



MICHIGAN'S PREMIER MOTORCOACH CONNECTION
BETWEEN EAST LANSING, ANN ARBOR,
BRIGHTON & DETROIT METRO AIRPORT



e-news

APRIL 2023



Michigan Flyer VP Ody Norkin with a New
'Hytch' Minivan

Coming Soon: Our New “Hytch” Door-to-Door Service ... Plus Our New Website

We're excited to announce that Michigan Flyer passengers will soon be able to reserve a Hytch-branded minivan to connect with their bus at the East Lansing Marriott, right from—or to—the door of their home, workplace, or another location in the Hytch service area.

As such, Hytch promises to be popular with both local residents and out-of-town visitors as an alternative to driving yourself, getting a ride from family or friends, calling a taxi, etc.

“At first, the Hytch service area will include all business and residential addresses within a roughly 4-mile radius of our East Lansing location,” says Michigan Flyer VP Ody Norkin. “Specifically, Hytch rides will be available to or from Downtown Lansing, the Michigan State University campus, parts of Meridian Township, and more.”

“And if our Hytch pilot project proves to be a success with passengers, we may well expand the service area locally, as well as launch new Hytch service in Brighton and Ann Arbor.”

More key points about the new Hytch door-to-door service:

✍ Tickets are just \$10 per person one way, and available only to Michigan Flyer passengers when booking their bus trips online.

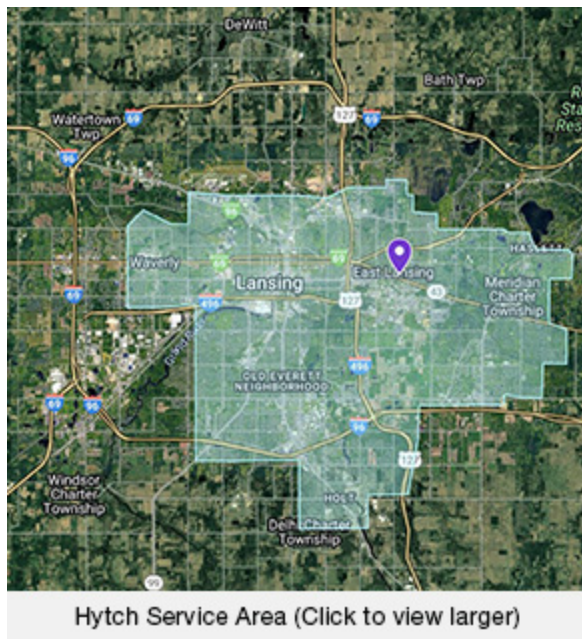
✍ If you book a bus trip that starts or ends in East Lansing, you'll see the option to add a Hytch minivan to or from the East Lansing Marriott. For a round trip, you'll be able to add a Hytch van to both legs of your trip.

✍ The Hytch vehicles—all with experienced drivers—are new-model, 5-passenger, ride-share vans, one of which is wheelchair accessible.

✍ Travelers may share their Hytch ride with other Michigan Flyer passengers, and in so doing help reduce the pollution and traffic congestion caused by single-occupancy vehicles.

✍ Hytch rides will be available Sunday through Friday from 3 a.m. to 11 p.m., but not on Saturday.

“The Hytch service actually hits the road on Tuesday, May 2,” notes Ody. “But Michigan Flyer passengers can start pre-booking rides on Tuesday, April 25, through our new website, which launched this morning.”



“Magic” Thru the New Website

The new website—with a sleek, modern design—will be fully “responsive “ so as to display correctly on all devices, from computers to smartphones. Over the next few months, it will also introduce important new functions that passengers are sure to appreciate, but more on those when the time comes.

For now, you should know that some real technical magic is happening behind the scenes on the website, where the new Hytch service comes together with Michigan Flyer.

“It’s like a dream come true,” says Ody, who’s spent a decade trying to find a way to overcome gaps in the transportation system and provide Michigan Flyer passengers with door-to-door service. “We’re especially happy to be able to help senior citizens, veterans, and people with disabilities. They can now use Hytch to

access Michigan Flyer, and then connect with early-morning, low-fare flights out of Detroit Metro Airport. It’s a huge bonus, too, that our Hytch solution also enables visitors of all kinds to reach family and friends, jobs, shopping, education and healthcare services, major attractions, and so on in our area.”

The problem had been that the reservation systems of separate transportation companies could not “talk with” one another. The answer was to develop an “Application Programming interface” or API that enables passengers to book and pay for trips involving multiple carriers (e.g., Michigan Flyer and Hytch) on a single ticket for travel to their personal destinations across a metropolitan region.

Development of the API—which was partly funded by a competitive [Michigan Mobility](#) grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation—is what makes the Hytch on-demand service possible. It enables Michigan Flyer’s reservation system (provided by [Turnit Ride](#)) to coordinate with the Hytch reservation system (powered by our TransitTech provider [Via](#), which brings together intelligent booking and routing software, drivers, and vehicles) so that you can seamlessly schedule bus and van trips on a single ticket.



Driver Mike Assid

Meet Driver Mike Assid

This week marks driver Mike Assid's seventh month as a Michigan Flyer driver—and for now, he can't imagine doing anything else.

"This is the most enjoyable job I've ever had," he says. "Even though I'm driving the same route every shift, it's different every day."

It's a major change from Mike's days working as a lab technician for a biopharmaceutical company in mid-Michigan after earning an associate's degree in chemistry at Lansing Community College. In 2016,

Mike was part of a downsizing at that company, and afterward worked in construction before a friend suggested he apply for a driver's position at Indian Trails.

Born and raised in Owosso, Mich., Mike was accustomed to seeing the Indian Trails headquarters every time he was downtown. "I'd ridden the buses before, but didn't find out the company has been here since 1910 until I joined their driver training program. That was a fun fact to learn."

Mike found the five-week training program extensive, thorough, and a bit "nerve-wracking," especially when he anticipated getting behind the wheel of a 45-foot motorcoach for the first time. "I learned a lot from the Smith Driving System® that was part of the curriculum. That emphasized five keys to safe driving, including creating a safe space between vehicles, getting the big picture by scanning the view in front of you, and anticipating what could go wrong so you can react in the safest way possible."

"Flying" Solo

Mike started as an Indian Trails driver last April driving regularly scheduled routes across the state and beyond, while also filling-in with Michigan Flyer several times a month. He began driving full-time for Michigan Flyer last September.

Due to the nature of his previous jobs, Mike had no real experience working with the public. And although he considers himself an introvert, he found that one of the benefits of being a driver is interacting with the passengers who ride his bus. "It's really rewarding. You're meeting new people every day, so every trip is different. My greatest responsibility is making sure our passengers get to where they're going safely."

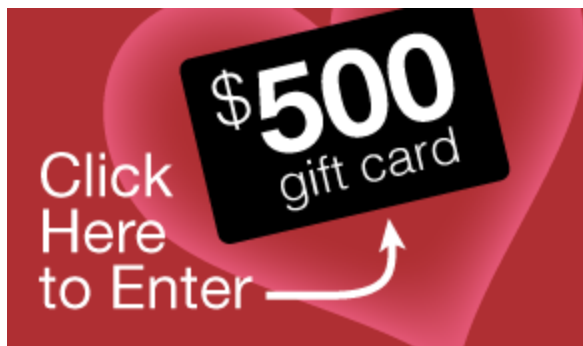
The Company You Keep

Having started his career as a lab technician, Mike was surprised to find that he likes driving a bus as much as he does. "I really enjoy the open road. And even though you're working for someone, you're the boss of your bus, so there's a certain freedom to that. Plus, I enjoy the people I work with, and I was impressed by the company's emphasis on great customer service, as well as the fact that our fleet is regularly updated. Folks should know, too, that each bus is cleaned and washed after every run so they always look great."

When he's not out piloting a bus on the open road, Mike spends his downtime riding a mountain bike, enjoying quieter moments at home, and reading books, especially about theology.

Last Chance to Win a \$500 Prize: May 22 Contest Deadline

Don't miss your chance to win a \$500 gift card Top Prize, or one of five \$100 gift card Runner-up Prizes! All you have to do to enter our new "Love Connections" contest is tell a short—and true—story about how Michigan



Flyer helped connect you with a person, place or adventure dear to your heart. In addition to the gift card, all winners will have their stories and photos published in our E-news for the enjoyment of fellow passengers.

It doesn't get much easier: Submit your story of up to 300 words [here at SurveyMonkey](#) between now and May 22. We'll notify the winners sometime after that by phone or email. Entries will be judged by Michigan Flyer staff and creative consultants, based on their judgment of which stories best fit the contest theme.

Good luck!



International Airfares for Summer

If you're dreaming of exploring another country while on vacation this summer, now is the time to start planning. Using [Skyscanner.com](#), we spot-checked prices for roundtrips originating at Detroit Metro Airport (DTW) on Saturday, July 8, and returning on Sunday, July 23. Among our search criteria: Flights had to make no more than one stop or plane change in each direction, any layover between flights had to be fairly

brief, and the flight return had to arrive at DTW in time for passengers to catch our last run at 8:15 p.m./8:30 p.m. to Ann Arbor, Brighton, and East Lansing.

NOTE: Lower prices than these are often available for anyone who is flexible about the dates of travel, or willing to make two+ stops or plane changes. Our sample economy roundtrip fares include taxes but not necessarily baggage or other "extras."

Cancun, MEX (CUN) Delta \$403	Oslo, NOR (OSL) Lufthansa \$1,498
Toronto, CAN (YYZ) Air Canada or United \$438	Brussels, BEL (BRU) United & Affiliates \$1,518
Montreal, CAN (YUL) Air Canada or United \$480	Amsterdam, NLD (AMS) Delta \$1,539
Nassau, BHS (NAS) United \$699	Glasgow, GBR (GLA) Lufthansa/United \$1,542
Kingston, JAM (KIN) Air Canada/JetBlue \$817	Berlin, DEU (BER) Lufthansa \$1,551
San Jose, CRI (SJO) Spirit \$859	Lisbon, PRT (LIS) Delta \$1,582
Lima, PER (LIM) Spirit \$865	Warsaw, POL (WAW) Delta \$1,591
Reykjavik, ISL (KEF) IcelandAir/JetBlue \$894	Luxembourg, LUX (LUX) Lufthansa \$1,612
Dublin, IRE (DUB) United/Lufthansa \$1,308	Athens, GRC (ATH) United/Lufthansa \$1,622
Frankfurt, DEU (FRA) United/Lufthansa \$1,316	London, GBR (LHR) AirFrance/Delta \$1,633
Stockholm, SWE (ARN) KLM/Delta \$1,342	Naples, ITA (NAP) United/Lufthansa \$1,701
Santiago, CHL (SCL) Delta \$1,414	Buenos Aires, ARG (ARG) Spirit+Argentinus \$1,742
Geneva, CHE (GVA) Lufthansa \$1,427	Madrid, ESP (MAD) American \$1,745
Helsinki, FIN (HEL) KLM/Delta \$1,437	Bucharest, ROU (OTP) Delta/KLM \$1,746
Barcelona, ESP (BCN) Delta \$1,491	Paris, FRA (CDG) Delta/AirFrance \$1,806
Rome, ITA (FCO) Delta/KLM \$1,900	Singapore, SGP (SIN) KLM/Delta \$2,596
Sydney, AUS (SYD) Delta \$2,356	Tokyo, JPN (HND) Delta \$3,144
Manila, PHI (MNL) Philippine/Delta \$2,556	

Top Coming Events—We Can Get You There!



East Lansing

[WICKED the Musical](#)

WICKED, the Broadway sensation, looks at what happened in the Land of Oz from a different angle. Long before Dorothy arrives, a young woman there is born with emerald-green skin. She's smart, fiery, misunderstood, and has an extraordinary talent. When she meets a bubbly blonde who is exceptionally popular, their initial rivalry turns into the unlikely of friendships ... until the world decides to call one "good" and the other "wicked."

From the first electrifying note to the final breathtaking moment, the wildly inventive story of the Witches of Oz transfixes audiences in what USA Today calls "a complete triumph! An original musical that will make you laugh, cry, and think." Catch one of 24 performances between Wednesday, May 10, and Sunday, May 28, at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Ln., Michigan State University, East Lansing. [Tickets \\$64-\\$174, plus fee.](#)

Check out more local coming events with the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar: <http://www.lansing.org/events>.



Ann Arbor

[An Evening with Natalie Merchant - Keep Your Courage Tour](#)

Singer-songwriter Natalie Merchant is returning to the road with her first full album of new songs in nearly a decade. Natalie is best known as the lead singer with the alternative rock band, 10,000 Maniacs. "Keep Your Courage" is her ninth solo studio album and first of new material since 2014's self-titled record. She performs at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, at the Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Relatively few tickets remain at [TicketMaster for \\$307-\\$913](#) and [StubHub for \\$226-\\$1,616](#) and [TicketsOnSale for \\$165-\\$963](#).

For more entertainment in and around A2, see the Ann Arbor Area Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar of coming events: <https://www.annarbor.org/events/>

Brighton

Brighton, like other communities in Livingston County, offers a multitude of events to delight visitors of all ages. Explore them with the Livingston County Convention & Visitors Bureau events calendar: <https://visitlivingstoncounty.com/events/>.

Detroit

[Madagascar the Musical](#)

Join Alex, Marty, Melman and Gloria as they bound out of the zoo and onto the stage in "Madagascar the Musical" at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. This smash hit musical from Dreamworks features all your favorite crack-a-lackin' friends as they escape from their home in New York's Central Park Zoo and find



themselves on an unexpected journey to the madcap world of King Julien's Madagascar. The show is at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 13. [Tickets \\$15-\\$70+](#).

NOTE: [The D2A2 Express Bus](#) from Ann Arbor's Blake Transit Center (BTC) to Detroit's Grand Circus Park can get Ann Arbor-area residents to and from this event. The Fox Theater is about a five-minute walk from D2A2's stop at 1508 Park Ave. (in Grand Circus Park) in Detroit. Since the D2A2 schedule coincides

with Michigan Flyer's schedule at the BTC for this early performance, East Lansing and Brighton residents can also ride buses to and from this event.

To learn more about what's happening in Detroit, check out the Detroit Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar of coming events: <https://visitdetroit.com/events/>.



Customer Comments

"5 Stars! The best way to get to Detroit Metro airport. I live in Shiawassee County and was flying out of DTW. The round trip cost on Michigan Flyer from and to East Lansing was \$54. We would have (almost) spent that in gas for the round trip, and if I had left a car in airport parking for a week? No contest! Good clean buses, very friendly and good drivers, easy and hassle free trip. I will use this service again. P.S., Free WiFi and charging ports too!"

—David W., Perry, Mich.

Please, Help Others by Reviewing Us Online

Kindly take a moment to help others understand how our service might improve their travels. Simply visit one of the websites below to write a brief review about your experience with Michigan Flyer. Thank you!



Professional Drivers Wanted

Indian Trails, Inc.—which staffs Michigan Flyer with professional drivers—is accepting applications for full-time motorcoach drivers. These positions pay a **starting** hourly rate of \$21.42, provide a 5-week PAID training program leading to a Commercial Drivers License, and operate Michigan's newest and largest fleet of motorcoaches. Full-time drivers also receive:

Two weeks of paid time off in the first year
Medical, dental, vision and life insurance



- 401(k) retirement program with employer match
- Annual safety bonus

Also important, Indian Trails truly appreciates the hard work of its staff members—it's a 113-year-old, family-run company with old-fashioned values like fairness, honesty, teamwork, and service excellence.

We encourage anyone, including those with no commercial driving experience, to apply. It takes a special person to be a professional bus driver. To us and to our passengers, they're truly heroes of the road. [Learn more and apply here.](#)



Anna Jarvis

Happy Mother's Day!

Celebrations of mothers and motherhood can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. But the American version of Mother's Day was championed by Anna Jarvis of West Virginia in 1908 and became an official U.S. holiday in 1914. In 2023, it will be celebrated on Sunday, May 14.

According to [History.com](https://www.history.com), Jarvis conceived of Mother's Day as a way to honor the sacrifices mothers make for their children. She gained financial backing from Philadelphia department store owner John Wanamaker,

and organized the first official Mother's Day celebration at a Methodist church in Grafton, W.V. It quickly became so popular that in 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed a law officially establishing Mother's Day as an annual holiday to be celebrated on the second Sunday in May.

Ironically, Jarvis—who never married or had children—became disillusioned by commercialization of the holiday, and spent her later years campaigning against greeting card makers, confectioners, and florists for profiting from it. Still, virtually everyone loves their mother, which is why more phone calls are made on Mother's Day than any other day of the year.

Why Drive?

Booking is easy, [click here](#) to view schedules on



www.michiganflyer.com



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