



Media Contact:

Jennifer Sistrunk

Visit South Haven

jsistrunk@southhaven.org | 269-637-5252

South Haven's South Beach Named Best Beach in Michigan by USA TODAY

Award comes during milestone summer as lifeguards return to South Beach for the first time in 25 years.

SOUTH HAVEN, Mich. — May 27, 2026 — South Haven's South Beach has been named Best Beach in Michigan by [USA TODAY's 10Best Readers' Choice Awards](#), earning statewide recognition for one of Lake Michigan's most well-known shoreline destinations.

Located just south of the South Pier and South Haven's historic red lighthouse, South Beach is known for its wide sandy shoreline, walkable access to downtown, and one of the most recognizable views on Michigan's west coast — the South Haven Lighthouse and catwalk.

"For more than 100 years, South Haven has been a place where families come to make summer memories, and South Beach remains one of the most beloved parts of that tradition," said Jen Sistrunk, Executive Director of Visit South Haven. "Generations of visitors have walked the pier, watched the sunset, played along the shoreline, and returned year after year. This recognition honors not only a beautiful beach, but South Haven's lasting place as one of Michigan's classic resort towns."

The award comes during a milestone summer for South Haven beaches. New this year, lifeguards have returned to South Beach for the first time in 25 years, adding another layer of support for residents and visitors enjoying Lake Michigan.

"South Beach isn't just a beautiful place to spend the day — it's a beach designed for everyone," said Kate Hosier, South Haven City Manager. "Its accessibility features, family-friendly atmosphere, and iconic lakeshore setting helped earn this well-deserved recognition as the best beach in the state."

South Beach amenities include a playground, splash pad, concession stand, kayak and paddleboard rentals, free beach wheelchair rentals, and six life jacket loaner stations.

South Haven is home to seven public beaches and access sites, with North Beach and South Beach recognized as the community's largest and most frequently used beaches. South Beach's location near downtown shops, restaurants, the harbor, and summer events makes it a

central part of the South Haven visitor experience.

The recognition also highlights the importance of beach destinations to Michigan's broader visitor economy. According to Travel Michigan, Michigan tourism generated \$54.8 billion in total economic impact in 2024, including more than \$30 billion in visitor spending, and supported more than 350,000 jobs statewide. South Haven's beaches, downtown, harbor, trails, events, and small businesses all play a role in that statewide tourism story.

Visitors can explore South Beach at 60 Water Street in South Haven, just steps from downtown South Haven and the Black River harbor.

About Visit South Haven

Visit South Haven is the destination marketing organization for the South Haven area and Van Buren County, promoting travel, tourism, events, local businesses, and the lakeshore experiences that make South Haven one of Michigan's premier beach towns. Visit South Haven works with community partners to welcome visitors, support the local economy, and share the best of South Haven year-round. Learn more and plan your trip at southhaven.org.