



Objects on the Mackinac Bridge are closer than they appear.

Michigan muscle

Forced carries—and forced induction—with the Shelby GT500 / by Matt Rudy



A cheerful woman walks up outside baggage claim in Detroit and hands me the keys to what is essentially a wingless fighter plane—a carbon-colored Shelby GT500—so there must be something to sign, right? I can't take a vanilla-plain Impala with polyester seats out of the Avis lot without showing ID and a credit card.

I sign the bottom of a

sheet that says you can take the car with two conditions. It's got to be back to Ford headquarters on Monday. Check. And I'm responsible for my own moving violations. Yikes.

Keeping the supercharged, 500-horsepower Shelby under 90 would prove to be the most challenging part of my three-day, 1,000-mile tour of Michigan's gawk-worthy lakeshore drives—even harder than rallying, over-golfed and leg-weary, for that 8:30 tee time at Forest Dunes on getaway

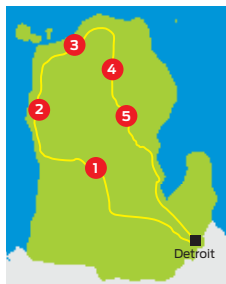
day with an old college buddy.

It takes less than 10 miles on freshly-paved I-96 toward East Lansing to realize that this car is designed to mesmerize you into driving at, um, extra-legal speeds. It isn't watching the speedometer jump that does it. It's the boost gauge that sits top-middle in the dash cluster. Downshift from sixth to fifth, hit the gas and you can see exactly how much air is getting forced into the supercharger. It sets

civilized road manners back at least a generation, especially if you're pumping something bass-heavy out of the stereo. The subwoofers are built into the doors, and the driver's side one rumbles against your calf in the snug cockpit. You don't have to be an 18-year-old boy to get carried away by all the stimulation.

REGISTRATION

STATE **Michigan**
MILES **1,113**
COURSES VISITED **5**
TOTAL COST OF GOLF **\$430**
TOTAL COST OF FUEL **\$231.20**
GALLONS OF FUEL BURNED **71**
FARM TRACTORS PASSED **3**



TEE TIMES

- 1. TULLYMORE G.C.**
(★★★★½), Stanwood, tullymoregolf.com, 800-972-4837, \$45-\$180.
- 2. ARCADIA BLUFFS G.C.**
(★★★★), Arcadia, arcadiabluffs.com, 231-889-3001, \$75-\$180.
- 3. BAY HARBOR G.C.**
(★★★★½), Petoskey, bayharbortgolf.com, 540-884-1600, \$129-\$199.
- 4. THREETOPS C.**
(not rated), Gaylord, treetops.com, 989-732-6711, \$60.
- 5. FOREST DUNES G.C.**
(not yet rated), Roscommon, forestdunesgc.com, 866-386-3764, \$75-\$150.



SHELBY GT500

MSRP \$41,930 (base), \$47,955 (as tested).
SEATS Four (sort of).
TRUNK SPACE Room for two golf bags.
ENGINE 500-horsepower, 5.4-liter supercharged V8.
OPTIONS Sirius satellite radio (\$195), navigation system (\$1,995), high-intensity headlights (\$525).
THE GOOD Most power for the price. Faster than you'll ever need to go. Giant brakes can stop time.
THE BAD Same interior as the \$30K Mustang GT. Cranky in stop-and-go traffic. Low chin spoiler makes parking an adventure.

Continuing a tradition he started in 1965 with the wicked GT350, race builder Carroll Shelby nastifies 10,000 of these stock Mustangs a year at his Las Vegas shop—adding the supercharger, giant brakes and other goodies. He can say he did his job when the only complaint about the GT500 is that the short first gear and industrial-strength clutch make it a hard car to drive slow. Still, \$42,000 for a midlife crisis—fully covered by Ford's standard new car warranty—is about as cheap as you can get and still be called irresponsible.



FRIDAY

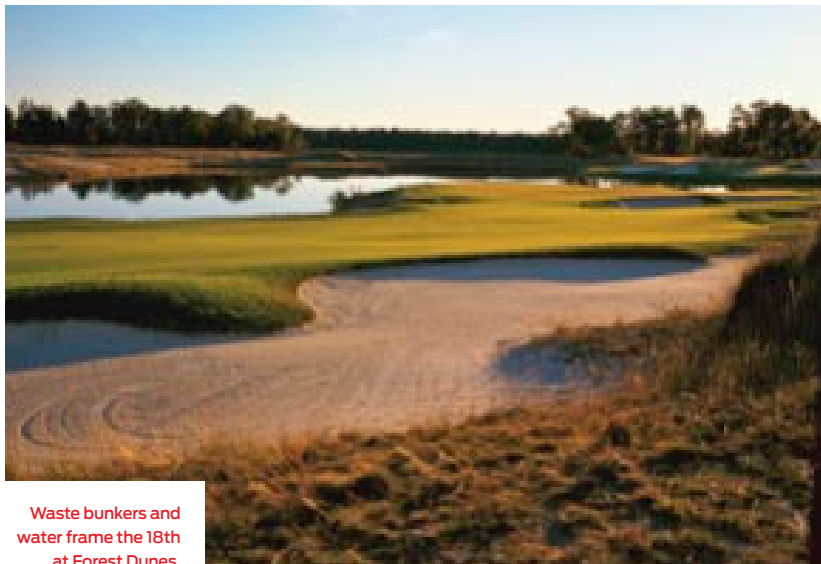
With everything stowed—the GT500's back seat isn't much more than decoration, but the trunk actually fits two golf bags—we tore off for Stanwood and Tullymore Golf Club, No. 14 on Golf Digest's list of America's 100 Greatest Public Courses. You can stay at a new 44-room hotel right on the property and play Tullymore's equally worthy sister course, St. Ives, but we grabbed a sandwich and headed for the coast.

Route 22 traces the western coastline from Manistee to the tip of the Michigan mitten—the state's prime golf meridian. New pavement, sparse traffic and lake views make it easy to miss the turn for Arcadia Bluffs. Don't. The Warren Henderson-Rick Smith design doesn't just sit on Lake Michigan. Take a wrong step on the edge of the 11th green and you're *in* Lake Michigan.



SATURDAY

You could build a self-contained golf trip just from the menu of choices at the



Waste bunkers and water frame the 18th at Forest Dunes.

Forest Dunes' finishing holes make for the perfect weekend bet-settler.

three Boyne resorts, but the 27-hole Bay Harbor complex in Petoskey (a twisty, 90-minute, don't-do-it-at-night drive from Traverse City) is the jewel, and not just for the golf. The wide-open Links and industrial age Quarry are the must-play nines, but the rooms and food at the imposing lakeside Inn almost make it OK to get rained out.

From Bay Harbor, it's a 20-minute jaunt to I-75, the state's north-south Interstate spine, and the route back to Detroit. We didn't have time for a full 18 at one of Treetops Resorts' four championship layouts, but the bite-size Threetops is a perfect 1,400-yard appetizer. Fred Couples won \$200,000 in the 2006 Par-3 Shootout by making birdie from four feet on No. 9. I missed the green, made bogey and lost \$10.



SUNDAY

It's a good thing the Detroit Carpenter's Union rescued Forest Dunes from bankruptcy in 2003. Not only is the wild Tom Weiskopf design Michigan's version of Pine Valley, but in the clubhouse you can see what checking every box on the finish carpentry order form gets you. Even the crown moldings have crown moldings.

Forest Dunes' fescue-strafed finishing holes make for the perfect weekend bet-settler. I lost our junior-varsity version of the Ryder Cup *again* by three-putting both 17 (after driving the green from 302 yards) and 18 (after my buddy saved par from the water hazard shown in the photo *above*).

Luckily, we weren't playing for pink slips. The Ford people probably wouldn't have been so cheerful if I brought my friend's Pontiac G6 back instead. 🐾

MAP: JASON LEE • FOREST DUNES: STEPHEN SZURLEJ