

Michigan EV Road Trips

Michigan's West Coast: No Sharks, No Jellyfish

Trip Highlights

- Pick some apples at Crane's Orchards. Not apple season? Stop in at Crane's pie pantry.
- Start the day off right with a meal at the Pennyroyal Café in Saugatuck.
- Enjoy sand and surf at Holland State Park.
- Enjoy a quick stop in downtown Spring Lake or Holland.
- Let the kids roam the playground at Pere Marquette Beach in Muskegon.
- Get a coffee at Drip Drop Drink Coffee or the Muskegon Art Museum while you charge.
- Get off the highway and take Silver Lake sand dune ride at Mac's.
- Drive up to Ludington State Park and hike out to Big Sable Lighthouse.
- Stop in the Manistee County Historical Museum.
- Try your luck at Little River Casino.
- Take the epic M22 byway for fantastic Lake Michigan views at Arcadia Bluffs.
- Explore downtown Frankfort, then stop in at Stormcloud Brewing for a meal and some craft beer to take home.



Necessity vs. Opportunity Charging

Since this trip may be within the normal 100-0% range of many EVs or require only minimal charging to complete, let's discuss the concept of opportunity charging vs. necessity charging.

Necessity charging means you need a charge to get to your next destination, be it home, a hotel, or the next charger. So you seek out a DC Fast Charger, charge as fast as you can, and move on as fast as possible.

Opportunity charging means you charge when the car is sitting idle and you're out having fun at the beach, playground, museum, etc. or while you're having a meal or a coffee. You may not always need to charge to get to your next destination, but if the places you're visiting are near an EV charging opportunity, why not top up your battery while enjoying local sights and activities?

While DC Fast Chargers are all the rage, don't discount the value of a Level 2 charger. Even an hour at a Level 2 charger can often add 25-30 miles of range that you won't need to add later when you're trying to get somewhere.

So, linger over a coffee in that charming coffee shop you just discovered, let the kids take a few more trips down the slide at the beach playground or explore some downtowns near a charger and embrace the more relaxed side of the EV lifestyle.

Either way, consider leaving a note or a charging etiquette hang tag to let others know if you'll be there for a while or if you're just getting a free charge and don't really need it. Catch us at one of our live events to get yours free.



passed down through the generations.

Your car may not need a charge just yet, but if you didn't get your fill at Crane's or aren't ready to get going, stop by Pennyroyal Café and the adjacent Roan & Black art gallery. If you do want to charge, plug your car into either the [DC Fast Charger](#) or a [Level 2 charger](#) depending on your charging needs and then head off for some food and contemporary art. The cafe features seasonal, home-style cuisine enhanced by an inviting courtyard setting.

Saugatuck to Muskegon

Destination: Drip Drop Drink Coffee and downtown Muskegon - 926 2nd St, Muskegon, MI 49440

Driving Distance from Saugatuck: 49 miles

Michigan's West Coast offers so many great places to visit, you must pick and choose. Holland and Spring Lake both have downtown amenities and Level 2 charging, but let's head up to Muskegon.

For coffee lovers, **Drip Drop Drink Coffee** specializes in pour-overs and waffles, but make sure you get there before the closing time in the early afternoon. **Aldea Coffee** on Pine Street is open a bit later if you miss Drip Drop Drink's hours. There are many dining and craft beer choices as well, but please have a designated driver if you choose to indulge.

There's a free [Level 2 charger at 1st and Western](#) and another by the [Muskegon Visitor Center](#). Muskegon also has a great selection of museums like the Muskegon Art Museum, the **Heritage Museum of Business and Industry**, **Hackley and Hume Historic Homes** and the **Lakeshore Museum Center**.

When you're done exploring, head down to **Pere Marquette Beach**. Although best in summer (be sure to get a parking tag between Memorial Day and Labor Day), Pere Marquette is a great place to walk, hit the playground and get some energy out any time of year. [Another free Level 2 ChargePoint](#) charger awaits you at the beach.

Muskegon area DC Fast Charging options:

- Meijer Fruitport – [ChargePoint DCFC](#) and [Tesla Supercharger](#)
- McCormick White Lake Drive – [ChargePoint DCFC](#)

Muskegon to Manistee

Destination: Downtown Manistee - 320 River Street, Manistee, MI 49660

Driving Distance from Muskegon: 83 miles (direct, slightly more if you meander through towns)



[Street](#) and [Washington Street](#). These are great for opportunity charging close to restaurants, coffee shops and museums. The **Manistee County Historical Museum** and **Goody's Juice and Java** are a great way to experience Manistee. Haven't gotten enough beach time? Follow River Street to 1st Street to Lake Michigan for great views, sand and pavilions to enjoy a picnic.

Manistee to Frankfort via M22

Destination: Frankfort Public Beach, Frankfort, MI 49635

Driving Distance from Manistee: 35 miles

Need a quick DC Fast Charger top up before you head north? Stop in at the [Marathon convenience store on US-31](#).

If you want to try your luck at slots or table games, stop in the **Little River Casino** right at the intersection of US-31 and M22. They have [Level 2 chargers](#) while you play or take in a meal.

For a slightly more scenic introduction to the famous **M22 Scenic Byway**, turn onto M110 as your heading north out of Manistee past [Orchard Beach State Park](#).

Either way take M22 rather than US-31 for an unforgettable drive up the lakeshore. You'll be charmed by towns like **Onkama** (did we mention they have a [Level 2 charger](#)?), **Arcadia** and **Elberta** before arriving in Frankfort. Be sure to stop at the **Arcadia Scenic Overlook** for stunning views of the Lake Michigan coastline. If you're up to it, climb the stairs all the way to the top for the view that's found in nearly every Michigan travel guide.



Frankfort

Once in **Frankfort**, take Main Street directly off M22/Lake Street towards the public beach and lighthouse. There are great places to eat and shop downtown along Main Street, so enjoy a rest after all the driving. In season, head out the **Stormcloud Taproom** which is slightly outside of town. The taproom often has food trucks in season as well as a [Level 2 and Tesla Destination charger](#).

Heading Back to Grand Rapids

One more West Michigan gem you'll want to take in is the [Cherry Hut](#) in Beulah, MI. Visit Cherry Jerry, get a piece of pie and take home some cherry salsa, jam, or other treats. They're celebrating 100 years in 2022!

Assuming you don't want to retrace your steps, [PlugShare Trip Planner](#) shows several DC Fast Chargers spaced no more than 56 miles apart. Check out the amenities near each and see which best fits your travel needs and lifestyle. The [DC Fast Charger just off US-131 near Big Rapids](#) is one of our favorites since it's near convenience stores, fast food and a major grocery store chain.

Remember that charging when your battery is at a low state of charge (aka battery percentage) is usually the fastest. You might choose to just have a meal during one of your charges and get enough to get directly home, or pick two shorter charges and grab some snacks, soft drinks or coffee for the road.

Final Thoughts

As this road trip illustrates, there are already lots of charging choices along the way, so planning an EV road trip is easier and more convenient than ever. As part of Consumers Energy [PowerMIDrive program](#), we'll be helping even more businesses and municipalities add chargers over the next few years to energize your EV travels.

Want to find local charging or learn more about EVs and how Consumers Energy is helping new drivers on their EV journey? Check out [ConsumersEnergy.com/ev](#).

Distance: 243 miles (one way)

Vehicle: 2022 Kia Niro EV **Range:** 239 miles

Charging stops: 2-4 (two out of necessity but four for fun)

