

Port of Muskegon, Michigan

Brief History

The **Ottawa Indians** settled the area and in the 1600's set up trading posts to attract the roaming **French fur traders**. Muskegon became a city in 1837 the same year Great Britain's Queen Victoria came in to rule. This influenced the culture and architecture of this small Midwestern city.

Lumber Baron, Charles Hackley brought recognition to the city nicknamed "**Lumber Queen of the World**"! Michigan White pine forests were harvested and trees then floated down the long Muskegon River to lumber mills. The lumber was shipped to Chicago to build housing for new Americans. This brought great wealth to the coastal community also referred to as the "**Riviera of the Midwest**"!

Mr. Hackley was the equivalent of a today's Bill Gates and became a well-known philanthropist. Thanks to his influence, the city began **collecting fine art** and built great buildings and public institutions **over 100 years ago**.

Muskegon then established historic industrial strength that still exists today in automotive, aerospace and food processing industries. Henry Ford looked to Muskegon for its first auto engine parts. Today **Muskegon made** metal and plastic parts are found in **90% of global transportation products**.

In the 1900's, the Port of Muskegon became a destination for the passengers of steam cruise ships and car ferries coming out of Chicago to escape the summer heat. **Silent film star Buster Keaton** was a summer resident and brought with him many artists and actors to the cool sandy beaches of Lake Michigan.

The city center is experiencing a rebirth as investors rehab old buildings and build new for the next generation!

A Day in Muskegon – History, Art, and Eco-tourism Expeditions

Take a trolley ride or walk around **the Heritage District**. Visit the ornate museum homes of Lumber Barons and other painted lady **Victorian homes**. Tour a train depot, historic library with glass floors, flowering gardens, a fire barn, or a restored home from "The Great Depression" era.

See more than **40 pieces of public art** to include Buster Keaton, Charles Hackley and modern art.

Explore two "**in the water**" **military museums**. The WWII LST Naval Transport Ship museum is one of only two left in the United States. Visit the USS Silverside **Submarine** and museum building. Hear from expert guides at both attractions with **true stories about our local war heroes**.

Enjoy the famous **Muskegon Museum of Art** to view one of the finest European and American collections in the Midwest.

Open every cruise ship day is the **Muskegon Heritage Museum** with touchable displays of 70 local products and working machines. See Brunswick Bowling, Raggedy Ann Dolls, Guinness Beer, gas station pumps, fishing rods and more.

You will find **open air markets** with farmers, crafters and flea market vendors. Listen for the tower bells each hour. You can walk the streets with craft beers or cocktails to hear live music on street stages. Browse Western Market Shops for local art, clothes, food and Michigan souvenirs.

For **eco-tourism adventures**, ride to Muskegon State Park for climbing dunes, **a zip line over white pine forest, nature tours**, picnics and trail quests. Visit the award winning freshwater **soft sand beaches** and include a BBQ and board walk to **the lighthouse**. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists can present on climate change or Great Lakes resilience.