

A Stroll Back in Time

Take a stroll through time and explore the culture and heritage of Western Minnesota's Native Prairie.

*Four-day itinerary for spring, summer, and fall.

*For best accommodations, groups of less than 25 are recommended.

DAY ONE:

9:30 – 10:00 am

All aboard! First stop...the Canby Depot. See how this once booming railroad town has revitalized its train depot. Get a historic feeling for the town by browsing through old photos and memorabilia.

10:00 – 11:00am

Just up the road is the beautiful Lund-Hoel House Museum. This 15 room, Victorian style home that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places was built in 1891 and has been restored with most of its original furnishings. Picturesque balconies, beautiful stained glass, etched glass and curved glass windows are all highlights of the home, which is nestled inside a unique stone fence with the original iron gates.

11:00 – 12:00pm

Lunch in Canby at selected restaurant.

1:00 – 3:00

Agriculture, one of the most important dynamics in the history of Western Minnesota, unfolds at Minnesota's Machinery Museum in Hanley Falls. Take a close look at the tools and implements used for farming at the turn of the century, explore rooms of farm homes and general stores all to help you better understand the life that many lived on the prairie.

3:30 – 4:30pm

Continue your education on agricultural history by heading to the city of Granite Falls and visiting the home of former U.S. Congressman Andrew J. Volstead. Known as the co-author of the Capper-Volstead Act that established farmer cooperatives, Volstead was also the co-author of the 1920 Prohibition Act.

4:30 – 6:30pm

Check into Super 8 Motel in Granite Falls. Dinner at selected restaurant.

6:30 – 7:30pm

Take an evening drive down the Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway to Upper Sioux Agency State Park. View the location of the original Upper Sioux, or Yellow Medicine, Agency that served as a distribution point as well as an attempt to convert the Dakota people's assimilation into white society.

DAY TWO:

8:30 – 10:00am

Your morning travels take you to the Swensson Farm Museum just east of Montevideo. A self-taught scholar, Olaf Swensson built this 22-room, turn of the century brick farm home with a 38x38 chapel situated on the second story.

10:30 – 12:00pm

Step back into time and see how pioneer settlers lived, worked and played at Historic Chippewa City in Montevideo. This late 1800's replication of a pioneer village includes authentic log cabins, a 1914 hearse, and other replicated buildings.

12:00 – 3:00pm

Enjoy lunch at a select restaurant and explore downtown Montevideo.

3:00 – 4:00pm

Receive a tour of the restored Milwaukee Railroad Heritage Center Depot adjacent to downtown Montevideo. Browse through memorabilia and view the restored turntable.

4:00 – 6:30pm

Check into the Country Inn & Suites and enjoy dinner at select restaurant.

6:30 – 7:30pm

Take a short drive west of town to visit the Camp Release Monument. Erected by the State of Minnesota in 1894 to commemorate the release of 259 captives during the U.S.-Dakota Conflict, this was the first State Park in Minnesota.

DAY THREE:

8:30 – 9:30am

Along the shores of Lac qui Parle Lake your tour takes you to the site where the first church bell rang in Minnesota, Lac qui Parle Mission. View the reconstructed mission and hike the walking trails that interpret the site where many Dakota people had their first contact with Euro American culture. Ring the church bell and hear echoes of the past!

10:00 – 11:30pm

Velkommen to the town of Milan! Deep in Scandinavian roots, Milan proudly displays its history at the Arv Hus Museum. View a unique collection of vintage photographs and other pioneer items from the culturally rich Milan area. If time allows, visit the traditional Norwegian Stabbur east of Milan.

12:00 – 1:00pm

Enjoy lunch at a select restaurant in Madison.

1:00 – 2:30pm

Receive a guided tour of Madison's historic downtown. Visit the newly reconstructed Lac qui Parle County courthouse, city hall and National Guard Armory.

2:30 – 4:00pm

Take a look into the area's literary history by visiting the former writing study of Madison native, Robert Bly an internationally renowned poet and best selling author. Bly's study and other artifacts are showcased at the Lac qui Parle County Historic Center in Madison.

4:30 – 6:30pm

Check into Econo Lodge motel in Ortonville.

6:30 – 7:30pm

Dinner at selected restaurant.

DAY FOUR:

9:00 – 10:00am

Start the morning off by taking a stroll through Ortonville's downtown district. Take note of the numerous buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places including the Ortonville Commercial Historic District in the vicinity of 2nd St, Madison Avenue and Monroe Avenue.

10:00 – 11:00am

Head to the top of the hill to the Big Stone County Historic Society and get a beautiful view of Big Stone Lake. The museum gives visitors a look back into the rich history of Big Stone Lake and is home to the Muskegon, one of the first tour boats used on Big Stone Lake at the turn-of-the-century.

12:00 – 1:00pm

Lunch at selected restaurant in Benson.

1:00 – 2:00pm

Your afternoon travels begin at the Swift County Historical Society Museum in Benson. Here you will get a deeper look into the lives of pioneer settlers in Western Minnesota. View an original log cabin that was built on the prairie in this area in 1871.

2:30 – 3:00pm

Your last stop on your historic tour of Western Minnesota Prairie Waters is at the Kerkhoven Civic Center. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the museum exhibits the early days of Swift County and pioneer life.

For more information or help on planning your tour contact Western Minnesota Prairie Waters toll-free at 1.866.866.5432 or by e-mail at Rebecca.Jackson@UMVRDC.org. Additional information on Western Minnesota Prairie Waters can be viewed online at www.prairiewaters.com.