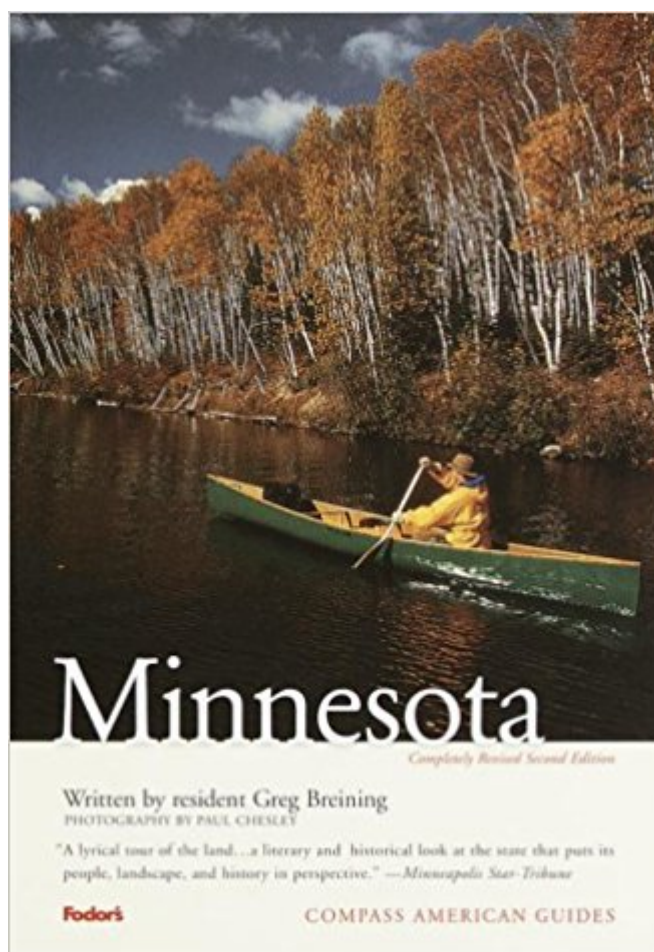


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Compass American Guides: Minnesota, 2nd Edition (Full-color Travel Guide)



Synopsis

Compass Minnesota 2nd ed."The most literate and elegant series of guides ever written about North America." -- Maine in Print
Created by local writers and photographers, Compass American Guides are the ultimate insider's guides, providing in-depth coverage of the history, culture and character of America's most spectacular destinations. Covering everything there is to see and do as well as choice lodging and dining, these gorgeous full-color guides are perfect for new and longtime residents as well as vacationers who want a deep understanding of the region they're visiting. Outstanding color photography, plus a wealth of archival images
Topical essays and literary extracts
Detailed color maps
Great ideas for things to see and do
Capsule reviews of hotels and restaurants

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Customer Reviews

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LANDSCAPE AND HISTORYIn Northern Minnesota, somewhere north of Hibbing in a forest of conifers and aspen near County Road 5, lies a spot at once prosaic and remarkable. Here, at a point unmarked and for practical purposes inexact, a falling raindrop has an equal chance of draining east through a maze of tributaries to the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean, north to Hudson bay, or south down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. Because of this confluence of major divides, historian William E. Lass calls Minnesota "mother of three seas." I've never heard the phrase elsewhere, even though I'm a life-long Minnesotan. But we'd do well to adopt it. It's a beautiful metaphor and symbolizes as well as anything the crossroads of geology, geography, landscapes, people, and cultures that make Minnesota the diverse state that it is today.

Prairie Path of the Southwest and Red River ValleyOnce a seemingly endless grassland roamed by bison and Dakotas on horseback; the Southwest is now Minnesota's richest farmland. Historic towns, monuments, and parks tell the tales of pioneers and their efforts to homestead on the prairie.

Southeastern Hills and Mississippi RiverPassed over by the last ice age, southeastern Minnesota is carved by deep river valleys. Picturesque towns from the 1800s sit in the shadows of limestone bluffs. Quick waters provide trout fishing and pleasant canoe trips. Trails and country roads make for pleasant bike routes.

MinneapolisLook to Minneapolis for its hustle and bustle, big business, and lively nightlife. Stroll the city's many lakeside parks or tour the remnants of its milling days. This is truly one of America's most "civilized" cities -- friendly, safe, and clean.

St. PaulBorn of the trade and exploration along the Mississippi River, Minneapolis and St. Paul grew up as rivals, each with its own character and sense of itself. Visit St. Paul, the state's capital, for historic sites such as the Landmark Center and the James J. Hill House, and for Victorian neighborhoods, intimate old bars, and ethnic restaurants.

St. Croix River ValleyOnce the heart of Minnesota's white-pine logging industry, the St. Croix River Valley is today known for its natural beauty. The river was one of the nation's first designated wild and scenic rivers. Towns such as Stillwater and Taylors Falls are among the state's oldest and most picturesque.

North Shore and the ArrowheadLake Superior has a powerful presence. People visit the rugged North Shore for the crashing surf, tumultuous streams and waterfalls, and brilliant fall color. In the arrowhead-shaped tip of northeastern Minnesota lie the famous Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the Mesabi Range, which provided the iron that built early 20th-century America.

Northern ReachesThis is bog country where

the landscape consists of vast, wet flatlands. The Northwest Angle, the northernmost point of the contiguous United States, juts into the enormous Lake of the Woods -- a sportsman's paradise. Glacial Lakes When Minnesotans want to get away they "go to the lake," often a cabin tucked away among central Minnesota's glacial hills and sparkling lakes. The region caters to folks on vacation, whether they fish, ride bikes, or play golf. Of historic interest are the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

I got this book because it was one of the few available for the MN area. I was going to the Twin Cities, and I found the section on that area decidedly lacking in information. It had far less information than a standard AAA guidebook. The tradeoff is the rich history and the beautiful photography, which are what this book is touted for. I usually prefer more practical information such as prices, hours, time to allow for an attraction, guides to good shopping and dining areas, etc., and this book did not deliver on those fronts. If you want an in-depth and beautifully done history, though, this book is a good choice. If you are a stranger to the area, you definitely have to pair this with a more practical guidebook (like AAA). I'm still looking for a good one for the Twin Cities area.

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