

Roadtripping Lake Pepin



ONE OF THE most beautiful stretches of Minnesota is found between Red Wing and Winona, along the Mississippi River. To be truthful, we owe a lot of credit to Wisconsin, as Lake Pepin is hard to enjoy wholly from only one of the two states. While I call this piece Roadtripping Lake Pepin, it's somewhat of a misnomer. Feel free to end your trip when Lake Pepin does by crossing over to Wisconsin on Highway 25 at Wabasha, but I'd recommend seeing it through all the way down to Winona. This is a trip I've made each fall for many years and the adventure doesn't feel complete without seeing a fair stretch of Bluff Country.

The most important facet of a roadtrip is settling on the parameters. Know your audience and your objectives. Coffee within the first hour is important, probably still within the Metro Area...perhaps while still within walking distance of home. Never go with more than one person per window, nobody wants to straddle the hump in the backseat without being able to see more than the trunks of the trees along the roadside. Music is key, let the persnickety one pick it. Never ever start with a wine tasting in Hastings as everyone will require naps before you even get to Lake Pepin. There's living and learning and each year's roadtrip is usually better than the last.

We've got about eight hours and many miles to go—very few places will make the cut; others will merit their own trips. For instance, we're roadtripping—it's not a day for hiking or biking Frontenac State Park. It could be a good reconnaissance mission for an overnigher in the future, but plan to be home by nightfall. And, depending upon your group of travelers, it could be all about food, art, window-shopping, antiquing, or all of the above. There are so very many options.

Because so much of the Minnesota side of the route is accessible for shorter day trips, I focus on how to do the whole loop in a day, most of the stops occurring on the Wisconsin side. This is not a slight to our fair state, but more a look at how a region is experienced. Given that much of the Minnesota side involves high-speed travel down Highway 61 with exits and turns into the river towns, I find the slower pace that takes me through the river towns that flank the Great River Road Highway 35 in Wisconsin to be preferred. We're driving the main I drags and looking inside the storefronts of history; quaint and industrial artistic and plain, bleak and optimistic. All of it, wonderful.

THE ROUTE

It begins in Hastings on Highway 61/63 and continues all the way down Winona to cross to Wisconsin on Winona Street (43) and turn north on the Great River Road (35) at the "T." When all the way up to about 5 miles north of Bay City, you can cross back over to Red Wing on 63 or wait until Prescott when 35 brings you to 10 that will cross you back to Hastings. Check out your maps, plot your course. My friend Matt went down in hysterical lore the year he told me to just "turn left" in Winona to get to Wisconsin. As his luck would have it, the exact

I "turned left" got us precisely where we needed to be. Still, I do have a little better sense of where I'm going than that.

MINNESOTA

Once you're clipping along on Highway 61 going south from Hastings, you'll see signs for places that deserve a separate Tip. Alexis Bailley Vineyards is toward the very start of the journey. Red Wing beckons the window-shoppers in the vehicle, but stopping too early might mean losing momentum for getting around the lake. It's important to establish the taskmaster of the journey as sometimes there is navigational

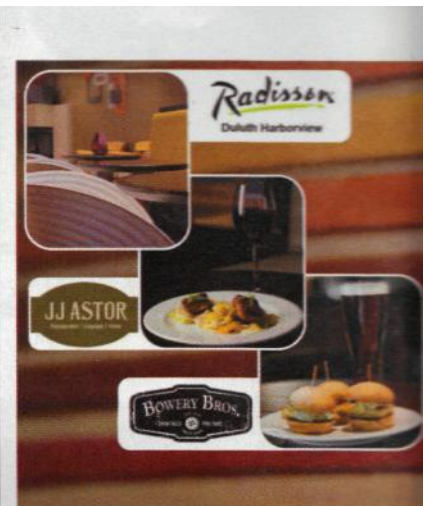
•siforcement to be done—like when passing a store called the Uffda Shop. Also, be sure to look to your right as you leave Red Wing: an unexpected architectural delight is to be found in the Minnesota Correctional Facility there. On to Lake City, there are the sights of Lake Pepin to behold: sailboats, a marina, and the only lighthouse on the Mississippi River. Grab some apples at the Peiji Heights store, take some time to drink a drink in, but then keep on going...much of your

7 station lies ahead of you. Wabasha has a great shopping area as well as the National Eagle Center. Typically, I tour through the town with a stop for chocolate and coffee at The Chocolate Escape and a drive-by nod to the Eagle Center, right on the riverfront. Because Wabasha requires getting off the highway and finding your way through the town streets, it might be easily skipped in case you're feeling hunger pains and want to get to the lunch destination in Wisconsin

•xner than later. Winona is as much an active, working town as the ones you just left for the day. So what surprised me the last time I went around Lake Pepin was the jewel in the crown of Minnesota's art scene, the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, peacefully and quietly existing down in the riverfront college town of Winona. There are

visiting art collections (Norman Rockwell was particularly delightful last year) as well as a personal collection that knocked me off my feet. Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings of international importance are refined within the attractive, weathered

—LL—shake building on the Mississippi, including some works by Bradford, Buttersworth, Homer, Monet, O'Keeffe, Picasso, Pollock, Renoir and Van Gogh. Each time I turned a corner. I gasped at who and what hanging on the wall. Delightful. If you choose to do the roadtrip in a clockwise fashion, instead of starting in Minnesota and going counterclockwise. I recommend skipping at the museum in the late afternoon before going to dinner at one of the fine restaurants in Red Wing.



Hamline
AutoBo

Done the way it should be.

With quality workmanship since 1990 a total commitment to EARN your trust

2520 Broadway Drive
Lauderdale, MN 55113
(651) 224-4717
www.hamlineautoboc

PLAN THAT FIT YOUR LIFE

Wherever you are in life, we have a health plan that fits you, your family and your budget.

Scan the code with your smartphone's QR code reader to be connected instantly with a plan that works best for you. Call your Medica agent or 1-888-313-2951.

Or visit us at medica.com/plansthatfit.



MEDICA

Personalize, Empower, Improve.

Need the QR reader app? Go to get.medica.com to download the free app, then scan the code.

Expert Home Financing. *Guaranteed.*
It's not just a tagline. It's a promise that we back up —with cash.

An approval from Residential Mortgage Group, a division of Alerus Financial, is backed by a \$10,000 guarantee* that your loan will close. Why are we able to be so bold? Because we've never failed to close a loan we said would close! Contact me today to learn more about this Guaranteed Approval and our *to-the-penny* Guaranteed Closing Costs!



RMG <Akrus

A DIVISION OF
FINANCIAL

Pat Gleason

RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE GROUP

OFFICE 952.847.9834 E-MAIL pat@rmgmn.com
patgleasononline.com

*Paid to the seller if RMG is unable to close based on the terms of our approval letter.

WISCONSIN

Once you've crossed over from Winona to Highway 35 in Wisconsin, the first town you'll encounter to the north is Fountain Gully. Set in the bluffs, my annual lunch destination is up the hill from the highway: The Monarch Public House. A quiet, historical place by day (but what looks to be a Packer bar by night), The Monarch has been serving travelers since 1894. A brewhouse and restaurant always sates us by the time we get there for a late lunch. I order the same burger every year, the "I Am Uncle Harry's Burger," a "big juicy burger with a thrilling combination of cheddar, bistro mustard sauce, chopped green olives, and thinly sliced onion." It never fails to please.

Fed and happy, we proceed north on the Great River Road, and someone needs to stretch a bit, checking out Lock and Dam 4. Alma is fascinating...but we usually plod onward to Nelson for an ice cream cone at The Original Nelson Cheese Factory (more loosely known as the Nelson Creamery). The blueberry ice cream is divine and, even when you see the line stretching outside the door to get some, it's worth the fleeting wait...whichever the flavor. Plenty of motorcycles line the road and the crowd is a mix and match of people looking for cheese, wine, ice cream, or a meal of sandwiches, soups, and pizza. We're usually stuffed by then, and more so with the ice cream, so our stop is often short and sweet.

North of Nelson is the town of Pepin. Pepin hosts gorgeous and interesting art in its shops and is a required stop for anyone looking for a stroll along the water. My first destination is Great River Coffee Roasters on Highway 35 before heading down to the waterfront to park and browse through the shops. Antiques, garden gifts, art and novelties await in Pepin. And, if you're there for lunch or supper, The Harbor View Cafe is historically popular—with reason—and has pleasing coq au vin and Swedish meatballs.

Stockholm is the belle of the ball. I look forward to getting to Stockholm, all year. It's been the topic of foodie buzz recently due to the "Pizza Farm" at AtoZ Produce and Bakery (which only serve pizza on Tuesdays) but it also has events like a film festival and *Christmas in Stockholm* that draw people to its fine locale. What appeals to me is the use of the historical buildings along Highway 35. A house has been turned into The Palate with a porch and lower level full of kitchen implements, gourmet ingredients, decor, and wine. Bogus Creek Cafe & Bakery and The Stockholm Pie Company keep us in our sweets. Ingebretsen's (of Minneapolis) has smaller, more genteel store which is oh-so-appropriate in Stockholm. Gelly's Pub & Eatery has proven itself invaluable as a place to see someone who's not interested in window-shopping. OQ Quilts* has handmade treasures and quilting supplies. Stockholm General stocks Wisconsin foods and wines with delicious samples to taste. A must-see, Abode,* is an artist gallery, an interior design studio and a home and lifestyle showroom. (*GLBT-Owned.)

Up the hill from Stockholm (past a cemetery that can get pretty creepy as the sun gets lower) is the Maiden Rock Apples, which is where I usually end the formal portion of the tour and buy a sack of apples. Unlike other stops along the way, this location allows you to wander through the trees and pick your own apples or taste it take what they've already prepared for purchase. A little hay maze is available for the kids, but usually we just sit on it because we think we're old and tired. The sun gets lower on the farm as we sip some cider and prepare for the return trip to the Cities.

A road well-tripped, a river well-traveled. D

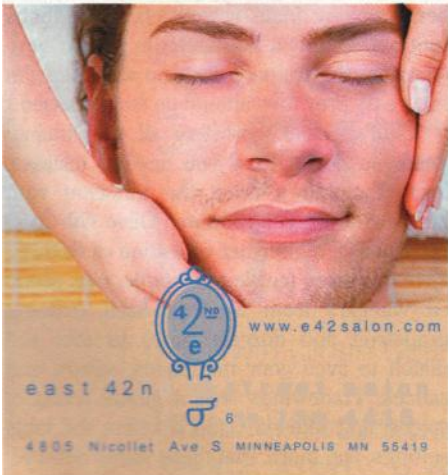


THE REMODELER YOU CAN TRUST

- Courteous
- Detailed & professional specifications
- On-time



House Lift REMODELER
 Additions & Dormers / Kitchens & Bathrooms / Custom Cabinetry
 Whole House Renovation / Porches & Sun-Rooms / Finished Basements
www.houseliftinc.com
 4330 Nicollet Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409
 612.821.1100 / 651.690.3442



- facials
- back facials
- massage
- haircuts color
- makeup
- manicure
- pedicure
- waxing

MEN'S DAILY WEDNESDAY.

SPA PACKAGES & GROUP SPECIALS AVAILABLE

CHECK OUT OUR WEEKLY SPECIALS @FACEBOOK.COAVE42SALON

lavender offers you more great ways to **STAY CONNECTED!**

Be a fan of Big Gay News and Lavender on Facebook & Twitter to receive and invitations to Lavender events.

Read Big Gay News & Wanda Wisdom at iTunes.com,

and the latest local, national, and international news emailed to you via News.com.

Listen to Wanda Wisdom's daily radio show, and check out her hilarious videos on YouTube.com.



Visit STOCKHOLM!

Visit [LAVENDERMAGAZINE.COM](http://www.LAVENDERMAGAZINE.COM)

Abode Stockholm

Collection of artisan made furnishings, accessories, life style items, must, fine art.
 715-442-2266

www.abodegallery.com

A Cottage in Stockholm

A luxury retreat with fireplace and panoramic view of Lake Pepin.
 715-448-2048

www.cottageinstockholm.com

Fjyway Rim Festival

October 20-23, 2011
 A premier destination festival for regional, domestic U.S. and International emerging and independent filmmakers.
www.fjywayfilmfestival.org

Ingebretsen's av Stockholm Scandanavian Gifts

An old world marketplace of fine Scandinavian gifts, food, needlework, and clothing
www.jngebretsens.com

Lake Pepin Beach House B & B

Quality beach house located directly on the shores of Lake Pepin! Spectacular lake views.
 715-254-9156

Northern Oak Amish Furniture and Gifts

Handcrafted Amish furniture. Complete finishes of furniture and home decor for every room
 715-442-6008
www.northernoakamishfurniture.com

River Road Inn

Our goal is to provide a restful romantic, luxury spa-like atmosphere for our guests,
 6C-306-2B0
www.rferroadinn.com

Stockholm General

An amazing array of Wisconsin made food stuffs, charming gifts and gourmet items and picnic supplies.
www.stockholmgeneral.com

The Palate Gourmet Kitchen Store

Selection of gourmet cookware, dinnerware, kitchen tools and unique home decor products.
 715-442-6400
www.thepalate.net

The Stockholm Pie Company

Old-fashioned, hand crafted, and flaky crust pie. More than thirty varieties of pie to choose from!
 715-442-5505
www.thestockholmpiecompany.com

Widespot Performing Arts Center

Serving the diverse audience and artists within its community by presenting performing art pieces designed to engage the mind, body and spirit.
 715-307-8941
www.widespotperformingarts.org

Also check out these great businesses:

Bogus Creek Cafe & Bakery

Featuring savory breakfasts, lunches, and fresh bakery goods.

Clemona Massage & Spa Therapy

Specializing in therapy for chronic pain, injuries, and relaxation... with an all-natural, organic spa twist!

Sandys Clothing and Art

Hand crafted jewelry, fabulous hand-painted t-shirts, and many one-of-a-kind accessories and artful objects.

Savvy

Cutting edge fashion trends in both the women's fashion and home accent arenas.

For further information contact The Stockholm Merchants Association

