

2023 Catalina 22 Great Lakes Cruise Grand Traverse Bay, Michigan July 23 - 29

By Mike Bracket

It is snowing today, so what better way to lift your spirits than to start planning for our 22nd Annual Catalina 22 Great Lakes Cruise. This year we will be sailing the deep blue waters of Grand Traverse Bay in Northern Michigan. Traverse City is known as the Cherry Capital and the area is a hotbed of wineries and great sailing. Our itinerary will follow the same route we sailed in 2001 when we did the first Catalina 22 National Sailing Association Great Lakes Cruise. Don't let the prospect of sailing on 'big water' or the distances we plan to sail intimidate you. We sail as a group and are always within a few hundred yards of each other. We stay in marinas every night, but there is one opportunity to anchor out if you wish. We will have a skipper's meeting each morning to review the charts, weather and activities for the day. And if the weather doesn't cooperate, we don't leave. This is a cruise, not a race. It is fun, and not 'work'. Even if you have never sailed this far or this much before, we will all work together and get you through it with no issues. And trust me, any issue that can come up, we have experienced before and know how to solve the problem.

We will launch in Elk Rapids, Michigan on Sunday July 23 at the Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor. This is a nice, modern, full-service marina right next to the downtown area of Elk Rapids. They have a very nice parking lot and ramp area but it can get busy on a weekend afternoon. You may want to arrive on Saturday afternoon for a less stressful time rigging and launching. Early in the day or later in the afternoon/evening is best. There is a very nice beach immediately adjacent to the marina. We will spend the night at the marina and have a group dinner to meet the other cruisers and discuss our plans for the week.

On Monday, July 24, we will depart Elk Rapids, and sail to the town of Northport on the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula separating Grand Traverse Bay from Lake Michigan. The distance is about 15 miles and we will sail past the Old Mission Light house on the tip of the Old Mission Peninsula separating East and West Grand Traverse Bay. The water here can be up to 500 feet deep!! The Northport marina is also a very nice, modern facility but it is smaller than Elk Rapids. And it is also walking distance to the downtown area. There is also a nice beach and park adjacent to the marina.

On Tuesday, July 25, we will sail about 13 miles to Sutton's Bay via Omena Bay. We will stop for lunch at the Knot just another Bar and the adjacent wine tasting/retail outlet for the Leelanau Cellars Winery. The area close to shore gets shallow but there are docks available outside the restaurant. Depending on water levels, we may have to anchor to the beach and wade ashore. After some shopping and lunch, we will sail down thru Sutton's Bay to the town of Sutton's Bay. The marina here is the most 'basic' of the week, bath house, electricity and ice. But downtown is only about 2 blocks away. There are a lot of nice restaurants and shops. Prior Great Lakes Cruises have voted the Ice Cream Factory on Main street the best on the bay!!! I personally recommend Moomers, Amaretto Cherry!! We will do our (in)famous White Elephant Gift exchange this evening. Standard White Elephant rules apply. Bring a gift and get a gift. Limited to nautical theme not to exceed \$20.

(Continued on page 27)

(Continued from page 26)

On Wednesday July 26, we will sail down to Traverse City's Duncan Clinch Marina. This is a very nice, new marina with all the amenities. Even washers and dryers if you need to do your laundry!! There is also a park and beach adjacent to the marina and the downtown area is about two blocks away. In years past, we have participated in the Grand Traverse Yacht club Wednesday evening races and post-race gathering at their clubhouse. I need to do more coordination on this event. We will spend two nights at Traverse City so there is plenty of time to explore the "Cherry Capital" and all it has to offer.

On Thursday evening, anyone who wants to anchor out can sail over to Marion Island, about six miles back up the West Bay, near Bowers Harbor. The island is a city park so there are hiking trails and picnic spots. Anchoring on the northeast side should provide good protection from the prevailing winds. And there is a good restaurant/brew pub in Bowers harbor. Unfortunately, there are no docks or public access there.

On Friday, July 28th, we will depart Traverse City to sail about twenty-two miles back to Elk Rapids. Anyone who anchored out the evening before will have a six-mile head start as we will sail right by Marion Island on our way. Upon arrival back at Elk Rapids, we will prepare to de-rig and haul out. You can haul out on Friday evening or Saturday morning. We will plan on a group dinner on Friday evening at a local restaurant and make some tentative plans for our cruise in 2024.

Each boat will make their own reservations at the various marinas. See information below. NOTE: These marinas are all closed now and most will not open until around April 15. Some of the marinas allow you to call them direct to make reservations and some require you to go thru the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to make reservations. The MI DNR website does charge \$8 for each reservation and you cannot make them all in one visit. Each reservation you make is a separate transaction and a separate \$8 fee.

When you notify each marina, be sure you tell them you are part of the Catalina 22 Group. They will try to put us all together where possible.

Please let me know if you are planning to attend. I will send out additional information and a 'registration form' in a couple months. The "registration" fee is just \$20 and that helps pay for the dinner on Sunday evening in Elk Rapids. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sunday - June 23.

Edward C Grace Memorial Harbor, Elk Rapids, Michigan.

231-264-8174.

GPS Location: N 44° 53.991' / W 085° 24.966.

Go to www.dockwa.com and enter Elk Rapids, Michigan in the search bar. Grace Memorial Harbor should pop up. They will not be open for reservations until 0800 hrs, May 15, 2023.

Published rate is \$1.70/ft.

Remember to make your reservation for Friday night at the same time.

(Continued on page 28)

(Continued from page 27)

Monday - July 24th.

Marsten Dame Marina, Northport, Michigan.

231-386-5411

GPS location: N 45 07' 48" / W 36' 38".

www.midnrreservations.com The DNR site accepts reservation requests up to 6 months in advance of your arrival. Select Harbors, and on the left menu, scroll down to Northport and enter your arrival date and other information.

Published rate is \$1.48/ft.

Tuesday - July 25th.

Suttons Bay Marina, Suttons Bay, Michigan.

231-271-6703.

GPS Location N 44° 58.592' / W 085° 38.973'.

sbmarina@suttonsbayvillage.org <mailto:sbmarina@suttonsbayvillage.org>. Transient reservations can be made April 15th by either calling the marina or emailing them.

Wednesday - Thursday July 26-27.

Duncan Clinch Marina, Traverse City, Michigan.

231-922-4906 / 231-922-4903.

GPS Location: N 44° 46.009' / W 085° 37.308'.

www.midnrreservations.com The DNR site accepts reservation requests up to 6 months in advance of your arrival. Select Harbors, and on the left menu, scroll down to Duncan Clinch Marina and enter your arrival date and other information.

Dockmaster: tcmarina@traversecitymi.gov <<mailto:tcmarina@traversecitymi.gov>>

Published rate is \$40/night.

Friday - July 28th.

Grace Memorial Harbor Elk Rapids, Michigan.

231-264-8174.

Go to www.dockwa.com and enter Elk Rapids, Michigan in the search bar. Grace Memorial Harbor should pop up. They will not be open for reservations until 0800 hrs, May 15, 2023.

Published rate is \$1.70/ft.

If you have any questions, please let me know. It's snowing again here in Michigan, but I am already thinking of July.

Mike Bracket

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Catalina 22 Fleet 130

Detroit