

TRAVEL ITINERARIES

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THE TWIN CITIES IN 48 HOURS

The Twin Cities of Minnesota are Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the largest cities in the state. Along with Bloomington to the south, this is an incredibly diverse area with an amazing cultural scene, exciting professional sports teams, renowned restaurants, and beautiful nature including lakes, rivers and wildlife. Visitors could easily spend a week or two enjoying the Twin Cities, but if you only have 48 hours...this is the highlights tour.



★ Mississippi River

DAY ONE: MINNEAPOLIS

Morning:

Start your morning with breakfast at Hell's Kitchen in downtown Minneapolis, an iconic restaurant known for its unique dishes and Bloody Mary and Mimosa bar.

Then it's a short walk or drive to the Walker Art Center, one of the top modern art museums in the world. Just outside the Walker Art Center is the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden which is one of the largest urban sculpture gardens in the United States. The highlight and a well-known beloved symbol of the Twin Cities is a piece called "Spoonbridge and Cherry."

Next stop is Mill City Museum, a state historic site located on the bank of the Mississippi River. Walk through the history of Minneapolis and learn about its lumber and flour milling industry--for 60 years Minneapolis led the world in flour production. The viewing platform at Mill City Museum offers spectacular views of the Mississippi River, the Stone Arch Bridge and St. Anthony Falls, the only natural waterfall on the entire Mississippi.



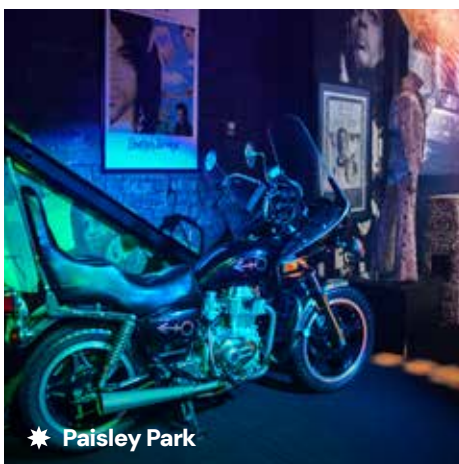
★ Spoonbridge and Cherry

Afternoon:

Enjoy lunch and a beer at nearby Surly Brewing Company, one of many booming microbreweries in the Twin Cities region. Take a free tour of the brewery after dining or browse through the gift shop for a memorable souvenir.

Then take a 30-minute drive to Paisley Park in Chanhassen. This is the former home and studio of music legend Prince. The tour, which must be booked in advance, showcases his private studios, his many awards and platinum record collection, hundreds of outfits, artwork, and special items from his movies.

Returning to downtown Minneapolis, stop by First Avenue, the nightclub featured in Prince's film Purple Rain. Many artists have performed at First Avenue and the side of the building features silver stars naming some of the incredible talents that have played here.



★ Paisley Park



Evening:

Dine at Murray’s Steakhouse, a third-generation family-owned restaurant since 1946. Known as the “home of the silver butter knife steak,” the restaurant is a Minneapolis landmark.

After dinner, experience the Minneapolis music scene with a performance at The Dakota, the Aster Café, or the Minnesota Orchestra at Orchestra Hall—live music is performed year-round.

DAY TWO: SAINT PAUL

Morning:

Breakfast this morning is at Mickey’s Diner, a downtown Saint Paul legend that features everything that makes diners an American staple. The yellow and red painted train car has been featured in several films and you never know who will be seated in the next booth!

While Minneapolis is known as the modern city of the West with skyscrapers built of glass, Saint Paul is known as the historic city of the East with stone and granite buildings. The first stop today is at the Minnesota State Capitol, a gleaming white marble building with free public tours.

Next is a short drive (or walk) to the Cathedral of Saint Paul, which was built from 1907-1915. This Archdiocese is on the National Register of Historic Buildings. A highlight of the Cathedral is The Shrine of the Nations, which features patron saints of ethnic groups from Europe who first settled the area.

The James J. Hill House is across the street from the Cathedral. Built by railroad baron James J. Hill, this served as his family home while he built the Great Northern Railroad, extending rail service from Chicago to the West Coast of the U.S. Tours of this majestic home include public galleries, the family’s living areas, as well as the kitchen, laundry and servants’ quarters.



Afternoon:

Following the grand start to the day, lunch will be at the Saint Paul Grill, located in the historic Saint Paul Hotel overlooking Rice Park. The restaurant is known for its refined style and exceptional cuisine.

After lunch, board a Paddlewheel Riverboat for a narrated sightseeing tour of Saint Paul on the Mississippi River. The Mississippi winds through both Minneapolis and Saint Paul and combines city skylines with parks and pristine nature.

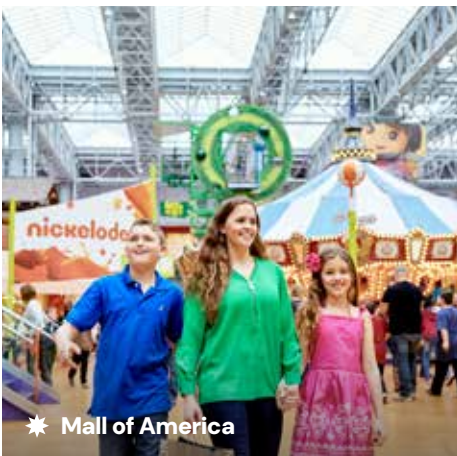
Next a short drive to Bloomington brings you to Mall of America, the largest shopping and entertainment complex in the U.S. With 500 stores, 50 restaurants, Nickelodeon Universe indoor amusement park, SEA LIFE Aquarium, FlyOver America, Museum of Illusions and dozens of other attractions, Mall of America is one of the most-visited sites in the U.S. And there is no sales tax on clothing or shoes at Mall of America—nor anywhere in Minnesota!



Evening:

Take a break from shopping and enjoy dinner at Twin City Grill in Mall of America. The restaurant features Minnesota dishes including wild rice soup and walleye, a delicate white freshwater fish.

After dinner, continue shopping, ride a roller coaster or enjoy entertainment.

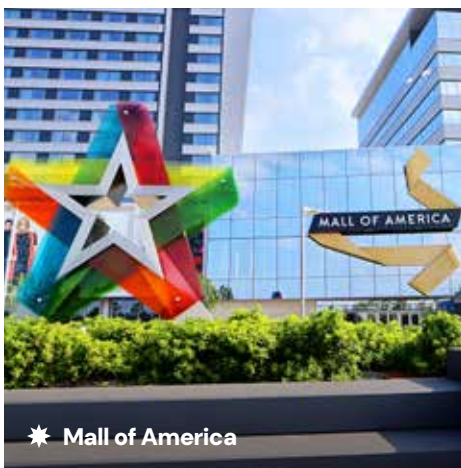


GREAT LAKES ITINERARY

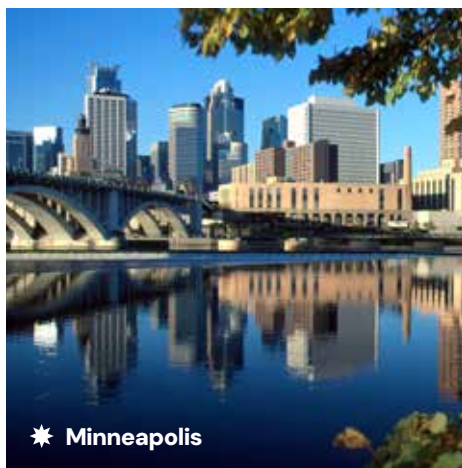
The Great Lakes are a majestic natural wonder, situated on the U.S.-Canadian border. In this freshwater paradise, discover the great cities and charming small towns of the region. And experience the water on sightseeing tour boats, canoes, sailboats and kayaks. Or enjoy the magnificent sunsets on the water for memories to last a lifetime.



✦ Split Rock Lighthouse State Park



✦ Mall of America



✦ Minneapolis

DAY ONE: MINNEAPOLIS/ ST. PAUL/BLOOMINGTON

Arrival at Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport. Use a complimentary hotel shuttle and check into your Bloomington, Minnesota hotel. Then it's off to an evening of shopping, entertainment and dining at Mall of America, the largest enclosed shopping and entertainment center in the U.S. There is no sales tax on clothing or shoes in Minnesota!

DAY TWO: MINNEAPOLIS/ ST. PAUL

Minneapolis is the largest city in Minnesota and St. Paul is the state capitol—together they are known as the Twin Cities. Start the day with a trip to downtown Minneapolis. Head to the Mississippi River, which flows through the centers of both Minneapolis and St. Paul. Take a 1.5-hour sightseeing cruise as an introduction to the city. Then learn about the history of the area at Mill City Museum in Minneapolis and Historic Fort Snelling in St. Paul.





✦ Aerial Lift Bridge

DAY THREE: DULUTH

Located on the shore of Lake Superior, Duluth is the world's largest inland seaport welcoming ships from around the world. Watch the ships enter the harbor as the Aerial Lift Bridge raises up to allow entry. Visit the Maritime Marine Visitors Center to learn the history of shipping on Lake Superior.

DAY FOUR: BAYFIELD

Enjoy the stunning drive along Lake Superior as you head to Bayfield, a charming small town and one of the highlights of Wisconsin with its Apostle Islands Lakeshore National Park. Take a narrated Apostle Islands Cruise (2.5 hours) to view the 21 islands from the water.

DAY FIVE: GREEN BAY

Green Bay is well known in the world of professional football for Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers and open for public tours. The arts and culture of Green Bay are on display at the Ashwaubenon Historical Society and Museum and The Art Garage.

DAY SIX: CHICAGO

Morning drive along Lake Michigan to Chicago. With almost three million inhabitants, it is the third largest city in the U.S. Chicago's skyscrapers are among the tallest in the world and the city is considered one of the birthplaces of modern architecture. Learn about the city's most interesting buildings and about the city's history in general on an architecture boat trip.

DAY SEVEN: CHICAGO

Today explore the sights, museums and famous buildings of Chicago. Highlights include the Museum of Science and Industry, the Field Museum of Natural History and the Art Institute of Chicago, one of the best art museums in the world. Then get a panoramic view of the city on the observation deck of the Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower).

DAY EIGHT: ROCKFORD

Driving west from Chicago, stop in Rockford, Illinois. Nicknamed the Forest City, Rockford is known for its beautiful location on the Rock River. Take a stroll through the famous botanical gardens, especially the Anderson Japanese Gardens which is known as one of the most beautiful gardens in the U.S.

DAY NINE: WINONA

A beautiful drive along the Mississippi River leads to Winona, a river town located in the bluff country of Minnesota and Wisconsin. The history of Winona is told through several unique museums including the Watkins Heritage Museum and Gift Shop and the Polish Cultural Institute and Museum.

DAY TEN: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL:

Follow the Great River Road along the Mississippi River to arrive at the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport for your flight home. Time to shop for some last-minute items at Mall of America, only five minutes from the airport.



✦ Cloud Gate



✦ Winona



✦ National Eagle Center

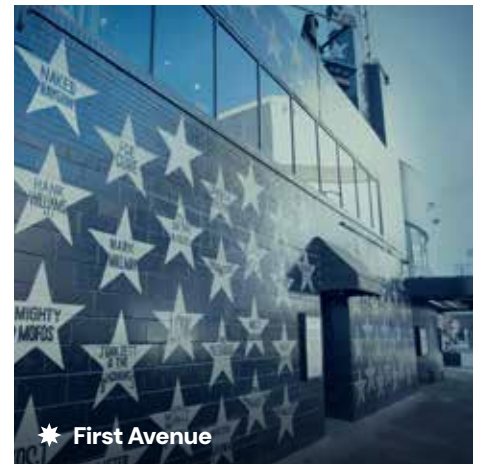
THE MSP GATEWAY TO THE WEST

Nestled in the northern part of the USA lies a region that's truly magical, packed with epic vistas and stunning natural beauty. Awe-inspiring outdoor adventure awaits visitors here coupled with an abundance of cultural activities. Visit museums and interpretive centers to take a hands-on journey into Old West history and Native American cultures.

* Stone Arch Bridge



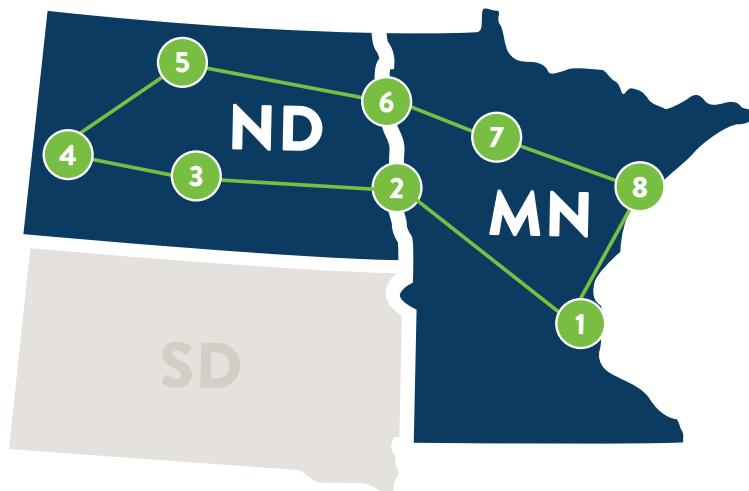
* Mall of America



* First Avenue

DAY 1: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL/BLOOMINGTON

Arrival at Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport. Use a complimentary hotel shuttle and check into your Bloomington, Minnesota hotel. Then it's off to an evening of shopping, entertainment and dining at Mall of America, the largest enclosed shopping and entertainment center in the U.S. There's no sales tax on clothing or shoes in Minnesota!



DAY 2: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

Start your day exploring the Mississippi River in downtown Minneapolis. Walk across the historic Stone Arch Bridge for a view of the only natural waterfall on the entire river, St. Anthony Falls. Learn about the history of Minneapolis at Mill City Museum, which was once one of the most important flour mills in the U.S. Then take a short drive to St. Paul, following Summit Avenue which features a collection of Victorian-styled homes. Stop at the Minnesota State Capitol, the Saint Paul Cathedral and the James J. Hill House. Final stop of the day is First Avenue, the nightclub in Minneapolis that Prince featured in his movie *Purple Rain*.



✦ Hjemkomst Center

DAY 3: FARGO/MOORHEAD

Following a four-hour drive, visit the Fargo-Moorhead Visitor Center to get your photo taken with The Woodchipper, made famous in the film Fargo. Next stop is the Hjemkomst Heritage Center to see a locally built Viking ship that sailed from Duluth, Minnesota to Bergen, Norway in 1982. Then it's off to Bonanzaville USA, a re-created pioneer village, a stop at the Plains Art Museum or the Fargo Air Museum.

DAY 4: BISMARCK

On the drive west, stop in Jamestown to see the world's largest buffalo, and the National Buffalo Museum. Upon arrival in Bismarck, visit the North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum on the North Dakota State Capitol campus. Next a short drive to Mandan leads to old Fort Abraham Lincoln, which shows life as a frontier soldier in a living history demonstration. End the day with a sunset cruise aboard the Lewis & Clark Riverboat.

DAY 5: MEDORA

U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt visited Medora and was captivated by the spirit and beauty of the small town, resulting in the creation of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. After a visit to the park, stop at the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame and the Chateau de Mores, Roosevelt's home in Medora. For dinner and entertainment, attend the Pitchfork Steak Dinner and Medora Musical, a stunning outdoor variety show.



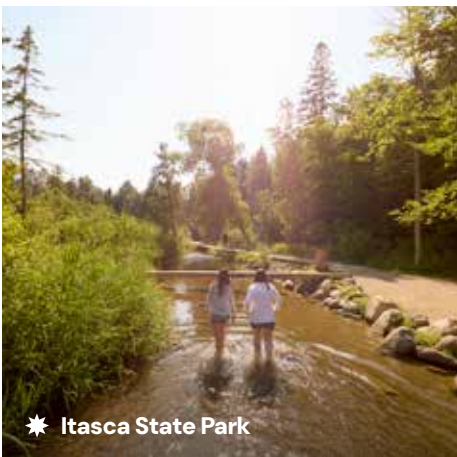
✦ Theodore Roosevelt National Park

DAY 6: MINOT

Driving east this morning, first stop is New Town, home of the MHA Interpretive Center and earth lodge building, which tells the story of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nations. Reflect on the beauty of the area at Lake Sakakawea. After arrival in Minot, walk through the Scandinavian Heritage Park, featuring buildings, statues and monuments that celebrate the heritage of the Nordic countries. And visit the Dakota Territory Air Museum, which features a variety of military and civilian aircraft as a tribute to the city's importance as an aviation training center.

DAY 7: GRAND FORKS

Upon arrival in Grand Forks, take a tour of the North Dakota Museum of Art. Then time for outdoor parks with Lincoln Drive and Riverside offering paths lined with beautiful flowers and foliage. Setoma boasts a picturesque Japanese Garden and great birdwatching. And River Cities Speedway is the top 1/3-mile dirt and clay track in the nation, with Friday night races testing the speed of Outlaw Sprints, Midwest Modifieds and Street Stocks.



✦ Itasca State Park

DAY 8: BEMIDJI

This morning it's a short drive to Itasca State Park, where the Mississippi River begins its journey to the Gulf of Mexico. Drive to the Headwaters in the park for a photo and walk across the stepping stones where the river flows from Lake Itasca. Late afternoon drive to Bemidji, known as the First City on the Mississippi. Highlights include the famous statues of lumberjack Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox, the Bemidji Woolen Mills and the outdoor Sculpture Walk.

DAY 9: DULUTH

Enjoy the drive through Minnesota's Iron Range on the way to Duluth, the world's largest inland seaport on the shore of Lake Superior. First stop is Canal Park and the iconic Aerial Lift Bridge, which opens to allow ocean ships to enter the harbor. Visit the Maritime Marine Visitors Center to learn about the history of shipping on Lake Superior. Other top attractions are Glensheen Mansion, the Lake Superior Railroad Museum and Spirit Mountain Recreation Area.



✦ Glensheen Mansion

DAY 10: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL/BLOOMINGTON

Depart Duluth for the 2.5-hour trip back to Minneapolis/St. Paul. Take a walk along the Minnesota River at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Bloomington or shop for some last-minute items at the Mall of America—both are only five minutes from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

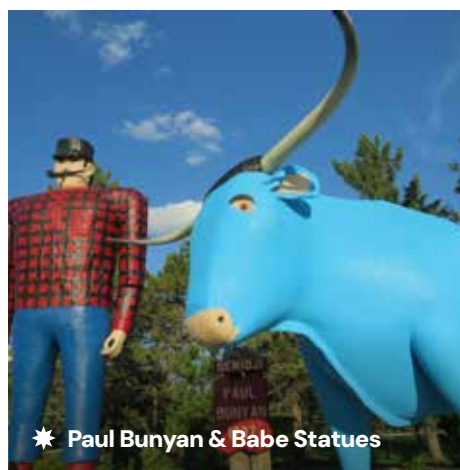
MISSISSIPPI RIVER ITINERARY

The story of the “Father of Waters” is steeped in American history. From the headwaters’ discovery by early explorers with American Indian guides, to its background as a transportation route, this history is as varied as the scenery it touches. Follow this route to discover the scenery and stories of the northern half of the Mighty Mississippi.

★ Mississippi River Headwaters



★ Mall of America



★ Paul Bunyan & Babe Statues

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DAY TWO: BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Morning drive to Itasca State Park, where the Mississippi River begins its journey to the Gulf of Mexico from Lake Itasca. Drive through the Park to the Headwaters for a photo and walk across the stepping stones where the river flows from the lake. Late afternoon drive to Bemidji, known as the First City on the Mississippi. Highlights include the famous statues of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox and Bemidji Woolen Mills.





★ Mississippi River

DAY THREE: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

Minneapolis is the largest city in Minnesota and St. Paul is the state capitol—together they are known as the Twin Cities. Head to the Mississippi River, which flows through the centers of both Minneapolis and St. Paul. Take a sightseeing cruise aboard a Paddlewheel boat for beautiful views of the city skyline. Learn about the history of the river at Mill City Museum in Minneapolis and the Mississippi National River & Recreation Area in St. Paul.



★ Mill City Museum

DAY FOUR: WINONA

Depart the Twin Cities driving along the Great River Road, a national scenic byway which extends from the Mississippi River Headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico. About one hour south, stop at Red Wing to visit the flagship Red Wing Shoe Store & Museum. Next stop is Wabasha, with impressive views of the Mississippi and home of the National Eagle Center. Then it's on to Winona, a river town famous for the Watkins Heritage Museum and Gift Shop and the Polish Cultural Institute and Museum.

DAY FIVE: GALENA

Head across the River to explore the historic city of Galena, Illinois, with charming shops, delectable restaurants and more. The historic Main Street is lined with 125 unique shops—from candy and ice cream shops to spas, wine tasting and amazing dining options—all happening along an 1800s street with original buildings. For more history, tour the home of the 18th U.S. President, Ulysses S. Grant.

DAY SIX: HANNIBAL

Follow the river to Hannibal, Missouri, the boyhood home of America's most famous author, Mark Twain. Learn about the author's early life at the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum located in the historic downtown. Jim's Journey Freedom Center is Hannibal's newest museum, detailing the history of African Americans in the city. For hands-on activities, visit the Mark Twain Cave and Mark Twain Riverboat for a ride on the Mississippi River.



★ Winona

DAY SEVEN: ST. LOUIS

Drive along the Great River Road to St. Louis, Missouri. For one of the most unique views of the Mississippi River, ride the tram to the top of the Gateway Arch and see the river from the top of the 180-meter structure, overlooking Missouri and Illinois. In the afternoon head to the Forest Park neighborhood, home to free attractions including the Saint Louis Zee, the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Missouri History Museum. Final stop will be the famous Anheuser-Busch Brewery for a tour.

DAY EIGHT: MISSISSIPPI RIVER CRUISE

From St. Louis, visitors have the option of boarding a luxurious 7-night cruise ship on the Mississippi River, traveling either north to St. Paul, Minnesota or south to New Orleans—both are 7-night cruises. Or depart for a flight home with memories of your visit to the Father of Waters.



★ The Gateway Arch

THE GRAND MINNESOTA EXPLORER TOUR

Named by the American Indians as “Land of Sky-Blue Waters,” Minnesota is well-known for its many lakes and rivers. But less-known secrets are left for the modern explorer to discover: Headwaters of the Mississippi River, award-winning restaurants and chefs, top-rated museums and the largest shopping and entertainment center in the U.S. Come and discover the spectacular scenery and welcoming people of Minnesota!



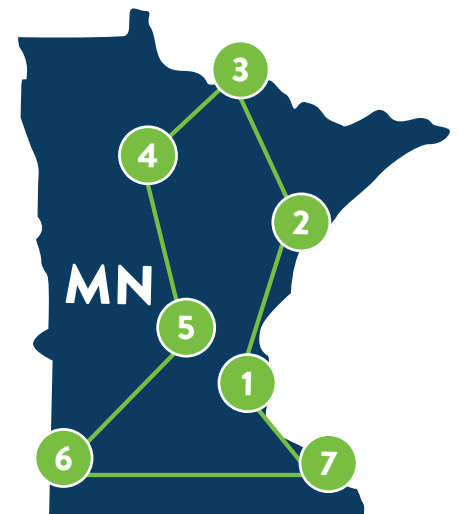
✦ Minneapolis Chain of Lakes



✦ Mall of America



✦ Guthrie Theater



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★ Gooseberry Falls

DAY THREE: DULUTH

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DAY FOUR: INTERNATIONAL FALLS

International Falls is located on the Canadian border, directly across from Fort Frances, Ontario. The city is often referred to as the “Icebox of the Nation,” with an average of 109 days per year where the high temperature is below freezing. The Rainy Lake Visitor Center is one of the gateways to Voyageurs National Park, the only water-based national park in the U.S. Take a sightseeing tour boat or rent a houseboat, one of the best ways to enjoy the national park.



★ Big Ole Viking Statue

DAY FIVE: BEMIDJI

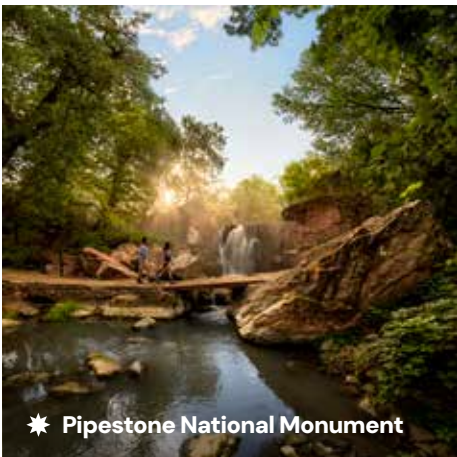
Morning drive to Itasca State Park, where the Mississippi River begins its journey to the Gulf of Mexico from Lake Itasca. Drive through the Park to the Headwaters for a photo and walk across the stepping stones where the river flows from the lake. Late afternoon drive to Bemidji, known as the First City on the Mississippi. Highlights include the famous statues of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox and Bemidji Woolen Mills.

DAY SIX: ST. CLOUD

Stop in Alexandria on the way to St. Cloud for a photo op with the Viking statue Big Ole and a visit to the Runestone Museum. Debates continue regarding whether the Kensington Runestone on display was actually left by the Vikings. After a short drive to St. Cloud, walk through the stunning Munsinger and Clemens Gardens, built along the Mississippi River. A visit to St. John’s Abbey provides a rare opportunity to see a hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible completed in 1998 by renowned calligrapher Donald Jackson.

DAY SEVEN: PIPESTONE

The Pipestone National Monument is a working quarry used by American Indians to harvest the soft red stone used to make ceremonial peace pipes. A 1-km walking trail allows a view of the quarries and in the Visitor Center, American Indians still today hand craft the pipes. Many buildings in town are made of the red quartzite stone (pipestone) and are on the list of the National Register of Historic Places. Two of the best examples are the Calumet Inn and the Pipestone County Courthouse.



★ Pipestone National Monument

DAY EIGHT: WINONA

Once home to wealthy lumber barons, Winona still showcases several attractions of historic and cultural value, including the Polish Museum, St. Stanislaus Catholic Church and its stained glass windows, and Watkins Heritage Museum and Headquarters. And the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, located directly on the Mississippi River, showcases great art featuring water, including art by internationally renowned artists.

DAY NINE: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

Depart for the Twin Cities driving along the Great River Road, a national scenic byway which extends from the Mississippi River Headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico. First stop is Wabasha, with impressive views of the Mississippi and home of the National Eagle Center. Next stop is Red Wing to visit the flagship Red Wing Shoe Store & Museum. Once back in the Twin Cities, visit the Minnesota Zoo for an amazing view of dolphins and to walk the Treetop Trail, an elevated walkway to see animals in their natural habitat.

DAY TEN: MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL/BLOOMINGTON

Final day to explore the Twin Cities. Visit the Walker Art Center and adjacent Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. Or tour the Minneapolis Institute of Art, with a collection of 90,000 artworks from six continents, spanning about 5,000 years. Visit Paisley Park, the former home and recording studio of Prince. For history buffs, a tour of Historic Fort Snelling tells the story of pioneer life in the 1820s through costumed interpreters. Shopping at Mall of America provides the opportunity to pick up last-minute items before heading to the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport and your flight home.



★ National Eagle Center

