*A weekly column written by the staff of* [*Discover Wisconsin*](http://discoverwisconsin.com/) *highlights things to do and see throughout the State of Wisconsin, and is made available for publication to members of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association. The column is accompanied by photos for use in print and online. The Discover Wisconsin logo can be* [*downloaded here*](https://www.wnanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/DiscoverWi-Logo_300dpi.jpg)*.*

## State Parks to Kick Off the Summer Season in Wisconsin

Whether you’re into hiking, paddling, camping, or simply soaking up the sun by a lake, Wisconsin’s state parks offer endless opportunities for adventure and relaxation. From the northern shores of Lake Superior to the scenic riverways and rolling hills in the south, here’s your guide to kick off summer with unforgettable experiences in Ashland, Sauk, Door, St. Croix, and Washington counties!

### Ashland County

Begin your summer excursion in Ashland County, home to two spectacular state parks. Hop aboard the Madeline Island Ferry to Big Bay State Park, where you can explore miles of hiking trails, unwind on sandy beaches, or camp beneath a canopy of stars.

Then, venture to Copper Falls State Park, where the sights and sounds of cascading waterfalls set the scene for adventure. After a refreshing hike or bike ride through lush forests, cool off with a swim in the park’s pristine waters. Don’t forget your fishing poles—this park is a favorite spot for anglers looking to reel in some more summer fun.

### Sauk County

Next up is Sauk County, boasting three parks that showcase Wisconsin’s natural beauty. Mirror Lake State Park is a go-to for kayaking, fishing, and lakeside picnics. Looking to refuel? Make your way to the iconic Ishnala Supper Club, nestled among the trees.

Nearby, Natural Bridge State Park captivates visitors with its striking sandstone arch—a highlight of any scenic summer hike. And no summer adventure in Sauk County would be complete without a visit to Devil’s Lake State Park.

As Wisconsin’s largest and most popular park, Devil’s Lake features an extensive trail system leading to breathtaking views from towering bluffs. Plus, its sandy beach invites families and outdoor enthusiasts alike to swim, paddle, and relax.

### Door County

Head east to Door County, where more must-visit state parks await! First stop: Whitefish Dunes State Park. Explore miles of trails weaving through stunning sand dunes along the shores of Lake Michigan. Next, Peninsula State Park, one of Wisconsin’s largest, serves as the ultimate summer playground.

From camping and golfing to hiking and biking, there’s something for everyone. While you’re there, be sure to check out the historic lighthouse and the panoramic views from the Niagara Escarpment cliffs—both offer unforgettable summer experiences.

### St. Croix County

For a little taste of Wisconsin history, venture to both St. Croix and Washington counties. In St. Croix lies Interstate State Park—the oldest state park in Wisconsin! Take in spectacular views of the St. Croix River and the Dalles gorge by hiking, paddling, or even rock climbing.

Uncover even more history and scenery in Washington County at Lizard Mound State Park. Here, you can roam through ancient effigy mounds! It’s a quiet, reflective place that’s unlike any other park in the state—and definitely one you won’t forget.

Ready to kick off your summer season? Wisconsin’s state parks offer something for every outdoor enthusiast. Pack your gear, plan your visit, and discover the incredible natural beauty waiting for you across the state!

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