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Gaylord, Michigan IS All OUTDOORS!

**Home to Fresh Air, Unparalleled Scenery, Quaint Towns
to Bike and Hike Through – and World Class Golf!**

GAYLORD, MICHIGAN –April 20, 2015 – Gaylord is known as America’s Summer Golf Mecca with 17 championship golf courses, and is home to North America’s Number One Par Three Course – ThreeTops, located in the heart of the Golf Mecca at Treetops Resort. Gaylord boasts courses designed by the giants of the game (Robert Trent Jones Sr., Tom Fazio, Rees Jones, Jerry Matthews, Rick Smith, and Tom Doak to name a few), the quality and quantity of golf combined with the affordability of its golf packages is unmatched anywhere in America.

In addition to premier golf, the area is quickly being recognized as a cycling and hiking destination. The cycling and hiking scene in the heart of northern Michigan – Gaylord is diverse; ranging from single tracks at Aspen Park, Pigeon River State Forest, Shingle Mill Pathway, Pine Barron Pathway, and High Country Pathway to the crown jewel of trails – the **North Central State Trail**.

Located in the exact center of Northern Michigan on the 45th parallel, Gaylord most literally offers something for everyone. Known as Michigan’s Alpine Village the Alpine themed shopping district offers visitors a quaint, clean setting with a multitude of [Downtown Shopping](#)

experiences. The downtown pavilion offers weekend entertainment, a twice weekly farmers market and a vast array of events and activities.

Well known as a [Recreation](#) seekers paradise, visitors will want to experience all that Gaylord has to offer in the cycling scene, including the **North Central State Trail**. This trail offers up unforgettable hiking and biking during the summer season. Just moments from downtown Gaylord is your gateway to miles of exploration by bike or by foot. Welcome to the North Central State Trail, a pathway connecting the city of Gaylord to surrounding quaint towns and 62 miles of trail leading to the Straights of Mackinac.

Experience all that is Northern Michigan along one of the many trails in Otsego County used for hiking and biking. The area abounds with pathways for outdoor enthusiasts of every skill and age level, and all are free to use with no trail passes required.

[Pine Baron Pathway](#)

If a short, family outing is what you're looking for, the Pine Baron Pathway, situated in the Mackinac State Forest, is only six miles from the heart of Gaylord. To reach it, take Otsego Lake Drive west to Old Alba Road, continue west to Lone Pine Road and go north to the trailhead. This system of gently rolling to flat terrain has four short loops which average two miles each. The total outside loop is only 6.25 miles, so it makes a nice hike with the kids. There are several benches along the way for resting, as well as some nice clearings; perfect for a trailside picnic. All the trails are clearly marked and easy to follow through peaceful pine forests and mixed hardwoods. Wildlife abounds, so keep your eyes open for the natural inhabitants of the Pine Baron Pathway.

[High Country Pathway](#)

Feeling ambitious? Ready for some real wilderness adventures? Pack your gear head north through Vanderbilt then take Sturgeon Valley Road east to the High Country Pathway. High Country is a 70-mile loop that meanders east through Pigeon River Country, Thunder Bay State Forest and Black Lake State Forest. With rustic camping available at several points along the way, an ambitious hiker can cover the trail in 7-10 days. The terrain is varied, taking scenic vistas, challenging hills, stream crossings and thick growth.

A detailed, waterproof trail guide is available at the Pigeon River Country Forest's Visitor Center or by sending \$4.75 to Pigeon River Country Association, PO Box 122, Gaylord, MI 49734. The

25-page guidebook includes detailed maps and descriptions of trees, and points of interest. It also includes information about the campgrounds.

Shingle Mill Pathway

If you would like just a taste of the High Country experience, check out the Shingle Mill Pathway. It is a popular trail system that begins at the Pigeon Bridge Campground, just off Sturgeon Valley Road, 11 miles east of Vanderbilt. The shortest of the five-segment pathway is 3/4 mile and the longest stretches for 12 miles. Trail difficulty increases with the length of each trail, with some steep terrain along the 6, 10 and 12 mile stretches.

And...If you have not done any road biking in Gaylord, you are in for a pleasant surprise! With the highest elevation of any City in the Lower Peninsula, over 100 small lakes and the headwaters of 5 major rivers you will delight in the scenery. The gently and sometimes not so gently rolling terrain offers some of the best vistas and challenging ridging in Michigan.

Here are some of the best routes in Otsego County:

Northeast Route

This route is a part of the former Starker Mann biathlon and includes great scenery! It covers rolling farmland, plenty of trees, crosses the Sturgeon River it has a couple of good climbs and the potential to see lots of wildlife! You will want to park at the Soccer Fields off of North Ohio street (also the start of the North Central Trail. This trail also goes all the way to Mackinaw City) and head north on Morgan Road. It will wind around to the right after a long downhill and cross Old-27 North. Cross Old-27 North on to Whitmarsh Road and head due East on Whitmarsh Road. This is a nice flat area and the farther East you go the better chances of seeing Elk and Deer you will also cross the Sturgeon River. You will bear right on Winnie Hill Road. This will pass the Smith Golf Course and you will begin a long climb through the woods. This will road will eventually wind around and turn into Marquardt Road and you will pass Treetops North. You will enjoy a nice long descent, and some gorgeous farm country and gentle streams. Stay on Marquardt Rd. At the top of a long climb you will take a big turn and the road becomes Wilkinson Road. Going right past the main entrance of Treetops you will stay on Wilkinson Rd. until it takes you to M-32 and right back into town. This is a hilly challenging 26 mile route with plenty of scenery.

Lake Route

Riding around Otsego Lake is always fun! You can park at either the Otsego Lake State Park parking lot or Otsego County Park parking lot. This is very enjoyable circular route around the largest lake in the County, Otsego Lake. It is very scenic with plenty of places to view Otsego Lake and it is also slightly hilly in some spots. You will have plenty of chances to stop on this route which is about 18 miles. If starting at the State Park head South on Old-27 to Mancelona Road. You will then turn on West Otsego Lake Drive heading north on a fairly newly paved road with nice wide shoulders. It is a bit hilly on this side and you will also pass Beaver Creek Resort. This eventually takes a big wind right and remains West Otsego Lake Drive. This brings you right back to Old-27 South where you will turn right and back to your starting point.

South East Route

If you are looking for a really long relaxing ride with an opportunity to stop for a meal or something to drink and also looking to get way out of town and see some great scenery take this route! This route also borders the Pigeon River State Forest and so wildlife abounds. You can start in town and head East on M-32 take a slight left onto Wilkinson Road heading east. After passing Treetops and at the top of big curve stay to the right on Wilkinson Road; this winds down and up and past some gorgeous farmland. Stay on Wilkinson for a long time until it eventually takes a hard left turn and brings you to the Sparr Road intersection. Turn Right on Sparr Road and go for a long distance. It is very scenic!! You will come to an intersection of Meridian Line Road and turn right. This is a long beautiful uphill climb!! On the right you will see Heatherton Road, when you get to Heatherton Road turn right and it will bring you right into the quaint little community of Johannesburg. A great stop for lunch or late breakfast is either The Old Depot Restaurant or Paul's Pub! When finished turn onto M-32 heading South for a short distance until you come to huge turn and you take a right onto Finnegan Road heading West, this eventually intersects at Turtle Lake Road where you stay right heading North. At the corner of McCoy and M-32 take a left on McCoy road which heads west. It is beautifully paved with a wide shoulder and will eventually pass the beautiful and scenic Dixon Lake with a great public access site. Stay on McCoy to Krys Road turning right and then to M-32. Taking a left on m-32 you will come right back into downtown Gaylord. It is approximately 40-45 mile route with plenty of scenery and gorgeous farmland.

Elk Viewing In The Gaylord Area!



The Pigeon River State Forest's expansive 105,000 acres with the Midwest's only free ranging elk herd offers a unique wilderness experience that is just a short drive from downtown Gaylord. The Department of Natural Resources maintains this excellent elk habitat through careful forest and wildlife management.

Elk inhabit this site year-round, but certain times are better for viewing than others. Probably the best month is September, when the males (bulls) are trying to establish dominance for mating rights with the females (cows). They are very active during this time, making loud vocalizations (bugling), and breaking brush with their antlers to impress cows and intimidate their rivals.

Typically, Elk are active throughout the daylight hours eating the new green growth and there are few people out to see them. Several elk viewing sites have been established on this site. These are not the only places you can see elk, but they are located in known elk gathering spots, and are good places to start.

The best viewing is done from your car, since elk are accustomed to seeing cars. Use binoculars or spotting scopes for best results. Do not approach elk. Despite their large size, they are timid animals and will not tolerate much disturbance.

Spectacular Viewing Areas:

1. On Fontinalis Road, about three miles north of Sturgeon Valley Rd. near the Cheboygan County line, a small cleared parking area and field.
2. At the DNR-signed elk-viewing area on East Sturgeon Valley Road, about eight miles east of Vanderbilt.
3. Less than a mile north of the Osmun Road and Clark Bridge Road intersection in the Pigeon River Country State Forest.

Gaylord's City Elk Park

The city of Gaylord maintains an elk herd and provides viewing areas for the public to stop and watch the impressive herd. Under the city's care the roughly 70 elk can be viewed from near the Elk's Lodge off Grandview at Elk View Park.

The herd is contained on 108 acres. City staff feed the animals corn, hay and sugar beets, plus vitamins. The herd started with three elk 14 years ago, when a local nature center closed.

Currently, a few of the bulls weigh well over 800 pounds and stand roughly 6' tall. The bulls will don their massive horns during the fall and winter, dropping them in the spring.

Visit www.gaylordmichigan.net or call 800-345-8621 for more information and special events schedule.

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