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MINNESOTA

2015-16 FISHING GUIDE

#ONLYINMNE



PLACES TO
CAST A LINE

PLAN YOUR FISHING
GETAWAY

MEET
MINNESOTA'S FISH

Is this your year to catch the
FISH of a LIFETIME?



Meet Fisher
 (yes, that's really his first name)
 with his first "fish of a lifetime".

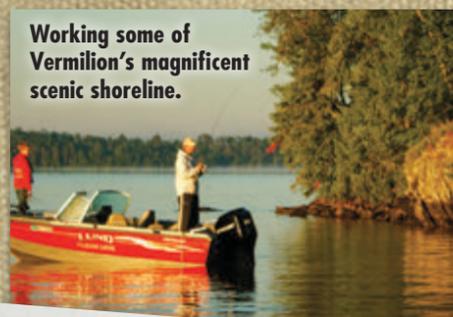
Fisher has been vacationing with his family at Pehrson Lodge since he was a little boy. His fishing career began with bluegills and the help of his dad. At age ten he broke into the big leagues with his biggest fish to date: this amazing muskie. We can't promise that everyone who casts Lake Vermilion will have Fisher's luck, but could this be your year? Join us at Pehrson Lodge and find out.



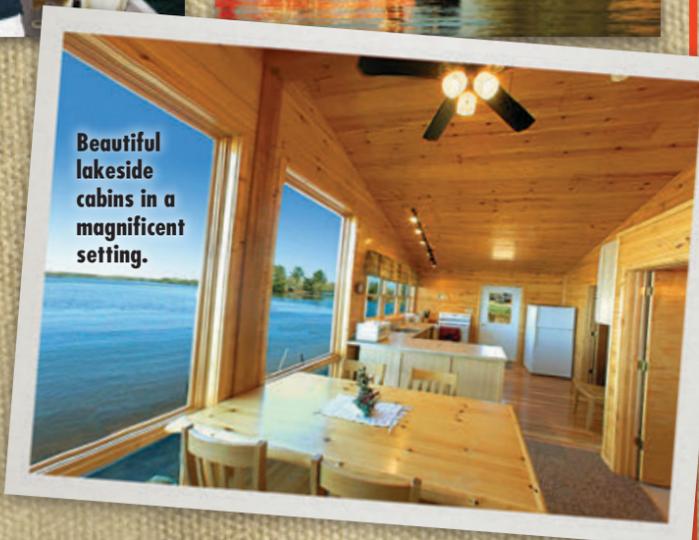
Renowned Lake Vermilion fishery: 40,000 acres of fishing paradise!



Here's Will with two beautiful "model" fish he caught for a Bass Pro photo shoot.



Working some of Vermilion's magnificent scenic shoreline.



Beautiful lakeside cabins in a magnificent setting.



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Go to www.pehrsonlodge.com and see what we have to offer! (800) 543-9937

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The Minnesota Fishing Guide is published by Explore Minnesota Tourism, an office of the State of Minnesota. ©2015

EXPLORE MINNESOTA FISHING

Minnesota's great fishing starts with its many diverse bodies of water. The moniker "Land of 10,000 Lakes"—a considerable understatement—only hints at that variety. In fact, the state has more shoreline than California, Florida and Hawaii combined. The deep, cold waters of Lake Superior, the world's largest freshwater lake, offer charter fishing for native lake trout as well as steelhead, chinook, coho salmon and walleye. America's greatest river, the mighty Mississippi, is only one of many, along with the Minnesota, St. Croix and Red River of the North, where anglers can reel in huge catfish or northern pike, smallmouth bass, walleye, panfish and more than 100 lesser-known species.

Then there are the many easy, fertile trout streams flowing toward the Mississippi in southeastern Minnesota, and the rocky rivers punctuated by thundering waterfalls along Lake Superior's North Shore. The aforementioned 10,000-plus lakes are often hopping with largemouth bass, northerns, panfish, walleye and more. In the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and throughout the state, many of these lakes have public, accessible fishing docks, where kids or anyone looking for a simple and fun fishing experience can toss in a line and catch a mess of sunnies for dinner, or cast a lure for a bigger challenge.

Use this guide to discover the many wonders of Minnesota fishing.



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
888-MINN-DNR (888-646-6367)
651-296-6157
info.dnr@state.mn.us
mndnr.gov

LakeFinder mobile website: mndnr.gov/mobile/lakefinder

Fishing licenses and regulations: Brochure or online information on fishing regulations, including seasons and limits and special regulations for border waters and other specific waters.

Residents and nonresidents 16 and older must have a fishing license. You must buy a trout stamp to fish any trout stream, trout lake or Lake Superior. Licenses are available from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and from sporting goods stores and some convenience stores. You can also buy your license with a credit card by phone at 888-665-4236, or online at mndnr.gov.

Licenses and Fees

This information applies from March 1, 2015, to Feb. 28, 2016. Check with the DNR for 2016 rates.

Resident

Youth age 16 and 17	\$5
Individual (age 18 and older)	\$22
Individual 24-hour	\$10
Combination (married couple)	\$35
Trout-salmon stamp (not required with a 24-hour license)	\$10
Voluntary walleye stamp	\$5

Nonresident

Youth age 16 and 17	\$5
Individual 72-hour	\$32
Individual seven-day	\$38
Combination (married couple) 14-day	\$48
Family (husband, wife, children under 16)	\$60
Trout-salmon stamp (not required with 24-hour license)	\$10

Minnesota Fishing Seasons

Seasons effective March 1, 2015, to Feb. 28, 2016. Check with the DNR for 2016 dates.

Trout in streams

Jan. 1-April 17, 2015: Catch and release only in southeastern Minnesota*
 April 18-Sept. 14, 2015: Harvest season in southeastern Minnesota
 Sept. 15-Oct. 15, 2015: Catch and release only in southeastern Minnesota
 April 18-Sept. 30, 2015: Harvest season in remainder of state
 *Southeast Minnesota includes Houston, Fillmore, Mower, Dodge, Olmsted, Winona, Wabasha and Goodhue counties.

Lake trout

Jan. 1-March 31, 2015: Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) lakes

Jan. 17-March 31, 2015, and May 9-Sept. 30, 2015: Remainder of state

Rainbow, brook and brown trout in lakes

Jan. 1-March 31, 2015: BWCAW lakes

Jan. 17-March 31, 2015, and May 9-Oct. 31, 2015: Remainder of state

Walleye, sauger and northern pike

May 9, 2015-Feb. 28, 2016

Largemouth and smallmouth bass

May 9, 2015-Feb. 28, 2016: Largemouth bass in northeast**

May 23, 2015-Feb. 28, 2016: Largemouth bass in remainder of state

May 9-22, 2015: Largemouth bass catch and release only in remainder of state.

May 9, 2015-Feb. 28, 2016: Smallmouth bass in northeast Minnesota

May 23-Sep. 13, 2015: Smallmouth bass in remainder of state

May 9-22, 2015, and Sept. 14, 2015-Feb. 28, 2016: Smallmouth bass catch and release only in remainder of state

**Northeast is defined as north and east of U.S. Hwy 53 from Duluth to International Falls and Pelican and Ash lakes in St. Louis County.

Muskellunge

June 6-Dec. 1, 2015

Sunfish, crappie, perch, catfish, bullheads

Continuous

Note: Fishing regulations for waters along Minnesota's borders differ somewhat from inland waters. Also, some inland lakes and streams have special regulations. For a more detailed listing of fishing seasons and information on other species, consult the Minnesota Fishing Regulations booklet, available where you buy your license, from the Minnesota DNR, or in PDF format from the DNR website.

Boating Info

Boat, canoe and kayak licenses required: All boats, canoes and kayaks (unless non-motorized and nine feet or less) used in Minnesota must be licensed in Minnesota or the owner's home state. Most states will register any boat upon request. Contact the Minnesota DNR at 800-285-2000 or info.dnr@state.mn.us for information about licensing your boat.

Boat access: More than 1,900 public accesses have been built on Minnesota's lakes and streams. Many of these are equipped with concrete boat ramps. The locations of most are shown on county water access maps, available from the Minnesota DNR Information Center: 651-296-6157 or 888-MINNDNR (646-6367).



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!



Minnesota waters are threatened by many invasive species of plants and animals. It is illegal to transport any aquatic plants, zebra mussels, New Zealand mudsnails or other prohibited invasive species on public roads, or to launch a boat or trailer with these species attached.

Required actions:

- Remove visible aquatic plants and animals from your boat, trailer and other water-related equipment before leaving the water access (see diagram above).
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash – it is not legal to release bait into state waters.
- Drain water from your boat, motor, live well and bait containers before leaving the water access. Drain plugs, bailers, valves or other devices used to control the draining of water from ballast tanks, bilges and live wells must be removed or opened while transporting watercraft (marine sanitary systems are excluded from this requirement).

Recommended actions:

- Spray, rinse or dry boats and recreational equipment to remove or kill species that were not visible when leaving a water body.
- Before transporting to another water body: spray/rinse with high pressure and/or hot tap water, especially if moored for more than a day; or dry boat for at least five days.

For more information, contact the DNR Invasive Species Program, Division of Ecological and Water Resources, at 651-259-5100 or 888-646-6367 or visit mndnr.gov/invasives.



GET AWAY IN MINNESOTA

Great Fishing and So Much More

Minnesota provides plenty of options for a fishing getaway. Find a lakeside resort or campground, or stay in a convenient motel or cozy historic inn. See the listings beginning on page 12 for more ideas on places to stay.

Photo by Gary Hamer



Resorts:

Staying at a Minnesota resort is like having your own lake cabin. There are hundreds of resorts to choose from. Some are large complexes with luxury suites and condos, on-site golf, gourmet restaurants and spas. Others are historic lodges. Many are small, family-operated resorts with several lakeside cabins or cottages. Most are family-friendly, with swimming beaches, playgrounds, game rooms and other activities for kids, and some offer large units to accommodate big groups.

For anglers, resorts typically rent boats and motors, and provide dock space if you bring your own boat. Many can hook you up with a fishing guide who's familiar with the local waters. On half-day or all-day trips, guides can show you where and how to fish the area's lakes or rivers, so you can go out on your own later to take advantage of what you've learned. Resort and bait shop owners also are good sources for where the fish are biting, and what they're biting on.



Campgrounds:

Whether you're pitching a tent or driving an RV, you'll find a bounty of beautiful lakeside campgrounds in Minnesota. Many resorts in the state also have campgrounds, giving campers access to other resort amenities, such as swimming pools or restaurants. Other campgrounds are operated by cities or counties. In addition, there's a wide choice of campgrounds at state parks, state forests and in Chippewa and Superior National forests. Some are rustic; others have showers, playgrounds, RV hookups and other modern amenities.

Note: Help protect our trees from bad bugs. Please buy firewood where you burn it; don't move firewood from another location.

For more information on resorts, campgrounds and other places to stay, visit exploreminnesota.com/places-to-stay.

CATCH OF THE DAY

North Shore steelhead/Photo by Gavin Brandt



Walleye

The walleye is Minnesota's state fish, and for good reason. They grow big and fight hard in lakes throughout Minnesota, and they make some tasty eating. Anglers catch walleyes in lots of ways—casting from a canoe in the northern wilderness, trolling live-bait rigs or crankbaits on weed lines and rocky reefs, or bouncing jigs along the bottom of a swift-flowing river. If you don't have a boat, rent a spot on a commercial launch and have a party catching walleyes with other anglers. Minnesota's walleyes average one to three pounds, but sometimes exceed 10.



Walleye

Muskellunge and Northern Pike

When a big northern pike or muskie slams into your bucktail like a Mack truck, your heart leaps, your pulse rises, your hands shake. The big size, sharp teeth and lightning strike of these ferocious fish have that effect on an angler. They may be the most exciting of Minnesota's really big fish. Northern pike are one of the most widespread fish in the state. You'll find them all over, from the backwaters of the Mississippi to the wilderness lakes of canoe country. Anglers catch them on both live bait and artificial lures, by casting and trolling. They also make for great sport on a fly rod.

Minnesota muskies are bigger and more widespread than ever, thanks to successful stocking programs that have introduced them to new lakes. A widespread catch-and-release effort lets them grow big—sometimes over 50 pounds.



Northern Pike



Muskellunge

Panfish

Some of Minnesota's smallest fish win the greatest devotion. There are anglers who like nothing better than to search deep weed lines and tiny woodland ponds to catch "bull" bluegills. Others spend the evenings searching a big lake for elusive one-pound crappies. Sunfish and crappies live in most Minnesota lakes.

Some of the state's largest lakes, known best for big walleyes, offer a surprise—jumbo yellow perch, some weighing more than a pound. When perch get that big, there's nothing finer in the pan—and that includes their big cousin, the walleye!



Bluegill



Black Crappie



Pumpkinseed



Green Sunfish

Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass

In the land of 10,000 lakes, how many have bass? So many that nearly 100 are named Bass Lake. You won't catch a world record largemouth in Minnesota, but you can catch lots of the size that real anglers catch. Head out in a tricked-out bass boat and work the weed lines with plastic worms. Run spinnerbaits through the shallows, or row a boat along the lily pads and throw topwater plugs.

With so much focus on walleye, some people would say Minnesota lakes are underfished for bass. And a strong ethic of catch-and-release fishing has helped protect lots of fish in the two- to six-pound range.

Smallmouth bass are known for jolting strikes and spirited leaps. You'll find no harder-fighting fish in freshwater. In Minnesota you'll find many places and ways to catch them—running crankbaits over rocky reefs on a big lake, drifting baited jigs through a pool in a big river, or fly-fishing with poppers while wading knee-deep in a rocky stream.

Plenty of lakes and rivers produce smallies up to five pounds. In some of these waters, you can spend a day without seeing another person. Fishing seems only to be getting better, because smallmouth anglers are a special breed who recognize that this fish is a resource worth protecting through catch and release.



Smallmouth Bass



Largemouth Bass

Catfish and Bullheads

Minnesota's catfish include some monsters. Flathead cats of the state's slow-moving southern rivers sometimes exceed 50 pounds. There's a lot of pull in a fish that big. Channel cats can grow bigger than 20 pounds and show up in some surprising places, including the Red River of the North along the state's northwest border. You'll find bullheads, the smaller cousins to catfish, in lakes throughout central and southern Minnesota—great sport for kids and even better for the frying pan.



Flathead Catfish



Channel Catfish



Brown Bullhead

Trout and Salmon

Whether rising through the crystalline current of a stream to sip a dry fly, or leaping across the blue expanse of Lake Superior, trout and salmon are pictures of grace and power. They live in some of the most beautiful water imaginable. Rainbow, brook and brown trout swim in the riffing woodland creeks of southeastern Minnesota's bluff country, and in the tumultuous streams of Lake Superior's North Shore. Trollers find lake trout, chinook and coho salmon in the cold waters of Superior itself. A brilliantly colored trophy "brookie" from a cold stream may measure only a foot, while a mature chinook from the big lake can easily push 20 pounds.



Brook Trout



Brown Trout



Rainbow Trout



Lake Trout



Coho Salmon



Chinook Salmon



Steelhead



All fish species illustrations © 2015 MN DNR, C. Iverson



Minnesota State Parks and Trails' I Can Fish! programs are all about the thrill of your kids learning to catch fish—and it's all free with a Minnesota State Parks entrance permit. Programs cover all of the basics, taught by experienced anglers, and are designed for first-time anglers and those who would like a refresher. All equipment is provided, and most programs will have bait available. For more information, visit mndnr.gov/ican, or call the DNR Information Center at 888-646-6367.

FISHING FROM BORDER TO BORDER



Photo by Gary Hamer

NORTHWEST



In Northwest Minnesota, the Mississippi River begins its journey as a wilderness stream, winding through pine and hardwood forests studded with thousands of large and small lakes alive with bass, panfish, walleye, northern pike, muskie and more. Along the western border, the Red River of the North travels up toward Canada along the western border of the state, producing many of the above species as well as huge channel catfish. The diversity of waters leads to a great diversity of fishing experiences.

Big Waters

The broad, fertile waters of Lake of the Woods, Leech Lake, Lake Winnibigoshish and Upper Red Lake draw serious anglers from across the nation, particularly for big northern pike and walleye, which find perfect breeding grounds on the lakes' windswept reefs and shorelines. Anglers take to the big water in deep-V boats, jigging the flats and drop-offs, or trolling the reefs with crankbaits. Commercial launches, popular on Leech and Lake of the Woods, are an easy and economical way to get out on these big waters. There's also excellent fishing on Lake of the Woods among the sheltered islands off the Northwest Angle, the northernmost point of Minnesota.



While You're Here

There's more here than just big lakes and big fish. A must-see highlight of this area is the headwaters of the Mississippi River at Itasca State Park. If you enjoy gaming, there are several Ojibwe-owned casinos in the area. Towns such as Detroit Lakes, Park Rapids, Bemidji and Walker feature hundreds of small lakeside resorts and campgrounds.

Leech Lake is fabled for its notorious muskie "rampage," a few midsummer days when muskies hit just about anything in the water. Cass Lake has also been a top producer of big muskies. Lake Winnibigoshish is a large reservoir with 140 miles of mostly undeveloped shoreline. Called "Winnie" by its fans, the lake holds walleye, northerns, muskies and perch. Adjoining Winnie is Cut Foot Sioux Lake, and nearby are Bowstring and Ball Club lakes.

North Woods Lakes

The big lakes are best known, but hundreds of smaller lakes rank among the favorites of those who fish them. They hold almost every kind of game fish Minnesota offers: walleyes, largemouth and smallmouth bass, pike, muskies, sunfish and crappies.

Among these are Detroit Lake and Lake Bemidji, the latter anchoring a popular state park across the lake from the town of Bemidji. These and several others have become muskie hot spots through carefully managed stocking programs. But the region's popular lakes are favored for their variety and the options they offer anglers. Near the town of Detroit Lakes are Cormorant, Melissa and Pelican lakes; Plantagenet and Blackduck lakes are near Bemidji. Not far from Park Rapids are Big Sand and Fish Hook lakes. All make good fishing destinations, as do others too numerous to name.

River Fishing

Northern Minnesota also has some red-hot river fishing. Float the Mississippi in a boat or canoe and catch everything from muskies to smallmouth bass. The river arcs through the north woods linking several large reservoirs. The Red River of the North, hugging the state's western border, flows through a rural landscape into Canada. It's the northernmost catfish population in the state, giving up channel cats averaging well over 10 pounds. The Red Lake River also features a variety of fish.

NORTHEAST



This corner of Minnesota has been dubbed the "Arrowhead" for its distinctive shape, formed by the Canadian border on one side and the craggy shore of Lake Superior on the other. In between is a wild land with deep forests of pine and birch dotted with thousands of lakes, where wolves still howl and loons call out across the water.

Wilderness Waters

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) holds more than 1,000 lakes linked by overland trails. Most lakes are paddle-only; motors are permitted on only a few. BWCAW visitors canoe to secluded campsites and fish for trophy walleye, northern pike and some of the finest top-water smallmouth bass fishing in the nation. In early spring, the deepest lakes provide light-tackle fishing for lake trout. Major gateways to this canoe country are Ely and the Gunflint Trail, a scenic byway that begins in Grand Marais.

Also along the state's northern border is Voyageurs National Park, just east of International Falls. Voyageurs has beautiful rocky lakes, thick forest and great fishing. Travel is largely by motorboat; rent one from an area resort, or book a comfortable houseboat, the largest of which accommodate up to 12 people. Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan, Crane and Sand Point lakes serve up walleyes, northerns, smallmouth bass and big crappies. Just west, anglers fish the Rainy River for walleyes, pike and sturgeon.



While You're Here

Among the top attractions in this area are many state parks, waterfalls and Split Rock Lighthouse along the North Shore, and the International Wolf Center and North American Bear Center in Ely. The Commercial Fishing Museum in Tofte and the Great Lakes Aquarium in Duluth might be of special interest to anglers. Several of the state's top golf courses are in this region.

Lake Country

Along the Iron Range, from Grand Rapids to Babbitt, abandoned mine pits have filled with clear spring water, forming lakes such as Lake Ore-be-Gone, now holding trout and big pike. The area is rich with natural lakes as well, some of which are managed for trout.

Long and narrow Birch Lake near Babbitt has great fishing for a variety of species, and is a favorite for houseboat rental. The island-studded beauty of Lake Vermilion is enhanced by its

budding reputation for big muskies, as well as large perch, walleye and bluegills. In the north woods between the Iron Range and Voyageurs, Pelican Lake near Orr has a lot of shallow structure for great fishing.

The forests around Grand Rapids are studded with lakes. North of town, the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway winds among scores of lakes in Chippewa National Forest, including Trout Lake and Lake Wabana. Here is a place to fish walleyes, pike and bass in solitude. Just southwest of Grand Rapids is popular Pokegama Lake.

Lake Superior

The Arrowhead borders the largest freshwater lake in the world. Lake Superior's cold, clear waters hold native lake trout, and stocked steelhead, chinook and coho salmon. The big lake is too open and windswept for many boats, but charter fishing trips are available from Duluth and other towns along the North Shore.

Stream & River Fishing

Stream fishing is also popular along the North Shore. In the thundering wilderness rivers that tumble into Lake Superior, anglers wade in to cast for resident trout, or drift-fish for spawning steelhead during their spring run. The St. Louis River near Duluth is a favorite for walleye, smallmouth bass and muskie. The St. Croix, a National Scenic River, is a great route to canoe and fish for smallmouth bass, northern pike and walleyes.

CENTRAL



This is lake country, where the hardwoods of the south meet the pine forests of the north, and the rural countryside holds hundreds of lakes populated with a variety of fish. It's a great family vacation destination, with much to do off and on the water.

Legendary Lakes

Located in the heart of the state, the Brainerd Lakes area has been a fishing destination for travelers for more than a century, and is home to fishing legends Babe Winkelman and Al Lindner, and In-Fisherman magazine. Tall tales of giant lumberjack Paul Bunyan say the lakes here sprang up to fill the footprints of his sidekick, Babe the Blue Ox. Among the bounty of good fishing lakes are Gull, Pelican, Whitefish, North Long and Round.

An unusual fishery has developed in the abandoned iron-ore mines of the Cuyuna Iron Range near Crosby, just northwest of Brainerd. Many of these deep open pits have filled with spring water and are now stocked with trout; some also harbor monster pike and smallmouth bass.

Mille Lacs Lake, east of Brainerd, is the second-largest lake within Minnesota and a popular fishing destination. Mille Lacs offers great fishing for smallmouth bass, muskies, walleyes, perch, northern pike and other species. Fishing launches large and small make it easy to get out on this big lake, providing bait, tackle and guidance on half- or full-day trips.

In the Aitkin-McGregor area north of Mille Lacs, several smaller lakes, including Big Sandy, Round and Minnewawa, are popular spots for walleyes, pike, largemouth bass and panfish. Cedar Lake is known for muskies.



While You're Here

This region has hundreds of resorts, from classic lakeside cabins to large, full-service resorts with restaurants, golf courses, spas and water parks. The Brainerd Lakes area boasts excellent golf courses. See antique fishing gear at the Minnesota Fishing Museum in Little Falls and antique boats at the Minnesota Lakes Maritime Museum in Alexandria. Cycle for miles on picturesque paved trails such as the Central Lakes State Trail, Glacial Lakes State Trail and Lake Wobegon Regional Trail.

Central Lakes

The area in the rural countryside south of St. Cloud serves up good fishing, too. Popular lakes are Rice, Koronis, Clearwater, Cedar, Sylvia and Pleasant, with a few resorts in the Paynesville area. There is another large cluster of lakes in the countryside around Willmar, including Big Kandiyohe south of town.

One of the best is Green Lake near Spicer. A clear lake amid glacial hills, Green provides fishing for walleye, northern pike, bass and panfish that compares favorably with most northern lakes. There are several lakeside resorts in the Spicer-New London area.

Glacial Lakes

In the rolling countryside surrounding Alexandria and Fergus Falls, many glacial lakes dot the green hills. More than 1,000 lakes fall within the boundaries of Otter Tail County alone, including Otter Tail and Clitherall near Fergus Falls. Other well-known glacial lakes include Lake Minnewaska next to Glenwood, and Le Homme Dieu, Carlos, Darling, Ida and Osakis near Alexandria. These lakes offer a variety of species, from panfish to walleye.

Several lakes have become muskie hot spots through carefully managed stocking programs. Among these are Lake Miliona north of Alexandria and West Battle Lake in Otter Tail County.

SOUTHERN



Savvy anglers know that the countryside of southern Minnesota holds some surprisingly good fishing lakes and rivers, as well as scenic and productive trout streams. These waters can make for a quick and easy fishing getaway.

Southern Lakes

Many of the large lakes in the rolling farmland and valleys of the south are regularly stocked with walleyes. Most also have northern pike, largemouth bass and panfish. Some offer up dandy channel cats. And nearly every lake and pond down here has bullheads, perhaps the most popular fish in the region, celebrated at an annual festival in Waterville. Catching them is easy—all you need is a pole, line, hook and worm.



While You're Here

Visitors have a wide choice of campgrounds or hotels, some country resorts, and several historic inns and B&Bs. Favorite activities in this area include antique shopping, visiting historic sites and biking the region's scenic paved trails. Among the area's many attractions are the National Eagle Center in Wabasha, historic Schell's Brewery in New Ulm and the National Trout Learning Center in Preston.

The rural landscape between Mankato and Faribault is splashed with numerous lakes, several of which are popular fishing waters, served by a handful of resorts in the area. Among the fishing lakes to try here are Tetonka near Waterville; Madison and Washington east of Mankato; Mazaska, Shields and Roberds near Faribault.

Some of the best and most popular of the prairie lakes farther south include Benton and Shaokotan west of Marshall, Okabena at Worthington, Lake Hanska south of New Ulm, and Budd, Sisseton and Hall near Fairmont. Farther east is Albert Lea Lake, at its namesake town.

Minnesota & Mississippi Rivers

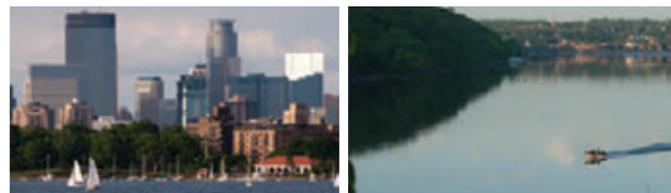
As good as the fishing is in southern Minnesota's lakes, the biggest fish in the region come from the rivers and streams. The Minnesota River and major tributaries hold some monstrous flathead catfish. Drop a live minnow into a logjam on an outside river bend some evening, and you may soon find yourself wrestling a flathead over 30 pounds. Other game fish on the river include walleyes, saugers and channel cats. Try for walleyes at Big Stone Lake, at the headwaters of the Minnesota River near Ortonville.

In the southeast, the Mississippi River, nestled between steep wooded bluffs, provides the main action. Its fishing is as impressive as the scenery, with walleyes, saugers, smallmouth bass and catfish. One of the most popular fishing holes is Lake Pepin, a great widening of the river. White bass are also common in the lake, and when schools smash baitfish at the surface, fishing can be furious. The tangled backwaters hold some big northern pike and good panfish.

Trout Streams

The spring-fed streams that riffle through the bluff country in the far southeastern corner of the state offer Minnesota's best trout fishing. Brown trout of two pounds and larger live in large streams such as the Whitewater and upper reaches of the Root, as well as clear tributaries so small you can leap across. The streams wind through valleys of hardwood forest. Fly fishermen love these streams for their beautiful surroundings, plentiful trout and frequent aquatic insect hatches.

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL AREA



If you're staying in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, good fishing is within casting distance. Big smallmouth, walleyes and catfish swim in the Mississippi River where it passes through downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul. Angling for walleye and sauger is popular on the St. Croix River in the eastern part of the metro area. The Minnesota River just south of the Twin Cities is another good bet. In the area's lakes, you can catch muskies, walleye and largemouth bass over five pounds.

Extend your range just a few miles and you're within reach of some of the best fishing in the state. Lake Minnetonka and Lake Waconia, both west of Minneapolis, have long had the reputation as great bass lakes, and now they have muskies, too.

About 30 Twin Cities area lakes are stocked with pure-strain muskies or hybrid tiger muskies. Among the best are White Bear, Bald Eagle and Independence. Many lakes have walleyes, northern pike, bass and panfish. Among the most popular are the lakes of Chisago County, at the northeast edge of the metro area, including Green, Chisago, North Center and South Lindstrom lakes.

Minnesota has made special efforts to give city anglers opportunities to go fishing, even if they don't have a boat, or even a car. The Fishing in the Neighborhood (FiN) Program stocks fish, installs fishing piers, puts on fishing clinics, and identifies dozens of metro-area lakes and rivers that provide good fishing in a safe setting suitable for families. Learn more about the program at mndnr.gov/fishing/fin.

FISHING HEATS UP IN THE COLD

In Minnesota, the fishing stays hot even after the lakes freeze over. Just drill a hole in the ice (power augers help!), drop in a line and relax until a fish takes a nibble. For many anglers, this low-tech, no-fuss, boat-free fishing has a special appeal.

On a beautiful winter day, fish out in the open under a vast blue sky. For shelter from the cold and wind, fish from inside a cozy hut. On some of the larger lakes such as Mille Lacs, Lake of the Woods and Winnibigoshish, small villages of fish houses crop up in the winter. Ice fishing contests and other related activities play a part in winter festivals on many lakes where the sport is popular.

Some resorts rent ice houses—one-room shelters ranging from basic to downright homey—with heaters, carpeted floors, table and chairs. "Sleeper" houses also have bunks and a cook stove for overnight stays. If you're new to the sport, resort staff can set you up with the gear, which is very basic, and teach you the simple principles of ice fishing.

Most of the species caught the rest of the year bite during winter, as well: walleyes, northern pike, yellow perch, sunfish, crappies, and in the wilderness lakes of the northeast, lake trout. January and February are prime time for ice fishing; the ice needs to be thick and strong enough to support anglers and their vehicles.

Check with the DNR and local area resorts for the latest information about ice thickness and safety. To find listings of fish house rentals, or ice fishing-related festivals, call 888-VISITMN (888-847-4866) or go to exploreminnesota.com. You can also sign up for free fishing reports via e-mail.



Every June, a weekend is designated when Minnesotans 16 or older who take a child 15 or younger fishing don't need a license. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources schedules a variety of organized fishing opportunities that weekend throughout the state. The same policy applies during "Take a Kid Ice Fishing Weekend" in mid-January. For more information, including related events for the weekend and exact dates, contact the DNR at 888-665-4236, or visit mndnr.gov/takeakidfishing.

Photo by Judith Goering

PLAN YOUR MINNESOTA FISHING GETAWAY

Browse these advertiser listings to find a great place for your fishing getaway.



NORTHWEST

Bayside Cabins & Resort

206 Rosalind Ave. W
Backus, MN 56435
218-947-3344
baysidecabins.com
Located on Pine Mountain Lake. Cabins, RV and camping available. Next to Paul Bunyan bike trail. Open year-round. Like us on Facebook for specials.

Lake of the Woods Tourism

P.O. Box 518
Baudette, MN 56623
800-382-3474
lakeofthewoodsmn.com
The walleye capital of the world welcomes you! Resort listings, charter boats, ice fishing, snowmobiling, fishing reports and more.

Wigwam Resort

3502 Four Mile Bay Drive NW
Baudette, MN 56623
800-448-9260
wigwamresortlow.com
Lake of the Woods full-service year-round. Guided launches, guided ice fishing, cabins, lodge rooms, RV campground, full-service dining, bar, live bands, docks.

Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce

700 Summit Ave.
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501
218-847-9202
visitdetroitlakes.com
Year-round fishing fun in Detroit Lakes! Pan and game fish, including trophy-size muskie. Complete your visit with warm accommodations, dining, shopping and attractions.

Woman Lake Lodge

914 County 5 NW
Hackensack, MN 56452
218-682-2426
womanlakelodge.com
Woman Lake is one of the region's major fisheries with structure of rocks and sand points, bays and deep holes with walleye, bass and muskellunge.

White Birch Resort

18882 North Blackduck
Lake Road NE
Hines, MN 56647
218-835-4552
whitebirchresort.net
Located on Blackduck Lake and half an hour from Red Lake. New luxury homes with private hot tubs. Open year-round.

Little Boy Resort & Campground

3600 County Road 54
Longville, MN 56655
218-363-2188
littleboyresort.com
Little Boy Lake with access to Wabedo, over 2,500 acres of lakeside: fishing, eight cabins, 11 campsites, boat rental. Walleye, northern, muskie, bass and panfish.

Sunset Lodge

3179 Oak Island
Oak Island, MN 56711
855-634-1863
sunsetlodgeresort.com
Northwest Angle of the Lake of the Woods. Open year-round renting cabin and condos. Full-service bar and restaurant. Enjoy summer and winter fishing packages.

Itasca Area Lakes Tourism Association

Park Rapids, MN
itascaarea.com
Quality resorts and campgrounds for your stay in the area serving Itasca State Park and Park Rapids, with many lakes and great fishing awaiting you.

Little Norway Resort

32016 Little Mantrap Drive
Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-732-5480
littlenorwayresort.com
Little Mantrap Lake with many bays and 11 miles of shoreline. Largemouth bass, panfish, northers and walleyes. One mile south of Itasca State Park.

Tamarac Bay Resort

40728 County Road 126
Rochert, MN 56578
218-847-7096
tamaracbayresort.com
Fish walleyes, northern, bass and panfish on Island Lake. Fishing and family resort with 11 cabins situated between Detroit Lakes and Park Rapids. Pontoon available.

Leech Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

201 Minnesota Ave.
P.O. Box 1089
Walker, MN 56484
218-547-1313
leech-lake.com
Experience the thrill and excitement when the last cast snags the big one. Walleye, northern pike, muskie, bass and panfish. Leech Lake has it all.

Zippel Bay Resort

6080 39th St. NW
Williams, MN 56686
800-222-2537
zippelbay.com
Lake of the Woods South Shore. Luxury log cabins, 30-foot charters, rental boats, ice houses, sleepers, outdoor pool/hot tub. Home of the Zippel Bay Igloo.



NORTHEAST

Sunset Point Resort

28496 Sunset Point Road
Cohasset, MN 55721
218-328-5334
sunsetpointresort.net
Enjoy an affordable fishing/family vacation at a classic Minnesota resort. Bass Lake near Grand Rapids. Fish for walleye, northern, panfish, bass, perch and crappie.

Lake Vermilion Resort & Tourism Association

P. O. Box 159
Cook, MN 55723
218-666-5850
fishlakevermilion.com
Great fishing for walleye, bass, northern, muskie and more in our 40,000-acre Canadian Shield lake. Resorts, hotels, campgrounds and houseboats specialize in fishing vacations.

Pehrson Lodge Resort

2746 Vermilion Drive
Cook, MN 55723
800-543-9937
pehrsonlodge.com
Beautiful cabins, magnificent setting. New 12-bedroom reunion chalet. Renowned fishery, scenery and wildlife. Expansive rental fleet, harbor service, beach. Pet-friendly cabins, spring/fall rates.

Crane Lake Visitor & Tourism Bureau

7238 Handberg Road
Crane Lake, MN 55725
800-362-7405
visitcranelake.com
Experience extraordinary fishing at Crane Lake; entrance to hundreds of miles of lakeshore that make up Voyageurs National Park and BWCA. Resorts, outfitters and houseboats.

The Pines Resort

17221 Winnie Day Road NE
Deer River, MN 56636
800-342-1552
thepinesresort.com
Located on a small bay on Lake Winnibigoshish, where most of the shoreline is undeveloped. Uncrowded fishing waters for year-round enjoyment.

Visit Duluth

21 West Superior St. Suite 100
Duluth, MN 55802
218-722-4011
visitduluth.com
Fish the best waters in the state, Lake Superior and the St. Louis River, for multispecies with our charter captains just minutes from Duluth.

Ely Chamber of Commerce

1600 E Sheridan St.
Ely, MN 55731
218-365-6123
ely.org
Access to more than 5,000 lakes and streams in the Superior National Forest and Boundary Waters Canoe Area, with some of the country's best fishing.

Grand Ely Lodge Resort

400 N Pioneer Road
Ely, MN 55731
218-365-6565
grandelylodge.com
Lakeview rooms, Evergreen Restaurant, Antlers Lounge, indoor pool, Whirlpool. Marina with boat rentals on Shagawa Lake. Walleye, bass, northern. Great ice fishing. Open 365 days.

LaTourell's Resort & Outfitters

P.O. Box 239
Ely, MN 55731
218-365-4531
latourells.com
Closest fishing resort/canoe outfitter to famous Basswood Lake and Boundary Waters Wilderness. World-class smallmouth, walleye and northern. Catering to fishermen for three generations.

Spirit of the Wilderness Outfitters

2030 E Sheridan St.
Ely, MN 55731
800-950-2709
elycanoetrips.com
Your one-stop BWCAW canoe outfitter and bait shop. We talk fishing. Stop in for bait, tackle, canoe rentals, permits, clothing, sporting goods and more.

Iron Range Tourism

111 Station 44 Road
Eveleth, MN 55734
218-749-8161
ironrange.org
Find smaller, secluded lakes with no shortage of game fish at five scenic Iron Range campgrounds, where attractions and recreation are historic.

Bear Track Outfitting's Grand Marais Charters

2011 W. Highway 61
Grand Marais, MN 55604
218-387-1162
bear-track.com
Full-service outfitter for Boundary Waters canoe trips, Lake Superior charters in Grand Marais, inland fishing guides, fly shop, seven year-round cabins, 43 years in business!

Bearskin Lodge

124 East Bearskin Road
Grand Marais, MN 55604
800-338-4170
bearskin.com
A family-run BWCA wilderness resort offering secluded cabins on East Bearskin Lake. Good fishing for walleyes, smallmouth bass, northern pike and lake trout.

Visit Grand Rapids

10 NW Fifth St. Suite 212
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-326-9607
visitgrandrapids.com
Home to more than 1,000 grand lakes, Grand Rapids is a fishing mecca for anglers in search of crappie, northern, walleye, panfish, bass and perch.

International Falls, Rainy Lake and Ranier CVB

301 Second Ave.
International Falls, MN 56649
800-325-5766
rainylake.org
World-class fishing and spectacular scenery in Voyageurs National Park. Border regulations allow the longest walleye season in the state; pike and bass open continuous.

Kabetogama Lake Association

9707 Gamma Road
Kabetogama, MN 56669
844-525-3522
kabetogama.com
Kabetogama Lake, central entrance to Voyageurs National Park. Resorts and businesses offering memories to last a lifetime. Experience the wild and pristine shorelines.

Northern Lights Resort & Outfitting

12723 Northern Lights Road
Kabetogama, MN 56669
218-875-2593
NLRO.com
Twelve unique lakeside cabins and high-quality boats for rent. Beach, view, activities and comforts of home. Come recreate on Lake Kabetogama and Voyageurs National Park.

Cedar Point Resort

38268 Cedar Point Road
Marcell, MN 56657
800-450-6613
cedarptresort.com
Cabins within 20 feet of shore! Pool, beach, rec room. Lodge with food, Wi-Fi, satellite. Great fishing on North Star: walleye, bass, northern, muskie, crappie.

Edge of the Wilderness Lodging Association

P. O. Box 32
Marcell, MN 56657
888-754-0011
edgeofthewilderness.com
Visit the Edge of the Wilderness Resort Area, home to more than half of Itasca County's 1,400-plus lakes and some of Minnesota's best fishing resorts.

Fox Lake Resort

32158 County Road 45
Marcell, MN 56657
218-832-3758
foxlakeresort.com
The only resort on Fox Lake offers six comfortable lakefront cabins with air conditioning, microwaves, ceiling fans. Bring your boat for excellent fishing and scenery.

Orr Pelican Lake Resort Association

P. O. Box 144
Orr, MN 55771
800-777-4690
orrpelicanlake.com
Experience world-class fishing on Pelican Lake's 12,000 acres; 54 miles of shoreline, 50 islands, resorts, motels, B&B, fishing guides, boat rentals.

Anchor Inn Resort
55960 County Road 4
Spring Lake, MN 556680
218-659-2718
anchorinnresort.com
Rated one of the best family fishing resorts in Minnesota! Explore Sand Lake and the Bowstring chain or fish Bowstring River from our new bridge.

Everett Bay Lodge on Lake Vermilion
1820 Everett Bay Road
Tower, MN 55790
800-249-3178
everettbaylodge.com
Excellent walleye, muskie, large/ smallmouth bass, perch, northern at Lake Vermilion. Cabins, boat rental, dock spaces, launch, heated pool. Fishing, families, fun!

Fortune Bay Resort Casino
1430 Bois Forte Road
Tower, MN 56623
800-555-1714
fortunebay.com
Come to Fortune Bay in northeast Minnesota. We have it all: resort, casino, golf, dining, bar, RV park, marina and direct access to Lake Vermilion!



CENTRAL

Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
206 Broadway St.
Alexandria, MN 56308
320-768-3161
vacationalexandriamn.com
Fishing in Alexandria is excellent year-round, with more than 300 lakes to choose from. Come and catch some memories that will last a lifetime.

Cragun's Resort
11000 Cragun's Drive
Brainerd, MN 56401
800-CRAGUNS
craguns.com
On Gull Lake, a family fishing favorite. Royal Karel's Guide Service, full- and half-day trips available. Full-service marina: bait, tackle, boat rental.

Gull Four Seasons Resort
4132 St. Columbo Road
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-963-7969
mnresortcabins.com
Gull Lake; affordable fishing and family resort. Boats, motors, pontoons and boat lifts. Great walleye, bass, northern pike and panfish. Cabins, condos, chalets, swimming pools.

Appeldoorn's Sunset Bay Resort
45401 Mille Lacs Parkway
Isle, MN 56342
320-676-8834
sunsetbayml.com
At Appeldoorn's Sunset Bay we offer year-round accommodations for any size group with all the luxuries. We are located on Mille Lacs Lake.

Mille Lacs Area Tourism Council
P. O. Box 286
Isle, MN 56342
millelacs.com
Lake Mille Lacs is a premier fishery only 90 miles north of the Twin Cities. Walleye, bass, northern, muskie, with lodging and recreational activities. #DoTheLake

Lake Osakis Resort Association
P. O. Box 179
Osakis, MN 56360
800-422-0785
fishosakismn.com
Lake Osakis is 6,300 acres worth of premier fishing in central Minnesota, featuring walleye, northern, large and smallmouth bass, crappie and sunfish.

Crossings Inn & Suites
211 W Main St.
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
218-338-3380
crossingsparkersprairie.com
Adjacent to the Parkers Prairie Event Center and steps from Lake Adley, the hotel is perfectly situated for all your group fishing and recreation needs.

Perham Area Chamber of Commerce
185 E. Main St.
Perham, MN 56573
218-346-7710
perham.com
Surrounded by 1,048 lakes in Otter Tail County, the Perham area makes it easy to catch walleye, bass, northern, crappie and sunfish! Visit perham.com today.

Sauk Centre Convention & Visitors Bureau
1220 Main St. S
Sauk Centre, MN 56378
855-444-SAUK
visitsaukcentre.com
Big Sauk Lake and nearby Osakis is your bass, crappie and walleye destination – easy on/off with resorts, campgrounds, hotels. Main Street shops, restaurants, trails.

Shady Rest Resort and Campground
16953 142nd St.
Villard, MN 56385
320-554-2017
shadyrestresort.com
Lake Amelia, ranked walleye lake only two hours from the Twin Cities! Wonderful lakeside cabins. Great family summer destination.

Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
2104 E. Highway 12
Willmar, MN 56201
800-845-8747
willmarlakesarea.com
Find us 90 minutes west of the Twin Cities. Home to a variety of great fishing lakes filled with walleye, northern, bass, crappie and sunfish.



SOUTHERN

Fairmont Convention and Visitors Bureau
P. O. Box 976
323 East Blue Earth Ave.
Fairmont, MN 56031
507-235-8585
visitfairmontmn.com
Fairmont, at the intersection of Highway 15 and I-90, is easily accessible. With a chain of five lakes, Fairmont is your southern Minnesota fishing destination.

Visit Winona
160 Johnson St.
Winona, MN 55987
800-657-4972
visitwinona.com
Celebrate the year of fishing in 2015. The Mississippi River area lakes and miles of trout streams offer plenty of great fishing in Winona.



MINNEAPOLIS - ST. PAUL AREA

Visit Lakeville
19950 Dodd Blvd. Suite 101
Lakeville, MN 55044
952-469-2020
visitlakeville.org
Beautiful Lake Marion boasts three fishing piers, beach, paths and picnic shelters. Fishing year-round for northern pike, crappie, sunfish, walleye, largemouth bass and yellow perch.

Waconia Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
209 S. Vine St.
Waconia, MN 55387
destinationwaconia.org
Fish Lake Waconia! Home of the 2012 Governor's Fishing Opener. Just west of the Twin Cities, our bountiful lake offers a variety of fishing year-round.

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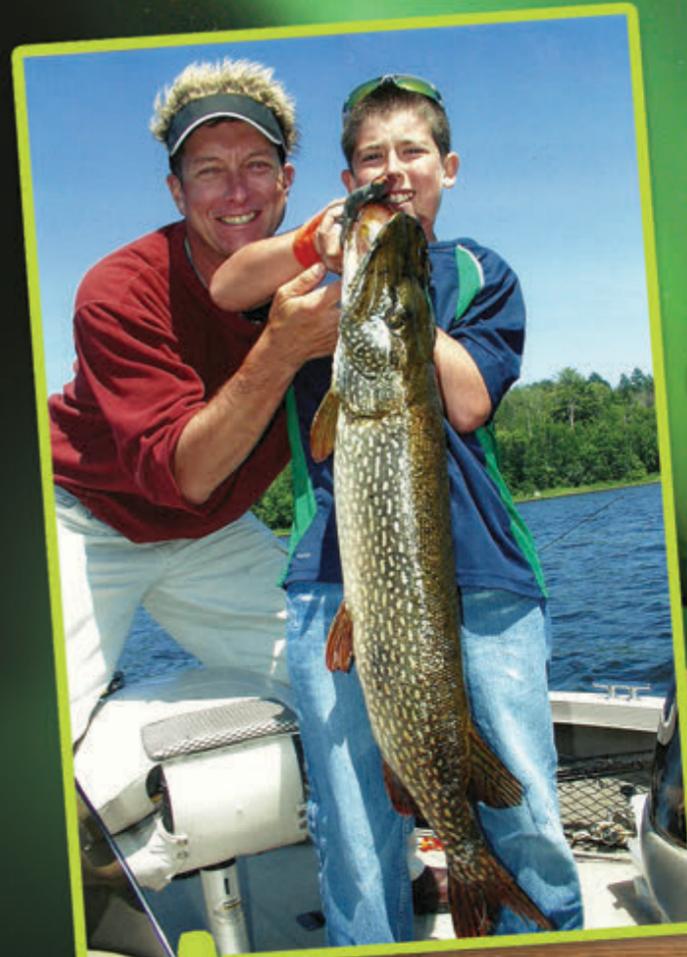
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-Tom, avid fisherman from Illinois



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