

water and power at the slips, and plenty of dockage. Toward the end of June the marina starts filling up on weekends. In July and the first week or so in August, it's full every day. Sometimes up to 40 more boats are anchored in the bay to the east of the docks."

"If you want to come in the busy season," he advises, "It's best to arrive early in the morning, preferably before 7 a.m. If you can't, put into Mackinaw City or St. Ignace instead. Stay for the night and come over to the island early the next morning. Check in with the harbor master, who is on duty by then—they have a waiting list and know you when your turn is up, if you're sitting at anchor."

The Morgans recall the time they left Mackinaw City at 7:30 a.m. and found 50 boats ahead of them, waiting for a slip at the state dock. "We waited until 7 p.m. before we got a slip."

The longest wait is for one of the six seasonal slips, which are rented by islanders and often inherited when one of them dies. It costs \$25 a year just to stay on the waiting list. The rest of the 77 slips are for visiting boaters, who also get to use the clubhouse. Showers are planned for the clubhouse, but for now transients may use the showers at the nearby Mackinac Island Yacht Club. A small fee is charged.

There are special rules for visiting boaters. They can use the docks for only four days at a time, and

must leave for 24 hours before redocking there. Transient dockage rates are a little higher than at other state-run docks.

Don't try to find a slip during the Port Huron-to-Mackinac race in mid-July. About 30 slips are reserved for the racing yachts. When they arrive the competitors crowd into the marina by rafting their boats together. Then they head for the Pink Pony and other watering holes to drink beer and tell war stories.

"If you can't get a slip, anchorage in the bay is free," Ravitz tells us, "but you need a dinghy to go ashore, and the bottom isn't very good for anchoring. When the wind goes into the southeast we can get some heavy waves in there."

The harbor has good water and is well-buoyed, but Ravitz emphasizes the need for the right charts. "We're a U.S. and Canadian authorized chart agent," he tells us. "We ship charts everywhere. If people have a problem planning an itinerary for a vacation, they call us up and we send the charts. The best one for around here is number 14881." Ravitz can be reached at (906) 847-6100.

"Be sure to bring extra lines," he adds. "There's a lot of surge in here from the ferries. Bring money, and bring your bikes, like a lot of boaters do. Kids always want to ride bikes, go

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BUT THEY FILL UP FAST— Looking down at the marina from Fort Mackinac reveals only eight slips occupied in May.

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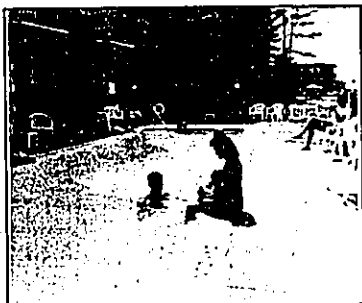
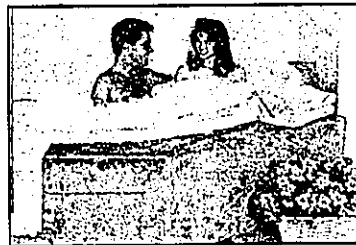
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