

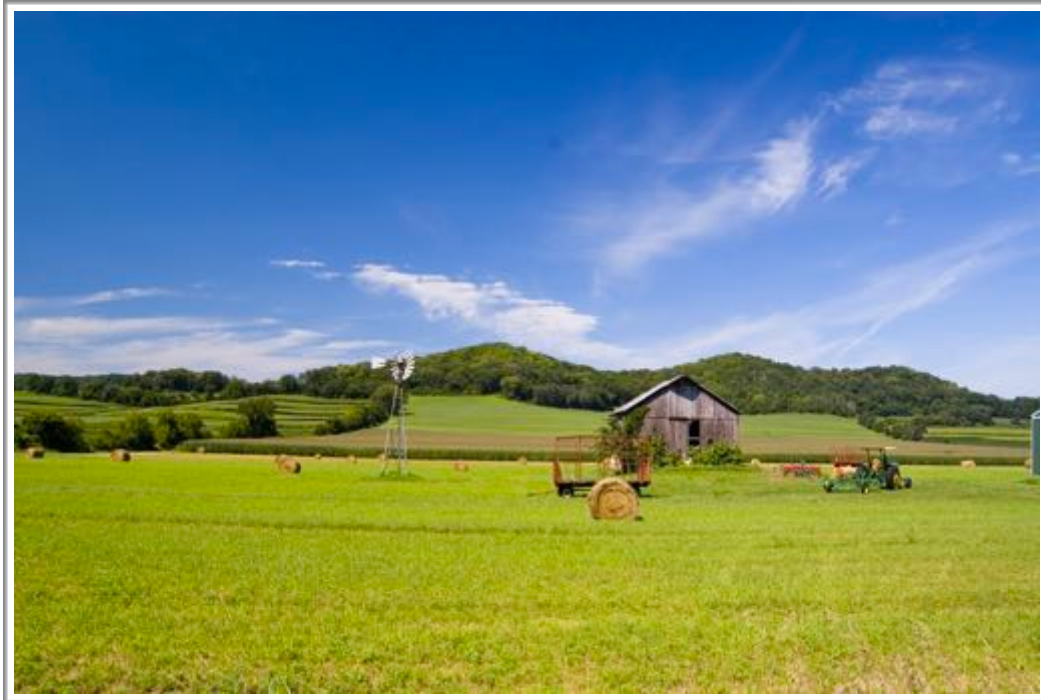
Historic Bluff Country National Scenic Byway/Apple Blossom Scenic Byway

Quintessentially Midwestern



6 Days/5 Nights

Gateway City: Rochester, Minnesota



Thousands of years ago, the Dakota and Winnebago Peoples lived on the land now known as southeastern Minnesota. The late 1800's witnessed industrious German and Scandinavian immigrants establishing huge dairy farms using the vast prairies and nutrient-rich soil to grow wheat and apples. The tiny towns settled by these Europeans became the center of agricultural trade and social activity throughout the region, where farmers congregated to sell their crops and homemakers gathered on Main Street to trade information and gossip. The magic of small-town Minnesota is still on display along the Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway, an 88-mile picturesque route that winds through watercolor landscapes, unbroken farmland, and the dramatic river bluffs of the Root River Valley and its sister route, the Apple Blossom Scenic Byway. As the golden prairie slowly turns into limestone palisades, you'll discover the bucolic villages of the Upper Midwest where you can still spot the silhouette of an Amish buggy as it rolls down a country lane. With outstanding vistas at every turn, this trail ducks in and out of hardwood forests and parallels the shimmering Root River, where you can hike and fish while listening to the stories of early 20th century Americana. From historic downtowns to the barns, windmills, and silos that dot the course, no road is more infused with small-town charm than the Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway, leading to the Apple Blossom Scenic Byway, which true to its name, is nestled in flowering trees abundant with fruit.



Touring the Byway

We recommend starting your journey in Rochester, a thriving city with one of the most important healthcare facilities in the country. Engage with contemporary art at the Rochester Art Center and discover what it was like to live in 19th century Rochester at the Heritage House Victorian Museum, the History Center of Olmsted County, and the Maowood Historic Home. Spend your first evening relaxing in the rooftop pool of a beautifully restored hotel.

On Day Two, you'll travel to Grand Meadow, a quiet country town named for the prairies that dot the surrounding landscape. Begin your drive along the Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway on Route 16 and stop for a taste of local wine at Four Daughters Vineyard and Winery. You'll visit three historic cities located along the Byway – Spring Valley, home to nearly a dozen buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places; Wykoff, where you can view a lifetime of quirky collections at Ed's Museum; and Preston, which has an original 19th century Grain Elevator. Your accommodations for the evening are in a former jail converted to a

cozy bed and breakfast. Explore the hidden gem of Minnesota on Day Three as you travel to Lanesboro, the geographic center of the Byway and the site of one of the last remaining gravity arch dams left in the United States. Read local Haiku in the Poetry Parking Lot and test your avian knowledge at the Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, and afterwards, curl up in front of the fireplace at a historic inn.

You'll want your binoculars on Day Four as you stop at four scenic towns nestled against the Root River – Peterson, where you can try to spot whitetail deer in the Rushford Sand Barrens Scientific and Natural Area; Rushford, home to the panoramic views of Magelssen Bluff Park; Houston, where you can learn about nocturnal birds at the International Owl Center and visit 260 acres of protected forest at the Mound Prairie Scientific and Natural Area; and Hokah, where Thompson Bluff provides spectacular views of Como Falls as it tumbles into Thompson Creek.



You're in for a real treat on Day Five, where after exploring La Crescent, head out on the 17-mile Apple Blossom Scenic Drive. Follow the "apple signs" north out of La Crescent on County Highway 1. When you reach County Road 12, a right turn will take you down a steep and twisty road to the riverside town of Dakota, while a left turn will take you to the small town of Nodine and the entrance to Great River Bluffs State Park near MN-90 at exit 266. Keep the Mississippi River to your left as you make your way to La Crosse, Wisconsin, where you'll spend the evening and on Day Six, picture yourself in a 1911 Roadster at the Dahl Auto Museum and see local youth and adult art collections at the Pump House Regional Arts Center.

From there, we wish you a safe passage if you're continuing your journey on another Minnesota Scenic Byway, or a safe and pleasant journey home.



DAY ONE



Rochester

This thriving city of care and innovation was founded in 1854 by George and Henrietta Head, who named the city after their hometown of Rochester, New York. The railroad arrived soon after and brought new residents and businesses, and in 1863 Dr. William W. May arrived as the examining surgeon for Civil War draftees. He and his sons eventually established what would grow into the Mayo Clinic, an internationally recognized healthcare facility that has since made innumerable contributions to medicine and science. Today, visitors can enjoy the city's scenic beauty, fascinating history, and extensive parks system.

Heritage House Victorian Museum

Discover what 19th-century life was like in Rochester in this 1875 Italianate-style home built for Timothy and Eliza Whiting. The house survived a powerful tornado in 1883 that ruined much of the rest of the city, and has since been authentically restored and decorated with period Victorian antiques. Visitors can view historic clothing, furnishing, toys, and a Victorian dollhouse, and other items that preserve Rochester's early heritage.

225 1st Avenue NW, Rochester, MN 55901, 507-286-9208 June-August, Wednesdays 11AM-3PM, Adults \$5.



Rochester Art Center

A contemporary arts center with 36,000 square feet of local, national, and international art. Rotating exhibits and programs provide visitors with innovative opportunities to experience, challenge, engage with, and connect the dynamic relationship between art and society. Gallery tours, film screenings, lectures, and workshops for youth and adults are also available to help people connect to the world in compelling new ways.

30 Civic Center Drive SE Suite 120, Rochester, MN 55904, 507-722-2552 Wed-Sun 11AM-4PM, Adults \$5.

History Center of Olmsted County

Located on 54 acres of sprawling farmland in southwest Rochester, the History Center is the place to experience, explore, and examine the stories of Olmsted County's past. The site includes two historic farmsteads, the Hadley Valley Schoolhouse, Dee Log Cabin, and the History Center Museum which features a gallery of changing exhibits, the Wicklund Archives, the Wilson Library, and a gift shop.

1195 W Circle Drive, Rochester, Mn 55902, 507-282-9447, Tue–Sat 9AM-5PM, Adults \$9.

Maowood Historic Home

Built in 1911 by Dr. Charles H. Mayo, this historic 38-room mansion was home to three generations of the famous family. The 5-story stone structure now boasts an extensive decorative arts collection, gorgeous gardens, and antique furnishings and original Mayo family artifacts that tell the story of their many world travels and amazing achievements in medicine and human service.

3720 Mayowood Road SW, Rochester, MN 55902, 507-282-9447 Open mid-March-December, days and times vary, Adults \$20, Tours last approximately one hour.





Destination Distinctive Accommodations

The Kahler Grand Hotel 20 2nd Ave SW, Rochester, MN 55902, 507-280-6200 Experience tradition and luxurious hospitality in a beautifully renovated hotel with elegant rooms, on-site dining, and an indoor rooftop pool.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Hollandberry Pannekoeken 214 N Broadway Ave, Rochester, MN 55906, 507-322-6600 Family-friendly diner offering sandwiches, Dutch-style pancakes, and baked goods.

Pescara 150 S Broadway, Rochester, MN 55903, 507-280-6900 Delicious restaurant serving fresh and refined breakfast, lunch, and dinner alongside an extensive wine and beer menu.

Cameo 121 N Broadway Ave, Rochester, MN 55906, 507- 361-2070 Relaxed eatery offering hearty global cuisine focused on seasonality and technique.

Destination Distinctive Retail

SEMVA Art Gallery 320 S Broadway, Rochester, MN 55904, 507-281-4920 Over 70 artists are represented in this cooperative. Artwork for sale includes paintings, photography, pottery, sculpture, wearable art, woodworks, and more.

The Nordic Shop 111 Broadway Ave S STE 202, Rochester, MN 55904, 507-285-9143 Your one-stop-shop for Scandinavian goods, including clothing, jewelry, kitchenware, and home goods.

99 Giggles 20 2nd Ave SW, Rochester, MN 55902, 507-252-9900 Eclectic gift shop offering funky finds, playful accessories, and fun gift ideas for everyone on your list.

DAY TWO



Grand Meadow

For centuries, the broad prairies of this quiet country town were a fertile hunting ground for Native Americans, and later, for European fur traders and hunters. Grand Meadow was established in 1862 and platted eight years later, and named for the prairies near the original town site, which provide a tranquil, off the beaten pass paradise.

Exchange State Bank and Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Hall

Two buildings in Grand Meadow are listed on the National Register of Historic Places for their significant architecture. The **Exchange State Bank** is a 1910 Prairie School-style building ornamented with terra cotta, glass mosaic, and wood. The building is still an operating bank and illustrates the prosperity of agricultural towns as reflected in their architecture. The Carpenter Gothic-style **Grand Army of the Republic Hall** was built in 1891 and is a rare surviving example of an inexpensive pattern clubhouse. It served as the meeting place of Booth Post No. 130 and though it is now vacant, it is one of Minnesota's only two remaining G.A.R. halls.

The Exchange State Bank is located at 105 Main Street N., Grand Meadow, MN, 507-754-5123, M-F 8:30AM-3PM. The G.A.R. Hall is located on the west side of South Main Street between First Avenue SW and Second Avenue SW.

Grand Meadow Wayside and Pine Lawn Park

Offering campgrounds, restroom facilities, picnic areas, and expansive views of the rolling rural landscape and serenity of the winding creek, this wayside and community park is well-signed and highly visible from the roadway.

Approximately 1.5 miles east of Grand Meadow on MN-16.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Four Daughters Vineyard & Winery 78757 State Highway 16, Spring Valley, MN 55975, 507-346-7300 Whether you'd like a sip, a glass, or a bottle to take back home, this rustic vineyard offers tastings and flights of their namesake wine, Loon Juice Hard Cider, and pizzas and appetizers at the on-site restaurant.



Spring Valley

Named for a nearby spring, this picturesque village was a stagecoach and railroad boomtown whose farmers were eager to take advantage of such services. With a post office in operation since 1855 and a commercial district listed on the National Register of Historical Places, the elaborate 19th-century buildings that dot this town are symbols of the area's early progress.

Methodist Church Museum and Washburn-Zittleman House

Built in 1876, services at this Gothic Revival church were attended by some of southern Minnesota's most important figures, including Laura Ingalls Wilder, who wrote the *Little House on the Prairie* series, and Richard Sears, who would later partner with Alvah Roebuck to found one of the most successful department stores in the world. Visitors will enjoy the 21 stained glass windows that adorn the church as well as two floors of exhibits on view in the church's museum. Adjacent to the church is the Washburn-Zittleman House, an 1865 Victorian home that is furnished with many beautiful pieces from that time period.

221 W Courtland St, Spring Valley, MN 55975, 507-346-7659 June-Aug: Daily, 10AM-4PM, Sept-Oct: Sa-Su 10AM-4PM, Adults \$10.





Spring Valley Historic Buildings

Spring Valley's downtown commercial district is recognized on the National Register of Historic Places due to its impressive collection of remarkable buildings, including the **Parsons Block and Hall** (112 S. Broadway), an Italianate building constructed in 1871 for real estate investor Emilius Parsons as a commercial, social, and theatrical center; the **Commercial House Hotel** (126 S. Broadway), a brick hotel built in three phases between 1876-1916 as the town grew into a railroad hub, regional trade center, and tourist destination (1876-1916); **City Hall at Carnegie Library** (201 S. Broadway), an early Carnegie-funded library and Beaux Arts brick and stone building built in 1904; the **Ephraim Steffens House** (404 N. Broadway), a High Victorian brick residence built in 1877 for a local entrepreneur, financier, and politician; and the **William Strong House** (508 N. Huron Ave), a French Second Empire home built in 1879 for a prosperous banker during the community's early boom years.

Wykoff

Platted in 1871 by the Southern Minnesota Railroad and incorporated in 1876, it wasn't until 1881 that the town was founded and named by Cyrus Wykoff, a railroad surveyor and early landowner. This tiny town with a lot of German pride wouldn't have existed without the railroad, and its picturesque downtown commercial district has an impressive number of brick-faced buildings on the National Register of Historic Places that were influenced by the emerging transportation industry.

Wykoff Commercial Historic District

Wykoff's well preserved and architecturally cohesive commercial district is illustrative of a railway-based agricultural center. Of particular note is the **Francis H. Bartlett House**, the 1876 Second Empire home of Wykoff's co-founder. Gold and Pearl Streets, Wykoff, MN 55990.

Ed's Museum and Wykoff Area Schools Museum

Edwin Julius was a beloved Wykoff citizen and the owner of the fJack Sprat Food Store. He moved into the store in 1933 and over the next 50 years, saved nearly every item that came into his possession. Upon his death in 1989, the town learned that he bequeathed the store to them with the stipulation that it be turned into a museum. On view is his extensive collection, with items including oatmeal tins, a 1930s lollipop tree, Hollywood pinups, player piano rolls, 30 years of *TV Guides*, multiple Smokey the Bear posters, and countless other treasures. In a small annex attached to Ed's is the Wykoff Area Schools Museum, which contains articles and class pictures from the area's school district.

100 South Gold Street Wykoff, MN 55990, 507-352-4205, Sa-Su 1PM-4PM.





Preston

This vibrant community in the heart of Bluff Country was founded in 1853 and named for Luther Preston, a millwright and the town's first postmaster. Preston is bisected by the Root River, which allowed early settlers to establish flour mills along the river's path and take advantage of river-related services like timber, water power, stonework, and the railroad industry. As Minnesota's Trout Capital," Preston is a welcoming family-fun destination with entertaining, educational, and recreational activities.

Milwaukee Elevator Company Grain Elevator

Built around 1890 to hold grain before it was shipped east, this grain elevator was built with interlocking bins, a technique also known as "cribbed" construction. Many small towns in grain-producing counties have a similar elevator, and the Preston grain elevator was last used in the 1980's and serves as a trailhead for the Root River Trail, with access to public restrooms. Northwest corner of Fillmore and Center Streets.



Destination Distinctive Accommodations

The JailHouse Inn 109 Houston St NW, Preston, MN 55965, 507-765-2181 This former 19th-century jail has been converted into a redbrick bed and breakfast with Victorian-style rooms and a cozy lounge. From cells to suites, this is one B&B worth going to jail for!

Destination Distinctive Dining

Sweet Stop & Sandwich Shoppe 110 St Anthony St S, Preston, MN 55965, 507-765-9956 Serving the area's best homemade sandwiches, soups, salads, cheesecakes and desserts.

Branding Iron 1100 Circle Heights Dr, Preston, MN 55965, 507-765-3388 Family-owned steakhouse with a comfortable lounge, lively bar, and beautiful views.

DAY THREE

Preston Wayside Overlook

Just east of the city of Preston is the Preston Wayside Overlook, which was built in 1937 as part of the New Deal public works program. It is the highest point on the bluffs above the Root River, 90 feet below, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Approximately 0.6 miles east of Preston on US-52.

Inspiration Point Wayside Park

This historic wayside overlooks the rolling hills of Lanesboro and the surrounding countryside. Constructed in 1934-37 with assistance from the New Deal program, it is the only surviving example of a stone roadside park built by a Civilian Conservation Corps erosion control camp.

Approximately 2.3 miles west of Lanesboro on MN-16.





Lanesboro

Discover the hidden gem of southeastern Minnesota! Nestled in the bluffs of the Root River Valley, the historic downtown of this charming town is lined with original 19th-century brick buildings. Lanesboro was founded in 1856 when the Southern Minnesota Railroad reached the area and was able to transport milled wheat from the town to markets across the midwest, turning the region into one of the nation's agricultural centers. Today, visitors find an inspiring and creative atmosphere in the town that is still thriving after 150 years.

Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center

Pick up a map of historic Lanesboro landmarks, buildings, and the iconic iron medallion public art project at the Visitors Center. Located in the heart of the town's authentic 19th-century downtown, the Chamber of Commerce is your entry to Lanesboro's unique shops, tantalizing restaurants, and excellent outdoor adventure activities like fishing, hiking, and float trips on the Root River.

100 Milwaukee Rd, Lanesboro, MN 55949, 507-467-2696 Daily 10AM-4PM.

Lanesboro Stone Dam

In the summer of 1898, Lanesboro attempted to build a dam that would redirect the river's flow into the canal, but the design of the original dam did not withstand the force of the rushing water. Architects reconsidered the plans and built a second and much more elegant dam using unmortared limestone blocks placed in a gravity arch, or an arc that curves upstream and is able to resist the weight of the river. Over 150 years later, the dam still generates electricity for the town. It is one of only six gravity arch dams left in the United States, is included in the National Register of Historic Places, and can be seen from a panoramic overlook on the banks of the Root River.

401 Parkway Ave S, Lanesboro, MN 55949.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Pedal Pushers Cafe 121 Parkway Ave N, Lanesboro, MN 55949, 507-467-1050 Enjoy burgers and sandwiches in a colorful cafe with vegetarian and gluten-free options.

Destination Distinctive Retail

The Peddler 107 Coffee St E, Lanesboro, MN 55949, 507-380-1677 Handmade, fair trade, and vintage clothing and other gifts in a historic building.



Lanesboro Historical Museum

This delightful museum is dedicated to telling Lanesboro's story through its collections and displays of historical and genealogical artifacts. Items on view include a model of the 1868 Stone Dam, a model of a 1930's turbine, the beloved Storytelling Telephone Booth, and exhibits on the railroad industry, farm tools, Norwegian culture, the women of Lanesboro, and notable trapper Ed Redalen. Kids activities and a research library are also available.

105 Parkway Ave S, Lanesboro, MN 55949, 507-467-2177 May-Oct 12PM-4PM.

Coffee Street Bridge and Poetry Parking Lot

Constructed in 1893, the 139-foot long Coffee Street Bridge is a significant example of a single-span, pin-connected, early steel Pratt truss bridge. It was originally designed for vehicle traffic, but underwent a rehabilitation project in 2002 and now carries pedestrians and bicycles over the Root River. At the south end of the bridge is the Poetry Parking Lot, a unique public art project in which the "park here" signage has been replaced by original Haiku from community members.

100-198 Coffee St W, Lanesboro, MN 55949.



Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center

A year-round environmental learning center for people and families of all ages. Weekend workshops and single-afternoon classes combine skill development with an immersive outdoor experience, while the campus offers 9 miles of public trails that are rich in biodiversity. Opportunities for spectacular hiking, bird watching, cross country skiing, mountain biking, and other outdoor adventures are plentiful, and restrooms, water fountains, and trail maps are available at the visitor's center. 28097 Goodview Dr, Lanesboro, MN 55949, 507-467-2437 Public trails open daily, dawn-dusk.





Destination Distinctive Accommodations

Andor Wenneson Historic Inn 425 Prospect St, Peterson, MN 55962, 507-875-2587 A quiet and cozy hideaway in a meticulously restored and maintained century-old inn with spacious rooms, private bathrooms, a TV and game room, and a fireplace in the parlor.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Burdey's Cafe 417 Mill St, Peterson, MN 55962, 507-875-2424 Breakfast, lunch, and homemade pie alongside daily specials.

DAY FOUR



Peterson

Platted, developed, and named by Peter Peterson Haslerud in 1853, he was also instrumental in bringing the railroad to the town in 1867 and establishing a trout farm on his property in 1871. Located along the Root River, Peterson is a veritable playground for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. Hiking, biking, birdwatching, and kayaking and trout fishing are popular activities, while almost every corner of town provides outstanding views of the Root River Valley's soaring limestone bluffs.

Peterson Station Museum and Visitor Center

Discover the history of Peterson and the surrounding area in this popular local museum. Located in what used to be the Peterson Station for the Southern Minnesota Railroad, visitors can explore the past through historical artifacts, photographs, and memorabilia, and research their family history in the museum's genealogy center.

228 Mill St, Peterson, MN 55962, 507-875-2415 Th-M 11AM-4PM.

Destination Distinctive Retail

Turned Write Handcrafted Art 322 Mill St, Peterson, MN 55962, 507-875-2239 Quality writing materials, handcrafted wooden home goods, and other unique gift items.

Rushford Sand Barrens Scientific and Natural Area

Located within the Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest, the dramatic topography and impressive biodiversity of the Minnesota Bluffs are on view in this natural. With a native prairie that is home to at least 13 unique species of flora and record whitetail deer, the site has been designated an Audubon Important Bird Area and provides excellent birdwatching opportunities as well as hiking, photography, and wintertime snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Approximately 1.8 miles east of Peterson on MN-16, 651-259-5800. Daily, 12AM-11:30PM.

Rushford

When the first pioneers pole-boated up the Root River in search of habitable lands, they had no idea they would peer through 10-foot tall grasses and discover the astonishing beauty of Minnesota bluff land and what would eventually be settled as Rushford. The Southern Minnesota Railroad arrived shortly thereafter, forming the essential link between the city and the rest of the country. Today, Rushford is a bustling center for outdoor enthusiasts, art and history aficionados, families of all sizes, and those looking for a peaceful respite amid stunning natural wonders.



Southern Minnesota Railway Depot & Visitors Center

Built in 1867 by the Southern Minnesota Railroad, the Rushford Depot is the state's oldest two-story railroad remaining on its original site. It currently serves as the town's Visitor Center and the Rushford Historical Society, and is surrounded by an original jailhouse, one-room schoolhouse, Episcopal chapel, and the Hanson Cabin. The Rushford Depot is also the trailhead for the city's popular bike trail.
401 S Elm St, Rushford, MN 55971, 507-864-3338

Magelssen Bluff Park

Located on top of a bluff that overlooks the city, you'll find panoramic views of the bucolic Root River Valley as you walk, run, or hike along the park's 1.5 easy looping trail in a lovely forest setting. With prominent limestone outcroppings and three scenic overlooks, the winding trail passes several picnic areas, long-standing apple trees, and the Rushford Burr Oak tree, estimated to be nearly 200 hundred years old and one of the largest trees in Minnesota.

Approximately 1.2 miles west of Rushford on MN-30 and Magelsson Drive.



Destination Distinctive Dining

Stumpy's 122 W Jessie St, Rushford, MN 55971, 507-864-7156 Good food, good friends, and good times! Serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and everything in between.

Creamery Pizza & Ice Cream 407 S Mill St, Rushford, MN 55971, 507-864-7214 Soups, appetizers, pizza, and of course, the area's best ice cream.



Houston

This tiny village in southeast Minnesota was established in 1852 by William McSpadden, a soldier in the Mexican-American War. McSpadden served under General Sam Houston and later named the town after his commander. Within two years of the town's founding, over 40 buildings were built, including many stores and a school.

Houston Nature Center

With 17 acres of prairie and wetland native plantings, the Houston Nature Center is the educational and information center for the eastern end of the Root River Trail System. Visitors will find a gift shop, hands-on nature displays, sites for tent camping, showers and restrooms, a community garden, and a one-acre interactive natural playground

215 W Plum St, Houston, MN 55943, 507-896-4668, M & Th 10AM-3:45PM, F 10AM-5:45PM, Sa-Su 10AM-2:45PM.

International Owl Center

As Minnesota's preeminent educational and research center for the advancement of owls, the sprawling grounds of this learning center are home to four live owls, an extensive list of programs and events, children's owl art from around the world, and an owl-themed gift shop.

126 E Cedar St, Houston, MN 55943, 507-896-6957, F-M 10AM-4PM, Adults \$7.

Mound Prairie Scientific and Natural Area

Calling all ecologists! This 260-acre protected natural area in the Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest aims to restore the original prairie land that once existed in the region. The diverse topography, flora, and fauna on view here includes high-relief, stream dissected bluffs, dry bedrock bluff prairie, a native plant community, prairie voles, Lark sparrows, milk snakes, and six-lined racerunners.

Approximately 7.6 miles east of Houston on MN-16. 651-259-5800. Daily, 12AM-11:30PM.



Hokah

Named after local Native American chief Wecheschatope Hoka in 1851, this delightful hamlet sits atop the scenic bluffs of the Root River and was settled by Edward Thompson, who constructed a flour mill and dam on a river tributary. Within 25 years, the town was an industrial hub with four flour mills, many copper shops, a railroad depot, and six general stores. Today, the city's downtown area showcases wonderful views of the Root River Valley and the Thompson Creek Valley, while the river provides opportunities for canning, hiking, and fishing.



Mount Tom and Como Falls Park

Thompson Bluff, also known as Mount Tom, rises more than 400 feet above downtown Hokah and is a favorite local landmark. It borders Como Falls Park, which provides stunning views of the short but picturesque Como Falls, which tumble into Thompson Creek just before it meets the Root River. The park includes signage detailing the history of the area as well as picnic tables, charcoal grills, and an open play area.

9 Mill Street, Hokah, MN 55941. Daily, dawn-dusk.



Destination Distinctive Accommodations

Best Western Plus 509 N Chestnut St, La Crescent, MN 55947, 507-895-1001 A relaxed hotel with warmly furnished rooms and free Wi-Fi, as well as a gym, business center, and indoor pool.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Kaddy's Kafe 230 Main St #298, La Crescent, MN 55947, 507-895-2900 Family-friendly cozy cafe serving homemade breakfast, soups, salads, sandwiches, and locally made desserts.

Corky's Pizza 25 S Walnut St, La Crescent, MN 55947, 507-895-6996 Legendary pizzas made with homemade dough, fresh ingredients, and a signature cheese blend.

Schmitty's TimeOut Tavern 444 N Chestnut St, La Crescent, MN 55947, 507-895-4239 Great food, great drinks, and an even better atmosphere with pub fare, many TVs, and outdoor patio.

Destination Distinctive Retail

Bauer's Market & Garden Center 221 N 2nd St, La Crescent, MN 55947, 507-895-4583 A great selection of plants and flowers, fresh produce, and seasonal and everyday home goods.

DAY FIVE

La Crescent

Known as the “Apple Capital of the Midwest,” La Crescent saw the first apple trees in the Midwest when John S. Harris developed a technique for planting and propagating seeds in a climate previously deemed too harsh for apples. The area was inhabited by the Dakota people for thousands of years before Peter and Emma Cameron founded the city in 1851, named it “Cameron,” and unsuccessfully tried to change the flow of the Mississippi River with a canal that rerouted the water into La Crescent. The Kentucky Land Company later changed the town’s name to the more romantic “La Crescent,” and the area is now known for its vast apple orchards and having more bluffs than most Minnesota cities.

Lock and Dam 7

A 110-foot by 600-foot long lock that forms Lake Onalaska on the Mississippi River began operating in 1937. The Dresback Welcome Center provides exciting views of the lock, dam, and rushing Mississippi River.

33020 Highway 61, La Crescent, MN 55947 507-895-2005 April-Sept: Daily 9AM-5PM.



Apple Blossom Scenic Drive

Drive a bonus Byway! The Apple Blossom Scenic Drive is a breathtaking 17-mile road that winds through the bluff-top roads overlooking the Mississippi River. Named for the Midwest's first apple trees planted in La Crescent, you'll find blossoming apple trees, rolling hills, dramatic views of the Driftless Region, and roadside apple stands in the autumn selling the area's tastiest and juiciest harvest. A stop at **Great River Bluffs State Park** will provide panoramic views of the Mississippi River Valley, oak-hickory and maple-basswood forests, opportunities to spot wildlife like rabbits and red foxes, birdwatching and hiking trails, and picnic and campground sites.

43605 Kipp Dr, Winona, MN 55987, 507-312-2650, Daily 8AM-10PM.





La Crosse

Named by Lieutenant Zebulon Pike for a Native American stick game that resembled a bishop's crozier, or hooked staff in the shape of a cross, the first settlers to La Crosse were furriers who set up a trading post on the banks of the Mississippi River in 1841. The completion of the La Crosse & Milwaukee Railroad allowed the city to become one of the largest in Wisconsin by the second half of the 19th century, and today is considered a regional technology, manufacturing, and transportation hub, as well as a popular university town home to three colleges and over 20,000 students during the school year.

Historic Amtrak Station

Originally built in 1926 by the Milwaukee Road Railroad in a variety of architectural styles, this historic station has undergone renovations in recent years but the waiting room retains its original marble surfaces, benches, and wooden ticket counter. The station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. 601 St Andrew St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 800-872-7245.

Riverside International Friendship Gardens

This collection of public gardens in La Crosse's Riverside Park celebrates the town's sister-city relationships with communities on three continents. Discover unique gardens designed to highlight the principles of Chinese Feng Shui, formal French topiary, German friendship squares, and Cameroonian palm trees.

405 E Veterans Memorial Dr, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-789-7533 Daily 6AM-11PM, Donations accepted.





Destination Distinctive Accommodations

The Charmant Hotel 101 State St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-519-8800 A former candy factory turned historic and luxury boutique in the heart of downtown La Crosse with premium amenities, multiple dining options, a rooftop terrace, and a 24-hour chocolate bar.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Waterfront Restaurant and Tavern 328 Front St S, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-782-5400 Locally sourced American fare, a fun piano bar, and patio seating with great river views.

Lovechild 300 3rd St S, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-433-2234 Seasonal American cuisine in a modern and stylish supper club with happy hour and a full bar.

The Freighthouse 107 Vine St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-784-6211 Steak and seafood in a historic freight house with live music and an extensive whiskey list.

Destination Distinctive Retail

Satori Arts 201 Pearl St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-785-2779 Unique and handcrafted jewelry, fine art, and other gifts and collectibles.

Finnottes Nut & Chocolate Shop 417 Main St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-782-3184 A fantastic assortment of nuts, gourmet chocolate, assorted candies, and other gifts and treats.

DAY SIX

La Crosse Area Heritage Center

Hear the rich stories of La Crosse's history and heritage at this museum and cultural center that connects our past to our present and to each other. Family-friendly exhibits include displays on the Ho-Chunk People, the Black River logging industry, and life on the Mississippi from steamboats to mussels to fishing.

506 Main St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-782-1980 F-Su 10AM-5PM, Adults \$5.

Dahl Auto Museum

Experience 100 years of automobile evolution at this memorable museum that celebrates the Dahl family's involvement in automotive dealerships. Cars on display include: 1911 Ford Model T Roadster; 1914 Saxon Roadster; 1928 Chrysler Deluxe Coupe; 1955 Buick Special; 1969 Ford Mustang Cobra JET; and many others.

711 3rd St S, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-791-6494 W-Sa 10AM-4PM, Adults \$5.

Pump House Regional Arts Center

A former City Water Works building and the previous site of the La Crosse Tractor Company, the Pump House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the only surviving example of Romanesque Revival civic architecture in La Crosse. It is now home to a regional alliance for the visual and performing arts in La Crosse and the surrounding region, and exhibits celebrating local youth and adult artists are on display.

119 King St, La Crosse, WI 54601, 608-785-1434 M-Sa 9AM-5PM.

