm. After a leg stretch at Fremont, we need to return to Muskegon. Flying out on a heading of 213 from Fremont will take us to Muskegon in about 20 miles. Given our heading, let's plan to land on Muskegon's runway 24 (6,500' long) this time. There is also an ILS for that approach (109.5).

Muskegon to Traverse City (104 nm)

We now head northeast, up to the heart of the Michigan tourist area at Traverse City. To get to Traverse City from Muskegon we will fly to HIC (117.6), and then on up to TVC (114.6), which is about 5 miles south of the airport. Cherry Capital Airport is on the 346 radial of TVC at 4.6 nm. (By the way, the airport is named Cherry Capital because over 80% of the tart cherries produced in the U.S. come from Michigan, and almost all of those come from the Grand Traverse Bay area. The preferred runway at Cherry Capital is 28, which has an ILS (110.7) and a LOM (365). The elevation is at 626'. The ATIS is on 126.0. Note that this is the last time we will be able to use ATIS, because none of the other airports on this tour have that service.

Traverse City (pop. 15,000) sits at the southern end of Grand Traverse Bay. There is actually an East Bay and a West Bay to Grand Traverse Bay because extending up into the Bay is Mission Bay Peninsula. In fact, one of the better restaurants in Michigan is up that peninsula at Bowers Harbor. Traverse City serves as the regional economic, cultural, medical, and political center for the northern Lower Peninsula.

Traverse City has scheduled service to Chicago's O'Hare and Midway airports from American Eagle, United Express, and Chicago Express using ATR-42's, Beechcraft 1900's, and Jetstream 31's. United Express and American Eagle also fly to Marquette using the 1900's and ATR-42's. United Express flies to Pellston using the 1900's., and Northwest and Northwest Airlink fly to Detroit Metro using DC-9's, Fokker 27's, and DHC-8's. Finally, Midwest Express Connection flies to Milwaukee using Beechcraft 1900's.

The secondary tour from Traverse City will take us up to Bellaire and then over to Gaylord, before returning to Traverse City. Our first stop is the Antrim County Airport at Bellaire (pop. 1,100), which is in one of Michigan's downhill ski areas. Two of the larger resorts in the Bellaire area are Schuss Mountain and Shanty Creek, the latter one being the home of "The Legend", an Arnold Palmer designed golf course which is rated as one of the best golf courses in the midwest. Bellaire is on a heading of 049 from Traverse City about 22 miles away. If you fly to the CLX NDB (251) and then turn to 023 you will be lined up nicely for the approach to runway 02 (5,000' long) at Bellaire. The elevation at Bellaire is 623'.

After shooting a round of golf at The Legend (which will cost about \$130 on weekends), we'll go back to the airport and fly over to the Otsego County Airport in Gaylord (pop. 3,200). There is a VOR on the field at Gaylord (GLR, 109.2), so it will be easy to find. The trip will be about 43.5 miles. The primary runway at Gaylord is 09/27 (6,500' long), and at an elevation of 1,328' Gaylord is one of the highest places in the Lower Peninsula. There is a LOM (375) for the 09 approach. After visiting Gaylord, we will return to Traverse City. Traverse City is on a heading of 247 from Gaylord about 42 miles away. I again suggest you plan to land on runway 28 at Cherry Capital.

Traverse City to Pellston (60 nm)

We can now climb back into our airliner and fly up to the Pellston Regional Airport of Emmet County in Pellston (pop. 583) which is on a heading of 034 from Traverse City. We'll be seeing a lot of tourist activity in this area as well. Pellston's airport is on the 242 radial of PLN (11.8) at about 6.2 nm. The main runway is 14/32, and there is an ILS for 32 (111.3). The elevation is 721' at Pellston.

Emmet County is in the northwest corner of the Lower Peninsula. One of the most scenic roads in the midwest is in Emmet County. It is the 22 mile stretch of M-119 from Harbor Springs north to Cross Village. It is a very hilly road that winds in and out of the forests along the shore of Lake Michigan. A truly beautiful drive!

Both Northwest Airlink and United Express offer scheduled service to Pellston. Northwest goes non-stop to Detroit Metro using DHC-8's, Fairchild Merlin's, and Fokker F27's. United flies to both Chicago's O'Hare and Midway, Sault Ste. Marie, and Traverse City using Beechcraft 1900's.

Our secondary tour from Pellston is one of the most scenic and interesting because we will be visiting four different tourist areas, two of which are on islands. Our first stop is at Charlevoix (pop. 3,100), another tourist Mecca on the Lake Michigan shoreline, just south of Little Traverse Bay. Charlevoix is about 26 miles from Pellston on a heading of 231. The airport is on the GLR (109.2) 310 radial at 29.2 nm, and there is an NDB on the field (222). The Charlevoix Municipal airport is just south of town. The runway is 09/27 (4,300'), and the elevation is at 672'.

From Charlevoix we will fly over to St. James on Beaver Island. All traffic to Beaver Island, both ferry and aircraft leaves from Charlevoix, so this will be a very realistic flight. St. James is about 26 miles from Charlevoix on a heading of 332. There is an NDB (382) on the field, so if you'd like you can practice your NDB approach to 09/27 (4,000' long) where the elevation is 668'.

From St. James we now fly over to Mackinac Island, the most popular tourist attraction in all of Michigan. Mackinac Island is in Lake Huron, a little northeast of the Straits of Mackinac which connect Lake Michigan with Lake Huron and separate Michigan's Lower Peninsula from its Upper Peninsula. The principal means of transportation to Mackinac Island are frequently scheduled ferries that leave from both Mackinaw City in the Lower Peninsula, and St. Ignace in the Upper Peninsula. Mackinac Island is unique in that automobiles and trucks are not allowed on the island; the primary modes of transportation on the island are horse drawn carriages, bicycles, and walking. The island contains the shortest state road in Michigan, M-185, which is a nine mile circuit of paved road that follows the coastline of the island all the way around it. There are many hotels and other types of accommodations on the island, but the most famous is the Grand Hotel, a large resort hotel built around the turn of the century. It was the setting for the movie "Somewhere in Time". One of the stars of that movie was Christopher Reeve, who is a private pilot and had a plane on the island while they were filming in 1979. He used to take cast and crew members for rides in his plane during the two months they spent on the island making the movie. Mackinac Island is about 40 miles from Beaver Island on a heading of 075. It is on the 010 radial of PLN (111.80) at 20.3 nm. The runway is 08/26, and it is 3,500' long at an elevation of 741'.

From Mackinac Island we head back south to Boyne Mountain Airport in Boyne Falls (pop. 369), which is in another popular downhill ski area in Michigan. Boyne Falls is about 44 miles away on a heading of 196. The airport is on the 317 radial of GLR (109.2) at 12.7 nm, and there is an NDB (263) on the field. The

sole runway is 17/35 which is about 5,200' long at an elevation of 721'. After visiting Boyne Falls it is time to return to Pellston. A heading of 013 from Boyne Falls will take us back to Pellston. The trip will be about 25 miles. Again, I suggest you land on the preferred runway (28), taking advantage of the ILS and LOM.

Pellston to Sault Ste Marie 43 nm)

We now leave the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and fly up to the Upper Peninsula (affectionately referred to as the U. P. by Michigianians). You'll find that there are many fewer airports in the U.P. because it is relatively sparsely populated (and heavily forested). It is my favorite part of Michigan because of its scenic beauty. Our first stop in the U.P. will be the Chippewa County International airport serving Sault Ste Marie (pronounced Soo Saint Marie). The airport is actually about 15 miles south of the city. It is on the 218 radial of SSM (112.2) at 11.2 nm, and from Pellston it is on a heading of 018. There is an ILS (110.3) for runway 34 as well as a LOM (400). The elevation is 800'. Be careful landing here because although the runway is 7,200' long, there is also a 5,800' stopway for runway 16. Do not land on the stopway.

Sault Ste. Marie (pop. 14,700) is the oldest town in Michigan. It was settled by Jesuit missionaries in 1641. Perhaps the most famous attraction here are the Soo Locks which connect Lake Huron with Lake Superior. The St. Mary's River, in which the locks are built, divides Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. This is another major port of entry for those traveling between Canada and the U.S. Lake Superior State College is in Sault Ste. Marie.

Chippewa County International is served by United Express which offers flights to Pellston, Alpena, Chicago's O'Hare, and Detroit Metro using Beechcraft 1900's.

Our secondary tour from the Soo (as the Sault Ste. Marie area is called) will involve stops on Drummond Island and at Newberry. Although only two airports will be visited on this tour, we have quite a bit of flying to do (almost 150 miles) because the two destinations are in opposite directions from the Soo. Our first stop will be Drummond Island in Lake Huron. It is on a heading of 116 from Chippewa County about 34 miles away. There is an NDB (218) on the field. The paved runway is 08/26 (4,000' long) and the elevation on Drummond is 668'.

From Drummond Island we head west to the Luce County airport in Newberry (pop. 1,900). It is on a heading of 284 from Drummond about 74 miles away. There is a VOR (108.2) on the field at Newberry. The paved runway is 11/29 which is 3,500' long at an elevation of 869'. To return to the Soo from Newberry we will fly on a heading of 095 for about 41 miles. I suggest again landing on runway 34.

Sault Ste Marie to Escanaba (114 nm)

Our next stop in the Upper peninsula is the Delta County Airport in Escanaba, which is on the north shore of Lake Michigan. To get to Escanaba we will fly to ISQ (110.6) until we can pick up ESC (110.8), which is on the field at Escanaba. The preferred runway here is 09 (6,500' long) which has an ILS on 109.3. The elevation is 609'.

Escanaba (pop. 13,700) is the only iron ore port on Lake Michigan, shipping several million tons of ore each year. It is also an important lumber and paper producing center. From Escanaba you can fly non-stop on scheduled airlines to Chicago's O'Hare, Detroit Metro, and Minneapolis using either Northwest Airlinik or United Express. Equipment includes Beechcraft 1900's, Fairchild Merlin's, and DHC-8's.

Our secondary tour here will be a short trip over to Schoolcraft County Airport in Manistique (pop. 3,500), which is also on the northern shore of Lake Michigan. You probably flew over it on your way to Escanaba because the intermediate VOR you used for that trip (ISQ) is on the field at Manistique. We can now use ISQ again to guide us over to Manistique. The longer runway is 10/28, which is 5,000' long at an elevation of 685'. If you make your approach into runway 10, you will fly over Indian Lake which is just west of the town of Manistique, which in turn is west of the airport. Once you've had time to stretch in Manistique you should return to Escanaba where your airliner awaits you.

Escanaba to Marquette (53 nm)

We now fly up to Marquette, which is on the southern shore of Lake Superior. There is a VOR on the field (MQT, 116.8), and there is an ILS approach on 110.5 available for runway 08. The elevation here is 1,420'. Marquette (pop. 22,000) serves as the medical, political, and shopping center for the U.P. It is also the home of Northern Michigan University.

There are scheduled non-stop flights from Marquette to Hancock, Detroit Metro, Green Bay, and Traverse City on American Eagle, Northwest Airlink, and United Express using ATR-42's, Beechcraft 1900's, Fairchild Merlin's, and DHC-8's. There is no secondary tour for Marquette.

Marquette to Hancock (54 nm)

Next we fly up to the Keeweenaw Peninsula which juts out into Lake Superior. Our destination is the Houghton County Memorial Airport in Hancock. There is a VOR on the field (CMX, 112.6), and runway 31 (6,500' long) has an ILS (110.3) and a LOM (275). The elevation is 1,095'. Houghton-Hancock (pop. 12,000) is primarily a tourism and commerce center. It is the home of Michigan Technological University. This is one of coldest areas of the state in winter, and it is not unusual for them to have heavy snow falls in October.

Again, there is no secondary tour from Hancock. Northwest Airlink serves Hancock with flights to Marquette, Detroit Metro, and Chicago's O'Hare using DHC-8's and Fairchild Merlin's.

Hancock to Ironwood (78 nm)

We now fly to the far western end of Michigan. Ironwood (pop. 6,800) is on the Wisconsin/Michigan border and is served by the Gogebic County Airport. It is a major downhill skiing area, and it also is active in trade and lumbering. IWD (108.5) is on the field at Ironwood, and runway 27 (6,500' long) has an ILS (111.5). The elevation is 1,233'. The only scheduled service to Ironwood is five flights a day to Minneapolis by United Express using Beechcraft 1900's, which isn't unusual when you realize that Ironwood is much closer to Minneapolis than it is to any of the larger cities in Michigan.

Our secondary tour from Ironwood will take us up to the Ontonagon County Airport in Ontonagon (pop. 2,000), which is on the southern shore of Lake Superior. If we fly on a heading of 058 from Ironwood, we will find the airport about 37 miles away. The airport has an NDB (375) on the field. The only runway is 16/34 (3,500' long) at an elevation of 668'. For the return to Ironwood, again plan to land on runway 27.

Ironwood to Iron Mountain (118 nm)

We now head southeast to the Ford Airport in Iron Mountain/Kingsford (pop. 13,000). This used to be a major iron ore producing area, but the mines all closed in the 1940's. To get there we will first fly toward RHI (109.4) in Wisconsin until we can pick up IMT (111.2), which is on the field at Iron Mountain. The preferred runway is 01 which has an ILS on frequency 111.5. Iron Mountain's elevation is 1,183'. There is no secondary tour for this area. United Express is the only airline serving Iron Mountain. They use Beechcraft 1900's for several flights a day to Chicago's O'Hare airport.

Iron Mountain to Menominee (46 nm)

We now fly over to the western shore of Lake Michigan for a stop at the Menominee-Marquette Twin County Airport in Menominee (pop. 9,400). Menominee is the southern most city in the U.P. It may seem strange to be on the west side of Lake Michigan and still be in the state of Michigan, but that's the way it is. The airport is on the 149 radial of MNM (109.6) at 3.3 nm. The preferred runway is 03 (6,000' long), which has an ILS (108.7) and a LOM (239). The elevation here is 626'. Although a certificated airline airport, Menominee does not currently have any scheduled service. There is no secondary tour for this area.

Menominee to Alpena (203 nm)

We'll now fly to the last airline certificated airport in Michigan--the Alpena County Airport in Alpena, which is on the western shore of Lake Huron in the Lower Peninsula. Alpena (pop. 11,400) was originally a lumbering center, but today it is mostly industry and tourism that sustains it. To get there we will first fly out of Menominee on the 081 radial of MNM (109.6) until we can pick up the VOR at Pellston (PLN, 111.8), and then fly toward that until we can pick up APN (108.8) which is on the field at Alpena. A word of warning: the transmitter you can pick up at Menominee on 111.8 is not PLN. You need to be about 60 miles east of Menominee before you'll be able to pick up PLN. The preferred runway at Alpena is 01 with an ILS (109.7) and a LOM (206). The elevation is 691'. Alpena is the only stop on United Express' flights between Detroit Metro and Sault Ste. Marie using Beechcraft 1900's.

The secondary tour from Alpena will take us up to the Presque Isle County Airport in Rogers City (pop. 3,600). It is on a heading of 332 from Alpena about 23 miles away. The 09/27 runway is about 3,000' long at an elevation of 672'. We'll now complete this last secondary tour by returning to Alpena so that we can fly to our starting point for the tour of the military airfields in Michigan.

Alpena to Battle Creek (182 nm)

We've now completed this tour of the airline certificated airports in Michigan. The other tour we will take is one to the military airports in the state. To get ready for that tour, we will fly from Alpena down to Kellogg Airport in Battle Creek. You may remember flying just south of Battle Creek on our flight from Kalamazoo to Jackson. To get to Battle Creek we will use a couple of VORs on airfields we have already visited. First let's fly down to West Branch (BXZ, 113.2) until we can pick up the VOR at Mount Pleasant (MOP, 110.6), and then fly toward that until we can pick up BTL (109.4), which is on the field at Battle Creek. The preferred runway at Battle Creek is 23 (10,000' long) with an ILS (110.5) and a LOM (272). The Battle Creek elevation is 954'.

Tour of Michigan's Military Airports

Battle Creek to Selfridge ANG Base (109 nm)

Although Kellogg Airport in Battle Creek is not a military base, it is heavily used by the Air National Guard (ANG) of Michigan, which is why we are beginning our military airfield tour here. The city of Battle Creek (pop. 53,000) is known as the cereal capital of the U.S., as it is the headquarters for the Kellogg Co., the Post Division of Kraft-General Foods Corp., and the Ralston Purina Co. Each July the city hosts the Battle Creek International Balloon Championship and Air Show.

Our first stop on this tour will be the Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Mount Clemens (pop. 18,500), which is just north of Detroit on the shore of Lake St. Clair. To get there from Battle Creek we will first fly to SVM (114.3) and then get on the 070 radial of SVM and we should find Selfridge at 35.4 nm. The main runway at Selfridge is 01/19 which is 9,000' long at an elevation of 577'. Selfridge has ATIS at 125.32.

Selfridge ANG Base to Wurtsmith AAF Base (114 nm)

From Selfridge we head north to Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda (pop. 1,000), which is on the western shore of Lake Huron, a little south of Alpena. To get there we will first fly to Bad Axe (BAX, 108.2) in the Thumb, and then get on the 344 radial of BAX and we'll find Wurtsmith at 43.5 nm. The runway is 06/24, it is 11,800' long, and has an ILS approach for 24 on 108.5. The elevation here is 632'.

Wurtsmith AAF Base to Grayling AAF (60 nm)

We now head over to Grayling AAF in Grayling (pop. 1,900) which although closed in the winter, is heavily used for Air National Guard activities the rest of the year. Grayling has a VOR on the field (CGG, 109.8), and its preferred runway is 14 (5,000' long) with a LOM on the frequency of 359.

Grayling AAF to Sawyer AAF Base (179 nm)

The last military base we will visit is the K. I. Sawyer Air Force Base in Gwinn (pop. 2,400), which is in the Upper Peninsula. We'll get there by first heading toward Pellston (PLN, 111.80) until we can pick up the VOR at Manistique (ISQ, 110.6), and then fly toward that until we can pick up KLI (116.3) which is on the field at Sawyer. The very long runway at Sawyer is 01/19 at 12,300' (the longest in the state), and the elevation there is 1,093'.

Sawyer AAF Base to Chicago's O'Hare Field (263 nm)

We've now visited all the airports in version 1 of my Michigan scenery. Since we began our tour in Chicago, let's return there. To get to Chicago from Sawyer, we will first fly toward Menominee (MNM, 109.6), and then down to Sheboygan, Wisconsin (FAH, 110.0), and then down to Kenosha, Wisconsin (ENW, 109.2), and then down to O'Hare (ORD, 113.9). Why not plan to land on 22R (7,500' long) with an ILS on 111.3 (shared with 04L). O'Hare's elevation is 667'.

In closing, I hope you enjoyed these tours to Michigan's airports, and perhaps you've learned a little bit about the geography of my home state.