Taking Winter to the Extremes:
Full Day Dog Sledding and Ice Climbing in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula
February 5-8, 2023
$1,650 PER PERSON (single occupancy), $3,120 per couple (double occupancy)

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
- Lunch at Helmer House Inn
- 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 owned by Michigan State alums Ed Stielstra ‘91, Lyman Briggs College and Tasha Stielstra ‘98, College of Education. Nature’s Kennel is located in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan and is home to 160 magnificent Alaskan Huskies. Both Ed and Tasha are well-accomplished mushers and Ed has completed eight Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Races. 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 Nature’s Kennel and how Ed and Tasha went from MSU graduates to business owners. You will go behind the scenes as you learn about this extremely unique business. You will also have the opportunity to enjoy a bit of 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.

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

Sunday, February 5th

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, February 6th

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 Lunch at the Helmer House Inn
Upon completion of the trip, you will have lunch at the Helmer House Inn, a cozy Upper Peninsula restaurant located in an historic inn.

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, February 7th

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 our 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.

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. We will have a slide show to highlight the week’s activities and share our stories.

Wednesday, February 8th

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.

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, single occupancy or $3,120 per couple, double occupancy. Gratuities included.

Payment: A 50% deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance of the trip is due on February 5th 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.

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 (these snow/ice cleats are available at most outdoor stores, https://www.yaktrax.com/).
Contact information:

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

Suggested Marquette hotels if flying into Sawyer International airport:


Nature’s Kennel Wellness Statement: As we continue to navigate through the reality of Coronavirus, 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, 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.

Michigan State University Alumni Office Disclaimer: The Michigan State University Alumni Office (MSUAO) is not the Tour Operator. The MSUAO is not responsible for the changes of flight times, fare changes, dishonor of airline, hotel or motor coach transportation and car rental reservations, delays, losses, injuries, inconveniences, cessation of operations, airline or tour operator bankruptcies, acts of God, or any other event beyond our control. The MSUAO acts only as a sponsor with respect to the travel services, and it shall not be responsible for changes to flight times, fare changes, dishonor of airline, hotel or other reservations, injury, damage, loss of baggage, accidents or for the acts or defaults of any person or entity engaged in providing services to participants or in carrying out other arrangements of the tour. Further, the MSUAO shall not be responsible for losses or additional expenses of the participant due to sickness, weather, strike, civil unrest, acts of terrorism, pandemic, epidemic, quarantine, acts of God, governmental intervention or other causes beyond its control. The MSUAO shall not be responsible for alteration in the itinerary as deemed necessary for carrying out the tour and the Tour Operator may substitute hotels of similar quality. The Tour Operator may postpone or cancel any tour prior to departure. The MSUAO or the Tour Operator may decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of the tour should such person’s physical or mental health, actions or general deportment impede the operation of the tour or the rights or welfare of the other participants. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour. By embarking upon travel, the participant voluntarily assumes all risk involved in such travel, whether expected or unexpected. Participant is hereby warned of the above risks as well as possible travel industry force majeure, bankruptcies and medical and climatic disruptions, and the possibility participant may be unable to travel as scheduled because of personal emergency. Participant is advised to consider obtaining appropriate insurance coverage against these risks. Applicants for participation on this tour accept in full all the conditions set forth above.

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