

LAKE ERIE GAZETTEER · LAKEERIE.INFO

LAKE ERIE LIGHTHOUSE TRIP BOOK & CHECKLIST

Every lighthouse on all five shores, in Circle Tour order, with how to see each one.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The lights are in the order you'd meet them driving clockwise from Toledo. Each card tells you how the light can be seen: climbed, walked to, seen from shore, seen from a boat, closed, or ruined or moved. The QR code opens the live page, which may have newer access details than the printed edition.

This book never lists opening hours, prices or tour dates: they change every season. Each card names the operator; check with them before you go.

The visit-mode legend

Mode	What it means
Tower climbs	The operator has offered public tower climbs, usually seasonally.
Grounds open	You can walk to or around the lighthouse; the tower itself is closed.
View from shore	Best seen from a public park, beach or pier nearby.
View from a boat	Offshore or on a closed breakwater; seen from the water.
No public access	The site is closed to visitors; see it from a distance only.
Ruin or relocated	Only ruins remain, or the tower has been moved from its original site.

Pier and breakwater safety

Many Lake Erie lights stand at the end of piers and breakwaters. In wind and waves these can be swept by water and are slippery and dangerous. Stay off them in rough weather, obey posted closures, never climb on navigation structures, and never enter private or Coast Guard property.

Access details last verified 2026-10. Hours, tours and ownership change. Check the operator before you go. Pier and breakwater lights can be dangerous in wind and waves; obey posted closures and never enter private or Coast Guard property.

Crossing the border

Crossing into Canada requires a passport or other WHTI-compliant document. Check CBP and CBSA before you go. Checked 2026-10.

Positions and depths are approximate. NOT FOR NAVIGATION. Use current official charts.

ROUTE SECTION I

Western Basin and the islands

8 lighthouses in this section:

1. Turtle Island Lighthouse · Ruin or relocated
2. Toledo Harbor Lighthouse · View from shore
3. West Sister Island Lighthouse · No public access
4. Port Clinton Lighthouse · Tower climbs
5. Green Island Lighthouse · Ruin or relocated
6. South Bass Island Lighthouse · Tower climbs
7. Marblehead Lighthouse · Tower climbs
8. Cedar Point Lighthouse · View from shore

SAMPLE

MARBLEHEAD LIGHTHOUSE

Marblehead, Ottawa County, Ohio

Tower climbs

Access verified 2026-10



Live page

On the limestone tip of the Marblehead Peninsula, this white tower has marked the way into Sandusky Bay since 1822. Among lights on the American side of the Great Lakes, none has been in continuous service longer, by the usual reckoning, and seasonal tower tours have been offered.

How to see it

The operator has offered public tower climbs, usually seasonally.

Best public viewpoint	Marblehead Lighthouse State Park at the tip of the Marblehead Peninsula on Ohio 163; the grounds look out over Sandusky Bay and the islands.
Tower climbs	Tower climbs historically offered: Tower tours have been offered seasonally by the Marblehead Lighthouse Historical Society in the state park. (verified 2026-10)
Operator	Marblehead Lighthouse Historical Society (museum and tower tours) · https://www.marbleheadlighthouseohio.org/

History highlights

In 1819 Congress set aside \$5,000 for a light at the entrance to Sandusky Bay.^[1] Contractor William Kelly built the tower in 1821 from limestone quarried on the peninsula, and it was first lit in 1822.^[3,1] The original tower stood 50 feet, with walls five feet thick at the base; a further 15 feet was added around the turn of the twentieth century, giving the 65-foot tower seen now.^[1,4]

The first keeper, Benajah Wolcott, was a Revolutionary War veteran and one of the peninsula's early settlers. Each night he lit thirteen whale-oil lamps backed by metal reflectors. When he died in 1832 his wife, Rachel, took over the keeper's duties; two of the fifteen keepers who served before automation were women.^[1] Ohio's historical markers name Rachel Wolcott as the first woman to keep a lighthouse on the Great Lakes, and the couple's 1822 limestone house nearby on Bayshore Road is marked as the oldest known residence still standing in Ottawa County.^[7,8] Over the following century the station moved through every stage of lighthouse technology: kerosene and a Fresnel lens in 1858, a clockwork mechanism that made the light flash, and electricity in 1923.^[1] The Coast Guard took over in 1946 and automated the light in 1958.^[1]

Built	1821
First lit	1822
Tower height	65 ft
Light	Fl G 6s · focal height 67 ft
Heritage	National Register 1969
Owner	Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Marblehead Lighthouse State Park); the U.S. Coast Guard maintains the light

Seen on _____

Notes

This is a free sample of the Trip Book. The full book has a card for every lighthouse on all five shores, a checklist, printable maps and the sources for every fact.

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SAMPLE