

# Sheboygan, Wisconsin— Sailing and Sausages



Sheboygan, Wis., has long been called the “bratwurst capital of the world,” but the Lake Michigan port is now establishing itself as a sailing capital, too. Home to the fourth US Sailing Center in the country, world class races are held here—including the International Sailing Federation’s (ISAF) Nations Cup Grand Final in September.

Add in Sheboygan’s yacht club, youth sailing club, numerous fishing captains and pleasure boaters, and the result is a happy mix of regattas, charters, parties and parades. A full-service marina takes up the best

location in town, well within walking distance of restaurants, lodging and attractions. Set sail to Sheboygan, and you’ll be met with warm Midwestern hospitality and plenty of German sausage and sauerkraut!

How did the town get started? Explorers Marquette and Joliet interacted with a mix of Native American tribes. Fur trading posts were established and hardy European immigrants trickled in. They took advantage of the area’s natural resources by harvesting lake trout and whitefish. Boat-building and manufacturing factories flourished.

By the late 1900s, the focus had shifted to tourism. The vintage fishing shanties were transformed into a thriving shopping and dining neighborhood. World-class resorts, golf courses, art galleries and other attractions popped up. But, Sheboygan has not forgotten its ties to the water. Anglers still wet lines, folks stroll along the lakefront promenade and boaters in all kinds of crafts are welcomed.

## Harbor Centre Marina

Built in 1993, the marina is operated by Skipper Bud’s.

“Sea and boating conditions change daily on the Great Lakes, but summertime is consistently gorgeous,” said manager Christian Marx. “The predominant southwest winds bring warmer temperatures and calmer seas. The harbor entrance is accessible for boats of all sizes, offering wide berths and plenty of deep water.

“Two federal breakwalls provide protection with the lighthouse on the north pier and the south pier on the other side. The GPS coordinates at the lighthouse are 43 degrees, 45 minutes, 0 seconds North, 87 degrees, 41 minutes, 5 seconds West. Once inside the



Top: Harbor Centre Marina boat docks. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MARINA ■ Left: The U.S. Women’s Olympic team practices at the US Sailing Center. PHOTO BY TRYG JACOBSON

## SIDE TRIPS

Hike the cordwalk trails at Kohler-Andrae State Park; Lake Michigan provides the backdrop. Bird enthusiasts will enjoy the variety of resident and migratory shore birds.

Nature center and camping are available. (920) 451-4080  
[www.wiparks.net](http://www.wiparks.net)

Like traditional Scottish links, Whistling Straits Golf Course offers rugged terrain and eight holes sculpted along the bluffs of Lake Michigan. Last year's PGA championship took place here. 1-800-344-2838  
[www.destinationkohler.com](http://www.destinationkohler.com)

Two taxicab and three rental car companies service the marina.



breakwalls, the marina is tucked away inside a barricade of riprap breakwall in the northwestern part of the harbor.”

Located on the easternmost point of Sheboygan, the marina is the starting and finishing point for the urban recreational trail that winds through the city. Deland Park serves as the marina's backyard. The remains of an 1896 three-masted schooner called the *Lottie Cooper* are on display there. It was shipwrecked in the harbor and found when the marina was built.

Harbor Centre is open April 15-Oct. 15, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., although hours are extended June through August. Customer service is always available, 24 hours a day. The NOAA Web site provides data from the harbor lighthouse weather station. The marina Web site calendar details events such as fishing tournaments, sailing races, lakeshore and boater parties.

With 281 slips, there's always room for transient boats up to 50 feet long. The mega-yacht dock on the south pier

can accommodate boats up to 300 feet long. Harbor Centre is within walking distance of downtown, a community park and a sand beach.

## Sail Sheboygan

Little commercial traffic, modest motor boat traffic and a well-protected harbor add up to favorable sailing conditions. Factor in summertime winds averaging 4-14 knots and highs in the low 70s, and it's easy to see why sailors are attracted to the area. In addition to individual boat owners, Sheboygan also offers several sailing clubs. Many activities are open to the general public.

One such club is the **US Sailing Center**, which hosts high-level regattas, as well as promoting the sport within the local community. These include the ISAF Nations Cup, this year scheduled for

Top: Side trips include hiking cordwalk trails at Kohler-Andrae State Park. Lake Michigan is in the background. ■ Left: Whistling Straits, a world-renowned golf course, is only a few miles north of the marina. PHOTOS BY AUTHOR ■ Below: Sheboygan Youth Sailing Club (SYSC) provides lessons to the public—no need to be a member. PHOTO COURTESY SYSC



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Harbor Centre Marina  
821 Broughton Drive  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53081  
(920) 458-6665  
www.harborcentremarina.com  
Spring hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. every day April 15-Oct. 15; Summer: 7 a.m.-8 p.m. every day Memorial Day-Labor Day; Fall: from Labor Day-Oct. 15, hours revert to Spring hours

Sheboygan County Chamber  
621 S. 8th St  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53081  
1-800-457-9491 or (920) 457-9491  
www.visitsheboygan.com  
The Sheboygan County Chamber can provide a complete listing of charters available.

US Sailing Center  
214 Pennsylvania Ave (location)  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53081  
PO Box 649 (mailing)  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53082  
(920) 889-0758  
www.ussailingcentersheboygan.org

Sheboygan Yacht Club  
214 Pennsylvania Ave  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53081  
(920) 458-6601  
www.sheboyganyachtclub.com

Sheboygan Youth Sailing Club  
619 Broughton Drive  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53082  
(920) 459-0755  
www.youthsailingclub.us

Blue Harbor Resort and Conference Center  
725 Blue Harbor Drive  
Sheboygan, Wis. 53081  
1-866-701-2583 or (920) 452-2900  
www.blueharborresort.com

Sept. 13-18, Women's International Match Racing Association events, and training for the Women's U.S. Olympic sailing team.

The community sailing program allows qualified sailors the use of its fleet of Sonar sailboats for a modest fee, and Elliott 6-meter-long sailboats are available for charter.

Another club is the **Sheboygan Yacht Club** that charters the Sea Scouts. Scout fleets race Flying J's on Monday nights. It also serves as Sheboygan County High School Racing League headquarters and as the site of Lightning Fleet races on Tuesday nights. Keel boats race there on Wednesdays.

The club sponsors parties throughout the season, such as the Why Go By Party in July, which invites boats returning from the Chicago-Mackinaw Race. It's the host facility, too, for US Sailing Center ceremonies. Of course, brats are served at most of the events.

Finally, the **Sheboygan Youth Sailing Club** organizes youth and adult sailing and windsurfing courses covering novice through advanced racing. People of all ages and at all skill levels can take private lessons at the club for reasonable prices. Several free sessions are conducted throughout the season. Members operate Prams-Optis, Lasers, 420s, Lightnings and J-24s.



The club has empowered hundreds of children by sharing the experience of handling a boat on their own.

## Eat and Sleep

At Blue Harbor Resort, step onto your private outdoor balcony to soak in the lake's expansive views. It's a family friendly complex that offer suites with separate "little sailor quarters" in aquarium or boathouse themes.

Children are kept entertained at the 54,000-square-foot water park—the theme revolves around sinking ships that dump 1,000 gallons of water every few minutes! Sailboat motif linens, nautical artwork and cheery yellow and blue tones create a Cape Cod atmosphere.

Located directly south of the marina, across the Sheboygan River, the resort offers free shuttle service to the marina for their mutual guests. No need to leave the resort to dine because family style buffets, restaurants, or lakeside villas with fully equipped kitchens are all onsite. Live entertainment at the Blue Point Wine & Tapas Bar includes Caribbean, Latin and blues music.

Whether you're a novice yearning to learn to rig and handle lines, an advanced sailor needing to brush up on racing tactics, or a boating enthusiast interested in watching all the activities, it's all available here. Bring a waterproof camera, because sunrises, sunsets and a busy marina and lakefront make for picturesque backdrops. 🇺🇸

Left: Blue Harbor Resort Waterpark PHOTO COURTESY BLUE HARBOR RESORT & CONFERENCE CENTER ■ Bottom left: Sheboygan Youth Sailing Club teaches young people and adults how to sail. PHOTO BY AUTHOR ■ Bottom right: People enjoy bratwurst on the patio of the Sheboygan Yacht Club. PHOTO COURTESY SHEBOYGAN YACHT CLUB



# SHEBOYGAN, WI

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