Overview of Minnesota

Minnesota, in the north central region of the USA, has been dubbed the 'land of 10,000 lakes'. The poetic name of the state is a Sioux phrase meaning 'land of sky-tinted water'. Obviously this means Minnesota is rather wet, thanks to antediluvian glaciers which scoured the landscape, leaving numerous basins ready to be filled by great rivers like the Mississippi.

The result is Lake Superior, with its rocky and scenic shoreline, as well as thousands of other small bodies of water, linked by hiking trails, ideal for outdoor recreation like camping, kayaking, fishing and canoeing. In wintertime the countryside becomes a wonderland for cross country skiing, snowmobiling and dog sledding. Pleasant harbour towns and villages hug the north shore of Lake Superior along the scenic Highway 61 drive, that offers breathtaking vistas on its route to the Canadian border.

The original inhabitants of this watery world were the Sioux Indians. In the early 19th century, French pioneers penetrated the thick forests and found a treasure-trove of furry creatures like beavers and muskrats, which sparked a prosperous fur trade in the region, accompanied by fishing and logging. Iron ore was then detected in the hills, and the influx of settlers eventually drove out the Sioux. Today the northeastern extremity of Minnesota still remains as largely unspoilt wilderness, much as it was when the first Europeans came across it in the 16th century.

While there are many jokes about rural Minnesotan stereotypes, most of the population of Minnesota is urbanised, with more than half inhabiting the Twin Cities, Minneapolis and St Paul, that occupy opposing banks on the Mississippi River. The cities reflect the jovial culture of the roots of the early settlers, who were largely German, Irish and Scandinavian. The Twin Cities are renowned for their entertainment, attractions and shopping opportunities. Minneapolis in particular is a shopper's dream with the mighty Mall of America situated in its suburb of Bloomington.

Key Facts

Language:

English is the most common language spoken but Spanish is often heard in the south-western states. **Passport/Visa:**

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Currency:

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

Electricity:

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. Plugs are mainly the type with two flat pins, though three-pin plugs (two flat parallel pins and a rounded pin) are also widely used. European appliances without dual-voltage capabilities will require an adapter.

Travel guide by wordtravels.com © Globe Media Ltd.

By its very nature much of the information in this travel guide is subject to change at short notice and travellers are urged to verify information on which they're relying with the relevant authorities. Travmarket cannot accept any responsibility for any loss or inconvenience to any person as a result of information contained above. Event details can change. Please check with the organizers that an event is happening before making travel arrangements. We cannot accept any responsibility for any loss or inconvenience to any person as a result of information contained above.

Travel to Minnesota

Climate for Minnesota

Minnesota experiences a continental climate with warm summers and cold, often frigid winters. Normal daily temperatures range from 12F (-11C) in January to 74F (23C) in July. Heavy snowfalls occur from December to April, especially in the northeast. Blizzards hit Minnesota twice each winter on average and tornadoes occur mostly in the south with approximately 18 tornadoes in the state each year, mostly in July and August.

Health Notes when travelling to United States of America

There are no specific health risks associated with travel within the USA. Medical facilities are excellent, but expensive. Only emergencies are treated without prior payment and treatment can be refused without evidence of insurance or proof of funds. Good medical insurance is essential. Visitors must be fully vaccinated with the primary series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine to travel to the United States by plane if they are non-U.S. citizens.

Safety Notes when travelling to United States of America Travel within the United States is generally trouble-free, though travellers should be aware that the US shares with

Travel within the United States is generally trouble-free, though travellers should be aware that the US shares with the rest of the world, an increased threat from terrorist incidents. Security has been heightened, particularly at airports. Restrictions on hand luggage apply and travellers are advised to check on the latest situation with airlines in advance. Travellers should also be alert to the dangers of car and street crime in cities and should use common sense and take basic precautions. Hurricanes are common between June and November, putting the southern USA, including the Gulf Coast and the eastern US at risk. There is a risk of wildfires in many dry areas in the US, particularly on the West Coast from March to November.

Customs in United States of America

Laws vary from state to state, including speed limit, fines and punishment. The age at which alcohol may be legally bought and consumed is 21 years.

Duty Free in United States of America

Travellers to the United States who are returning residents of the country do not have to pay duty on articles purchased abroad to the value of \$800 provided their stay was longer than 48 hours and their duty-free allowance was not used in the 30-day period prior. For passengers arriving from Samoa, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, a duty-free allowance of \$1,600 is allowed. The following items are included in this: 50 cigarettes and 10 cigars and 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of alcoholic beverages or 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of perfume containing alcohol. Restrictions may apply to goods from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Angola, Liberia and Sudan. It is prohibited to import Cuban cigars from any country.

Travellers to the United States who are non-residents do not have to pay duty on the following items: 50 cigars or 200 cigarettes and gifts to the value of \$100 provided their stay in the USA is not less than 72 hours and that the allowance has not been used in the preceding six-month period.

Prohibited items for residents and non-residents include meat or meat products, poultry, narcotics, absinthe, plants, seeds, vegetables, fruits, soil, live insects and other living plants or animal pests. Fish is prohibited unless it carries disease-free certification. Wildlife and animals or their by-products carry restrictions. Dairy products and eggs from specified countries are not allowed. Firearms and ammunition are not allowed without the necessary license and permit.

Doing Business in United States of America

In such a large country, filled with so many diverse groups, business practices may differ according to each state, however rarely to any large degree. The East Coast is traditionally more formal than the West Coast, though in states such as California, dress code and conservative appearance are as common as they would be in New York. Punctuality is important throughout the country and it is considered rude to be late for a meeting. Gift-giving is uncommon as it may be construed as bribery. Appropriate titles (Mr, Mrs, Ms) are used upon introduction and until otherwise stated. Americans favour politeness and greetings of 'Hello' and 'How are you?' are often expressed with sincerity. Business hours may vary in each state, but an 8am start and 5pm finish Monday to Friday is the most common with an hour over lunch.

Status and age are not necessarily indicative of seniority, nor do they carry much weight in themselves. Those doing business in the States should be mindful of this fact; foreigners should never make assumptions about someone's position or rank. Best practice is to be respectful to all parties. That said, the US upholds a hierarchal business structure, in which 'the boss' is the ultimate decision-maker. Senior leaders have the power of the last word, and can go against the grain just as easily as they can follow popular opinion. Foreigners should concentrate on winning over this individual, even if the greater group seems unsupportive. Americans value a direct style of communication. In this fast-paced, consumer culture 'time is money', and small-talk is viewed as unnecessary and wasteful. It's best for foreigners to get to the point quickly, speak about issues in a frank and open manner, and to avoid taking offence if someone questions or challenges them outright.

Communication in United States of America

The international country dialling code for the United States is +1. Mobile networks cover most of the country, especially all urban areas, and WiFi is widely available.

Tipping in United States of America

A 15 percent tip is expected by taxi drivers, bartenders, hairdressers and waiters, but travellers shouldn't tip in fast-food or self-service restaurants. In expensive restaurants or for large parties, the tip should be 20 percent of the bill. It is normal to tip staff such as valets and porters in hotels; this is discretionary, although a minimum of \$5 is expected. Most services are customarily tipped if the service is good.

Passport/Visa Note

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Airports in Minnesota

International Falls Airport (INL)

Falls International Airport

www.internationalfallsairport.com

Location: International Falls The airport is located three miles (5km) from International Falls, Minnesota.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Getting to the city: There is no public transport serving International Falls Airport. However, taxis and car hire are available.

Car rental: Rental cars are available from Avis and Ford.

Airport Taxis: City Cab taxis are available by advance booking.

Facilities: Services are limited, but tourist information and vending machines are available in the terminal.

Parking: International Falls Airport provides free short and long-term parking.

Minneapolis-St Paul International (MSP)

Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport

www.mspairport.com

Location: Minneapolis-St Paul The airport is situated 12 miles (19km) from Minneapolis and 8 miles (13km) from St Paul.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from March to November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 612 726 5800.

Transfer between terminals: The airport's two terminals are linked by covered walkways, shuttles, and a free light rail.

Getting to the city: A Ground Transportation information booth provides passengers with information and directions. City buses leave from the Lindbergh Terminal to both Minneapolis and St Paul. A light rail operates between the airport, downtown Minneapolis and Mall of America. SuperShuttle provides a shared van door-to-door service to the local cities and towns. Taxis are also available.

Car rental: Car rental companies include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, Hertz and National. Shuttle buses to the off-site rental companies are accessible from the Transit Center.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available at both terminals. The journey from the airport to Minneapolis is approximately 12 miles (19km), costing \$39 to 49; and to St Paul is around 8 miles (13km), costing \$31 to 38. To reach the taxi booth from the Lindbergh Terminal, passengers should cross through the Tram Level (Level T) toward the parking ramp and go up one level.

Facilities: North Star Crossing in the Lindbergh Terminal is a collection of numerous shops, restaurants, and food courts. Other facilities include ATMs and bureaux de change, duty-free, and a children's play area. Business centres situated throughout the airport offer internet, fax, and photocopying services. Wireless internet access is also provided. The nearby Hilton hotel offers its rooms and gym facilities at day rates. Disabled facilities are good. Those with special needs should contact their airline in advance.

Parking: Parking for the Humphrey Terminal is in the orange and purple ramps; Lindbergh Terminal parking is in the blue, green, red, and gold ramps. All parking is connected to the terminals via skyways. Short-term parking is \$5 for the first hour and \$3 per hour thereafter up to \$26 per day. Value parking in the orange ramp is \$19 per day, connected to the Humphrey Terminal by skyway and the Lindbergh Terminal by light rail.

Duluth International Airport (DLH)

Duluth International Airport

www.duluthairport.com

Location: Duluth The airport is located seven miles (11km) northwest of Duluth.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Getting to the city: The Duluth Transit Authority operates bus services (Route 8) throughout the week and weekend (Route 5). Limited service is available on public holidays and Sundays. Single fares are \$0.75 off-peak, or \$1.50 during peak travel times. Exact change is required.

Car rental: Car rental companies at the airport include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National.

Airport Taxis: Several taxi companies operate from the airport, including Airport & Duluth Taxi and Yellow Door Taxi. It is best to book ahead via phone.

Facilities: Airport services include a restaurant, coffee shop, vending machines, and conference rooms.

Parking: Parking is charged at \$3 for the first hour, \$5 for two hours, \$9 for six hours and \$13 per day. Weekly rates are \$78.

Rochester International Airport (RST)

Rochester International Airport

www.flyrst.com

Location: Rochester The airport is nine miles (14km) southwest of Rochester.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 (507) 282 2328.

Getting to the city: There are no public buses or trains from Rochester International Airport, but there is a shuttle service that runs from the airport to downtown. To book the shuttle, ask the Ground Transport Desk in the terminal to assist. Taxis and rental cars are also available.

Car rental: Rental operators at the airport include Hertz, Budget, Avis, National, and Enterprise.

Airport Taxis: There are a few taxi companies which service the airport. To book a taxi, locate the Ground Transportation Service Desk for assistance.

Facilities: An ATM, foreign exchange, a free mini-library, charging stations, vending machines, baby-changing stations, restaurants, bars, and retail outlets are all available.

Parking: Parking is free for the first 30 minutes. Each additional half an hour costs \$1, up to a daily limit of \$9. Weekly rates are set at \$54.

Range Regional Airport (HIB)

Range Regional Airport

www.rangeregionalairport.com

Location: Hibbing The airport is located seven miles (11km) southeast of Hibbing, Minnesota.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Getting to the city: There is no public transport serving the airport. Car hire and taxis are the best method of getting to Chisholm or Hibbing.

Car rental: ACAR Auto Rental and Enterprise have car hire facilities at the airport.

Airport Taxis: Hibbing Taxi provides services at the airport.

Facilities: Airport facilities are limited.

Parking: The airport provides parking free of charge.

Minneapolis-St Paul

Minneapolis and St Paul are the two halves of a singular metropolis bisected by the Mississippi River in eastern Minnesota. The older city, St Paul, is the state capital and is smaller, quieter, and more reserved than its modern sibling across the river. It has a compact downtown area sporting a variety of restored Victorian architecture among its glass skyscrapers, and is home to several major universities, and many museums and theatres. Minneapolis, founded on money made by the hundreds of saw and flour mills along the Mississippi, has many contemporary buildings in a slick downtown area with a lively, arty character and a vibrant nightlife.

The very existence of the Twin Cities is due to the only waterfall on the Mississippi, St Anthony Falls, whose hydroelectric power fuelled numerous flour and timber mills along the river. Today, the Riverfront district in Minneapolis is a scenic stretch lined with old warehouses, mills, and historical walking trails.

While Minneapolis and St Paul are the original Twin Cities of Minnesota, the name now refers to the sprawling metro area, encompassing dozens of smaller towns, that extends for 30 miles in all directions. These towns have their own unique charm and identities, from the quaint 150-year-old main street of Anoka in the north to the antique stores and scenic St Croix River valley of Stillwater to the south.

With hundreds of lakes lying within the Twin Cities area, there are endless opportunities for outdoor recreation, with miles of trails surrounding the lakes. Residents of the Twin Cities pride themselves on a high quality of life that includes sport and outdoor activities as well as top priorities such as a good education, a clean environment, excellent healthcare, and a low crime rate.

They boast a rich arts and cultural entertainment scene with more concert venues per person than any other city in the country, except New York. And the southern suburb of Bloomington is home to the largest shopping centre in the US that includes an aquarium and amusement park under the same roof as hundreds of shops, restaurants, bars, and theatres.

Getting around in Minneapolis-St Paul

Getting around on foot in the downtown areas of the massive metropolitan area of Minneapolis and St Paul is a fascinating experience on the famous skyways, a network of enclosed walkways that connect buildings in the city centre at second-storey level, ensuring no pedestrian needs to be exposed to bad weather. About 50 blocks of downtown Minneapolis are connected by skyways. For those occasions when walking is not an option, Metro Transit operates one of the largest public transport systems in the United States. Trip planners and route information are readily available in the city and from hotel concierges. The METRO Blue Line Light Rail Transit route links downtown to the airport and the Mall of America, and the Northstar Corridor route takes passengers as far north as Big Lake. The twin cities also have numerous taxi services, available on call or outside hotels and other public venues. Rideshare options in Lyft and Uber.

Nightlife in Minneapolis-St Paul

The Twin Cities' nightlife is concentrated mostly in Minneapolis. While St Paul has a number of relaxed bars and pubs and a few live music venues, it tends to be much quieter and goes to sleep earlier than its counterpart across the river.

Minneapolis buzzes at night, with enough bars, clubs, pubs, restaurants and live music venues to satisfy those with voracious cultural appetites. Minneapolis' nightlife is concentrated in several neighbourhoods, each with its own personality. The Warehouse District is an up-and-coming hotspot with trendy restaurants, clubs, and cocktail bars for those who like to see and be seen; Nicollet Mall has some of the city's longest-running music venues, such as the Dakota Jazz Club, next to Orchestra Hall and a number of top restaurants; the Hennepin Theater District is home to the Block E collection of restaurants and bars, along with Minneapolis' big three theatres, the State, the Orpheum, and the Pantages. A more offbeat experience can be had at the Wabasha Street Caves in St Paul, which served as speakeasies during prohibition and now host swing dancing on Thursdays.

Minneapolis is known as a hub of theatre and classical music in the midwest United States, with several venues, such as the Guthrie, Ordway, State and Orpheum Theaters, enjoying national reputations. The Minneapolis Fringe Festival happens every August and showcases highlights from local companies. The Minnesota Opera, the St Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, and the Minnesota Dance Theater are all highly regarded, and the various universities in the area stage various productions during the school year.

Dinkytown is the place to go for a cheap and funky night out, as long as classes are in session. The neighbourhood is dominated by students from the nearby University of Minnesota, and there are a few buzzing venues that draw big crowds, such as the Gray's (a coffee shop-restaurant hybrid) and the Varsity Theater, which hosts indie bands, film screenings, and dance nights.

Uptown is the ultimate hip destination, however, with quirky clubs and music venues that create a unique atmosphere. While some come and go, there are established favourites such as Famous Dave's BBQ, which hosts live blues music; and the Bryant Lake Bowl, which combines food and live music with bowling.

The Twin Cities are a major concert destination, with the biggest events happening in the Target Center and the Xcel Energy Center. Those arenas host everything from rock concerts and sporting events to circuses and rodeos.

Dining in Minneapolis-St Paul

Traditional Minnesota food conjures up images of hamburger casserole (locally referred to as 'hot dish') and 'jello salad' (jello filled with sliced bits of fruit). However, the restaurant scene in Minneapolis is quite trendy, and visitors will have no trouble finding any kind of cuisine they desire, ranging from Peruvian to sushi.

Dinkytown and Stadium Village (near the University of Minnesota) provide a variety of low-priced options for the collegiate crowd, while Northeast Minneapolis has a wide range of ethnic spots, ranging from Mexican and Ecuadorian to Middle Eastern and Polish.

Downtown, the options are even more varied: Nicollet Avenue is known as Eat Street for its eclectic fare, including many Southeast Asian options.

During the day, 2nd Avenue and Marquette Avenue become a foodie's paradise, as dozens of food trucks of varying descriptions descend on the curb to provide the city's office workers with fresh food.

A particular specialty of Minneapolis is the Juicy Lucy, a type of hamburger where the cheese is sealed into the meat patty rather than put on top. Two local restaurants, Matt's Bar and the 5-8 Club, both claim to be the inventors. However, local loyalty is split down the middle and either venue provides a filling experience.

Mickey's Diner — \$
American

While it may not be haute cuisine, Mickey's Diner is a landmark on the St Paul map. The quintessential greasy spoon is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and isn't shy about much of anything. They'll boast about their thick milkshakes, juicy burgers, and cranky waitresses with equal fervour. The iconic dining car is done up in a distinctive art deco style, and has been featured in several movies, including The Mighty Ducks and A Prairie Home Companion.

36 W. 7th Street, St. Paul Minneapolis-St Paul, United States of America

www.mickeysdiningcar.com

Loring Pasta Bar — \$\$\$

The decor in this Dinkytown restaurant shouldn't be missed. It's both chic and whimsical and totally unlike any other eatery in the Twin Cities. The three-storey dining room is light and airey during the day, but packed at night when the Loring hosts live music, which is almost nightly. The menu is aimed at the university crowd as it's right on the edge of the University of Minnesota campus, but with a sophisticated flair. It heats up on weekends with salsa nights.

327 14th Ave SE, Minneapolis Minneapolis-St Paul, United States of America

www.loringpastabar.com

Manny's Steakhouse — \$\$\$\$\$

Steakhouse

Manny's Steakhouse in downtown Minneapolis is focused on the best: the best cut of meat, the best liquor, and the best service possible. This comes at a price, of course, as Manny's is one of the most expensive restaurants in the Twin Cities. Loyal patrons insist you get what you pay for though, as the food is excellent and the portions huge. The tables are close together and the atmosphere is usually bustling, so it isn't the place for a quiet, intimate meal.

825 Marquette Ave, Minneapolis Minneapolis-St Paul, United States of America

www.mannyssteakhouse.com **Midtown Global Market** — \$\$ International

The Midtown Global Market is an international hodgepodge of of freshly-prepared food from every corner of the world. Visitors can sample fare from Mexico, Italy, Israel, Sweden, Vietnam, and other exotic locales. The market also features specialty groceries and eclectic international shops, making it a one-stop shop for food, gifts, and more. Stalls trade Monday to Saturday 10am-8pm, and Sunday 11am-6pm.

Lake Sreet & Chicago Avenue Minneapolis-St Paul, United States of America

www.midtownglobalmarket.org
Chino Latino — \$\$\$\$
Fusion

This popular Minneapolis restaurant in the heart of Uptown blends Latin and Asian cuisine for a mixture that seems to please everyone. The food is served family-style, and includes diverse options like Jamaican Jerk Chicken and Philippine Paella. Reservations are recommended, and there are several dishes that must be ordered in advance, including Fidel's Capitalist Pig Roast (Havana-style suckling pig) and the Cuy Disponible (guinea pig).

2916 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis Minneapolis-St Paul, United States of America

www.chinolatino.com

Shopping in Minneapolis-St Paul

For many tourists, shopping in the Twin Cities means one thing: the Mall of America. The largest mall in the US, it houses more than 500 stores under one roof, along with an aquarium, amusement park, and numerous restaurants, bars, and theaters. 'The Megamall' is a tourist attraction in itself but offers mostly chain stores with a few exceptions, including Love From Minnesota, which stocks a range of Minnesota souvenirs.

The Twin Cities have a number of other major shopping centres, including Rosedale Centre in Roseville, Gaviidae Common on Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis, and the upscale Galleria in Edina. Most offer the same varieties of chain stores. There are many other places to shop in Minneapolis and St Paul, however, with unique local flavour.

Minneapolis has several unique shopping districts, include Nicolett Mall, a pedestrian avenue in the downtown area with many upscale shops; the arty and multicultural Uptown district surrounding Lake Street; and the emerging Warehouse District near the iconic Target Centre.

Visitors will find interesting vintage shops and used bookstores in the University of Minnesota-dominated Dinkytown neighbourhood. St Paul has its own vibrant neighbourhood in Grand Avenue, with dozens of quirky independent boutiques, cafes and markets. Minneapolis and St Paul each have their own bustling Farmers Markets on Saturday mornings, offering fresh produce and flowers alongside local arts and crafts.

Popular souvenirs from Minnesota include fashionable (and locally made) Minnetonka Moccasins; Prairie Home Companion merchandise and books by Garrison Keillor; and sports memorabilia for the Twins (baseball), Vikings (American football), Timberwolves (basketball), and Wild (hockey). There are good bargains to be had on fashion, as Minnesota does not impose a sales tax on clothing.

Climate in Minneapolis-St Paul

The continental climate of the Twin Cities, Minneapolis and St Paul, is rather harsh because of the northerly and land-locked location. Winters, which fall at the end of the year, are bitterly cold, with abundant snow and average low temperatures plunging well below freezing. In fact, records show that the Twin Cities have maximum temperatures of below freezing point on 76 days out of the year. Summers, which fall between June and August, are mild to hot with highs of 84F (29C), but short-lived. The best time to visit Minneapolis is between August and September, which has idyllic weather around the 77F (25C) mark, and all the festivals and events the region can fit into the two-month period. Rainfall can occur all year round, but is most plentiful in June. The driest month is February.

Sightseeing in Minneapolis-St Paul

Sightseeing in Minneapolis and St Paul can feel like a treasure hunt, as it is a constant process of uncovering hidden gems and unknown delights. The Twin Cities area is full of natural beauty but also home to a vibrant artistic and cultural community, the biggest within a thousand-mile radius.

There are a number of museums that are suitable for the whole family, such as the Science Museum, the Mill City Museum and the Children's Museum. As numerous as the museums are the galleries. Minneapolis is a cultural centre of note, with two world-class art centres: The Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Walker Art Centre. The Walker's famous sculpture garden is home to the Cherry Spoon Fountain, an iconic symbol of the Twin Cities. A newer addition to the art scene is the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, a modern steel-covered building designed by Frank Gehry at the University of Minnesota.

Minneapolis and St Paul have a number of interesting architectural sights as well, including the St Paul Cathedral and the immense St Mary's Basilica. There are a number of interesting mansions from the early 20th century in neighbourhoods such as Summit Avenue, including the James J Hill House, which offers tours to the public.

The innumerable lakes in the Twin Cities offer their own attractions. Lake Harriet is a tranquil area with jogging and biking paths, a bandstand, and scenic views of the city. Bde Maka Ska (previously named Lake Calhoun) has its own small sandy beach, with opportunities for boating, waterskiing and jet skiing.

There is much to do in Minneapolis and St Paul, even in the harsh winter months. Minnesotans are passionate about winter sports, and there are many places for sledding, snowmobiling, ice fishing, cross-country skiing, and ice skating. Though the state is relatively flat, there are several good ski resorts within a few hours' drive of the Twin Cities, including Wild Mountain, Buck Hill, and Lutsen.

Kids Attractions in Minneapolis-St Paul

The Twin Cities have lots on offer to keep the little ones enthralled and entertained. With activities both indoors and out in the open air, children are guaranteed a great time no matter the weather.

With a number of top-notch museums for the whole family, children will be learning something as well as having fun. With the likes of the Science Museum with an Omnimax theatre and interactive exhibits; or the Mill City Museum, which showcases local history in a restored flour mill on the Mississippi River, children will love what the Twin Cities have to offer. The interactive Children's Museum, which offers lots of places to explore and things to do for younger children is also a popular choice, as is the Bell Museum of Natural History, with hundreds of animal specimens and an interactive 'touch and feel' room.

A visit to the Minnesota Zoo is always a good way to keep children occupied and gives them an opportunity to learn along the way. For some pure unadulterated fun the Valleyfair amusement park is always cause for excitement, giving both kids and their parents a good time on any one of its many rides.

Families with children will not feel limited in any way when in the Twin Cities. There is lots to see and do, and there is lots of fun to be had at any one of its wonderful attractions.

Minneapolis-St Paul Attractions

Walker Art Center

Internationally renowned for its permanent collection of 20th century paintings, drawings, prints, photography and sculptures, the Walker Art Center is one of the country's leading contemporary art centres and is one of the most visited museums in the USA. It features works by top artists in a range of styles, utilising various multi-media installations and educational programs. Contemporary art can also be experienced here through theatre, dance, video, music, and film. Next door is the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, with creative contemporary work spread across a huge area of parkland. It is one of the largest urban sculpture parks in the country and includes the colossal Spoonbridge and Cherry Fountain by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, and Frank Gehry's Standing Glass Fish. Visitors can also cross the highway to Loring Park via the Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge, and enjoy the poetry written along the walkway.

Website: www.walkerart.org

Mall of America

Located in the southern suburb of Bloomington, the futuristic superstructure of the Mall of America is recognised as the largest enclosed shopping and entertainment complex in the country. It welcomes more than 42 million visitors each year and is the fifth most visited attraction in the USA, thanks to its world-class shopping, family entertainment, nightlife, and numerous dining options. Located conveniently close to the airport, some international tours are specially arranged for holiday shopping. There are more than 500 stores and specialty shops including the Lego Store, international department stores such as Bloomingdales, more than 70 restaurants and fast food outlets, cinemas, theatres, nightclubs, a wedding chapel, bowling alley, and a mini-golf course. Sea Life Minnesota is a massive aquarium with touch pools featuring sharks and stingrays, and glass-enclosed tunnels with moving walkways that go right through the aquarium. The Mall of America's famous centrepiece is Nickelodeon Universe, an indoor theme park with more thirty rides and adventures for children and adults.

Website: www.mallofamerica.com

Valleyfair

Valleyfair is the largest amusement park in Minnesota, with 125 acres of rides and attractions ranging from high-speed roller coasters to midway games and an IMAX theater. Valleyfair also has the Soak City Waterpark with a range of waterslides and pools, and Challenge Park, which features the RipCord SkyCoaster. The amusement park's most famous ride is the Wild Thing roller coaster, which travels at 74 mph (120kph) with a drop of 196 feet (60 metres). There is also a Berenstein Bears children's play area and a variety of restaurants and food court areas.

Website: www.valleyfair.com

Target Field

Home to the Minnesota Twins Major League Baseball team, Target Field was built in 2010 and is considered one of the most state-of-the-art baseball stadiums in the world. Minnesotans tend to be rather affectionate toward their team, and a day at the ballpark is a fun family activity for Minnesota tourists of all ages; an added bonus is that fans get a picturesque view of the downtown Minneapolis skyline. The stadium itself is beautifully and intricately constructed, and daily tours reveal hidden secrets such as the players' locker rooms, clubhouse, and the elaborate underground systems that both heat and irrigate the field.

Website: minnesota.twins.mlb.com

Minnesota Zoo

A huge state-of-the-art zoo with over 40 acres of habitats housing more than 2,000 creatures of all kinds, the Minnesota Zoo is a fantastic attraction for those travelling with kids in Minneapolis. It features animals from every continent in large habitats that mimic their natural environments, and an enormous aquarium. Popular attractions include the gorillas, tigers, meerkats, and red pandas. Kids can interact with animals in the touch pool and petting zoo; the various themed trails of the zoo are long, and one can easily spend an entire day exploring them. The zoo has a food court and gift shop, and hosts concerts in the summer. A new attraction is the enormous carousel, featuring 56 hand-carved animals representing zoo inhabitants.

Website: www.mnzoo.com

Minnesota History Center

This large museum showcases everything about Minnesota's history, with interactive exhibits ranging from blizzard and tornado simulations to a grainbelt exhibit with slides and a 24-tonne boxcar. Ever-changing temporary exhibits as well as events and lectures mean there is always something new to learn. The museum is family-friendly, with plenty of activities and programmes for kids, including the Museum Theatre and History Players. Conveniently located in downtown St Paul, the Minnesota History Center is a must-visit for anyone interested in learning about the state's fascinating history.

Website: www.minnesotahistorycenter.org

Minnesota Children's Museum

Children in the Twin Cities will love the Minnesota Children's Museum, which is aimed at kids six who are months to ten years old. Fun interactive exhibits allow children to go ice fishing, operate a crane, shovel coal into a locomotive engine, burrow their way through a giant anthill, or create a thunderstorm. Having entertained more than five million children since the 1980s, the award-winning Children's Museum is a must for families in Minneapolis and St Paul.

Website: www.mcm.org

Chain of Lakes

Minnesota is known as the Land of 10,000 Lakes, and there are plenty of lovely lakes within the Twin Cities for visitors to enjoy in the summers. Some of the best are located southwest of downtown Minneapolis. Bde Maka Ska (formerly called Lake Calhoun) has a few sandy beaches with lifeguards on duty, good for tanning, swimming, and volleyball, and a few good restaurants. The park offers canoe rentals and sailing lessons, and sailboarding is a popular activity here. Lake of the Isles is a great place for a family picnic, and kids will enjoy the excellent climbing trees in the park. There are no public swimming beaches, though visitors can access the lake on boats rented from the adjacent Bde Maka Ska. Lake Harriet has excellent bike and jogging trails around the lake, and an outdoor bandshell that hosts local musicians on weekends. A popular area for families, Lake Harriet has swimming beaches, and a marina with boat rentals. Lake Nokomis also offers a few swimming beaches and boat access. The park is conveniently located near shops along Cedar Avenue, making spur-of-the-moment picnics a fun option.

Minnesota Science Museum

The Minnesota Science Museum is a much-loved family tourist attraction in St Paul. Often called the most popular museum in the Midwest, the building is a state-of-the-art facility housing dozens of interactive exhibits, where children can learn about weather, biology, anthropology, paleontology, and many other branches of science. The museum is also home to a 3D laser theatre, and the Midwest's only Omnitheater, a movie theatre with reclined seats that shows stunning documentaries on its giant domed screen. Conveniently located near downtown St Paul, the Minnesota Children's Museum is an absolute must for those travelling with children in the Twin Cities.

Website: www.smm.org

Events in Minneapolis-St Paul

St Paul Winter Carnival Thursday January 23, 2020 to Sunday February 02, 2020 (23 January to 2 February 2020)

Where: Cleveland Circle, opposite the Xcel Energy Center

Back in 1886 a New York journalist described St Paul as being 'unfit for human habitation in the winter'. Locals were not going to take this insult lying down and decided to turn the snowiest spot in the States into a winter wonderland. Since then the tradition of building an ice palace (nowadays a spectacular walk-through castle of ice) has become entrenched, along with the huge party that goes along with it. Each year the crowning of King Boreas and the Queen of Snows heralds the start of three weeks of frozen fun with events like ice sculpture contests and a torchlight parade.

http://www.wintercarnival.com

May Day Festival Thursday May 07, 2020 (TBC 2020)

Where: Parade starts at Bloomington Avenue and 26th Street, proceeding to Powderhorn Park

After the long cold winter the people of the Twin Cities are very eager to turn out to celebrate the arrival of spring at the Minneapolis May Day Parade and Festival. Costumes, floats, and street performers make up a wonderful creative parade through downtown, ending at Powderhorn Park where all manner of entertainment, including several puppet shows, goes on. The food and activities on offer are ample to keep everyone happy.

hobt.org/mayday/festival

Minnesota Renaissance Festival Saturday August 21, 2021 to Sunday October 03, 2021 (21 August to 3 October)

Where: Jonathan, Minnesota

The Minnesota Rennaissance Festival is a month-long fair recreating life in 16th-century Europe. Held on a 22-acre (89,000 sq metre) field in Jonathan, Minnesota every autumn, the festival offers food, shopping, and entertainment all designed to be as authentic as possible to the era. Visitors can sample foods like turkey legs and apple tarts or the favourite Barbarian Burger while they take in a round of jousting or catch medieval comedy with performers like Zilch the Torysteller or popular comedians Puke and Snot. Pay a visit to the royal court, and you might even catch a real medieval wedding! Fair-goers are encouraged to come in costume, but if you don't have your own you can find whatever you need in the fair's shops.

http://www.renaissancefest.com

Minnesota State Fair Thursday August 26, 2021 to Monday September 06, 2021 (26 August to 6 September)

Where: State Fairgrounds, Falcon Heights

Dubbed the 'Great Minnesota Get-Together', the Minnesota State Fair is eagerly anticipated by locals every year, taking advantage of the beautiful late-summer weather to attract millions of people for food, music, rides, exhibitions, and more. The Midway offers dozens of rides and games for all ages, while the livestock competitions offer farmers the chance to show off their prized animals. The Fair started out as an event for farmers, so there are still machinery shows, but that has become secondary for most people with the concerts, exhibits, and shows. The real attraction is the food though, with Sweet Martha's Cookies, all-you-can-drink chocolate milk, Bloomin' Onions, and an amazing variety of food fried on a stick ranging from alligator to spaghetti and meatballs to cappuccinos.

http://www.mnstatefair.org

Anoka Halloween Parade Tuesday October 26, 2021 (TBC 2021)

Where: Main Street, Anoka

The Anoka Halloween Parade is a big event in a little town. It was the first city to host a Halloween Parade in 1920, and has officially been designated the 'Halloween Capital of the World' by the US Congress. The city's festivities include a bonfire, beauty pageant, 5k race (in costume, of course), ball, 'Pumpkin Bowl' football game, haunted houses, wine tastings, home decorating contests, and no fewer than three parades.

The main event is the Grand Day Parade, held on the Saturday before Halloween. The parade features marching bands and drum corps, dance groups, local police and fire departments, and many other groups handing out candy to spectators as they march down Anoka's historic Main Street.

http://www.anokahalloween.com

Airports in Minneapolis-St Paul

Minneapolis-St Paul International (MSP)

Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport

http://www.mspairport.com

Location: Minneapolis-St Paul The airport is situated 12 miles (19km) from Minneapolis and 8 miles (13km) from St Paul.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from March to November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 612 726 5800.

Transfer between terminals: The airport's two terminals are linked by covered walkways, shuttles, and a free light rail.

Getting to the city: A Ground Transportation information booth provides passengers with information and directions. City buses leave from the Lindbergh Terminal to both Minneapolis and St Paul. A light rail operates between the airport, downtown Minneapolis and Mall of America. SuperShuttle provides a shared van door-to-door service to the local cities and towns. Taxis are also available.

Car rental: Car rental companies include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, Hertz and National. Shuttle buses to the off-site rental companies are accessible from the Transit Center.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available at both terminals. The journey from the airport to Minneapolis is approximately 12 miles (19km), costing \$39 to 49; and to St Paul is around 8 miles (13km), costing \$31 to 38. To reach the taxi booth from the Lindbergh Terminal, passengers should cross through the Tram Level (Level T) toward the parking ramp and go up one level.

Facilities: North Star Crossing in the Lindbergh Terminal is a collection of numerous shops, restaurants, and food courts. Other facilities include ATMs and bureaux de change, duty-free, and a children's play area. Business centres situated throughout the airport offer internet, fax, and photocopying services. Wireless internet access is also provided. The nearby Hilton hotel offers its rooms and gym facilities at day rates. Disabled facilities are good. Those with special needs should contact their airline in advance.

Parking: Parking for the Humphrey Terminal is in the orange and purple ramps; Lindbergh Terminal parking is in the blue, green, red, and gold ramps. All parking is connected to the terminals via skyways. Short-term parking is \$5 for the first hour and \$3 per hour thereafter up to \$26 per day. Value parking in the orange ramp is \$19 per day, connected to the Humphrey Terminal by skyway and the Lindbergh Terminal by light rail.

Duluth

Situated on the westernmost end of Lake Superior, the largest freshwater lake in the world, Duluth's international harbour is filled with ships and the city bustles with sailors and the arrival of new wares. Although miles from either coast, Lake Superior is connected to the Atlantic Ocean via the St Lawrence River. The authentically restored waterfront can be explored along the Lakewalk Trail, or the scenic Skyline Parkway drive above the lakeshore on the bluffs, which affords magnificent views of the city and harbour.

The city itself is quiet, yet there is much to see and do in Duluth. Because of its location, it has always been a busy shipping port, and there are enough antique shops, cafes, restaurants, and other diversions. The city's two universities ensure the bars and pubs are always bustling during the semester. Kids will enjoy the Great Lakes Aquarium and the Lake Superior Railroad Museum, while adults will enjoy the well-preserved house and grounds of the Glensheen Mansion.

The spectacularly scenic Minnesota State Highway 61 (North Shore Scenic Drive) follows the shore of Lake Superior for 160 miles (257km) from Duluth to the Canadian border, its precipitous cliffs interspersed with pretty little harbour towns, charming shops and restaurants, waterfalls, and beautiful lake-view picnic sites.

The Split Rock Lighthouse is popular for hiking, picnics, and photo opportunities. There are several state parks and hiking trails along the way, including the long distance Superior Hiking Trail, and the unspoilt beauty of immense Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness that draws canoeists from around the world to its pristine lakes and streams. 40 miles (64km) north, Gooseberry Falls State Park has excellent walking trails.

Duluth is roughly two and a half hours' drive from Minneapolis, the nearest major city and airport. The best time to visit Duluth is in autumn, when the fall foliage is truly spectacular. Winters can be unforgivingly cold, while late summer provides idyllic weather for enjoying the spectacular scenery.

Getting around in Duluth

The Duluth Transit Authority operates a number of scheduled bus routes that include access to the airport, The University of Minnesota Duluth and Park Point Recreation Area. One-way fares are \$0.75 during off-peak hours, or \$1.50 during peak travel periods (7am-9am and 2.30pm-6pm). Day passes are available for \$4; exact change is required. Many visitors find that renting a car is the easiest way to get around Duluth, especially if they wish to explore the beautiful North Shore area. Rideshare options include Lyft and Uber.

Climate in Duluth

Duluth's climate varies drastically throughout the year. Summers are hot and humid with average temperatures ranging between 50F (10C) and 76F (24C); while winters are bitterly cold, with temperatures dropping as low as -4F (-20C). The best time to visit Duluth is in the autumn (September and October), when the fall leaves turn spectacular colours, while summers (June to August) offer the chance to enjoy outdoor activities. Winters in Duluth are best avoided unless visitors are avid snowmobilers.

Sightseeing in Duluth

Duluth, a seaport city, is home to many rewarding sightseeing experiences. Both sunny days and rainy days can be occupied with many interesting things to see and explore. Whilst the city is a quiet one, there are museums, galleries, and theatres to enjoy, keeping the historically and culturally enthused occupied.

Attractions such as the Fitger's Museum, exhibiting memorabilia from what was once the most successful brewery in the state, or the Lake Superior Railroad Museum, where people can climb up one of the world's largest steam locomotives, make for a memorable visit. For those interested in art, the Tweed Art Museum is always a popular choice too, exhibiting over 7,000 art objects.

The outdoors is a large part of what makes Duluth and its attractions special to visitors. Hiking in any one of the several state parks is a joy, especially the long distance Superior Hiking Trail and the trails accessing the untouched beauty of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Split Rock lighthouse is also a popular landmark to explore, allowing fresh air and scenic splendour. Duluth is home to many quaint harbour towns, which make good excursions from the city, complete with charming shops and cafes to enjoy after a day of outdoor activity.

Duluth Attractions

Boundary Waters Canoe Area

Part of Superior National Forest, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (also known as the BWCA), is an immense chain of lakes in north-eastern Minnesota that is extremely popular for canoeing, camping, and fishing. With more than a million acres of pristine wilderness, it's no wonder the Boundary Waters is the most visited wilderness area in the United States. Visitors can hike through forests and canoe along thousands of miles of water routes. No motor vehicles or boats are allowed in the park, and there are strict guidelines as to visitors leaving the area as they found it. Combine this with the fact that visitors may explore for days without seeing another person, and it's easy to understand why the Boundary Waters is the perfect place to get lost in nature. The best time to visit the Boundary Waters come in the summer months (June to August), as summer temperatures are warm but rarely exceed 90F (32C). Entry points include Ely in the west, and Grand Marais in the east. Both towns have numerous outfitters where canoes, kayaks, and camping equipment can be hired. Camping permits are required.

Website: www.bwca.com

Glensheen Mansion

This 39-room Jacobean Revival mansion on the shores of Lake Superior is a popular attraction in Duluth. Managed by the University of Minnesota, the Glensheen Mansion is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The 7.6-acre grounds and carriage house can be explored at leisure, and the lavishly furnished interior of the house is accessible on informative guided tours lasting 60 to 90 minutes. A new attraction is the night-time 'flashlight tour', which focuses on the lives of the servants of the house. Visitors should be sure to ask the guides about the various ghosts that are said to inhabit the mansion.

Website: www.d.umn.edu/glen

Split Rock Lighthouse

A popular tourist attraction outside of Duluth, Split Rock Lighthouse is located on the shore of Lake Superior, and was constructed following a major storm in 1905 that caused 29 shipwrecks. The lighthouse was decommissioned in 1969, and is now operated by the Minnesota Historical Society, who have restored it to its 1920s condition. The lighthouse offers tours and children's programmes, and has a gift shop. Its picturesque location in Split Rock Lighthouse State Park makes it a popular destination for bicycling, cross-country skiing, and camping; both the Superior Hiking Trail and the Gitchi-Gami State Trail run through the park, making it ideal for hiking. Even for visitors who aren't inclined to hike, the beauty of the rocky shore has earned it a place on many postcards from Duluth and Northern Minnesota, and is a stunning place for a picnic.

Website: www.mnhs.org/splitrock

Airports in Duluth

Duluth International Airport (DLH)

Duluth International Airport http://www.duluthairport.com

Location: Duluth The airport is located seven miles (11km) northwest of Duluth.

Time: GMT -6 (GMT -5 from mid-March to the first Sunday in November).

Getting to the city: The Duluth Transit Authority operates bus services (Route 8) throughout the week and weekend (Route 5). Limited service is available on public holidays and Sundays. Single fares are \$0.75 off-peak, or \$1.50 during peak travel times. Exact change is required.

Car rental: Car rental companies at the airport include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National.

Airport Taxis: Several taxi companies operate from the airport, including Airport & Duluth Taxi and Yellow Door Taxi. It is best to book ahead via phone.

Facilities: Airport services include a restaurant, coffee shop, vending machines, and conference rooms.

Parking: Parking is charged at \$3 for the first hour, \$5 for two hours, \$9 for six hours and \$13 per day. Weekly rates are \$78.

CurrencyThe official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to

Exchange rate for 1 USD - U.S. Dollar

0.00 BMD	0.93 EUR	0.80 GBP	152.99 JPY	1.37 CAD	0.91 CHF
Bermudan Dollar	Euro	U.K. Pound Sterling	Japanese Yen	Canadian Dollar	Swiss Franc
1.52 AUD	39.40 UAH	443.91 KZT	93,075.00 LBP	4.86 LYD	6.86 BOB
Australian Dollar	Ukrainian Hryvnia	Kazakhstani Tenge	Lebanese Pound	Libyan Dinar	Bolivian Boliviano
0.00 NPR	0.00 OMR	0.00 QAR	1.35 SGD	10.82 SEK	0.00 TTD
Nepalese Rupee	Omani Rial	Qatari Rial	Singapore Dollar	Swedish Krona	Trinidad Tobago Dollar
0.00 VEF	58.11 DOP	0.00 HRK	16.95 MXN	610.53 XOF	0.00 PGK
Venezuelan Bolivar	Dominican Peso	Croatian Kuna	Mexican Peso	West African CFA Franc	Papua New Guinean kina
0.00 BSD	0.00 FJD	0.00 HNL	133.87 DZD	0.00 MMK	0.00 BWP
Bahamian Dollar	Fiji Dollar	Honduran Lempira	Algerian Dinar	Myanma Kyat	Botswana Pula
3.72 PEN	938.44 CLP	386.84 AMD	23.29 CZK	17.63 MDL	139.89 ISK
Peruvian Nuevo Sol	Chilean Peso	Armenia Dram	Czech Koruna	Moldova Lei	Icelandic Krona
12,582.40 UZS	3.72 ILS	0.71 JOD	0.00 KWD	38.15 UYU	0.00 MUR
Uzbekistan Sum	Israeli New Sheqel	Jordanian Dinar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Uruguayan Peso	Mauritian Rupee
0.00 NIO	10.88 NOK	4.03 PLN	3.75 SAR	0.00 LKR	36.79 THB
Nicaraguan Córdoba	Norwegian Krone	Polish Zloty	Saudi Riyal	Sri Lanka Rupee	Thai Baht
3.66 AED	5.09 BRL	4.63 RON	7.81 HKD	610.53 XAF	25,405.70 VND
U.A.E Dirham	Brazilian Real	Romanian New Leu	Hong Kong Dollar	Central African CFA Franc	Vietnamese Dong
878.36 ARS	0.00 XCD	0.00 GTQ	10.06 MAD	0.00 BHD	1.00 PAB
Argentine Peso	East Caribbean Dollar	Guatemalan Quetzal	Moroccan Dirham	Bahrain Dinar	Panamanian Balboa
1.70 AZN	3,920.00 COP	88.42 KGS	362.00 HUF	10.89 TJS	16,073.70 IDR
Azerbaijan Manat	Colombian Peso	Kyrgyzstan Som	Hungarian Forint	Tajikistan Ruble	Indonesian Rupiah
47.95 EGP	1,358.84 KRW	7,456.52 PYG	4.74 MYR	508.31 CRC	1.67 NZD
Egyptian Pound	South Korean Won	Paraguayan Guaraní	Malaysian Ringgit	Costa Rican Colón	New Zealand Dollar
277.87 PKR	91.39 RUB	18.51 ZAR	3.13 TND	0.00 BBD	1.82 BGN
Pakistani Rupee	Russian Rouble	South African Rand	Tunisian Dinar	Barbadian Dollar	Bulgarian Lev
32.33 TRY	57.28 PHP	32.31 TWD	1,164.84 NGN	0.00 XPF	0.00 GHS
Turkish Lira	Philippine Peso	New Taiwan Dollar	Nigerian Naira	CFP Franc	Ghanaian Cedi
0.00 JMD	0.00 ANG	0.00 BND	108.90 RSD	7.24 CNY	6.94 DKK
Jamaican Dollar	Neth. Antillean Guilder	Brunei Dollar	Serbian Dinar	Chinese Yuan	Danish Krone
3.49 TMT	83.42 INR				
Maria Tradica and stars Maria at	Lastina Dimensi				