

Exploring Minneapolis and Nicollet Island

The Minneapolis Riverfront District is many things to many people. To some, it's a giant archaeological dig. To others, it's a playground of dining and nightlife and to yet others, it is a maze of beautiful parks and trails. Come visit St. Anthony Main as you take a stroll around the riverfront and along historic Main street and discover all the historic sites and various attractions the area has to offer. Nicollet Island • Stone Arch Bridge • St. Anthony Falls • Mill Ruins Park • Guthrie Theater • Mill City Museum • Bridge Park • Hennepin Ave Bridge • Water Power Park which is accessible from Main St. across from Tuggs and Vic's Restaurants • The Northeast Area with the new Lunds Supermarket and visit such Northeast icons as Nyes Polonaises, Surdyks Wine and Cheese and Kramarczuk's European Market.

The Ard Godfrey House. 50 UNIVERSITY AVE NE, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-813-5319

This is the oldest frame house in Minneapolis. Built in 1849, this Greek revival structure was the family residence for the Maine millwright who helped build the first dam and sawmills to put the waterpower of the falls to use.

Boom Island Park. 700 SIBLEY ST NE, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Situated upriver from historic Main Street, Nicollet Island and the St. Anthony Lock and Dam. The Paddleford Boat Company is located on Boom Island offering riverboat cruises in the summer and fall. This twenty-five acre riverfront park was once a holding place for logs on their way to the sawmill. The park was named after the Mississippi and Rum River Boom Company, which operated floating booms during the sawmill days. Facilities include a playground, picnic areas, a boat launch and dock, walking and biking paths and the Anson Northrup excursion boat landing.

The Milwaukee Depot. 225 THIRD AVE S, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-375-1700

The last train left in 1971, but the Milwaukee Road Depot still stands as a monument. For decades, family members and loved ones stood at the atrium of the Depot and waved to passengers boarding the trains of the Milwaukee Road line. The renovated complex now houses a Courtyard Marriott and Residence Inn, an indoor ice rink (October through March) and a waterpark (9:00am–10:00pm Friday, 8:00am–10:00pm Saturday, 8:00am–3:00pm Sunday; call for weekday hours).

Federal Reserve Bank. 90 HENNEPIN AVE, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-204-5000

One of just twelve federal reserve banks in the United States, the Minneapolis Fed is located on the downtown side of the river. It features five bronze interpretive exhibits that trace the history of the Mississippi riverfront. Tours are free of charge, but require advance reservations.

Mill City Museum. 704 SOUTH SECOND ST., MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-341-7555

Built within the limestone ruins of the Washburn A Mill, the museum documents Minneapolis's rise to become the flour milling capital of the world. It also highlights the lives of people who worked in the milling and lumber industries as well as the maturation of the city around it. Hours: Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat.: 10–5, Thurs.: 10–9, Sun.: 12–5. Adults: \$8, Kids: \$4. Open all major holidays.

Mill City Farmer's Market CHICAGO AVE. & 2nd ST. (near the Guthrie Theater) This seasonal outdoor market focuses on local, sustainable and organic foods. Open Thursdays and Saturdays May through October, 8am to 1pm. Visit their website (www.millcityfarmersmarket.org) for current events.

Mill Ruins Park. West RIVER PARKWAY, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-313-7793

A significant addition to the public amenities of the area, developed as part of the revitalization of the Minneapolis Riverfront District. It opened October 1, 2001, to celebrate the history of the 19th century ruins

long buried between many layers of gravel and sand. Now visitors stroll through historical walking tours, picnic areas and beautiful, century-old buildings.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church. 1 LOURDES PLACE, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-379-2259

Built in 1857, Our Lady of Lourdes is the oldest continuously used church in Minneapolis. It was constructed from limestone quarried from Nicollet Island. Masses: Saturday 5:30pm, Sunday 9:00am, 11:00am and 7:00pm.

Nicollet Island. Situated in the middle of the Mississippi, the Island is one of the most historic places in Minneapolis. Located on the Island are the Nicollet Island Inn, the Nicollet Pavilion, DeLaSalle High School and several private homes dating from the 1860's. The Nicollet Island Park offers wonderful views of downtown Minneapolis, the falls and the Stone Arch Bridge.

Stone Arch Bridge. This Minneapolis landmark connects the two sides of the riverfront district. Built in the 1870's by railroad magnate James J. Hill, this 2100-foot bridge uses 23 stone arches to support its weight. Once used by trains carrying freight and passengers, it is now a walking and biking path used exclusively for recreation.

Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam Visitor Center. 1 PORTLAND AVENUE, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-333-5336.

Completed in 1963, the Lock & Dam provide safe passage for boats and barges navigating the Mississippi. The Visitor Center, which sits atop the central control station, offers a fantastic view of the falls, the lock, the Minneapolis Mill Quarter and the Stone Arch Bridge. Open June 1–December 1.

Segue Tours. Whether Minneapolis is your hometown or your next travel destination, Segway Tours can turn a stroll through the neighborhood into a fun and exciting adventure. Add something new to your next business trip, vacation or weekend plans. <http://www.segwayguidedtours.com/segwaytoursminneapolis.cfm>

Guthrie Theatre. 818 S. 2nd ST. MINNEAPOLIS, MN 612-377-2224

Called "a 21st century dream factory" by Time Magazine, the new Guthrie boasts three stages, numerous bars and some of the best views of Minneapolis to be found in the city. Call for current shows and events. Backstage tours also available.

Gold Medal Park. Named after the famous flour brand, to honor the riverfront's rich milling history, the park is situated along West River Parkway next to the new Guthrie Theater in the heart of the rapidly growing Mill District. The 7.5-acre park includes a 32-foot-high viewing mound that provides great views of the Mississippi River and the surrounding neighborhood. Nearly 300 new, mature trees have taken root in an area that used to be a parking lot.

Free Concerts at Peavy Plaza Nicollet Mall and 11th Street

This outdoor sunken garden located in downtown Minneapolis swells with the sound of music and falling water all summer long.

At various times during summer, this sculpture decorated greenspace on Nicollet Mall becomes the setting for musical performances ranging from contemporary to the classics. Some of the annual events at the plaza include the Twin Cities Hot Summer Jazz Fest (weekend in June/ first of July), Famous Dave's Blues Fest, Macy's Day

of Music (24-hours of continuous live music) and Alive after 5/Tunes at Noon concerts on weekdays in June – a tradition of almost 25 years.

The Aquatennial

Although many events cost money during Aquatennial (the city's big water-themed celebration July 16-25), many of the best ones don't. For example, there's the torchlight parade, a two-hour long extravaganza of floats, marching bands and stilt walkers that makes its way down Hennepin Avenue. Some other stellar Aquatennial events include the milk carton boat races, the sand castle competition and a downtown contest in which area artists create sculptures completely out of recycled materials.

Minneapolis Aquatennial

when: Jul 2010 (annual)

where: Minneapolis/St Paul

The Minneapolis Aquatennial lives up to its reputation as "the best days of summer" with a broad spectrum of activities for both young and old. Highlights include a huge downtown block party, a regatta, sandcastle-building competitions and fireworks.

While most of the events are water-related, there are tennis, golf and volleyball events for those who prefer dry land. The festival also features a beauty contest where the Queen of the Lakes is crowned.

Related Information

Website: [Minneapolis Aquatennial Website](#)

Music in Mears

when: Jun - Aug 2010; Thu only (annual)

where: Mears Park

cost: Free

time: Thu 6pm-9pm

Every Thursday during the summer months the bandshell at St Paul's Mears Park hosts Music in Mears, a series of free outdoor concerts. Performers range from neo-soul acts to Latin ensembles. The last six weeks also feature movie screenings.

Music in Mears began in 2004 as a small event and has now grown to include a movie series, food and beverage stalls alongside various merchants and artists from the St Paul community. Past performers include Chastity Brown, Dan Isreal and The Hopefuls.

Related Information

Website: [Music in Mears Website](#)

St. Anthony Falls Heritage Trail

To get the most out of the trail, stop first at the Visitors Center for brochures and information. Although guided tours are offered, it's better to do a self-guided walk if you like a part in determining how long you'll stay at each point of interest. Among the trail's most interesting stops are Our Lady of Lourdes church, the oldest house in Minneapolis and the historic buildings on Nicolett Island