



USA Today Names Indian Trails America's Best Bus Service for 2025!



USA Today recently conducted a nationwide "10Best Readers' Choice Awards" contest to choose the 10 Best Bus Services in America for 2025. And get this: For the second year in a row, Michigan Flyer's parent company—Indian Trails—was selected as one of the 10Best!

[What's more, readers voted Indian Trails #1 of the 10Best!](#)

That's above such well-known companies as Megabus, Greyhound, and FlixBus. Also, of the [146 private regular route and charter bus companies](#) in Michigan, Indian Trails was the only one to make the 10Best list. Moreover, Indian Trails is one of some [8,000 scheduled and chartered bus companies in the U.S.](#)

"These 10 bus companies are selected by an expert panel and voted by readers as the best in the U.S.," says USA Today. [Read more about the 10Best Bus Services here.](#)

"Generations of Indian Trails employees truly earned this honor by operating a top-notch bus transportation company for more than 115 consecutive years," says Chad Cushman, president and CEO. "We must also thank the nearly 1 million loyal passengers who rely on us each year to carry them safely to their destinations, as well as the partner agencies—the Michigan Dept. of Transportation and Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation—who support our routes connecting rural communities."



USA Today readers likely chose Indian Trails as one of the 10Best because of attributes like these:

- Indian Trails connects with 80 towns throughout Michigan and into Wisconsin and Minnesota, as well as with airports, Amtrak, and the entire national transportation network. Each year, it enables hundreds of thousands of state residents to access the world, and hundreds of thousands of visitors to access Michigan.
- The popular airport shuttle service—Michigan Flyer—makes frequent, daily roundtrips between East Lansing, Brighton, Ann Arbor, and Detroit Metro Airport, connecting Michigan State University and the University of Michigan along the way.
- With safe driving a top priority, Indian Trails developed and conducts its own weeks-long intensive training program for all new drivers, which literally helped set the standard for the Federal Highway Administration's "Model Curriculum for Motorcoach Drivers."
- Indian Trails deploys Michigan's newest fleet of motorcoaches, each loaded with the latest safety features and equipped with engine technology that cuts exhaust pollution to near zero.
- Among the comfort features of its luxury coaches are reclining seats with headrests and footrests, individual climate controls and reading lamps, outlets for mobile devices, free WiFi, on-board lavatory, overhead storage racks, and abundant luggage space.

United Airlines Expands Your Global Reach



United recently launched the biggest expansion of international destinations in its history with a Summer 2025 schedule that includes [service to eight new cities](#): Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Nuuk, Greenland; Palermo, Italy; Bilbao, Spain; Madeira Island, Portugal; Faro, Portugal; and Dakar, Senegal.

So, United is now flying its largest-ever international schedule, with 800 daily flights to and from 147 international destinations. What's more, this fall, the airline plans to offer service to [Bangkok, Thailand](#); [and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam](#); [Hong Kong](#); and [Adelaide, Australia](#).

What's in it for you? The entire world if you'd like to explore it. Consider that—from Detroit Metro Airport (DTW)—it's just one nonstop flight to any of United's U.S. hubs (Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, New York/Newark, San Francisco and Washington, D.C./Dulles).

"One key destination, for example, is Adelaide, Australia," notes Michigan Flyer VP Ody Norkin, who's also a veteran travel agent. "For the first time ever by any airline, United will fly nonstop from San Francisco to Adelaide. So United's DTW-SFO-ADL route will shave four hours off a very long trip and get you to Australia faster than any other carrier combination."



The San Francisco hub also serves Manila and Cebu in the Philippines; and San Jose, Costa Rica; plus about 30 other cities in the Pacific and Central American regions.

Similarly, a nonstop flight from DTW to United's hub at Newark/New York can easily put you one direct flight away from dozens of cities in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Croatia, Greenland, and Mexico.

The Washington/Dulles hub offers direct United connections with Venice, Italy; Nice, France; Dakar, Senegal; Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa; Accra, Ghana and Lagos, Nigeria; and Marrakesh, Morocco. The hardest part may be figuring out where you want to go next.

Happy First Birthday, DAX!



The [Detroit Air Xpress](#)—or DAX for short—is the pilot express bus service that connects Downtown Detroit to Detroit Metro Airport (DTW). This past March it turned one year old. DAX was created by the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA), and is operated by Michigan Flyer. So far, as a pilot service funded by a \$2.5 million grant through the Federal Highway Administration's Carbon Reduction Program, the reviews are mighty good:

- 98% of riders are either very satisfied or satisfied with the service.
- 59% of DAX users are local residents.
- 40% of riders use DAX every time they travel to the airport.

We'll report more results from the DAX passenger survey as it becomes available.

Meet Your Driver, Tom Gates



Shortly after graduating from high school, Tom Gates joined the U.S. Marines, served for 20 years, and retired. When he returned to his hometown of Owosso, Mich., he decided to look for a job. "My dad, Nelson, had been a part-time driver for Indian Trails after he retired as police chief in Owosso, so I applied there," he says.

Tom thought his chances were slim since there were about 40 other candidates looking to become drivers: "I was surprised when I got the call to come in. It probably helped that some interviewers remembered my dad."

This year, Tom is celebrating his 20th anniversary with Indian Trails and his 18th as a Michigan Flyer driver. We first profiled him for this newsletter in 2013, when we highlighted his side-gig as a budding singer/songwriter and guitarist. While he still enjoys performing at open-mike opportunities, other pastimes have surfaced over the years. But Tom's main focus hasn't changed: It's doing his utmost to get his passengers safely to their destinations every time he's behind the wheel.

Like all new drivers at Indian Trails, after extensive in-house training Tom started out driving regular routes and group charter trips. One of his favorite charters involved taking a group of MSU logistical students to a conference in Memphis, Tenn., and exploring the city's famous Beale Street—"Home of the Blues"—and its live music venues. "I thought, 'Holy cow! This place is amazing!'" he recalls.

The Rewards of Driving a Bus

When Tom transferred to Michigan Flyer in May 2007, the shuttle service had only been operating for about six months. "I was looking for a regular routine and this fit me perfectly," he says. "It feels stress-free, and I really enjoy the passengers."

Back then, drivers checked in passengers using a paper manifest. Today, it's all done electronically. Because the Flyer's parent company, Indian Trails, routinely updates its fleet of motorcoaches, drivers are always learning about new features and technologies that make the bus safer for them and the passengers they ferry between East Lansing, Brighton, Ann Arbor, and Detroit Metro Airport.

Tom is an annual recipient of the Cora Taylor Safe Driving Award, named after the co-founder of Indian Trails in 1910 and bestowed on drivers who complete a year without an avoidable accident.

"I love the company," says Tom, "It's had good leadership from the get-go."



Photography by Tom Gates

Renaissance Man

One reason Tom joined the Marines was to see more of the world. In addition to serving a tour of duty in Iraq, his service also took him to both coasts of the United States, Okinawa, Japan, the Philippines, Germany, Norway, Iceland, Spain, Kuwait and South Korea.

He made a CD of the songs he wrote (“I think I gave away more than I sold”) and then turned his attention to nature photography. If you’ve visited the Michigan Flyer office in East Lansing, you may have seen some of his framed photos gracing the walls. He also collects and polishes fossils, making them into pendants. His newest passion is to completely remodel his 1890s childhood home, which he inherited from his family.



Travel Alerts

Reduced Michigan Flyer Schedule on July 4th

Due to the [Firecracker 5K and Mile Fun Run on Friday, July 4, in Ann Arbor](#), followed by the annual Jaycees Fourth of July Parade, not all of our regularly scheduled trips to or from Ann Arbor will be operated on Independence Day. Specifically, we will NOT be operating Eastbound runs 8000, 8002, 8004, 8006, 8008, 8010, 8012, 8014, or Westbound runs 8001, 8003, 8005, 8007, 8009. [See our Schedule here](#). You can easily check which of our runs will be operating with the “[Book a Trip](#)” feature on our website.

D2A2 Express Bus Expands Summer Service

The popular [D2A2 Express Bus](#), which makes frequent daily runs between Ann Arbor’s Blake Transit Center and Detroit’s Grand Circus Park, is now operating a special “midnight summer run” from Detroit to Ann Arbor. While the usual last run is at 11 p.m., an additional run will depart at 11:55 p.m. every Friday and Saturday night through Labor Day weekend. This gives visitors more time to enjoy the nighttime attractions of Downtown Detroit. (Note: D2A2 will not operate on July 4.)

Top Coming Events–We Can Get You There!

East Lansing



Capital City Comic Con

This major event brings together on-screen, comic creator, publisher and celebrity [Special Guests](#), vendors, artists, eSports tournaments, costume contests, replica cars, panels, [Kid Zone](#) fun, after-hours concerts and events, and tabletop gaming.

Visit more than 200 exhibitor booths selling must-have collectibles. Get your picture taken with a superhero, Stormtrooper, Mandalorian, G.I. Joe, and more! Life-size statues and vehicles will be available for poses.

It's happening over three days at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., in Downtown Lansing: Friday, July 11, 3 p.m. to 8 pm; Saturday, July 12, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, July 13, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. [Tickets \\$18-\\$60 plus fees; kids 13 and under free; weekend and VIP passes \\$136.75-\\$217.](#)

NOTE: A Capital Area Transportation Authority bus can get you from our location at the East Lansing Marriott right to this event in about 30 minutes for \$1.25. Find [CATA's Trip Planner here](#). Folks coming from the Brighton, Ann Arbor, or Detroit areas should be aware that our last eastbound run of the day leaves East Lansing at 5:30 p.m.

Check out more local coming events with the Choose Lansing calendar: lansing.org/events.

Brighton

Michigan Challenge Balloonfest

The 40th annual balloonfest features carnival rides, kid attractions, fireworks, and the spectacular daily balloon launches, fly-ins, and the ever-popular evening Glow, when about 20 hot-air balloons inflate on the launch field and glow their envelopes against the beautiful summer night sky.



The [event schedule](#) spans three days—Friday, June 27, 2 p.m.-11 p.m.; Saturday June 28, 6 a.m.-11 p.m.; Sunday, June 29, 6 a.m.-10 p.m.—and is hosted by the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce. [Admission is \\$5 per day](#) per person plus fee, but free for children three and under. The event takes place at the Howell High School Complex, 1200 W. Grand River Rd., Howell, Mich. That's about a [22-minute drive](#) from our current Brighton stop at exit 53 of U.S. 23 then west on I-96 to Howell. Parking is free.

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: visitlivingstoncounty.com/events/.

Ann Arbor



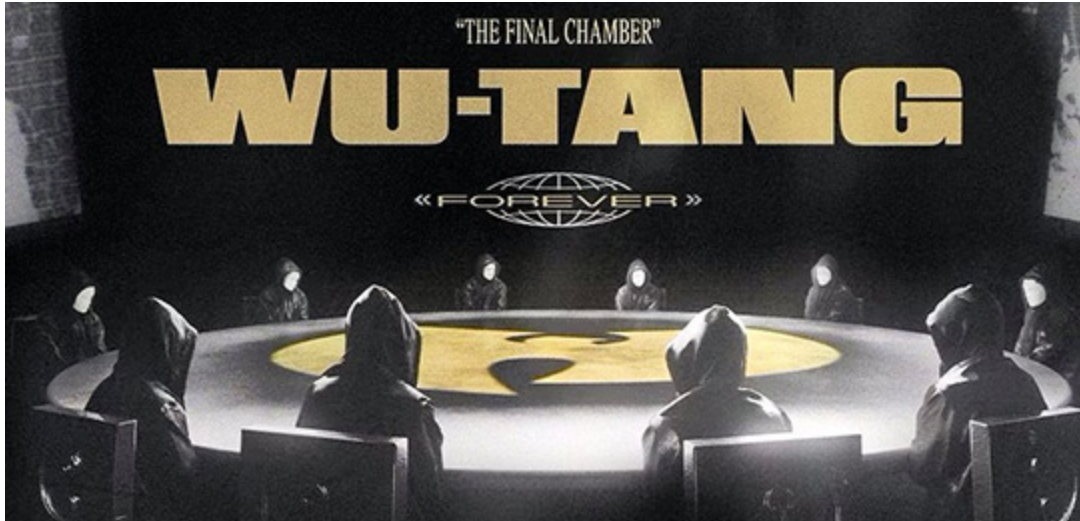
Ann Arbor Art Fair 2025

Drawing nearly half a million attendees over three days, it's the largest juried art fair in the nation, with works by about 1,000 artists displayed (and for sale) over 30 city blocks downtown. You'll find art in virtually every medium—handcrafted ceramics, jewelry, leather and metalworks, painting, photography, sculpture, wood, and more. In addition, there will be dining and sidewalk sales, plus [live music on two stages](#) and [plenty of art activities](#).

This distinguished event features three unique, independently juried, nonprofit art fairs, all operating concurrently: [Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, The Original](#), [The Guild's Ann Arbor Summer Art Fair](#), and [Ann Arbor State Street District Art Fair](#). They all take place on Thursday and Friday, July 17 and 18, 10 a.m. – 9 p.m., and Saturday, July 19, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. FREE and fun for all ages.

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

Detroit

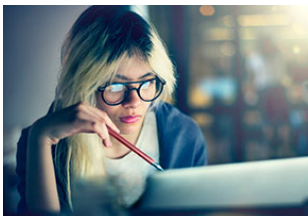


Wu-Tang Forever: The Final Chamber

The world famous hip-hop group, Wu-Tang, will appear at Little Caesars Arena—2645 Woodward Ave. in Detroit—on Tuesday, July 8, at 8 p.m., along with hip-hop duo Run the Jewels. Fans can expect to hear songs that have never been performed live, and hits from their album "Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)" as well as the Grammy-nominated "Wu-Tang Forever," which debuted at #1 on the Billboard 200 chart and has been certified 4x platinum. The group has released seven gold and platinum studio albums with worldwide sales exceeding 40 million albums. [Tickets \\$69-\\$295+](#).

NOTE: [The D2A2 Express Bus](#) from Ann Arbor's Blake Transit Center (BTC) to Detroit's Grand Circus Park can get Ann Arbor-area riders to and from this event. Little Caesars Arena is about a half-mile walk from D2A2's stop at 1508 Park Ave., Detroit.

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



Tips for Smarter Travel

Know How to Find Us at DTW (click the link for each terminal)

Easily Change Your Own MI Flyer Reservations at this Link

Where's Your Bus? Find Out with Our Real-Time Tracker

**Please, Help Others by
Reviewing Us Online**

facebook

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



Customer Comment

"I have had wonderful experiences with Michigan Flyer, and I am so grateful for the excellent service you provide, and the buses are amazingly comfortable!"

— Neal M., Ann Arbor, Mich.



Sample Airfares for Late Summer Getaways



If you're thinking of a vacation getaway before K-12 schools and colleges resume classes, now is the time to start planning. Using [Skyscanner.com](https://www.skyscanner.com), we spot-checked prices for domestic roundtrips originating at Detroit Metro Airport (DTW) on Friday, Aug. 8, and returning on Sunday, Aug. 17. Among our search criteria: Flights had to be nonstop in each direction, and the return flight had to arrive at DTW in time for passengers to catch our last run at 9:45 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. to Ann Arbor, Brighton, and East Lansing.

NOTE: You may well find different fares for nearly the same roundtrips on [Expedia](https://www.expedia.com), [Kayak](https://www.kayak.com), or [Orbitz](https://www.orbitz.com)—or by buying tickets directly from a carrier like [Delta Air Lines](https://www.delta.com). Lower prices than these are surely available for anyone who's flexible about the dates of travel, or willing to change planes once or more enroute to their destination. Our sample economy roundtrip fares include taxes but not necessarily baggage or other "extras."

Atlanta, GA (ATL) Spirit + Frontier \$83
St. Louis, MO (STL) Spirit \$90
Baltimore, MD (BWI) Spirit \$98
Hartford, CT (BDL) Spirit \$108
Durham, NC (RDU) Spirit \$110
Minneapolis, MN (MSP)
 Sun Country + Spirit **\$118**
Philadelphia, PA (PHL) Spirit \$118
Charlotte, NC (CLT) Spirit \$120
Nashville, TN (BNA) Delta \$139
Tampa, FL (TPA) Spirit \$140
Houston, TX (IAH) Spirit \$142
Phoenix, AZ (PHX) Spirit \$146
Orlando, FL (MCO) Spirit \$150
San Antonio, TX (SAT) Spirit \$150
New York, NY (LGA) Spirit \$153
Austin, TX (AUS) Spirit \$154
Boston, MA (BOS) Spirit \$156
Dallas, TX (DFW) Frontier \$159
Las Vegas, NV (LAS) Frontier + Spirit \$171

Washington, DC (IAD) United or Delta \$189
Denver, CO (DEN) Frontier \$208
Fort Lauderdale, FL (FLL) Spirit \$213
Chicago, IL (ORD) American \$244
Los Angeles, CA (LAX) Spirit \$250
Miami, FL (MIA) Delta \$265
New Orleans, LA (MSY) Delta \$269
Myrtle Beach, SC (MYR) Delta \$299
San Diego, CA (SAN) Delta \$299
Fort Myers, FL (RSW) Delta \$328
Des Moines, IA (DSM) Delta \$329
Providence, RI (PVD) Delta \$399
Burlington, VT (BTV) Delta \$409
San Francisco, CA (SFO) Delta \$414
Salt Lake City, UT (SLC) Delta \$449
Seattle, WA (SEA) Delta \$463
Portland, OR (PDX) Delta \$499
Anchorage, AK (ANC) Delta \$798
Honolulu, HI (HNL) Delta \$1,248



Bus Drivers Wanted

No experience necessary! 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 \$23.00, provide a 5-week PAID training program leading to a Commercial Driver's License, and operate Michigan's newest and largest fleet of motorcoaches. Among other benefits, full-time drivers 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

Worth noting, too, drivers with the highest seniority currently earn \$33.82 an hour. Indian Trails truly appreciates the hard work of its staff members—it's a 115-year-old, family-run company that values fairness, honesty, teamwork, and service excellence. [Click here to learn more and ask to get in touch with our recruiter, Jennifer Freeman.](#)

Happy 249th Birthday, America!



On July 4, 1776—249 years ago—the Founding Fathers of America's original 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence. Drafted largely by Thomas Jefferson, it proclaims freedom from the oppressive rule of Great Britain.

Including this famous passage—"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"—it ends with fighting words: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

Since then, July 4 has been celebrated with fireworks, parades, picnics and concerts as America's Birthday!

Fascinating facts about the founding of our great nation:

- When the Declaration of Independence was signed, the fighting had been ongoing for more than a year—since April 1775. That's when local militiamen fought British soldiers in the Battles of Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, marking the "shot heard round the world" that started the Revolutionary War.
- George Washington, who would become America's first president, did not sign the Declaration along with other Founding Fathers in Philadelphia. He was in what's now Manhattan, N.Y., commanding the Continental Army as it prepared to battle the British again. On July 9, he received a copy of the Declaration from John Hancock and read it to his ecstatic troops, some of whom promptly pulled down a nearby statue of Britain's King George III.
- In 1778, France joined the war on the side of the colonists. Its assistance helped the Continental Army to force the British surrender at Yorktown, Va., in 1781. Great Britain formally recognized the independence of the United States in the Treaty of Paris on Sept. 3, 1783.
- John Adams, America's second president, and Thomas Jefferson, our third president, were both Founding Fathers of America. As young men, they were

political rivals. In later life, they became close friends. Both died on the same day—July 4, 1826, our 50th Independence Day.

Why Drive?

Booking is easy, click here to view schedules.



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www.michiganflyer.com

