



Southern **MINNESOTA**

Travel Guide | Get out and explore Southern Minnesota

Scenic Byways
Parks & Trails
Historic Towns
Outdoor Adventures

SO
MN

m
EXPLORE
MINNESOTA

naturally different



Visit Mankato

Greater Mankato, located just 75 miles southwest of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, offers travelers adventure, delicious dining, fun entertainment, and rich cultural experiences throughout all four seasons. Here, you can find charming small-town hospitality mixed with big-city amenities, making this the perfect destination for a fun getaway for family and friends. Our community offers experiences you would expect from a major metro and the charm you can get only from a close-knit community.

Scan the code to learn more!



Mankato
Now Playing





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Lower Sioux Wacipi, Morton



Camden Park, Marshall



Tour de Pepin, Lake City

SOUTHERN MINNESOTA TRAVEL GUIDE

In cooperation with
SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
TOURISM ASSOCIATION
228 S Main Street
Le Sueur, MN 56058

SMTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Cassi Weiss
Anne Johnson
Jane Wildung Lanphere
Jeanne Zwart

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

Dawn Schreiber
southernminnesotatourism@gmail.com

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Madelia MN
dmcdonald@4hop.com
www.4hop.com

Creative/Layout & Design

Dawn Schreiber 2024
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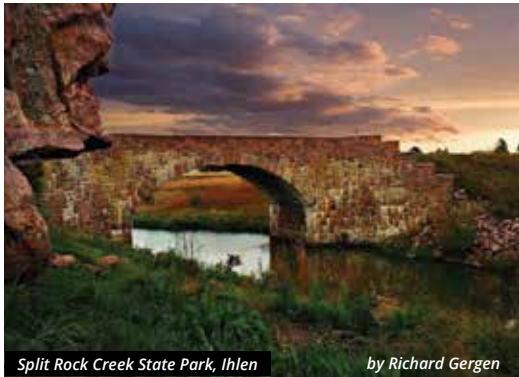
Cover photo: Winnewissa Falls, Pipestone National Monument by Linda Flanagan



naturally different™



Morning on Circle Trail at Pipestone National Monument by Julie Carrow



Split Rock Creek State Park, Ihlen by Richard Gergen



Highway 75 King Of Trails

The Highway 75 King of Trails is a 414-mile long highway that runs from Winnipeg, Canada to Dallas, TX. The historic highway runs along Minnesota's western edge. Stop at the Brandenburg Gallery in Luverne if you're an arts lover. Spend a day or weekend at Split Rock Creek State Park in Ihlen for camping, swimming, fishing, and horse riding trails.



Magelssen Bluff, Rushford by Kaye Bernard



Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway

Experience extraordinary views as you drive 88 miles through the bluff country of southeast Minnesota. You'll pass Amish homesteads and historic communities as well as Forestville State Park and Mystery Cave. Take a midway break in Lanesboro to bike the Root River Trail or rent a tube and float down the Root River itself.



Hormel Historic House, Austin



Shooting Star Scenic Byway

The Shooting Star Scenic Byway is one of the first designated wildflower routes in the state. The 31-mile route travels through rich farm land with remnants of tall grass prairie. The Byway also passes Lake Louise State Park along with numerous bed and breakfasts, golf courses, swimming pools, and 4 quaint communities.



Great River Bluffs State Park, Winona



Apple Blossom Drive Scenic Byway

Enjoy Apple Blossom Drive Scenic Byway in any season to experience dazzling vistas of the bluff region. Visit in the spring to enjoy the sights and smells of apple blossoms and come back in the fall to taste the many apple varieties on this 17-mile byway.



Minneopa State Park, Mankato



Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway

Travel along the Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway starting in Browns Valley (located along the Laurentian Continental Divide) and ending in Belle Plaine. This 287-mile byway runs through 4 state parks, 2 casinos, dozens of historical sites and museums, including the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame located in New Ulm.

Noteworthy *Drives*



Great River Road

Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway

Drive through history on the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway. Take the road that connects sites in Minnesota where Laura and her family lived and traveled. Visit the Spring Valley Methodist Church Museum in Spring Valley where Laura and her husband attended services.

Great River Road

Follow the Mississippi River on the 575-mile long Great River Road. Drive through dramatic bluff land, lakes and forests, enchanting towns and a variety of outdoor activities.



> Minnesota River Valley REGION

Through Forests and River Roads... Find Your Adventure

Linnaeus Arboretum, St. Peter (Brian Knutson)

Minnesota River Valley REGION

The Minnesota River Valley is known for great parks and trails. Enjoy rivers, lakes, ravines, bluffs, natural prairies and forested areas for breathtaking landscapes while you explore this historic region of Minnesota.

TRAVEL THROUGH HISTORY

Visit **Lac qui Parle State Park**, known in its Dakota name as "Lake That Speaks". This is the site, that is now **Montevideo**, where Joseph Renville worked alongside missionaries to create the first written Dakota alphabet. Walk along the trails that

are open from dawn until dusk.

See **Fort Ridgley State Park**, just 30 minutes outside of **New Ulm**. Explore the ruins of a once-thriving outpost and learn about its role in the U.S.-Dakota War at **Fort Ridgley Historic Site**. This was a major event in Minnesota's early history. In the summer check out the hiking, biking and horse trails. Fish in the pond or trout stream and camp in the renovated farmhouse with access to the Fair Ridge Trail.

The **Lower Sioux Agency** in **Morton** is where the U.S.-Dakota War broke out.

This historic site is managed by the Lower Sioux Indian Community. You'll find a Dakota history exhibit, restored 1861 US government building, scenic Minnesota river trails and weekend programs on Dakota life and nature.

Traverse des Sioux was a crossroads and meeting place for thousands of years. In 1851, it witnessed the signing of the treaty between the Dakota and the U.S. government, leading to the U.S.-Dakota War a decade later. Take a self-guided tour of the **Traverse des Sioux** historic site in **St. Peter** to learn more.



Sacred Heart Area Museum
By Sonja Thune, Sacred Heart

Stop in the **Sacred Heart Area Museum** to see artifacts from early pioneer days.

Take a group tour at the **Arv Hus Museum** in **Milan** to see the work of world famous Norwegian rosemålers, a mural by Augsburg artist Phillip Thompson, and other local culture and history displays.



Arv Hus Museum, Milan

IN TOWN VISITS

The award-winning **Meander Art Crawl** is a free self-guided tour of artist studios featuring 40 local artists from the Upper Minnesota River Valley. This event has more than 30 individual studios in and near the Western Minnesota Communities of **Ortonville, Appleton, Madison, Milan, Dawson, Montevideo, and Granite Falls**. Mark your calendar for the next Meander Art Crawl.

The **Montevideo Arts Project** has installed three pieces of public art in **Montevideo**: a painted train car, a mural in the center of downtown, and a stained glass tractor.

Following a visit to **Birch Coulee Battlefield**, where U.S. and Dakota tensions came to a head in one of the hardest-fought battles of the U.S.-Dakota War, stop at the **Renville County Historical Society and Museum** in **Morton** and view rotating exhibits and historical buildings on the property. Then make your way to the **Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site**, outside of **Morton**, where you will learn about Dakota culture and history and examine the causes of the U.S.-Dakota War.

Learn why **New Ulm** is the State Capitol of Fun when you visit the **Minnesota Music Hall of Fame**, the **Hermann Monument**, or **dance with the Narren** at one of the town's many festivals.

While visiting **Mankato**, immerse yourself in fine arts, dining, sporting events, and historical attractions in the **City Center Mankato**, including **Silo Art**, a new artwork installation on city silos that echoes the surrounding landscape and architecture while displaying a comprehensive community focus. Visit the **Arts Center of Saint Peter** to experience the active hub of arts in **Saint Peter**.



Top Minnesota River Valley Attractions

- **BIG STONE COUNTY MUSEUM | ORTONVILLE** A walking trail allows visitors to see outdoor historic displays, including fossils and a display of models of a farmhouse.
- **MINNESOTA MACHINERY MUSEUM | HANLEY FALLS** Featuring 26,000 sq ft of implements, tools, tractors, and gas engines in mint condition on a beautiful six-acre site, its mission is to recapture a century of stories about farm life.
- **FAGEN FIGHTERS MUSEUM | GRANITE FALLS** See the pristine collection of fully operational, active aircraft and vehicles from World War II.
- **BIRCH COULEE BATTLEFIELD | MORTON** This historic site is where U.S. and Dakota tensions came to a head in one of the hardest-fought battles of the U.S.-Dakota War.
- **AUGUST SCHELL BREWERY | NEW ULM** Established in 1860, this stands as the oldest brewery in Minnesota. Enjoy a brewery tour and sample some of America's finest beers.
- **CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN MINNESOTA | MANKATO** Spark natural curiosity of your children through the power of play in a learning environment.
- **TREATY SITE HISTORY CENTER | ST. PETER** Explore striking exhibits about Dakota culture, prairie life, and the many facets of the 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux.



Fagen Fighters Museum, Granite Falls



Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota, Mankato



Tatanka Bluffs Corridor, Redwood Falls



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Kerfoot Canopy Tour near **Henderson** offers more than a mile of zip-lining routes and 14 lines varying in height and speed.

Put your mountain bike on the car rack and travel to **Seven Mile Creek Park** outside of **St. Peter** to explore 11 miles of trails through the river valley.

Downhill ski at **Mount Kato Ski Area**. With a vertical drop of 240 ft and longest run of 2,800 ft this is the perfect place to ski, snowboard, or tube in the **Mankato** area.



Seven Mile Creek Park, St. Peter



FAMILY FUN

Bring your kids to the **Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota** in **Mankato** to spark natural curiosity of your children through the power of play in a learning environment.

The **Ney Nature Center**, a Le Sueur County Park in **Henderson** is home to 446 acres of all the natural world has to offer, including forests, prairie, meadows, bluffs, creeks, and a variety of wildlife.



Ney Nature Center, Henderson



PARKS & TRAILS

Whether you hike, bike, fish, or enjoy a good game of disc golf, **Land of Memories Park** in **Mankato** has something for everyone.

Enjoy the abundance of nature in the 6 state parks in the Minnesota River Valley region: **Big Stone Lake, Flandrau, Fort Ridgely, Lac qui Parle, Minneopa, Monson Lake**. Whether you're on the hunt for waterfalls, wildflowers, or wildlife, you will be sure to find it.



Fort Ridgely Historic Site, Fairfax



CAMPING

The Minnesota River Valley Region has numerous unique camping opportunities for tents or RVs. It shouldn't be too difficult to get a waterfront site. Try **Sportsman Park** in **Sleepy Eye** or **Lake Shore RV Park** near **Odessa**.

Spend your weekend in **Walnut Grove** at **Plum Creek Park** and enjoy one of their six new Camper Cabins, complete with sleeping for six, charcoal grill, fire pit, and access to restrooms and showers.



Ramsey Park, Redwood Falls



HOPS AND GRAPES

Sleepy Eye Brewing Co. in **Sleepy Eye** is a Coffee shop by day and brewery by night in the historic PIX Theater.

At **Grandview Valley Winery** in **Belview** all of the wine is made from 100% Minnesota grown grapes. **Rivendell** at **Grandview** is their 21+ cocktail lounge.

Sip authentic beers that reflect the heritage of the region and its people at the **Mankato Brewery** in **North Mankato**.

Morgan Creek Vineyards in **New Ulm**, is Minnesota's only underground winery.



Mankato Brewery, North Mankato



ARTS & CULTURE

The **Meander Art Crawl** in **Appleton** is a free self-guided tour of artist studios featuring 40 local artists from the Upper Minnesota River Valley.

The **Grand Center for Arts & Culture** and **State Street Theater** in **New Ulm** provide education and entertainment for all ages.

CityArt Walking Sculpture Tour is an exciting exhibit of outdoor sculptures displayed year round in Mankato & North Mankato.



Grand Center for Arts & Culture, New Ulm

Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway



Road Trip

➤ Hit the road to travel through the unique and historic Minnesota River Valley with friends or family.

The first stop on the road trip in the Minnesota River Valley Region is in **Ortonville** at **Big Stone Lake State Park**, the mouth of the Minnesota River. Enjoy a day out on the lake and catch some walleye, northern pike, or yellow perch and bluegills. Hike through the park, relax with a picnic in the **Meadowbrook Area** and take a dip in the swimming beach. Be sure to stop at the **Big Stone County Museum** and see the historic farmhouse and log cabins.

Continue your road trip in the Minnesota River Valley Region with a stop just outside of **Granite Falls** at the **Fagen Fighter Museum**, home to a pristine collection of fully operational, active aircraft and vehicles from World War II. This self-guided experience gives a rare look into the lives and legacy of the Greatest Generation. Also, take in the **Andrew Volstead House Museum** and visit the Volstead Act's namesake house, known as the National Prohibition Act of 1920.

Next is a stop in **Redwood Falls**, at **Ramsey Park**, the largest municipal park in the State. At 256 acres, Ramsey Park is known as the "Little Yellowstone of Minnesota" and features campground facilities,

shelter houses, four miles of paved hiking trails, a DNR trout stream, scenic overlooks of Ramsey Falls, and a zoo.

Travel next to **New Ulm** to hear the 45-foot tall **Glockenspiel** chime throughout the day and playing programmed pieces at noon, 1, 3, 5, and 6 pm. The Glockenspiel houses 37 bells with a total weight of more than two tons and depicts characters from the city's German heritage. Don't miss a stop at **Schell's Brewery!**

Head outdoors and follow the **Red Jacket Trail** to stretch your legs and enjoy the beautiful scenery in **Mankato**. The 6.3-mile mostly paved trail follows the route of an old railroad and runs to nearby **Rapidan**. While in Rapidan take in the views atop the **Rapidan Dam** and grab a mouthwatering piece of pie at the **Rapidan Dam Store**.

And last stop on the Minnesota River Valley Region for this road trip is to catch the **Henderson Classic Car Roll-in**. This popular free event features over 250 vehicles and 100 bikes every Tuesday night in the summer. This and so much more awaits you on your next road trip in the Minnesota River Valley.



Redwood Falls
Ramsey Park Zoo



Odessa
Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge



Red Jacket Trail, Mankato

Explore the Redwood Area



Redwood Area Chamber & Tourism
 200. S Mill St. Redwood Falls, MN 56283
 507-637-2828 chamber@redwoodfalls.org
 redwoodfalls.org



Redwood Area Community Center
 901 Cook St. Redwood Falls, MN 56283
 507-616-7444 recdept@ci.redwood-falls.mn.us
 redwoodareacommunitycenter.com



REDWOOD LODGE
 Redwood Lodge
 1382 E. Bridge St. Redwood Falls, MN 56283
 507-644-5700
 reservations@redwoodlodge.com
 redwoodlodge.com

The Vintage Inn

REDWOOD FALLS, MN
The Vintage Inn
 Luxury Vacation Home Rental
 103 E. 2nd St. Redwood Falls, MN 56283
 507-627-1875
 vintageinnredwoodfalls.com

Western Minnesota PRAIRIE WATERS

EXPLORE **m** MINNESOTA

Big Stone, Chippewa,
 Lac qui Parle, Swift
 & Yellow Medicine Counties



← --- FREE ADVENTURES



GERMANS HAVE MORE FUN

- SHOPPING
- DINING
- BREWERIES
- FESTIVALS
- GERMAN CULTURE

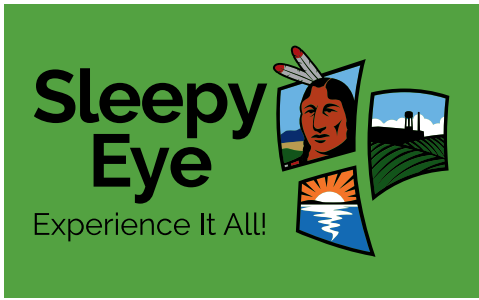



EXPLORE **m** MINNESOTA



newulm.com

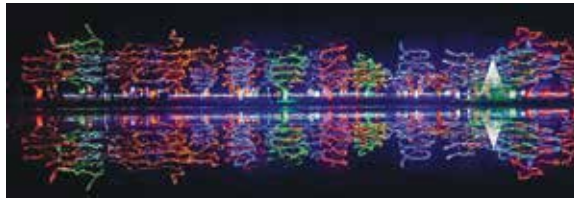




Plum Creek Park, Walnut Grove



www.sleepyeyechamber.com



DISCOVER ST. PETER

EAT



STAY



SHOP



PLAY





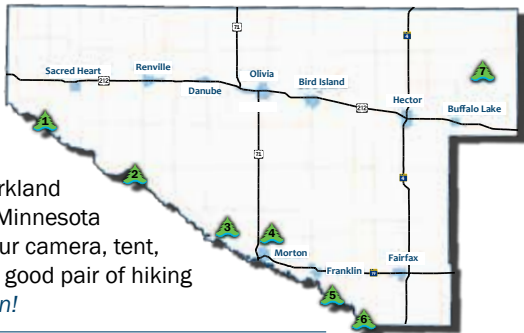
RENVILLE COUNTY

Learn more: www.renvillecountymn.gov

MORE THAN EXPECTED!

Whether you choose to visit for a day, or stay for a lifetime, you will discover **"More Than Expected"** in Renville County!

Visit 1,300 acres of County parkland located along the banks of the Minnesota River. You may want to bring your camera, tent, canoe, binoculars, horse, and a good pair of hiking shoes. *We hope to see you soon!*



320-523-3747
ParksDept@renvillecountymn.gov

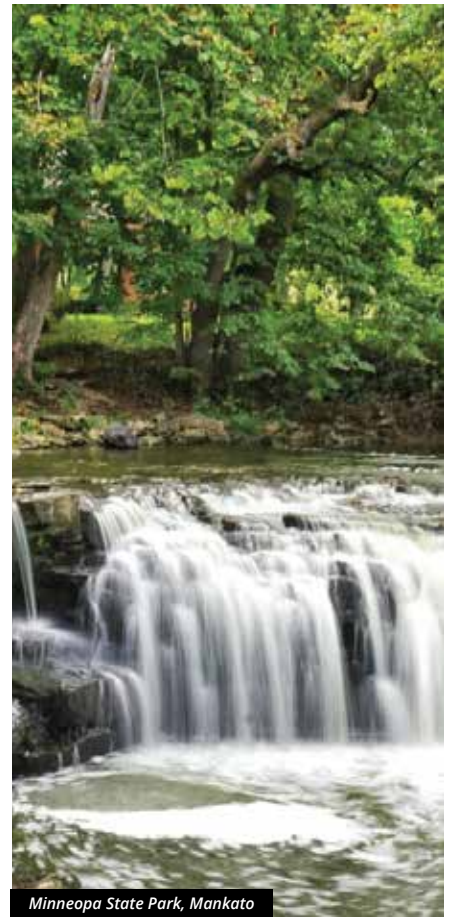


320-523-3656
EDA@renvillecountymn.gov

PARK LEGEND:

- 1 - Skalbekken
- 2 - Vicksburg
- 3 - Beaver Falls
- 4 - Birch Coulee
- 5 - Anderson Lake
- 6 - Mack Lake
- 7 - Lake Allie

Renville County Parks
 Renville County Housing & Economic Development



Minneopa State Park, Mankato

WITNESS FLYING HISTORY

PRESERVE HISTORY. PROMOTE PATRIOTISM. INSPIRE THE FUTURE.

SO MUCH TO SEE AND LEARN

- ★ Iconic Aircraft
- ★ Exhibits and Art
- ★ Waco Glider
- ★ Interactive Media
- ★ Authentic Artifacts
- ★ Ground Vehicles
- ★ WWII Library
- ★ D-Day Exhibit
- ★ Holocaust Exhibit



NEW NAVY HANGAR

PLAN YOUR VISIT TODAY

- ★ Located at Lenzen-Roe-Fagen Memorial airport near Granite Falls, Minnesota



FOLLOW US!



Fun and Free!



Ramsey Park, Redwood Falls

Experience the regions this season without breaking the bank. Hike, bike, swim, explore and learn in Southern Minnesota. There's affordable fun for everyone in every town.

Minnesota River Valley Region

REDWOOD FALLS

Ramsey Park, the "Little Yellowstone of Minnesota", is 256 acres and the largest municipal park in Minnesota. The park serves as a focal point for community events and festivals, as well as offering 4 miles of hiking trails, a DNR trout stream, a campground, and a zoo.

MANKATO

Visit the Carnegie Art Center in Mankato to view local art displays. The building was built as a library in 1902 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

NEW ULM

Visit the Glockenspiel, a 45 foot free standing clock that plays programmed music pieces with 3 foot figurines three times per day.

Prairie Land Region

HENDRICKS

Experience pioneer life with a school, train depot, Sears and Roebuck house, and an Icelandic church at the Lincoln County Pioneer Museum.

MARSHALL

Bring your skates or boards or bikes

to Marshall's Boards and Blades Tier 1 outdoor skate park.

PIPESTONE

Take a self-guided walking tour of historic downtown to see pink Sioux Quartzite architectural gems listed on the national register of historic places. While you are there, snap a selfie with the World's Largest Ceremonial Pipe.

ST. JAMES

Embark on a self-guided Artwalk tour of downtown St. James. Pick up the Artwalk brochure so you don't miss any of the 20 public art installations.

Southern Lakes Region

NORTHFIELD

See farm animals at the Fossum Family Alpaca Farm and stop in the shop to buy everything from hats to rugs.

LE SUEUR

Free to anyone is the Elysian Area Library & Heritage Center in Elysian which houses the local library upstairs, with its one-of-a-kind large exceptional display of "Dresden style" lace draped dolls. Open during library hours, save some time to peruse the many and varied static exhibits from dolls to fans to eggs, plus locally-based displays. Self-guided tours any time or call ahead to arrange a guide.

FAIRMONT

Cedar Creek Park is home to paved trails, nature trails and three 18 hole Disc Golf Courses.

Bluff Country Region

ZUMBROTA

Check out the covered bridge in Zumbrota. The Zumbrota Covered Bridge is listed on the National Historic Register and is surrounded by the 85-acre Covered Bridge Park.

HARMONY

Have fun in the Musical Notes Playground where you can make music with life-sized instruments.

RED WING

Visit the Pottery Museum with 6,000 vintage pieces, special exhibits, hands-on classes, and a gift shop.

MINNEISKA

Visit Gray's Crazy Castle. It was built in 1877 and was three stories high and decorated with towers, steeples, verandas, and pagodas. It was also in Architectural Digest. Legend has it that when steamboat lights flashed across the castle at night, Gray's daughters would dance with white sheets over themselves on one of the balconies.



➤ *Prairie Land*

Revel in the open skies and rolling prairies

Blue Mounds State Park, Luverne

Tall grass prairies are just the beginning of the wonders the Prairie Land region has to offer. Find artwork carved in and from stone by indigenous peoples. See bison roam. Enjoy time hiking, biking, and exploring the region's beautiful state parks, national monument, and historic sites.

Travel Through History

Visit **Fort Belmont** in **Jackson** to tour the replica 1862 civilian fort. Built to protect settlers, the site includes the

Delafield Church from 1902, a log cabin and stockade, a blacksmith shop, the 1873 Lygsgard farmhouse and summer kirchen, and a 1/3 replica working grist mill. Visit the weekend after Labor Day to also experience the **Annual Rendezvous**.

Take a tour of the **Mountain Lake Heritage Village** in **Mountain Lake**. The Heritage Village was founded in 1972 to preserve the life of people in Mountain Lake dating back to the 1800's. Explore the village with homes, churches, schools and various other businesses that tell the story

of what historic life was like in the prairie land region.

Experience the prairie of the 1880's at **Sod House on the Prairie** in **Sanborn**. See the prairie as Laua Ingalls Wilder knew it with sod houses and big skies. Time your visit for a prairie sunset.

The **Rock County Veterans Memorial Building** features award-winning photographs by Jim Brandenburg and the **Herreid Military Museum** tells the story of the sacrifice and service of our veterans.

Prairie Land REGION



Princess Theatre, St. James

Come watch current movies in the comfortable setting of the Historic Princess Theater in Downtown St. James, Minnesota.

Enjoy the paths throughout Independence Park in Marshall. Playgrounds, picnic areas, and restrooms make for a great rest stop. Plus it's a good place to view the 4th of July fireworks.



IN TOWN VISITS

Visit **Plum Creek** in **Walnut Grove**. Laura Ingalls Wilder lived in this area during the 1870's. Spend a night or a weekend at the Plum Creek County Park Campground with friends and family.

Enjoy **Worthington** while biking around **Lake Okabena**. Visit one of the 23 city parks and the disc golf course. Visit a vineyard or brewery for a taste of the local wines and beers.

Spend your day in the tallgrass prairie at **Touch the Sky Prairie** near **Luverne**. The prairie is part of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge.

Travel to **Marshall** and visit the 30 shops that have everything from bath to clothing to home decor. Then grab lunch at one of the many tasty restaurants or stop in at **Brau Brothers Brewery** for happy hour.

Unwind in **Slayton**, the Hub of Southwest Minnesota while playing nine holes of golf at the beautiful **Slayton Country Club**. Then head to Broadway Avenue to shop, grab a coffee, and snap a selfie in front of the new downtown mural.



Top Prairie Land Attractions

- **PIPESTONE NATIONAL MONUMENT | PIPESTONE** Explore the visitors center, museum, exhibits and pipestone carving demonstration.
- **CAMDEN REGIONAL TRAIL | MARSHALL** The Camden Regional Trail is a paved, multi-purpose recreational trail extending from Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) through the City of Marshall, and connecting area residents to Camden State Park.
- **JEFFERS PETROGLYPHS | COMFREY** Images of humans, turtles, buffalo and thunderbirds tell the stories of Native American ancestors spanning more than 7,000 years.
- **PLUM CREEK PARK | WALNUT GROVE** Recognized by *On The Banks Of Plum Creek*, the book by Laura Ingalls Wilder talks about her life on Plum Creek. Visit the area that she lived for a few years of her childhood in the 1870's.
- **END-O-LINE RAILROAD PARK AND MUSEUM | CURRIE** This fun and educational destination features over 13 historic buildings and structures that preserve the railroad history of the Currie and Shetek area in the 20th century.
- **BLUE MOUNDS STATE PARK BISON BUGGY | LUVERNE** Experience the sights and smells of the prairie as you travel across the bison range on this educational 90-minute bus tour. Bison are wild and unpredictable and may not be visible along the route - or they may be as close as 75 feet.



End-O-Line Railroad Park and Museum, Currie



Roundhouse, Inc., St. James

Visit **Roundhouse, Inc.**, in **St. James** where the local model railroad enthusiasts share their art and passion for local railroad history.

Learn about the history of Native Americans at **Jeffers Petroglyphs**. Spanning more than 7,000 years, their sacred rock carvings include images of people, turtles, buffalo, and thunderbirds.



Jeffers Petroglyphs, Comfrey





WINTER ADVENTURES

Travel to **Kilen Woods State Park** to snowmobile on 3.5 miles of ungroomed trails and snowshoe through any area of the park. They also have a designated sledding hill, so don't forget the sled!

Visit **Pipestone National Monument** to snowshoe throughout the park during winter months to take in the natural beauty of the area.

Try ice fishing on any of the f5 Fairmont lakes.



Pipestone National Monument, Pipestone



TRAILS

The **Casey Jones State Trail**, in **Pipestone**, is indeed named after the famed railroad engineer Casey Jones. The longest section of trail is built on an old railroad grade and is 12 miles long.

Lake Okabena Trail in Worthington circles Okabena Lake. The trail connects 8 city parks and includes a bicycle bridge.

Belmont County Park near **Jackson** has beginner to advanced mountain biking trails along the Des Moines River.



Currie



PARKS

Lake Shetek State Park is popular for its camping and recreation. The park sits on Lake Shetek which serves as the headwaters for the Des Moines River.

Enjoy camping, canoeing, and more in **Kilen Woods State Park**. Explore the small creeks, prairie grasslands and oak savannas as you meander through the park.

Experience the natural wonder of **Blue Mounds State Park**. Start with the Sioux Quartzite cliff that rises 100 feet from the plains.



Blue Mounds State Park, Luverne



CAMPING

Take your horses camping at **Camden State Park** for a weekend. The park also has semi-modern campsites. Or rent out the historic **Redwood Lodge**, built in 1935.

Stay in **Split Rock Creek State Park** for a night and see MN's largest single-span, stone arch bridge.

Plum Creek in **Walnut Grove** has 64 RV sites, along with tent sites and camper cabins. For Wilder fans, there is campground access to a trail along the banks of Plum Creek.



Camden State Park, Lynd



WILDLIFE & BIRDING

Visit **The Hole-in-the-Mountain Prairie**, a 1,157-acre prairie and oak savanna wildlife preserve located south of **Lake Benton**. The preserve is owned by The Nature Conservancy.

Meadowlark Prairies Outdoor Lab near St. James is made up of three distinct ecosystems: ponds, woods and prairies. It is a beautiful place to enjoy, relax, commune and experience peace and quiet and appreciate a quiet natural setting.



Meadowlark Prairies Outdoor Lab, St. James



FISHING

Catch Green Sunfish, Northern Pike, Walleye and more in **Heron Lake**.

When fishing in **Lake Shetek**, located by Currie, anglers can expect to catch White Crappie, Johnny Darter, Walleye and much more.

Take your boat out on to **Lake Sarah** to spend a day catching Bluegill, White Sucker, Carp and more.

Try your luck fishing for trout on Three Mile Creek west of Marshall.



Marsh's Landing On Lake Shetek, Murray County

Prairie Land REGION Highway 75 King of Trails Scenic Byway

Road Trip

Ashley Park, Jackson

➤ Travel to the region of big blue skies that blanket the open prairies that hold history, wildlife, parks and wonderful experiences for all.

Start your trip in **Marshall** with a morning shopping spree in the bustling downtown area. Spend your afternoon at **Camden State Park**; fishing, birdwatching, and hiking and enjoy the woodlands, oaks, maples and basswoods while you explore.

The next stop is **Pipestone** to visit southern Minnesota's only national park site, **Pipestone National Monument**. Watch Native American artisans hand-carve pipestone before walking Circle Trail to view **Winnewissa Falls** and Sioux quartzite rock formations amongst the prairie. Then head towards downtown to snap a selfie with the **World's Largest Ceremonial Pipe**. On Main Street, enjoy patio dining and a plethora of unique boutiques and **16 gargoyles**.

Travel south on the King of Trails to **Luverne**. Stop by the **History Center** on Main Street to see the third largest collection of nutcrackers in the world - "*It's jaw-dropping*". Quench your thirst with a favorite beverage and satisfy your taste buds with a delicious meal. Then spend some time browsing through the city's unique one-of-a-kind shops.

Head west on Hwy 90 to the last stop on this trip, **Worthington**. Look for the **Beach Nook** in Centennial Park to rent canoes, kayaks, or paddle boards by the hour. After you get off the water, try the local wine at the **Round Lake Vineyards and Winery** or the refreshing beer at **Forbidden Barrel Brewing Co.**

Hendricks

Marshall

Lake Benton

Pipestone



Luverne

Worthington



by Erica Valkir

Old Stone Face, Pipestone



Touch the Sky Prairie, Luverne



Camden Park, Marshall



Round Lake Vineyard, Round Lake by Anita Perrizo



Prairie Land REGION

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Take 16 Brewery, Luverne



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Blue Mounts State Park, Luverne

FENDT

New in 2024



Fendt® Lodge

May 2024 marks the grand opening of the new Fendt Lodge, in Jackson, MN.

The new Fendt Lodge is the premier destination for Fendt North America. Fendt's Rogator® applicator and track tractors, as well as TerraGator®, are manufactured in the Jackson factory.

The Fendt Lodge is a home away from home for North American farmers, and the home of one of agriculture's most exciting and cutting-edge brands.

Amenities of the Lodge include a Fendt brand history center, interactive product innovation displays, fully functioning product simulators and a Fendt gift shop.

The Lodge hosts frequent customer, dealer, and corporate gatherings, and is also open to the public. **We offer visitor tours through the tractor and sprayer assembly lines, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:00 a.m., or by appointment.**

Come experience Fendt—as you never have before—at the new Fendt Lodge.

For more information and to schedule a tour, visit www.FendtLodge.com

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Instagrammable Spots

Visit these spots to take photos and surprise your followers with the breathtaking views, natural wonders, and unique cultural elements that make SOMN a perfect region.



Celebration of Prince, Henderson



Ramsey Falls, Redwood Falls



Loveable Linus Statue, Sleepy Eye



Lou T. Fisk, Madison

by Erica Volkir

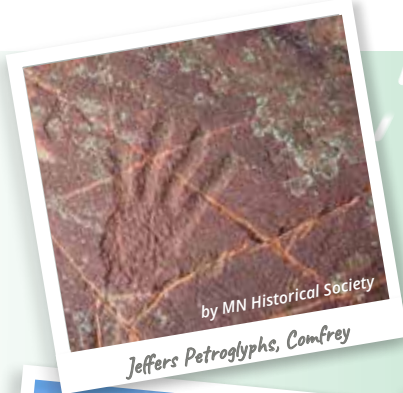


Paul Bunyan's Boat Anchor, Ortonville



World's Largest Mallard, Wheaton

Minnesota River Valley REGION



Jeffers Petroglyphs, Comfrey

by MN Historical Society



End-O-Line Railroad Park & Museum, Currie



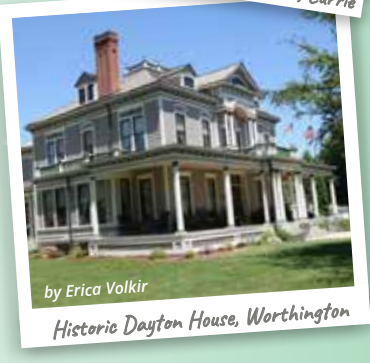
World's Largest Ceremonial Pipe, Pipestone

by Erica Volkir



9/11 Memorial, Marshall

by Erica Volkir



Historic Dayton House, Worthington

by Erica Volkir



Fort Belmont, Jackson

by Livewire

Prairie Land REGION



Experience Luverne... the Heart of the Prairie

With acres of preserved prairie, historic charm, a laidback vibe, and unreal sunsets... Luverne will quickly become a beloved destination. With towering, mature trees, a picturesque downtown, and a multitude of exciting places to see, this town is the perfect destination for a quick getaway or a long weekend.

On the banks of the Rock River in southwest Minnesota, Luverne is a place where time feels as if it's being stretched... giving us all a bit more time to "just be." Whether traversing the acres of Northern Tallgrass Prairie Refuge, enjoying a flight of craft beer at the local brewery, or catching a movie at the drive in, the city of Luverne is sure to leave an impression on your heart.

Escape to Luverne for a unique, unforgettable experience - so good you may not want to go home!

Heart of the Prairie REGION



Whether you're looking to sleep under the stars or enjoy modern amenities, Luverne has plenty of options. The area offers a **state park** known for its stunning prairie grasses and wildflowers, **campgrounds** that are perfect for families, and **hotels** that promise to provide all the comforts of home.



Along with modern attractions, Luverne offers visitors several opportunities to connect with the past and learn about the area's rich heritage. Witness incredible collections of rare artifacts at the **History Center** and **Herreid Military Museum** or visit the beautifully restored **Hinkly House** built in 1892.



Did you know that Luverne holds one of the **world's largest collections of nutcrackers**? Witness the impressive collection at the **History Center**, catch a wave of nostalgia at the **Verne Drive In** and **Palace Theatre** or marvel at the works of nature photographer and Luverne native Jim Brandenburg at the **Brandenburg Gallery**.



Having fun should be at the top of your vacation to do list! Enjoy a picnic and play at one of the parks sprinkled around the city, let the kids play at the fenced-in **splash pad**, visit **The Lake** for year-round fishing, or spend an afternoon on the country club's scenic **golf course**.



If you desire something a bit more active, take a brisk walk or a leisurely bike ride on the **15+ miles of paved trails** that weave through and around the city. Outdoor enthusiasts will be elated by **2,500 acres of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Refuge** only a few miles from Luverne!



Uncover **dining** and **shopping** experiences to make your trip a memorable one! Whether you're interested in a plated dinner, coffee and food on the go, a tasty treat, or a combination of the three, you're sure to find it in Luverne. Bring home something from one of the city's unique retail boutiques!

TAKE 16 BREWERY

This well-known, local brewery offers the best in craft beer. Come on down for a pint during the summer months and enjoy live music, food, outdoor games, and a large patio. Kid-friendly, family friendly and always fun – stop by Take 16.

TRAIL SYSTEM

Explore the 15+ miles of trail that weave through Luverne and connect the city to the prairie. Whether an impromptu evening walk or a lengthy afternoon bike ride, the trails are an easy way to get your body moving and get outdoors! Rent an E-bike, borrow-a-bike and enjoy your own two wheels...you'll enjoy the ride!

BLUE MOUNDS STATE PARK

This state park is full of surprises! Named for the 1.5 mile Sioux Quartzite cliff line that appeared blue to early settlers, Blue Mounds State Park allows for the unique experience of seeing bison in their native habitat. See the stunning prairie grasses and wildflowers, hear the songs of a variety of native birds, and experience camping, hiking, and rock-climbing on Minnesota's native prairie playground.

TOUCH THE SKY PRAIRIE

Hike the 1,000 acres of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Refuge at the Brandenburg Prairie Foundation's Touch the Sky Prairie. This beautifully preserved stretch of land is open to the public for activities such as hiking, bird watching, hunting and photography. Managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, you'll see hundreds of native plants brought back from near extinction as North America's native prairie has dwindled from more than 170 million acres to a mere 1% remaining. Touch the Sky Prairie is a "must-see" for all nature lovers.

HISTORY CENTER

Immerse yourself in the area's history by visiting the History Center. Uncover secrets in Rock County's past thru original furnishings, interactive displays, photographs and research materials covering over 150+ years – including a claim shanty, covered wagon and Luverne Auto built in 1911. Sidestep into the nutcracker gallery to learn why Luverne now has more nutcrackers than people and how the collection of 5,500+ (one of the largest in the world) came to be.

HERREID MILITARY MUSEUM

Dive into the rich history of Rock County veterans at the Herreid Military Museum located in the beautifully restored Rock County Jail & Sheriff's House. The museum shares the stories of Rock County's men and women who answered the call to serve told through their artifacts, photographs and documents covering the Civil War to the present. An extensive collection of WWII memorabilia shares the stories of Rock County heroes like Quentin Aanenson, who served as a P-47 pilot in the ETO and was featured in Ken Burns' 2007 epic documentary, *THE WAR*.

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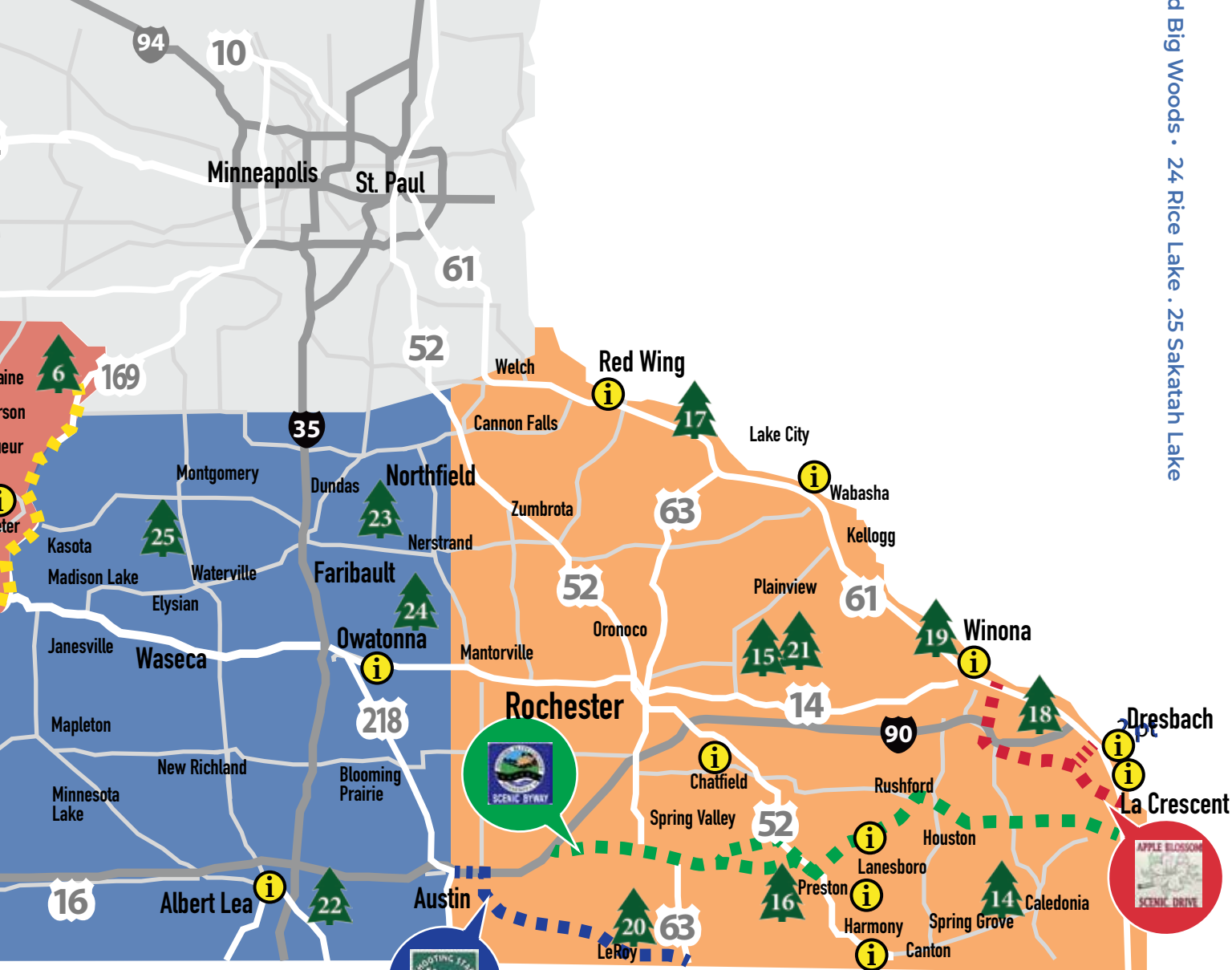


SOUTHERN MN REGIONS

- Minnesota River Valley*
- Prairielands*
- Southern Lakes*
- Bluff Country*

SCENIC BYWAYS & HISTORIC HIGHWAYS

- Apple Blossom*
- Historic Bluff Country*
- King of Trails*
- Minnesota River Valley*
- Shooting Star*





Southern Lakes REGION

Play on land and on water across the region

Fairmont, MN

Southern Lakes REGION

Visit some of the 10,000+ lakes of Minnesota in the Southern Lakes Region. Enjoy boating, fishing, swimming, and experience the well preserved history and local towns.

TRAVEL THROUGH HISTORY

Dive into the infamous history of Jesse James, an American outlaw, bank and train robber in the 1800's. The Northfield Historical Society in Northfield is the site of the Jesse-Younger Gang Bank Raid in 1876. This is where the outlaws were stopped by the townspeople in their plan

to rob the bank. Some of the gang, including Jesse James escaped. To celebrate this victory Northfield has the Defeat of Jesse James Day every year, the weekend after Labor Day. Also experience the Outlaw Trail that includes 13 stops along the gang's escape route.

Visit Le Sueur to see the W.W Mayo House. In 1859, Dr. William Worrall Mayo built this home and would later go on to open his first medical practice in the upstairs portion of the home. Take a tour of the home to learn about the Mayo Family and the history of the home.

Travel to Farmamerica in Waseca.

This 360-acre site includes a visitor center, a pond and prairie, many external historical buildings such as a one room schoolhouse and a 1930's farmstead.

View the history of bicycles displayed on the 16-foot walls inside the Rydjour Bike Museum in Austin. Each of the 80+ bicycles on display has its own story, beginning with the 1868 "Boneshaker" and includes one of the late Robin Williams' bikes. View the evolution of bicycles up to the most current styles.



RAD Zoo, Medford

Learn about the different kinds of reptiles that are at the Reptile, Amphibian Discovery (RAD) Zoo in Medford.

The Steele County Historical Society, established in 1949 has the village of Yesteryear and 19 structures for visitors to enjoy.



Dunnell House, Steele County Historical Society, Owatonna



IN TOWN VISITS

Discover blocks of unique buildings full of local shops offering apparel, antiques, furniture, oils and vinegars in the historic downtown area of **Northfield**. Stop to eat and drink at one of the many restaurants, cafes and breweries in the area. Enjoy a wonderful view of Cannon River while exploring.

Taste delightful, small-town food in **Faribault**. The restaurants range in flavor from Asian to Italian to American. Call ahead to schedule a tour of the Historic Fairbault Woolen Mills. Then enjoy a day of shopping in local boutiques for interesting finds and small town shopping adventures.

Check out unique gifts at the **Austin ArtWorks Center**, appreciate a book at **Sweet Reads** and enjoy many delightful dining options.

Stop in **Blue Earth** to visit the infamous **Green Giant Statue Park** to see the 55-foot statue. Then visit the **Giant Museum** with the largest collection of Jolly Green Giant memorabilia in the world and learn about the history of the canning factory.

See, touch and explore the experience of living rural at **Heritage Acres** in **Fairmont**. This agricultural interpretive center was created and designed to tell the ongoing story of farming.

Experience the thrill of skydiving at **Skydive Northstar, Waseca**. Climb in the aircraft to 10,000 feet and parachute down to see breathtaking views. Take a jump course to train for a solo skydive.



Top Southern Lakes Attractions

- **SAKATAH LAKE STATE PARK | WATERVILLE** Explore the 842 acre state park on a natural widening of the Cannon River.
- **MN STATE PUBLIC SCHOOL ORPHANAGE MUSEUM | OWATONNA** Where 10,635 neglected children were sent between 1886 and 1945. It was once the third largest institution of its kind in the nation.
- **BAYSIDE WATER SKI SHOW | ALBERT LEA** Bring the family and a picnic to take in the show at Edgewater Bay.
- **SOUTHERN MINNESOTA POND HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS | FAIRMONT** Is there a more Minnesota way to gather friends, families, old teammates, or just hockey enthusiasts to play and watch pond hockey? Enjoy a wonderful winter setting, and take in some jolly Fairmont in January!
- **FLAME THEATRE | WELLS** Catch your favorite Hollywood movies at the historic Flame Theatre, built in 1912. The facility is owned and operated by the city of Wells.
- **HEATHER CURLING CLUB | MAPLETON** This Olympic training facility has been in Mapleton since 1950. Curling is a Scottish tradition brought to Minnesota by Scottish settlers before Minnesota was a state. This club will teach newbies, or you can just watch the pros.



Pond Hockey Championships, Fairmont



Traxler's Hunting Preserve, Le Center

Spend a weekend at Traxler's Hunting Preserve from August through April during pheasant hunting season. Stay a night in one of their furnished lodges and grab dinner at the on site restaurant.

The Fairmont Opera House was built in 1901 and still houses live performances that adds to life of the arts in this bustling area.



Fairmont Opera House, Fairmont



WINTER ADVENTURES

Cross country ski in one of the many state parks in the region, including **Rice Lake State Park** and **Sakatah Lake State Park**.

Explore the 500 plus acres on snowshoes at the **J.C. Hormel Nature Center**.

Snowmobile through the 180 miles of countryside trails in **Le Sueur County**.

Go ice fishing on **Fairmont's Chain of Lakes** for Walleye, Northern Pike and Yellow Bass.



Jay C. Hormel Nature Center, Austin



TRAILS

Spend the day exploring **Cedar Creek Park, Fairmont**. This 260 acre park is home to miles of paved trails, unpaved trails, and three 18 hole Disc-Golf Courses.

Walk through nature at the **Schimek Park Conservation Area** in **Good Thunder**. The park offers a calm serene area for a picnic.

Bicycle **The Blazing Star State Trail** connects the city of **Albert Lea** with **Myre-Big Island State Park**.



Cedar Creek Park, Fairmont



PARKS

Try **Nerstrand Big Woods State Park, Nerstrand**, for hunting spring wildflowers or fall colors, or any time of year to see the Hidden Falls waterfall.

Float through summer at **River Springs Water Park** in **Owatonna**. Enjoy the lazy river, water slide and the lily pad walk.

Sakatah Lake State Park, Waterville, is home to a Maple and Basswood Forest with access to the **Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail**.



Fairmont Aquatic Park, Fairmont



CAMPING

Visit **Kiesler's Campground & RV Resort** in **Waseca** for a 18-hole miniature golf course, basketball, volleyball and more.

Travel to **Kamp Dels, Waterville**, for camping, cabins, water park and other planned activities.

Spend a night or weekend at **Daly Park Campground** in **Mapleton** to enjoy their tent camp sites and nature trail.

Experience top-notch campsites, events and services at **Brookside Campground** in **Blooming Prairie**.



Daly Park Campground, Mapleton



WILD LIFE & BIRDING

Steinberg Nature Park in **Blue Earth** has 33 acres of prairie plants, river views, woodlands, birding and natural habitat.

Myre Island State Park, Albert Lea hosts a variety of habitats which contributes to incredible possibilities of bird sightings in the park. View Waterfowl in the Great Marsh area and sparrows in the Woodlands.



Myre Island State Park, Albert Lea



FISHING

Go fishing for a variety of species in **Fountain Lake**, a 521 acre lake near **Albert Lea**. Find Black Bullhead, Flathead Catfish, Carp, White Crappie, and many more.

Travel to **Elysian Lake, Waseca County** to explore the 2,215 acre lake for a day of fishing for Bullheads, Bluegill and Bass.

Spend a day fishing on **Lake Francis** in **Le Sueur County** on the 927 acre lake with a depth of 60 ft. Fish for Bullheads, Bluegill and Bass.



Lake Francis by Jess Meek

Southern Lakes REGION

📍 Road Trip

Caron Park, Rice County by Jessica-Bohlken

➤ Take a trip to the Southern Lakes region of Minnesota to explore in and between some of Minnesota's 10,000+ lakes.

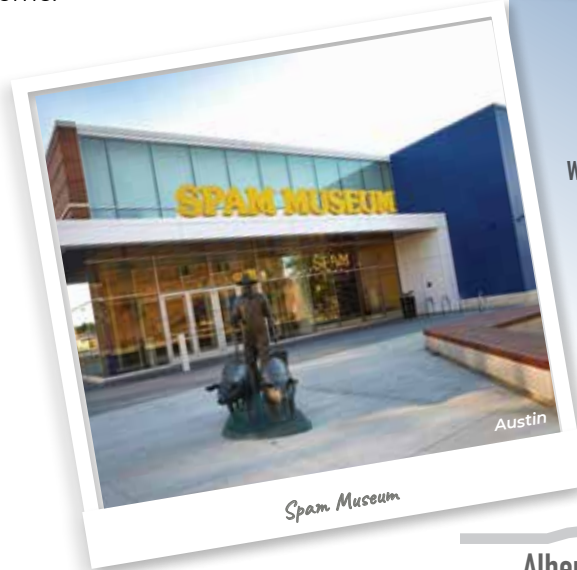
Northfield is the home of the **Cowling Arboretum** of Carleton College. The Arboretum holds 150 acres of prairie restoration that provides excellent bird and wildlife watching opportunities.

Visit **Faribault** next to experience the beauty of **Nerstrand Big Woods State Park**. Known for its wildflowers, large hardwood trees and fall colors, this state park is open year round for hiking and camping.

Albert Lea is next on the trip with the Summer Pelican Breeze and Fall show at **Marion Ross Performing Arts Center** and the **Three Oaks Vineyard and Winery**.

Last on the road trip is **Austin** to see the well known **SPAM® Museum**, explore nature at the **Jay C. Hormel Nature Center**, experience the **Paramount Theatre**; only 1 of 4 atmospheric

theaters remaining in the state of Minnesota. Then learn about some history at the **Hormel Historic Home** and rejuvenate at **The Elam House**, the Frank Lloyd Wright Home.





HISTORY • FOOD • SHOPPING • NATURE • LODGING

Create the initiative of curating and completing unique experiences in Austin, Minnesota

- VISIT** the World-Famous SPAM® Museum with Free Admission.
- EXPLORE** the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center.
- BUY** unique gifts at the Austin ArtWorks Center.
- LEARN** at the library or history at the Hormel Historic Home and Mower Country Historical Society.
- BIKE** over 45 miles of trails then check out the Rydjour Bike Museum.
- ENJOY** a hockey game, Family Fun Center or gain cancer prevention knowledge at The Hormel Institute.
- EXPERIENCE** Arts, Culture and Theatre.
- RELAX** down Cedar River in canoe or kayak.
- GOLF** at Meadow Greens or Austin Country Club.
- APPRECIATE** a book or some shopping and candy.
- ATTEND** college to increase your knowledge.
- DINING** options galore with nearly 60 restaurants plus a couple of breweries.
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Curling, Fairmont

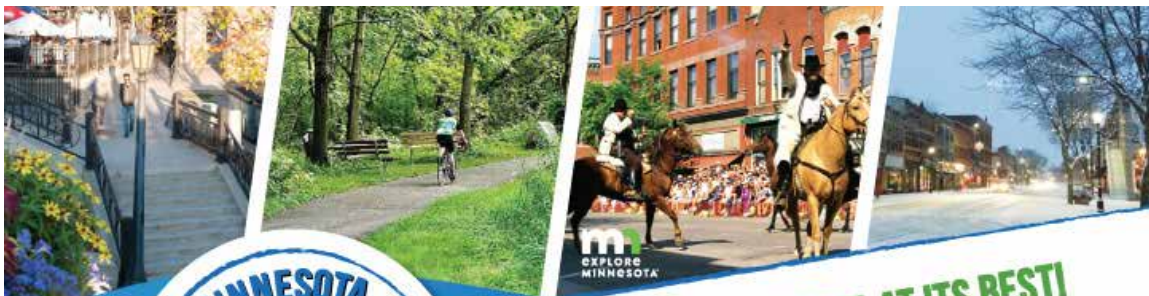


www.exploreAlbertLea.com




Village of Yesteryear, Owatonna





MINNESOTA
visit Northfield
AT ITS BEST

EXPERIENCE MINNESOTA AT ITS BEST!

Escape the ordinary and discover the charm of Northfield, just a short drive from Rochester! Immerse yourself in our picturesque river town, rich history, and vibrant culture. From quaint shops to delectable dining, Northfield offers a delightful escape. Plan your visit today and experience the unique allure of our welcoming community. Northfield beckons - where every moment becomes a cherished memory.

Get a FREE 2024 Visitor Guide for your next getaway at VisitNorthfield.com

EAT & DRINK



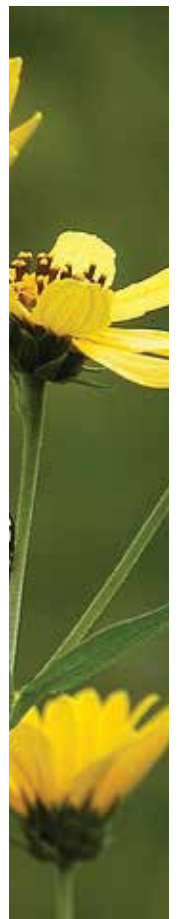
EVENTS



PLAY



SLEEP



Defeat of Jesse James Days, Northfield



Great Gatherings & *Festivals*

International Festival, Worthington



Bavarian Blast, New Ulm



Winterfest, Faribault



Water Ski Days, Lake City

Minnesota River Valley Region

- Applefest - Appleton
- Ribfest - Mankato
- Fiesta Days - Montevideo
- Lower Sioux Wacipi - Morton
- Bavarian Blast - New Ulm
- Corn Capital Days - Olivia
- NightFalls - Redwood Falls

Prairie Land Region

- Beer, Bands, & Bacon - Hendricks
- Rhythm of the River - Jackson
- Buffalo Days - Luverne
- Railroad Days - St. James
- Loose Gravel Music Fest - Walnut Grove
- International Festival - Worthington

Southern Lakes Region

- Big Island Rendezvous - Albert Lea
- ArtWorks Festival - Austin
- Winterfest - Faribault
- Defeat of Jesse James - Northfield
- Steele County Free Fair - Owatonna
- Sleigh & Cutter Fest - Waseca

Bluff Country Region

- Water Ski Days - Lake City
- Rhubarb Festival - Lanesboro
- Big Turn Music Fest - Red Wing
- RochesterFest - Rochester
- UffDa Fest - Spring Grove
- Boats & Bluegrass - Winona

For a Complete Listing of Events,
Please Visit www.ExploreMinnesota.com



Seasonal *Adventures*



Lake Shetek State Park

SUMMER FESTIVALS

Travel to Owatonna for the **Henry Wenger Marching Band Festival** for a parade made up exclusively of, you guessed it, marching bands!

Redwood Falls hosts **Vicki's Camp N Country Jam** in late June. Featuring national and local acts, this is a must-do for country festival fans.

Visit Jackson for their annual **Rythym of the River Music Festival** held at **Historic Fort Belmont**.

If music isn't your thing, maybe you should try the **Great River Shakespeare Festival** in Winona. They have been putting on two plays every summer for over 20 years.

ON THE WATER

Go water skiing where it all started, on Lake Pepin. Take to the water yourself or visit to see a ski show in the summer in **Lake City**.

Kayak or canoe at **Plum Creek Park** in Walnut Grove for fun with the family. Take any non-motorized vehicles onto Lake Laura then take a dip in the water and go for a hike.

CAMPING

Spend a night or weekend in **Fort Ridgely State Park** at a campsite or rent out one of the camper cabins available. Learn about the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 while you're there.

Go camping in **Lake Shetek State Park** where you can play in and on Lake Shetek, the head of the Des Moines River. There are also 6 wheelchair accessible campsites available.

FALL ORCHARDS

Fireside Orchard & Gardens in **Northfield** has something for everyone this fall. Pick a variety of apples, view the rose garden, see the fish pond and play yard games.

Ferguson's Orchard & Pepin Heights Store in **Lake City** is family-owned and the biggest apple producer in the midwest.

Center Creek Orchard and **Timberlake Orchard** in **Fairmont** are fall family destinations that offer locally grown apples and pumpkins. Activities include Jump Pad, hayrides, superslide, roller slide, duck races, scavenger hunts, and more.

GET IN TOUCH WITH NATURE

Explore the regions and go geocaching in Southern Minnesota. Several state parks double as geocaching checkpoints including Frontenac, Sakatak and Great River Bluffs State Park.

Have fun at the **ATV Park** in **Appleton**. The 330-acre park for ATV's has many miles of narrow technical trails, plus a motocross practice track and free admission.

FALL DRIVES

Drive along the **Great River Road** to see the extraordinary changing colors of fall along the Mississippi River this season and stop in the small town along the way to eat, play and stay.

Travel along the **Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway** to see vibrant fall colors from the comfort of your car and pass through historic cities and sites.

WINTER

SKIING & SNOWSHOEING

Welch Village in **Welch** has a 140-acre park with 50 trails and a summit reaching 1060 feet. **Mount Kato** in **Mankato** offers snowboarding, downhill skiing and snow tubing.

Beaver Falls County Park near **Morton**, has groomed trails open to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and fatbiking. Day use is free.

Visit **Skalbekken County Park, Sacred Heart**, to snowshoe or ski through the park and see wildlife like deer and turkeys. Free for day use.

ICE CLIMBING

Winona's Ice Park features approximately 100 routes up a 200 foot ice flow. Guides are available if you plan ahead.

SNOWMOBILING

The **Goodhue Pioneer State Trail** is a work in progress as part of a planned 47-mile trail linking the cities of Red Wing, Goodhue, Zumbrota, Mazeppa, Bellechester, and Pine Island along an inactive railroad corridor.

ICE FISHING

Try the **Mississippi River Backwaters** for river ice fishing this winter. There are public access points from Red Wing to Winona in each city. Fish for Crappie, Perch, Sunfish, and Pike.

SPRING

FISHING AND HUNTING

The **National Trout Center's 9-Hole Fishing Course** introduces Trout anglers to a 0.8 mile reach of blue ribbon Trout water in the south branch of the Root River. Catch Brook, Brown and Rainbow Trout along the river with different challenges for the fisher at each hole.

Visit **Kilen Woods State Park** for spring turkey hunting on the Des Moines River. Experience hunting on private land access and then enjoy spring fishing.

BLOOMING FLOWERS

At **Blue Mounds State Park** experience the blooming season of spring with prickly pear cactus and beautiful yellow blooms. Witness the big bluestem grasses as they begin to grow to seven feet tall, growing at almost an inch a day.

Travel to **Carly State Park** to see their spectacular Virginia Blue Bells blooming every year around Mother's Day.

THE ARTS

Take a trip to the **Minnesota Marine Art Museum** in Winona for a stellar art collection. Then take a quick trip down **Apple Blossom Drive** for the vistas and blossoming apple trees.

Browse the **Odin Craft Mill** for contemporary and re-imagined decor, repurposed furniture and recycled and seasonal yard art. Items from more than 170 artisans are displayed within the original 1917 Montgomery Ward home, feed mill, and barn.



Center Creek Orchard, Fairmont



Ice Climbing, Winona



Blue Mounds State Park, Luverne



Root River Trail, Lanesboro



> Bluff Country REGION

Over Hills and Valleys . . . Find Your Path >

Lake Pepin Overlook

Bluff Country REGION

MAKE MEMORIES, TAKE IN ROLLING HILLS AND VALLEY VIEWS, MARVEL AT THE VISTAS WHILE EXPLORING THIS QUIANT YET MAJESTIC REGION.

Long ago glacial meltwater shaped deep valleys and limestone bluffs, underground caverns and high rolling hills, creating what is now called the “driftless area”.

TRAVEL THROUGH HISTORY

Drive along the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Highway that links sites where Laura and her family lived. Visit places Laura and her family

traveled, including the **Spring Valley Methodist Church Museum**, built in 1876, attended by Laura and her husband Almanzo.

Travel back in time to **Historic Forestville**, located within **Forestville/ Mystery Cave State Park**. Get a taste of what life was like in the late 1800's with a guided tour exploring the choices that changed the path of a once-thriving community's history. Costumed interpreters in period clothing perform daily tasks.

Mabel House Hotel, Mabel, a once bustling town, declares itself the Minnesota's oldest continuously

running hotel dating back to 1879. Charles Lindbergh stayed here in 1923 during one of the aviator's barnstorming tours.

Minnesota's oldest county historical society, the **Goodhue County Historical Society, Red Wing**, was chartered in 1869. **Watkins Museum & Store, Winona** is a great place to see the company's 150+ year history with displays of old products, photographs and advertising. Visit the **History Center of Olmsted County, Rochester** which spreads across 54-acres and includes two historic farmsteads, historic buildings, and the History Center museum.



Red Wing Shoe Museum, Red Wing

At Red Wing Shoe Co. Museum see the company that changed work boots forever and pose with the iconic 16-foot tall boot.

Stay in the Iron Horse Outfitters Inn with modern accommodations with an 1890's feel in Lanesboro.

Stop by the Yah Sure You Betcha Shoppe in Spring Grove which features a fun blend of gifts, apparel and more.



Historic Downtown, Lanesboro



IN TOWN VISITS

Stop for a delicious baked good, apples and more at **Blossom Hill Orchard & Farm, Preston**. Choose from over 30 varieties of apples to take a bite out of onsite or bring home for tasty baking. Stop in at **The Pepin Heights Store, Lake City** for Sweetango apples.

Grab a beer while traveling alongside the Mississippi River at **Happy Girl Brewing LLC., Wabasha, Island City Brewing Co., Winona, Red Wing Brewery, Red Wing or Readings Brewery, Reads Landing**. Enjoy the unique and unforgettable flavors of craft beer brewed on site.

Salem Glen Winery in Rochester features their own wine and cider made from local orchards and their own cold hardy grapes! Experience Minnesota's largest winery at **Four Daughters Vineyard and Winery, Spring Valley**. Enjoy the 6-acre vineyard's winery, cidery and restaurant. **Garvin Heights Vineyards, Winona**. Take in a professional live play at the famous **Commonweal Theatre** in beautiful Lanesboro.

Stop in **Amish Experience, Lanesboro** for home decor, gifts and more. Experience an Amish tour while you're there! Find solid hardwood furniture and Amish craftsmanship at **Countryside Furniture, Harmony**.

Go antiquing at **Lake Pepin Pearl Button Co., Lake City** for great finds on Lake Pepin. Multiple stores at **The Pottery Place, Red Wing** offer treasures to antique and gift shops and eateries.

Check out **Farm Charm, Harmony** for locally made candles, scent products, tumblers and more! **Eyota Antique, Eyota** offers antiques, collectibles and toys.



Top Bluff Country Attractions

- **INTERNATIONAL OWL CENTER | HOUSTON** There are lots of static and interactive displays where people can learn more about owls and how you can help them..
- **NIAGARA CAVE | HARMONY** See natural canyon-like passageways sculpted by water from an underground stream.
- **LARK TOYS + SVJ CREATIVE DESIGNS | KELLOGG** Lark toy was voted the Best Toy Store in Minnesota by WCCO. Ride the hand-carved carousel. Just up the road is SVJ Creative's 3,000+ concrete statues from garden gnomes to life-size hero statues
- **MAYOWOOD MANSION | ROCHESTER** Take a tour of this 38-room mansion, completed in 1911.
- **WHITewater STATE PARK** This 2,700 acre park offers cross-country skiing, fishing, wildlife, and plenty of history.
- **HISTORIC FORESTVILLE | PRESTON** Tour guides wearing period costumes will perform daily tasks and tell you about late 1800's life.
- **MINNESOTA MARINE ART MUSEUM | WINONA** From contemporary exhibitions to historic works of Art, MMAM engages visitors and the community with great art inspired by water.
- **POTTERY MUSEUM OF RED WING | RED WING** 6,000+ vintage pieces of artisan-crafted stoneware, art pottery, dinnerware & folk art and dozens of exhibits covering 13,000 sq. ft.
- **NATIONAL EAGLE CENTER | WABASHA** Home to non-releasable bald and golden eagles, offering guided and behind the scene tours and special events.



National Eagle Center, Wabasha

Hok-Si-La Municipal Park and Campground is open year round for fishing, hiking, camping, biking, picnics and more on the bluff shores of Lake Pepin. This 22-mile long lake is the birthplace of water skiing.

See Minnesota's only remaining original functioning covered bridge in Zumbrota built in 1869.

Bring your horse camping with you at Zumbro Bottoms Horse Campgrounds in Kellogg.



Hok-Si-La Municipal Park, Lake City



Covered Bridge, Zumbrota



WINTER ADVENTURES

Cross country ski the majestic **Root River Trail**. Enjoy 30 miles of trails from **Isinours Forest Recreation Area** in **Preston** to the bridge outside of **Houston**.

Snowshoe in the **Great River Bluffs State Park** or one of the many state parks in the region.

The **Winona Ice Park** is a manmade ice climbing park set high above the Mississippi River with wonderful views of the city of Winona.

Ice fish on **Lake Pepin**. Catch Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike and Smallmouth Bass.



Lake City



SHOPPING

The Front Porch Market in **Plainview**; an occasional Market held typically the third weekend of each month featuring hand made along with vintage and market finds.

Adorn in Chatfield Minnesota has unique home decor, furniture and more.

The **Country Side Antique Mall** is a 12,000 sq. ft destination in **Cannon Falls** that features a 60-dealer variety of antiques, vintage wears and collectibles.



Country Side Antique Mall, Cannon Falls



PARKS

Hike the Wildflower Trail in May at **Carley State Park**, just NE of **Rochester**, for beautiful views of bluebell flowers.

Hike through **Frontenac State Park** any season of the year for beautiful views of the bluffs and Lake Pepin.

Experience views of the bluffs and goat prairies in **Great River Bluffs State Park**.

Spend a weekend in **Beaver Creek Valley State Park** for trout fishing, camping and spring woodland flowers.

See park info on pg 24 & 25.



Frontenac State Park, Frontenac



BOATING

Canoe, kayak, sail, paddle board, and motor boat in Bluff Country this summer.

Take a sailboat out onto scenic **Lake Pepin**. Check out a boat at **Lake City Boat Club and Rentals**

Travel to **Lake Zumbro** in **Mazeppa** for summer fun. Get a canoe at **Zumbro Valley Canoe Rental**.

Visit **Lake Winona** to rent a canoe, kayak, paddle board, and bicycle from **Lake Lodge Recreation Center**.



Lake Winona



WILDLIFE & BIRDING

Visit **Hvoslev WMA**, a wildlife management in **Amherst**. See wildflowers, hardwood forests and numerous birds in the area.

Experience the wonder of wildlife in **Beaver Creek Valley State Park**. Watch warblers and songbirds perching throughout the park.

See Waterfowl, Least Bittern and Common Moorhen in **La Crescent**.

Go birding along MN26 south of **Reno** that consists of many observation pullouts.



Lake Pepin



FISHING AND HUNTING

Go hunting on the thousands of acres of Wildlife Management Area across Southeastern Minnesota.

Go fishing in various streams throughout **Fillmore County** to catch Trout, White Sucker, Blacknose Dace, Slimy Sculpin, Brook Stickleback, and Longnose Dace.

Fish in **Lake Zumbro** in **Mazeppa** for black and white crappie, Bluegill and Channel Catfish.



Root River, Preston

Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway & Root River Trail

Road Trip

Amish near Harmony



➤ Start your trip to Historic Bluff Country and get ready for the incredible views the area has to offer.

As you approach Bluff Country the hills grow taller and longer, unveiling stunning views of the land and unique cities as you drive along HWY 16.

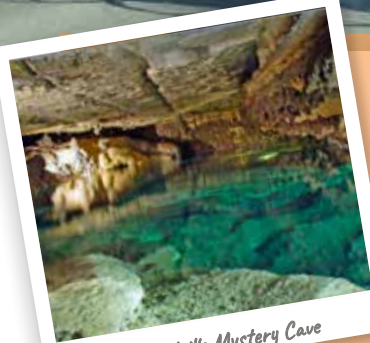
Jump on the **Root River Trail in Fountain**. Hike, bike, skate, run or walk the trail for three seasons and in the winter you can cross country ski! Enjoy all 10 Root River trail towns all year long.

Experience the wonders of the **Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park** with a tour of the cave formations along with pools and dramatic linear passageways. On your way to Lanesboro enjoy the overlook views of the valley from HWY 16.

Enjoy your day in **Lanesboro**. Grab a dish of ice cream at **Another Time Ice Cream Parlor & Chocolates**. Shop in downtown Lanesboro for a casual afternoon with the family and stop for a bite at one of the local restaurants.

The smallest town on the trail is **Whalan**. Take a break from the Root River Trail at the **Aroma Pie Shop** just off the bike path. Revel in Minnesota's history in **Peterson** at the **Peterson Museum and Visitor Center**. Shop for Scandinavian gifts at **Norsland Lefse** in **Rushford**.

Learn more about owls at the **International Owl Center** in **Houston**.



Forestville Mystery Cave



International Owl Center Houston

Spring Valley



Peterson

Rushford



Houston

Whalan

Lanesboro

Harmony

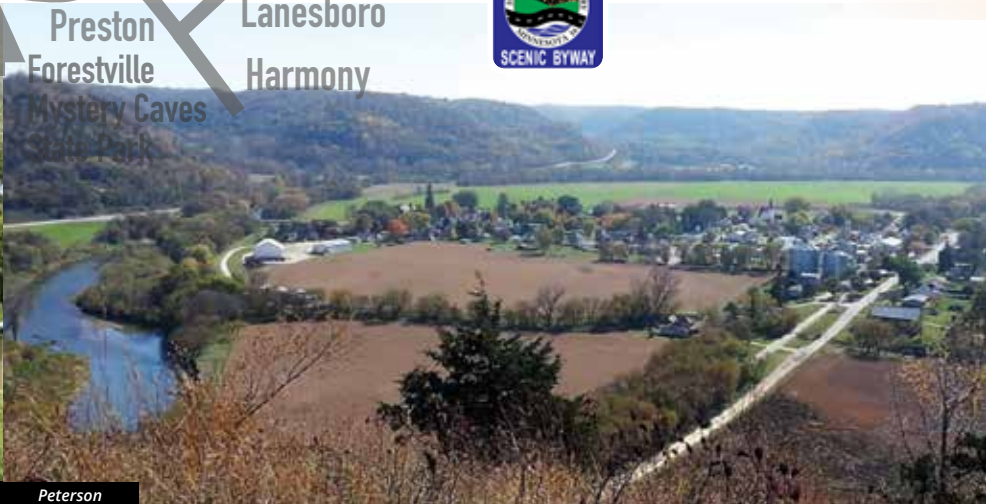
Preston

Forestville
Mystery Caves
State Park



Root River Trail

Peterson





DINE. SIP. EXPLORE.

Rochester is famous for some large institutions (hint: Mayo Clinic), but locals know it for its unique businesses, stunning nature areas, fantastic entertainment, and an emerging food and beverage scene.



experiencerochestermn.com



Don't forget to explore the Ear of Corn water tower.



Rose Gardens at Lake Park, Winona

THE HIDDEN GEM OF SOUTHEAST MN!

WELCOME TO

Lanesboro

The Place to Live Work Play



← PLAN YOUR GETAWAY!



Experience the vibrant, small town charm of Lanesboro & Whalan!

- 🏞️ Outdoor Recreation
- 🛍️ Shopping
- 🍷 Dining & Spirits
- 🏕️ Camping & RVing
- 🎨 Arts, Culture & History
- 🚲 Root River Bike Trail
- 🏠 Inns & B&Bs (and more!)

PLAN YOUR NEXT GETAWAY AT LANESBORO.COM



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(651) 345-9900
Lake City, MN



Niagara Cave, Harmony



Water Ski Days, Lake City

In the Land of 10,000 Lakes there's only One Lake City



SCENIC FUN

Situated at the Mississippi River's widest point and on the iconic Highway 61, Lake City is one of the Midwest's most scenic natural playgrounds. With miles of shoreline, beautiful beaches, world-class angling, and plenty of ways to get out on the water, you've just found your new favorite lake escape!

BIG EVENTS

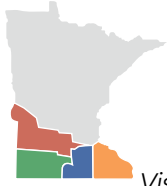
Lake City celebrates its distinction as the Birthplace of Water Skiing with huge lakeside concerts, ski shows, and more during the last full weekend in June. Throughout the year visitors will also find epic supported bike tours, beer fests, art fairs, haunted trails, and much more at an exciting array of local events and festivals.

LOCAL FLAIR

Brimming with independent shops, galleries, and restaurants, small-town charm meets world-class experiences here. Dine with a panoramic view after hunting for eclectic treasures, or grab gourmet take-out for a chartered sail on Lake Pepin. Whatever your taste, you'll find what you love in Lake City.

visitlakecity.org





Instagrammable Spots

Visit these spots to take photos and surprise your followers with the breathtaking views, natural wonders, and unique cultural elements that make SOMN a perfect region.



Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm, Waseca



Green Giant, Blue Earth



Martin County Veterans Memorial



Farmer and Pig at SPAM Museum, Austin



Tilt-a-whirl cars, Fox:beult



Austin ArtWorks Festival

Southern Lakes REGION



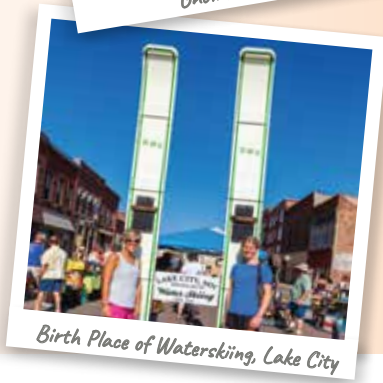
Gnome in Peterson



Como Falls Park, Hokah



The Wired Rooster, Caledonia



Birth Place of Waterskiing, Lake City



Kaye Bernard

Magelssen Bluff, Rushford



Red Wing Boot, Red Wing

Bluff Country REGION



Explore New *Trails*

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge

Minnesota River Valley REGION

Minnesota River State Trail

10 miles in three segments
This paved trail is envisioned to connect Ortonville, MN with Le Sueur via Granite Falls and Mankato as it follows the Minnesota River. In Ortonville, a 2.2-mile section links the city with Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge. Start near the Minnesota River headwaters, travel past granite outcroppings and continue on paved and unpaved roads inside the refuge. Other sections of trail are in Milan and Montevideo.

Ney Nature Center Trails

1.5 miles of mountain bike trails take you offroad and through the 446-acre property in rural Henderson, MN.

Minnesota Valley State Trail

29 miles in two segments
Ride on paved and natural surface trails from Belle Plaine through the Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area and beyond into the Twin Cities metro.

Mankato Area Mountain Bike Trails

Besides being the western terminus of the paved Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail, the Mankato area also has over 20 miles of dirt mountain bike trails, spread across four locations.

- **Ft. LeHillier Trail – 2 miles**
This skills building area south of Mankato on the Blue Earth River is perfect if you're a beginner.
- **Kiwanis Mountain Bike Trail – 6 miles.** Two single-direction loops on the Minnesota River, one easier, one more challenging.
- **Mount Kato – 7 miles**
If you like a challenge you'll enjoy the climbs and descents through the wooded hills of this ski area
- **Seven Mile Creek – 8 miles**
River valley, bluffs, grasslands and forest, this system has some challenging descents.

Mount Kato, Mankato Area



Photos courtesy of
Minnesota Trails Magazine

Prairie Land REGION



Camden Regional Trail, Marshall

Camden Regional Trail | Marshall, MN | 15 miles

The Camden Regional Trail connects Marshall to nearby Camden State Park and makes for a nice afternoon outing in southwestern Minnesota.

Marshall's network of on and off-street bike routes take you to some of the city's numerous parks and Camden State Park offers about 5 miles of dirt mountain bike trails.



Casey Jones State Trail, Pipestone

Casey Jones State Trail Pipestone, Woodstock, Lake Wilson, Currie

19 miles total in three sections
The Casey Jones Trail is the first rails to trails conversion in Minnesota, authorized in 1967. The section between Pipestone and Woodstock gets you up close and personal with rolling hills and impressive wind turbines while the 6-mile Currie Loop travels past historical sites like the Shetek Monument and End-O-Line Railroad Park. In Pipestone, the Indian Lakes Trail makes a loop around Pipestone National Monument.



Blue Mounds Trail, Luverne Loop, Luverne



Mountain Lake Bike Trail, Mountain Lake

Luverne Loop Trail

(including Blue Mounds Trail and Christopher Martin Ashby Memorial Trail)

Luverne, MN | 12.5 miles

This paved trail in the far southwestern corner of Minnesota circles downtown Luverne and connects many of the town's parks and sights. Start your trip at the modern trailhead building and make a loop in either direction. In the north, the Luverne Loop connects to the four-mile Blue Mounds Trail. See the striking rock formations of Blue Mounds State Park rise up as you travel across the prairie.

Mountain Lake Bike Trail

Mountain Lake | 5 miles

This well-marked trail takes you around scenic, 220-acre Mountain Lake. The northwestern corner of the trail passes through the grassy knolls of the Mountain Lake State Wildlife Management Area with unimpeded views of the town and its namesake lake. A good place to start your ride is Lawcon Park.

Belmont Park Mountain Bike Trail

Jackson | 5.3 miles

An exciting singletrack ride under the mature canopies of Oak, Walnut, and Ash trees with a beautiful view of the Des Moines River. These bobsled-style flow trails have plenty of switch backs, berms, and jumps as they drop 120 feet into the river valley.



Photos courtesy of
Minnesota Trails Magazine



Belmont Park Mountain Bike Trail, Jackson

Southern Lakes REGION

Kaplan's Woods Mountain Bike Trail | Owatonna | 6 miles

Leave the paved trails behind and enjoy the moderate dirt trails at Kaplan's Woods. Ride through hardwood forest and challenge yourself on the trickier segments.

Blazing Star State Trail

Albert Lea | 7.5 miles

The Blazing Star State Trail connects the city of Albert Lea with Myre Big Island State Park. Although short, this trail is a favorite with birdwatchers, especially during migration time at the state park.

Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail

Mankato to Faribault | 39 miles

On this paved rail trail, you'll pass through cool, wooded areas as well as open, sun-drenched farm fields between Faribault and Mankato, but you don't have to stop there. The North Minnesota River Trail brings you to downtown Mankato where you can connect to the Red Jacket Trail or bike into Minneopa State Park.

Cannon Valley Trail at Red Wing



Douglas State Trail at Pine Island



Shooting Star State Trail, Lake Louise State Park



Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail, Mankato to Faribault

Bluff Country REGION

Cannon Valley Trail | Cannon Falls to Red Wing | 19.7 miles

The paved Cannon Valley Trail follows an old Chicago Great Western railroad route and hugs the Cannon River. The trail is bordered by cliffs, often under the canopy of lush trees, and open areas are lined with wildflowers. You'll enjoy the halfway rest stop in the hamlet of Welch.

Douglas State Trail | Rochester to Pine Island | 12.7 miles

A pleasant ride from Pine Island to Rochester via the town of Douglas is the perfect out-and-back ride for a sunny afternoon. You'll have access to Rochester's extensive trail system and on the Pine Island side, another trail heads toward the town of Oronoco.

Shooting Star State Trail

Austin to LeRoy | 28.75 miles

This paved trail travels through remnants of tall grass prairies. If you're going east to west, you soon pass through Lake Louise State Park, then the towns of Taopi, Adams and Rose Creek. The final leg of the ride picks up Austin's network of city trails where your journey comes to an end at Jay C. Hormel Nature Center. Schindler's Way, a five-mile off road mountain bike trail system along the Cedar River is a great beginner ride.

Root River State Trail, Lanesboro



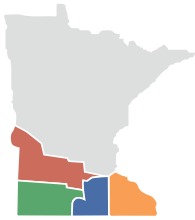
Root River/Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail | 60 miles

This trail system in the heart of southeastern Minnesota's Bluff Country is one of the major trail destinations in Minnesota and the hills and valleys are especially gorgeous when the leaves begin to turn.

Bike from Fountain all the way through Lanesboro, Whalan, Peterson, Rushford and Houston for a total of 42 miles, following the meandering Root River through a scenery of spectacular limestone bluffs, picturesque farms and small towns. At Isinours Junction, connect with the 18-mile Harmony-Preston Valley Trail, which climbs to the rim of the valley with great views of the countryside.

Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail at Preston





SOMN *Guide Contributors*

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Motorplex, Jackson



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