Taking Winter to the Extremes: Full Day Dog Sledding and Ice Climbing in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula
March 10-13, 2024
$1,650 PER PERSON

For reservations or further information, call Nature’s Kennel at 906-748-0513

Tour Inclusions:
• Drive or ride with sled dog team on a 20-mile excursion.
• Three nights of lodging at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn in Curtis, MI.
• Welcome Dinner and Nature’s Kennel Presentation
• Breakfast each morning and dinner each night
• Traditional pastie lunch at Nature’s Kennel
• Wine tasting at End of the Road Winery
• Ice climbing in Munising
• Gourmet snack lunch during ice climbing
• Guided hiking of Munising waterfalls
• Transportation from Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn to all excursions during the tour

Not Included: Travel insurance, items of a personal nature, alcoholic drinks, and meals not mentioned in the tour inclusions.

Nature’s Kennel, Michigan’s premier dog sledding destination is located in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan and is home to 150 magnificent Alaskan Huskies. The tour is led by Tasha Stielstra ’98, MSU College of Education. Both she and her husband Ed are Spartans and are well-accomplished mushers. This unique winter adventure offers you the opportunity to drive your own dog team or to take a ride with the sled dogs of Nature’s Kennel. Also included is a presentation about kennel and how the Stielstra’s went from MSU graduates to business owners. You will also have the opportunity to enjoy a bit of the Upper Peninsula winter splendor with ice climbing in Munising.

Note: This trip is designed for people with little to no experience, but you must have good balance and upper body strength for ice climbing. All sessions, both dog sledding and ice climbing, will be fully guided.

“I loved the ability to enjoy more of the Upper Peninsula in the Winter. I have done a lot of travelling in the UP in the summer, but this was completely different and in many ways even more beautiful.” Heidi Nagel, ’91
Trip Itinerary:

Sunday, March 10th

6:00 pm Welcome reception at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn
Appetizers and wine will be served around the lobby fireplace followed by dinner in the private dining area. Meet Tasha, owner of Nature’s Kennel, who will be your guide for the duration of the trip.

6:30 pm Dinner at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn
During dinner, Tasha will give you a short presentation on the Upper Peninsula and what to expect during the tour.

Monday, March 11th

7:30 am Breakfast at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn

9:00 am Dog Sledding at Nature’s Kennel
After arrival at the kennel you’ll meet the amazing sled dogs and receive all the instructions necessary to drive your own team on a guided 20-mile dog sledding trip on the beautiful scenic snow trail. Or, if you prefer, you can ride in the sled with the guide. This excursion will be 3-4 hours.

2:00 pm Pastie lunch at Nature’s Kennel
Upon completion of the dog sledding, enjoy an Upper Peninsula pastie.

3:30 pm Wine Tasting, End of the Road Winery
After lunch head to the End of the Road winery for a private wine tasting from a locally owned Upper Peninsula winery.

6:00 pm Dinner at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn
Enjoy dinner and relax in front of the giant fireplace after a great day of winter activities.

Tuesday, March 12th

7:30 am Breakfast at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn.

8:30 am departure to Munising
Head to Downwind Sports in Munising and meet the professional ice climbing guides, receive ice climbing gear, and make your way to some spectacular ice formations. A gourmet snack lunch will be provided that you can eat while taking a break from ice climbing.

Climbing will occur from approximately 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The remainder of the afternoon can be spent enjoying guided hiking with Tasha to the waterfalls around Munising or relaxing on your own.

Gear: Bring warm gear for the dog sledding trip as there is a constant breeze when the sled is moving. Insulated snow pants, a warm parka/jacket, winter boots, mittens and lightweight gloves (gloves are nice when hooking up the dogs), are all suggested. If riding in the sled, blankets will be provided. Warm winter boots are available for loan if needed at no charge. The same gear can be worn for snowshoeing and hiking to the caves but it is highly suggested you bring along a pair of YakTrax for walking along the trail and into the caves (YakTrax snow/ice cleats are available at most outdoor stores or www.yaktrax.com.)

Tuesday, March 12th cont.

6:30 pm Dinner at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn
Enjoy a fantastic dinner and relax in front of the giant fireplace after another great day of winter activities. There will be a slide show to highlight the week’s activities and share stories.

Wednesday, March 13th

8 am-11 am Breakfast at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn
Departure at your leisure.

For reservations or further information, call Nature’s Kennel at 906-748-0513
Accommodations: Enjoy three nights of lodging at Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn in Curtis. Chamberlin’s is nestled high on a bluff overlooking Big Manistique Lake in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This incredible lakeside country inn offers charming accommodations and casual fine dining. Rich in history, this gracious 7500 square ft. 19th-century-style lakeside dwelling was built by a railroad company to serve as a passenger hotel near the Curtis train station. More than one hundred years later the inn continues to embrace travelers with warmth, comfortable lodging and stunning views.

“Tasha is the reason this trip was beyond fantastic! She is so very kind, and plans exciting and interesting adventures for the group!”

Included meals: There will be a private welcome dinner and program at Chamberlin’s on Sunday night, dinner on Monday and Tuesday evenings and full breakfasts on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Monday lunch will be at the Helmer House Inn and Tuesday lunch will be a gourmet snack lunch to be eaten during ice climbing. If you have special dietary needs, notify Tasha. All restaurants are spacious enough to provide adequate space for a group and adequate distancing for each couple/individual if necessary.

Getting there: Air transportation is available to Marquette, MI (Sawyer International Airport) or Sault Ste. Marie (Chippewa County Airport). Both airports have rental cars available.

Transportation during the tour: Transportation is available to and from all locations (Chamberlin’s, Nature’s Kennel, Tahquamenon Falls, and Munising). If you prefer to drive your own vehicle, we will provide maps and you can easily follow the caravan.

Cost: $1,650 per person. Gratuities included.

Payment: A 50% deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance of the trip is due on March 10th when you come for your adventure. Payment may be made via all major credit cards or personal check.

Cancellation policy: In the unlikely event the trip is canceled due to weather conditions, a full refund will be issued. If participants request a cancellation, the deposit will be refunded if request is made more than three weeks before the start of the trip.

Reservations: To make your reservation, contact Tasha Stielstra, Nature’s Kennel 906-748-0513 or info@natureskennel.com. Please note this trip is limited to 10 participants. The trip must have a minimum of 6 participants to operate. If the minimum is not met by December 28th, deposits will be refunded.

Contact information:

- Chamberlin’s Ole Forest Inn, 906-586-6000, www.chamberlinsinn.com

Suggested Marquette hotels if flying into Sawyer International airport:


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Nature’s Kennel Wellness Statement: As we continue to navigate through the reality of COVID-19, we have adjusted our practices, policies and procedures to maintain a low risk environment for all of our guests, staff and family. While no one can totally eliminate the risk of the virus, we will do our best to adapt and continue to provide an exceptional vacation experience. The majority of this trip takes place outside with a small group and during any inside programs or meals there is adequate spacing for individual tables.

“Great winter adventure! Dog sledding with Nature’s Kennel was the best!”

“I was intrigued by such a unique opportunity, to try dog sledding, and see the Ice Caves. The MSU connection added a sense of comradery.”

“Our dog sledding and ice cave trip in northern Michigan was awesome! Driving the sleds was very exciting and we learned a lot about dog sledding from Tasha. The hike into the ice caves was beautiful. I would highly recommend this trip to others.” Theresa Larsen ’82

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