



We Create Community through People, Parks and Programs!

December 5, 2008

Dear Mackinac Trip Coordinator,

We are excited to begin our plans for the *42nd Annual MRPA Grand Experience*. We couldn't be more pleased with the great dates that we will be able to provide you for the 2009 season. Please choose the dates that you prefer and mark them by your first, second and third choice. In the event that we have an overwhelming response for the same trip, a lottery will be done for that specific trip. In the case that a lottery is needed, this is how it will run:

Each application will be placed in a pile by the first choice of trip date. If there are not enough rooms on any given trip, a lottery will be done for that trip (and that trip only). Those who may not be successful with their first choice date will be placed in their second choice of trip date. If a lottery is needed for the second choice of dates, then we will draw to see who gets on their second choice of dates. *Preference will be given to MRPA member groups. Non-member groups will fill in where space permits.*

Please review the enclosed trip information and fill out your trip request completely. It will be very important that I am able to contact each group if we have any questions. If there are any unanswered questions after reviewing the information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gail Garber
Membership Director

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Group Travel Coordinators & Program Leaders...

Would You Like To:

- ❖ Offer an opportunity for your travelers to enjoy a “land cruise” at beautiful Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island?
- ❖ Provide an opportunity to discover the history of Mackinac Island and Grand Hotel at a greatly reduced rate?
- ❖ Fundraise for your travel program? Groups who offer the trip can have your “break even” point at 30 passengers. Extra travelers above that number can mean money in your treasury.
- ❖ Add a bonus color tour this year? With travel dates in late September and October, the fall colors should be in fine form.
- ❖ Offer your “seasoned” veteran travelers a peaceful, low impact trip chocked full of lectures and indoor activities at beautiful Grand Hotel, as well as plenty of ways to be active if that’s their preference?
- ❖ Provide your golfers the opportunity for “unlimited golf” at the Jewel Golf Course at Grand Hotel? For a discounted rate, golfers will get all the golf they can play (including a cart). Club rental is extra. Beautiful vistas are free!
- ❖ See how a family trip strikes your travelers? Many people use this trip as a mother/daughter, father/family opportunity. Only one person in each room needs to be 50 years of age.

We are very excited about the program for 2009 – we had a great year in 2008 and hope to repeat that success! Survey results from 2008 indicated that 98 percent would recommend this program to their friends, 97 percent would come back again, and 97 percent felt the trip was a good value. If you would like more information on the program, call MRPA at (517) 485-9888 and we’ll be glad to talk with you about the program.

It's Easy to Register for the MRPA Grand Experience!

1. Verify MRPA Agency Membership (must be current and paid in full). Please call (517) 485-9888 to verify membership with the MRPA Office. Non-member agencies will not be a part of the lottery and will be assigned trip dates as space permits.
2. Complete the registration form. Please review ALL trip dates offered, and select your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices. It is mandatory that you select at least three trip dates (unless you only want the two night / three day). Mail or fax the registration form with a \$100 non-refundable deposit.

Every effort will be given (but no guarantees) to give you your first choice if your registration form and deposit are postmarked by Wednesday, January 7, 2009. Your deposits will be refunded if one of your trip choices is not available. Registration forms will be accepted after that date, but requested dates may not be available.

3. Confirmations will be mailed by January 23, 2009, along with 2009 MRPA Senior Trip promotional materials. Groups needing date confirmation prior to that may call or email us. Information will be given out as soon as possible.
4. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Gail Garber, MRPA Senior Trip Director, at (517) 485-9888. You can also email Gail at ggarber@mrpaonline.org.

PLEASE NOTE: You ***must*** have your registration form completely filled out to be considered for trip dates for 2009. Incomplete forms may not be valid requests for date assignment.



2009 MRPA GRAND EXPERIENCE

Participation

The MRPA Grand Experience is for individuals 50 years or older. MRPA welcomes spouses, sons, daughters and caregivers under 50 that share the room. Group Leaders do not have to be 50 or older to participate. MRPA recommends that participants with physical, mental and emotional restrictions be accompanied by a caregiver. Caregiver's rate is not reduced. Please note: Mackinac Island has limited medical facilities.

Two Night / Three Day Trip Dates & Rates

Trip #3: Tuesday, October 13, 2009 thru Thursday, October 15, 2009

Single Occupancy \$568/person

Double Occupancy \$404/person

Triple Occupancy \$367/person

*Add \$10/person for Non-MRPA Agency Members

Three Night / Four Day Trip Dates & Rates

Trip #1: Tuesday, September 22, 2009 thru Friday, September 25, 2009

Trip #2: Tuesday, September 29, 2009 thru Friday, October 2, 2009

Trip #4: Friday, October 23, 2009 thru Monday, October 26, 2009

Single Occupancy \$776/person

Double Occupancy \$555/person

Triple Occupancy \$502/person

*Add \$10/person for Non-MRPA Agency Members

Single Occupancy

Denotes the price of a room not shared. The single rate will apply to those not having a name or paid roommate at the time the room lists are due. MRPA is not responsible for matching roommates.

Double Occupancy

Denotes the price per person when two or more individuals are sharing a room. Room assignments are "luck of the draw." Some rooms will have one king bed.

Triple Occupancy

A room will be assigned with two double (not queen) beds. A rollaway bed will be added at no extra charge. The rollaway will be delivered upon request after occupying the room. Be sure your travelers know that some of the hotel rooms are small for three people.

Comp Rooms

Group leaders who bring 30 persons (excluding themselves) will receive a complimentary package in a double room. Each group leader is responsible for finding a roommate. If the Group Leader has met complimentary requirements and would like single accommodations, please add \$40 for a 3-day package, \$55 for a 4-day package. **Group Leaders who do not meet complimentary requirements and require single accommodations will be required to pay the regular package price.** Please note: bus drivers, caregivers, spouses and all other individuals must pay regular package rates. No exceptions.

Disabled Persons	MRPA invites and welcomes participation in this event by everyone. All MRPA activities and programs are accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities. Please be sure to request specific information from individuals who require special accommodations.
Wheelchairs	<u>Guests needing wheelchairs must bring their own.</u> Grand Hotel has a limited number of wheelchairs available for guests that unexpectedly require assistance.
Handicap Rooms / Special Requests	Grand Hotel has a limited number of barrier free rooms with specifically equipped facilities for those in wheelchairs or electric carts. Requests should be made for individuals with walking difficulties to be located near an elevator. Be specific on your request, such as bars in the shower, roll in shower or near elevator. The special needs requests must be on your Rooming List. Leader dogs for the blind are welcome. All special accommodations must be listed on final rooming list to accommodate individuals in appropriate rooms.
Room Assignments	ALL PARTICIPANTS will be assigned rooms by luck of the draw. NO ONE will receive special room assignments regardless of the number of years they have attended, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. Most rooms at Grand Hotel have either two double beds (not queen size) or one king size bed per room. Have your participants keep this in mind when deciding their room arrangements.
Group Leaders	EACH GROUP MUST SEND A QUALIFIED GROUP LEADER. Group Leaders will be assigned a room in a higher than average category. They may use their room to hold a group party, trade with someone celebrating a special anniversary, etc. in their group, or simply reward themselves for a job well done.
All Trip Packages Include the Following Amenities:	Accommodations at Grand Hotel (includes baggage handling, taxes and tips), full breakfast each morning, tea and cookies each afternoon, five-course dinner each night, special champagne reception, banquet, nightly demitasse, nightly dancing with the Grand Hotel Orchestra, Grand Hotel history lecture, Grand Hotel kitchen tour, a carriage tour (route for 2009 to be announced) and tournaments (bocce, golf putting and chipping), bingo, self guided walks, writing and photography contests, movies, daily activities, evening entertainment, round trip ferry tickets, horse drawn taxi to and from Grand Hotel, and discounts on bicycle rental, golf, and photos.
Additional trip features- Trip #4	The final trip of the season (October 23-26) will include a complimentary Grand Hotel Luncheon Buffet on Saturday, October 24 and Sunday, October 25 for all participants, ½ price sales in the Grand Hotel shops, and an upgraded cocktail reception prior to the final banquet.
What's Not Included	Transportation to and from Mackinaw City/St. Ignace, lunches (exception: two days on Trip #4) pin on nametags that identify participant's name and senior travel group name and a hand held sign or symbol to identify group.
Deposit	\$100 (non-refundable) deposit is due with application form postmarked by Wednesday, January 7, 2009. Deposits received after that date will be assigned trip dates based on availability. Make check payable to MRPA (Michigan Recreation and Park Association). All payments are to be mailed to MRPA, 2465 Woodlake Circle, Ste 180, Okemos, MI 48864.

- 2nd Payment** \$200 for each participant registered must be postmarked by July 6, 2009. Do not pay for any participants that are not registered. Please continue to fill your rooms after that date until you have reached your allotment. Make check payable to *Grand Hotel*. All payments are to be mailed to MRPA, 2465 Woodlake Circle, Suite 180, Okemos, MI 48864.
- 3rd Payment:** The balance of all trip fees is due at this time. Do not continue to fill your allotted rooms after this date, unless approval is received from Tom Fraas at the MRPA Office. Checks are made payable to Grand Hotel. All payments are to be mailed to MRPA, 2465 Woodlake Circle, Ste 180, Okemos MI 48864
- Payment Due Dates (35 days out from the trip)
- Trip 1: August 18
- Trip 2: August 25
- Trip 3: September 8
- Trip 4: September 18
- Payment Methods** Payments may be made by check, money order or credit card. All payments are mailed to the MRPA Office. The initial \$100 deposit is payable to MRPA. Each subsequent payment is made payable to Grand Hotel and mailed to MRPA.
- Rooming Lists** Final room lists are due with final payment. Groups must send only *ONE* rooming list. Changes to the rooming list (additions, cancellations, and special requests) must be done on the Room List Change Form.
- Travel Insurance** Because there are absolutely no refunds after the final payment deadline dates, MRPA strongly recommends that groups offer travel insurance and/or signed waivers that clearly state cancellation/refund policies. If you do not have a Travel Insurance Company, take advantage of the travel insurance information provided by MRPA or contact a local travel agent in your area. Please be sure to offer the opportunity for travel insurance on your initial flyer and strongly encourage your travelers to secure this travel insurance. After the payment deadline there will be NO REFUNDS- NO EXCEPTIONS.
- Room Allotments** After final deadline, unfilled rooms are given back to Grand Hotel. If more rooms are needed after that date, please contact Tom Fraas, MRPA Business Service Manager, (517) 485-9888, fax (517) 485-7932 or email tfraas@mrpaonline.org to check availability.
- Cancellation of Trip** Because of the popularity of the trip dates for 2009, please contact Gail Garber (517) 485-9888 if you do not think your trip will fill. We can discuss further options of combining trips etc. If you wish to cancel after the July 6 deposit and before final payment deadline, a full refund will be issued less the \$100 non-refundable deposit.
- Cancellation of Participant** After the final room list is submitted, a cancelled participant may be replaced with another individual. Monies must be handled by the participants or the local agency. Please use the room list change form to indicate name changes and send to Tom Fraas, MRPA Business Services Manager, fax (517) 485-7932 or email tfraas@mrpaonline.org with name change.

If you have any questions, please contact Gail Garber at (517) 485-9888.