

MINNESCIA



WHERE TO FISH WHERE TO STAY LECTOR

Everything you need to know to plan the ultimate Minnesota fishing trip

INCLUDING: Boating and fishing license information, fishing seasons, ice fishing and more.

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e've never stayed at a place with such amazing service. Every time we arrived from fishing, there was always someone out there to help us with the boat. The staff took all the fish we caught, filleted them, and packaged it up for us. Not to mention that Vermilion is the best lake for fishing. We will definitely come back."

—Julia, Pehrson Lodge Guest





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EXPERIENCES BEYOND BELIEF

THIS FISHING GUIDE BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

M explore MINNESOTA

Explore Minnesota is the tourism office for the State of Minnesota. 121 Seventh Place E, Suite 360

St. Paul. MN 55101 888-VISITMN (888-847-4688)



Assistant Director Leann Kispert

Amy Barrett

Graphic Designer Melanie Graves

Minnesota's great fishing starts with its many diverse bodies of water. The moniker "Land of 10,000 Lakes" only hints at that variety. In fact, the state has more shoreline than California, Florida and Hawaii combined, and consistently ranks as one of America's top inland fishing destinations.

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 lesserknown species.

TRAVEL LISTINGS

Find your next fishing trip with these helpful listings

11 Locations Across the State

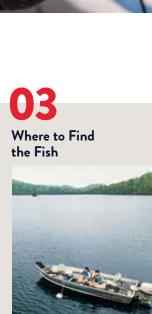
FEATURES

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Land of 10,000 Lakes

Fishing Licenses and Seasons

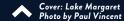
Minnesota's Fish



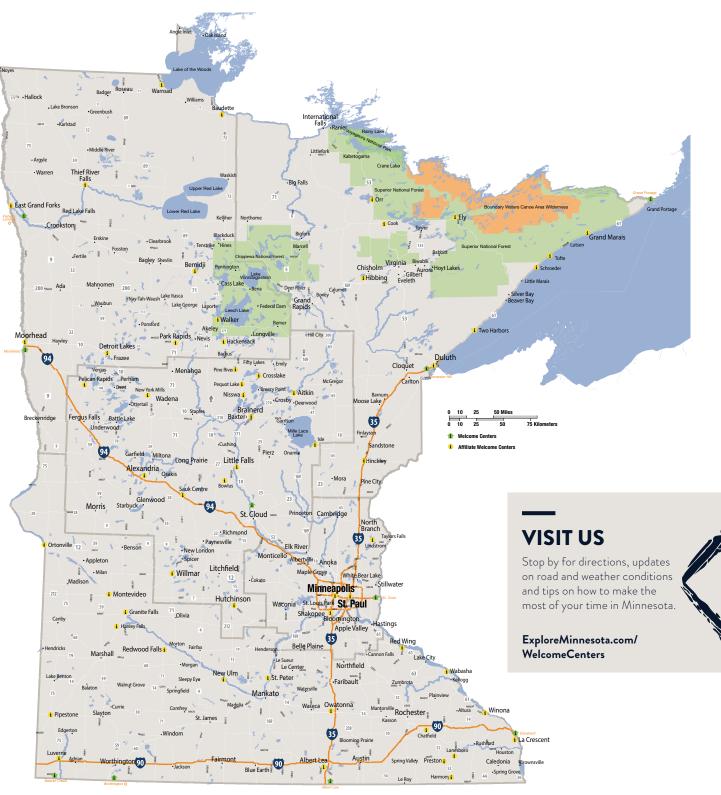
#ONLYINMN

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

ExploreMinnesota.com/Fishing



LAND OF 10,000 LAKES AND LOTS OF RIVERS



WHERE TO FIND THE FISH

With so many lakes and rivers to choose from in Minnesota, it may be hard to decide just where to go for the best fishing. Northwest Minnesota boasts the Walleye Capital of the World™ while Northeast Minnesota offers opportunities for trophy fish in the pristine Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the state's only national park. The Central Region, home to fishing legends Babe Winkelman and Al Lindner and In-Fisherman magazine, is popular for its many resorts on great

fishing lakes. Southern Minnesota can claim the state's most scenic and productive trout streams for fly fishing, and there are always plenty of great places to wet a line in the metro area, especially in the numerous Fishing in the Neighborhood ponds stocked by the DNR for its urban fishing program. In other words, you really can't go wrong. A Minnesota fishing trip in any direction will make a great vacation destination, with much to do both off and on the water.

Loon Lake - Photo by Micah Kvidt



BIG WATERS

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. Anglers in deep-V boats jig the flats and drop-offs or troll the reefs with crankbaits. Commercial launches are another way to get out on these big waters.

North Woods Lakes

The region's pine and hardwood forests are studded with thousands of large and small lakes teeming with fish. The Detroit Lakes areas dotted with hundreds of lakes offering a variety of fishing opportunities, including Detroit Lake and Lake Bemidji, which have become muskie hot spots through carefully managed stocking programs.

River Fishing

The Red River of the North, hugging the state's western border, is known for channel catfish averaging well over 10 pounds. And you can catch just about anything in the Mississippi River, which begins at Itasca State Park in Park Rapids and flows all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.







WILDERNESS WATERS

Visitors to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness along the Canadian border can paddle to secluded campsites and fish for trophy walleye and northern pike or enjoy some of the finest top-water smallmouth bass fishing in the nation. Trophy-size fish can also be found at Voyageurs National Park in International Falls.

Great Lakes

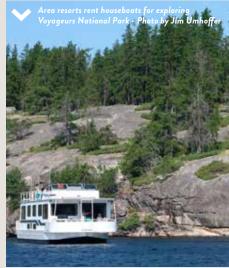
Island-studded Lake Vermilion has a reputation for big muskies, as well as large perch, walleye and bluegills. The cold, clear waters of Lake Superior, the largest freshwater lake in the world, hold native lake trout as well as stocked steelhead, chinook and coho salmon.

Stream and River Fishing

Wade into the rivers that flow to Lake Superior if you're angling for 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 for combining canoeing and fishing. For sturgeon, wet your line in the Rainy River.







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FISHING -

CENTRAL

LEGENDARY LAKES

The Brainerd Lakes area features a bounty of good fishing lakes, including Gull, Pelican, Whitefish, North Long and Round. Near Crosby, many abandoned iron-ore mines have filled with spring water and are now stocked with trout. Some also harbor monster pike and smallmouth bass. Lake Mille Lacs, the second largest lake in Minnesota, is a haven for smallmouth bass, muskies, walleyes, perch, northern pike and other species.

More than 1,000 lakes fall within the boundaries of Otter Tail County alone, including Otter Tail and Clitherall near Fergus Falls. Well-known glacial lakes include Lake Minnewaska next to Glenwood, and Le Homme Dieu, Carlos, Darling, Ida and Osakis near Alexandria. Muskie hot spots, the result of carefully managed stocking programs, include Lake Miltona and West Battle Lake.

Popular lakes near St. Cloud include Rice, Koronis, Clearwater, Cedar, Sylvia and Pleasant. There is another large cluster of lakes in the countryside around Willmar, including Big Kandiyohi and Green Lake.







FISHING HEATS UP IN THE COLD In Minnesota, the fishing stays hot even in the ice (power augers help!), drop in

after the lakes freeze over. Just drill a hole 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.

Ice fishing on Prior Lake
Photo by Sunny Augustine

On a beautiful winter day, you can fish out in the open under a vast blue sky. Or, for shelter from the cold and wind, fish from inside a cozy hut. Some resorts rent ice houses, which range from basic to downright homey with bunks and cook stoves. Resort staff can often provide you with gear and basic instruction, too.

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 for the latest information about ice thickness and safety (mndnr.gov). To find listings of fish house rentals, or winter festivals with ice fishing contests and related activities, call 888-VISITMN (888-847-4866) or go to exploreminnesota.com.

METRO

MINNESOTA AND MISSISSIPPI RIVERS

The biggest fish in this region come from the rivers and streams. The Minnesota River and its major tributaries, for example, hold some monstrous flathead catfish. Big walleyes are plentiful in Big Stone Lake, at the headwaters of the Minnesota River near Ortonville.

The main action is on the Mississippi River, which has an abundance of walleyes, saugers, smallmouth bass and catfish. One of the most popular fishing holes is Lake Pepin, a widening of the river at Lake City. White bass are common in the lake, and when schools smash baitfish at the surface, fishing can be furious.

Trout Streams

Have a fly rod? The spring-fed streams that riffle through the picturesque 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 River and upper reaches of the Root River.

BIG RIVERS, BIG FISH

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.

Urban Lakes

In metro area lakes, you can catch muskies, walleyes and largemouth bass over five pounds. Lake Minnetonka and Lake Waconia, west of Minneapolis, have long had the reputation as great bass lakes, and now they have muskies, too.

Stocked and Loaded

About 30 Twin Cities area lakes are stocked with 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.







Find stocked ponds that will increase your chance of catching fish.

MNdnr.gov/Fishing/Fin











EXPLOREMINNESOTA.COM/FISHING

FISHING LICENSES AND SEASONS

MINNESOTA FISHING LICENSES

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

Fishing licenses are valid March 1 through Feb. 28 of the following year.

Resident

Youth age 16 and 17:

Individual (age 18 and older)	\$25
Individual 24-hour	\$12
Combination (married couple)	\$40
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	\$36
Individual seven-day	\$43
Combination (married couple) 14-day	\$54
Family (husband, wife, children under 16)	\$68
Trout-salmon stamp	
(not required with 24-hour license)	\$10

BOATING INFO

Boat, canoe and kayak licenses required: All boats, canoes and kayaks (unless non-motorized and 9 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).





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 illegal 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.







MINNESOTA FISHING SEASONS

Seasons effective March 1, 2022, to Feb. 28, 2023. Check with the DNR for later dates and details, particularly for border waters, which often have different rules.

Trout in streams

Jan. 1-April 15: Catch and release only in southeastern Minnesota*

April 16-Sept. 14: Harvest season in southeastern Minnesota

Sept. 15-Oct. 15: Catch and release only in southeastern Minnesota

April 16-Sept. 30: 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, and May 14-Sept. 30: Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) lakes

Jan. 15-March 31, and May 14-Sept. 30: Remainder of state

Stream trout in lakes

May 14-Oct. 31; for winter, see lake trout

Walleye, sauger, northern pike: May 14, 2022-Feb. 26, 2023

Largemouth and smallmouth bass in northeast**

May 14, 2022-Feb. 26, 2023: Harvest season

Remainder of state:

May 14-27: Catch and release for largemouth and smallmouth

May 28, 2022-Feb. 26, 2023: Regular harvest season for largemouth

May 28-Sept. 11: Regular harvest season for small mouth

Sept. 12, 2022-Feb. 26, 2023: Catch and release only for smallmouth

**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 4-Dec. 1

Flathead catfish

April 1-Nov. 30

Lake sturgeon

See DNR fishing regulations for specifics.

Sunfish, crappie, perch, 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 at mndnr.gov/fishing.

I can— FISH! Minnesota State Parks and Trails' "I Can Fish!" programs are all about the thrill of learning to catch fish—and kids (under age 18) fish for free with a registered adult. Programs cover all of the basics, taught by experienced anglers, and are designed for first-time anglers and

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.



Fish for free during "Take a Kid Fishing Weekend." One weekend every June, 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, contact the DNR at 888-665-4236, or visit **mndnr.gov/takeakidfishing**.



QUESTIONS?

888-MINN-DNR (888-646-6367) 651-296-6157 info.dnr@state.mn.us | mndnr.gov

LakeFinder mobile website: MNdnr.gov/Mobile/Lakefinder

MINNESOTA'S **FISH**

Beneath Minnesota's 10,000 lakes and many rivers lurk more than 100 species of fish that just might bite if you drop them a line. Allow us to introduce you to a few, with some tips on how to hook them.



WALLEYE FAMILY

Where to find 'em: Northern Minnesota (Baudette, on Lake of the Woods, calls itself the Walleye Capitol of the World).

Why catch 'em: They make some tasty eating.

How to hook 'em: Troll live-bait rigs or crankbaits on weed lines and rocky reefs or bounce jigs along the bottom of a swift-flowing river.

Fun fact: The walleye is Minnesota's state fish.



MUSKELLUNGE AND NORTHERN PIKE

Where to find 'em: Throughout the state, from the backwaters of the

Mississippi to the wilderness lakes of canoe country

Why catch 'em: These lunkers are exciting to reel in.

How to hook 'em: They'll hit on both live bait and artificial lures. Just keep casting and trolling.

Fun fact: A widespread catch-and-release effort lets muskies get large — sometimes more than 50 pounds!



PANFISH

Where to find 'em: Most Minnesota lakes.

Why catch 'em: Panfish are easy for kids and other beginning anglers to catch.

How to hook 'em: Put a worm on a hook, cast your line to the edge of a deep weed line and wait until your bobber dips.

Fun fact: Jumbo yellow perch, some weighing more than a pound, can be found in the bigger lakes and some say nothing's finer in the pan, not even walleye.



SUBSCRIBE

Get weekly updates on what's biting in each Minnesota region.

ExploreMinnesota.com/Newsletters



LARGEMOUTH AND **SMALLMOUTH BASS**

Where to find 'em: Lakes and rivers across the state

Why catch 'em: They're known for jolting strikes and spirited leaps. You'll find no harder-fighting fish in freshwater.

How to hook 'em: Work the weed lines with plastic worms. Run spinnerbaits through the shallows, or row a boat along the lily pads and throw topwater plugs.

Fun fact: Bass are so plentiful that nearly 100 of Minnesota's lakes are named Bass Lake.



TROUT AND SALMON

Where to find 'em: Rainbow, brook and brown trout swim in the riffling 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.

Why catch 'em: The sheer pleasure of fishing in beautiful settings.

How to hook 'em: Grab your fly rod, put on some waders and, when you bait your hook, try to "match the hatch," as the

Fun fact: 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.



CATFISH AND BULLHEADS

Where to find 'em: The Red River of the North offers

the best chance of catching a 20-pound channel catfish; bullheads, the smaller cousins to catfish, can be found in lakes throughout central and southern Minnesota.

Why catch 'em: The fishing doesn't have to stop when the sun goes down, because catfish are active at night.

How to hook 'em: Catfish often hang out near the bottom of flats and sandbars, so a slip-sinker rig is a good choice. Truth be told, bullfish are often caught "by accident" when trying for something else.

Fun fact: Flathead cats of the state's slow-moving southern rivers sometimes exceed 50 pounds.



CENTRAL MINNESOTA

ALEXANDRIA

Explore Alexandria

explorealex.com • 320-763-0102 • 324 Broadway St. Suite 101, Alexandria, MN 56308 Discover a hidden gem in Minnesota Lakes country! The Alexandria Lakes Area boasts over 350 lakes where you can cast lines for numerous fish species.

Gull Four Seasons Resort

mnresortcabins.com • 218-963-7969 • 4132 St. Columbo Road, Brainerd, MN 56401 Great fishing, boat and pontoon rentals, guides. Walleye, bass, northern pike, panfish. Affordable vacations on beautiful Gull Lake. Indoor and outdoor pools, beach, reunion facilities.

Perham Area Chamber of Commerce

perham.com • 218-346-7710 • 185 E. Main St., Perham, MN 56573 . Surrounded by 1,048 lakes in Otter Tail County alone, Perham has something for everyone. Shop. Fish. Relax. And then do it all over again!

Willmar Lakes Area CVB

willmarlakesarea.com • 320-235-3552 • 2104 E. Highway 12, Willmar, MN 56201 Find great year-round fishing in the Willmar Lakes Area. Home to a variety of excellent fishing lakes filled with walleye, northern, bass, crappie and sunfish.

NORTHEAST MINNESOTA

Pehrson Lodge Resort

pehrsonlodge.com • 218-666-5478 • 2746 Vermilion Drive, Cook, MN 55723 Legendary Lake Vermilion fishery. New lodge, beautiful lakeside cabins, magnificent setting. Expansive boat fleet, harbor service, natural sand beach, pet-friendly cabins, spring/fall rates.

LaTourell's Resort & Outfitters

latourells.com • 218-365-4531 • P.O. Box 239, Ely, MN 55731

Boundary Waters wilderness fishing. Offering cabin-based boat fishing and canoe-camping fishing trips from our unique lakeside location at the end of the road.

GRAND MARAIS

Gunflint Lodge & Outfitters

gunflint.com • 800-388-4477 • 143 S. Gunflint Lake, Grand Marais, MN 55604 Legendary Gunflint Lodge bordering Canada and the BWCAW. Cabins feature fireplaces, kitchens, saunas. Lakeside restaurant. Fishing guides available to Saganaga/Seagull - home to Minnesota's record walleye.

visitcookcounty.com • 218-387-2524 • 116 W. Highway 61, Grand Marais, MN 55604 From the shores of Lake Superior, a canoe in the BWCAW, a charter boat or a cozy ice shack, you'll love fishing in Cook County.

INTERNATIONAL FALLS

International Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau

rainylake.org • 218-283-9400 • 301 2nd Ave., International Falls, MN 56649 Walleye, smallmouth bass, crappie, northern pike and sturgeon are all popular game fish on Rainy Lake and Rainy River here in "Minnesota's Vacation Paradise."

SPRING LAKE

Anchor Inn Resort

anchorinnresort.com • 218-659-2718 • 55960 County Road 4, Spring Lake, MN 56680 Legendary walleye, northern, bass, crappie and panfish fishing on Sand, Little Sand, Rice Lake and Bowstring River. Cabins, lodge, tent and RV sites. Boat launch available.

Everett Bay Lodge on Lake Vermilion

everettbaylodge.com • 218-753-5115 • 1820 Everett Bay Road, Tower, MN 55790 Come experience excellent walleye, muskie, bass, northern and perch fishing on Lake Vermilion Fully equipped modern cabins, boat rental, dock with electric, launch, heated pool and more. Fishing, families, fun!

NORTHWEST MINNESOTA

Lake of the Woods Tourism

lakeofthewoodsmn.com • 218-634-1174 • P.O. Box 518, Baudette, MN 56623 Fish the famous waters! The Walleye Capital of the World provides four seasons of world-class fishing, full-service resorts, fish houses, charters and guides.

Kohl's Resort of Bemidji

kohlsresort.com • 218-243-2131 • 15707 Big Turtle Drive NE, Bemidji, MN 56601 Located on Big Turtle Lake. Nestled in the Buena Vista State Forest. Enjoy onsite food and beer at Liar's Lounge. Boats and guides available.

DETROIT LAKES

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

Hackensack Chamber of Commerce

hackensackchamber.com • 218-675-6135 • P.O. Box 373, Hackensack, MN 56452 Hackensack is situated on the shores of Birch Lake with 127 lakes within a 10-mile radius. We have great fishing both winter and summer.

Timber Trails Resort

timbertrailsresort.com • 218-566-2376 • 3014 S. Boy Lake Drive NE, Remer, MN 56672 In the Chippewa National Forest, Big Boy Lake has 3,400 acres and 26 miles of shoreline. Walleye, northern, bass and crappie are abundant. Cabins and campsites.

Leech Lake Chamber of Commerce

leech-lake.com • 218-547-1313 • 201 Minnesota Ave. E., Walker, MN 56484 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.

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL

LAKEVILLE

Visit Lakeville

visitlakeville.org • 952-469-2020 • 19950 Dodd Blvd. #101, Lakeville, MN 55044 Fish year-round at Lake Marion, Valley or Orchard for northern pike, crappie, sunfish and largemouth bass! Enjoy swimming beaches, boating, trails and picnic shelters.

SOUTHERN MINNESOTA

LAKE CITY

visitlakecity.org • 651-345-4123 • 100 E Lyon Ave., Lake City, MN 55041 Experience Lake City, home of the 2021 Walleye World Championship. Discover phenomenal shore-fishing and multiple public launches on majestic Lake Pepin for world-class freshwater angling.

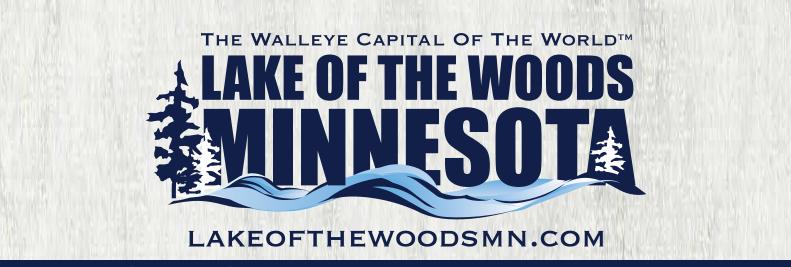


FIND MORE

For more information on resorts, campgrounds and other places to stay.

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GREAT

ExploreAlex.com

