

amounts of freight up and down the Mississippi. Tows comprised of 12 to 15 barges totaling 20,000 tons of freight are quite common.

The largest tonnage items moved on the river are petroleum products: gasoline, kerosene, fuel oil and lubricating oil headed upriver from the oil fields of Texas and Louisiana. Enormous shipments of coal are also headed upriver, mainly from the coal fields of central and southern Illinois and western Kentucky.

Grain—corn, wheat, oats, barley and rye—is the principal product shipped downriver. Loaded onto barges from river-side elevators, the grain is shipped downstream, much of it going to New Orleans where it is loaded aboard ocean freighters for overseas destinations.



and dam sites were built between 1930 and 1940. Ten of those sites are located along Wisconsin's Great River Road between Dickeyville in the south and Prescott in the north.

Each dam pools the water above it to a navigable depth. Locks, adjacent to each dam, alternately lift vessels to upstream pools or lower them to downstream pools. Most of the locks in the system are the same size: 110' x 600'. The height that a vessel is lifted or lowered varies from 5.5 feet to 49.2 feet. They are all gravity powered and are fascinating to watch.

In effect, the lock and dam system acts as steps along the river. In the 669 miles between St. Paul and St. Louis, the locks and dams lower the river through about 420 feet of elevation.

The system of 27 locks and dams on the Upper

In the early 17th century, French explorers and missionaries were among the first Europeans to view the area — men like Jean Nicolet, Fr. James Marquette and Louis Joliet. French fur traders followed. By 1650, they were doing a brisk business with area Indians. Spring and summer “rendezvous” at Prairie du Chien and La Crosse brought thousands of beaver, muskrat and raccoon pelts to be bartered for iron axes, tinware, glass beads and colorful cloth. Fur trade continued for the next two centuries, with the river serving as the means to transport the goods to market.

An aerial photograph of a large cargo ship, the 'Pushin' freight up the big river,' navigating a wide river. The ship is long and narrow, with a white hull and a dark upper section. It is surrounded by lush green banks and other smaller boats in the distance.

Boats docked at
 133/81 & Iowa
 only Fri. Sat &
 Sun. 10:00 a.m. till
 5:00 p.m. daily
 715/442-5162
 Stockholm, WI 54769
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STOCKHOLM
 Spout of Lake City
 The function group
 departing at noon.
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PRAIRIE DU CHIEN
 Departs from Riverside Park
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 cruises and day-trip cruises, many out-

[illegible]

 Lakes are low and flat between along the river. The Mississippi provides plenty of boating, fishing and swimming. Many river communities also built municipal swimming pools. The location of swimming pools and river beaches are noted in the accompanying Great River Road narrative.

 In some areas, river bluffs rise more than 500 feet above the Mississippi. Towns were built on the narrow banks between the bluffs and the water. As a result, many river towns are only one or two blocks from the water. Picknickers pause in silent appreciation as the looks and way-sides high atop the river bluffs. Fisherman casts for striped bass. From scenic out-As you round a crescent river bend a solitary evening meal.

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GREAT RIVER ROAD



The "La Crosse Queen." Tourism staff photo by Gary Knowles



Fishin' is great all along the river! Tourism Photo File



La Crosse Jazz Festival. Tourism staff photo by Stan Solheim



Ride the mine train at the Platteville Mining Museum. Tourism Photo File



Stonefield Village, Cassville. Bob Granlatten, SHS



Golf Wisconsin! Tourism Photo File



"Wisconsin . . . You're Among Friends! Tourism staff photo by Gary Knowles



Mississippi sandbars — a boater's delight! Tourism staff photo by Gary Knowles

WISCONSIN'S GREAT RIVER ROAD



Follow one of the world's truly great rivers as it rambles along Wisconsin's western border carving frontier history and river-city charm from its bluffs of Mississippi limestone.

This is the Upper Mississippi. Distinctly different than it's lower half, it's as relaxing and beautiful as the Lower Mississippi is commercial and bustling. Take your time. Stop often. There's plenty to see and enjoy.

The tour description that follows begins at the southern end of Wisconsin's Great River Road and heads north. Your tour may run north-to-south; or begin and end anywhere along the route. The information in this brochure allows you to design your own, personalized excursion.

1 DICKEYVILLE — In Wisconsin's southwest corner, at the intersection of Hwys. 151 and 61, lies Dickeyville, home of the **Dickeyville Grotto**. The shrine was constructed by Father Mathias Wernerus from colorful bits of stone, glass and shells gathered from throughout the world. Wernerus paid tribute to his God and country in this unusual piece of folk art. The grotto is open year 'round.

For an interesting side trip off the Great River Road, follow Hwy. 151 northeast from Dickeyville into Lafayette and Iowa Counties.

Stop in Platteville where attractions include tours of the old Beavis Lead Mine and Rollo Jamison Museum. The University of Wisconsin-Platteville hosts an excellent summer Shakespeare Festival and is also the site of the Chicago Bears' spring training camp.

Traveling further along Hwy. 151, stop in Belmont, site of Wisconsin's first capital. Visit Pendarvis in Mineral Point, a Wisconsin State Historical Site preserving the heritage of the Cornish miners who were among the state's first settlers. Be sure to visit House on the Rock, one of Wisconsin's premier attractions near Dodgeville, and Frank Lloyd Wright's "Taliesin" near Spring Green, a world-class architectural treasure.

2 TENNYSON — Back on the Great River Road, follow Hwy. 61 north from Dickeyville to Tennyson, (originally named "Dutch Hollow"), one of a dozen communities that grew up 150 years ago around more than 10,000 hand-dug lead mines that operated in the area. The region produced virtually all of the lead shot for the Northern forces during the Civil War.

3 POTOSI — From Tennyson follow Hwy. 61 north to Hwy. 133 to Potosi, the "Cathfish Capital of Wisconsin." You can't get lost in Potosi. The town has just one street (Main Street) — and it's three miles long! For more mining history, check with the **St. John Lead Mine** for a self-guided tour of 40 local sites dating back to the 1827 "lead rush". Tour the mine, which is thought to be the oldest in the state. It was hand-dug and worked by Indians before the first settlers arrived. The mine is open daily May through October.

Two miles south of Potosi, just off Hwy. 133, is the **Grant River Recreation Area & Park**. Administered by the Army Corps of Engineers, it includes a well-developed, modern campground open Mid-April through Mid-October.

4 CASSVILLE — Follow Hwy. 133 west to Cassville, the site of **Stonefield Village** and **Nelson Dewey State Park**. Cassville was the site of the first territorial legislature of Wisconsin and was an important steamboat center. Today, Cassville boasts a large swimming pool, a beautiful river park and a marina. If you've never ridden on a car ferry, now is the time. The **Cassville Car Ferry** is the fun way to cross the Mississippi — and return for more great touring along

Wisconsin's Great River Road! The ferry operates May through October.

Just north of Cassville on Cty. VV lies **Stonefield Village**, a replica of an 1890s frontier village operated by costumed guides from the State Historical Society. The village features horsedrawn carriages and a beautiful covered bridge. Open daily May through October, the complex includes five original buildings from the Nelson Dewey homestead, home of Wisconsin's first governor. Just across the street, wooded family campsites and spectacular river bluffs are available at **Nelson Dewey State Park**, open year 'round.

Continue north on Cty. VV to Duncan Road, then turn west to the **Eagle Nature Preserve**. The preserve is a haven for migrating eagles. In mid-winter, nearly 1,000 eagles roost on the nearby islands in the Mississippi.

5 BAGLEY — Follow Cty. VV north taking in spectacular views of the Mississippi River and the bluffs and hollows of its shoreline. At Cty. A turn northwest to Bagley, a robust river town with large campgrounds on either end of the village.

6 WYALUSING — Follow Cty. X to the Village of Wyalusing offering an excellent sand beach in the village park along the river.

Just north of Wyalusing, be sure to visit **Wyalusing State Park**, open year 'round. Here you can enjoy excellent camping facilities, hiking trails and picnic grounds. Watch for wild turkeys, turkey vultures, eagles and migratory birds as well as deer, raccoon and opossum in this 2700-acre park. Huge Indian mounds line the Sentinel Ridge Walk and from a cliff overlook you can observe the confluence of two magnificent rivers, the Mississippi and the Wisconsin. Hiking trails lead to interesting rock formations and canyons. There is a marked canoe route that winds through ten miles of river islands.

7 PRAIRIE DU CHIEN — Follow Cty. X to Cty. C to Hwy. 18 west through Bridgeport to Prairie du Chien. Stop at the **Wisconsin Tourism Information Center** to learn about the area's attractions. The center is open May through October.

Prairie du Chien is the second-oldest settlement in Wisconsin, (second only to Green Bay). In the early 19th century, the American Fur Trading Company built the sturdy stone warehouses which still survive on historic **St. Feriole Island**. Remnants of the old American Fort, built to protect this outpost, also survive.

Fabulous fur fortunes were made in the area. One such fortune built **Villa Louis**, an 1870s mansion built by Wisconsin's first millionaire, Hercules Dousman. The villa is an opulent Victorian estate with one of the nation's finest collections of Victorian decorative arts. It is now owned and operated by the State Historical Society and is open daily May through October.

Behind Villa Louis, along the river bank, enjoy the **St. Feriole Island Railroad** — where a variety of boardwalk shops fill restored rail cars. Nearby, **Lawler Park** offers delightful river walks and an excellent swimming beach. The island also boasts a fine 80-slip marina.

See medical history from the 1800s and an exhibit of medical quackery at the **Fort Crawford Medical Museum**. Open May through October the museum houses relics of 19th century medicine in Wisconsin including displays of Indian herbal remedies, an old-fashioned drug store, dentist and doctor's office.

Take a tour of the town in a horse and carriage from **J & D Livery**. Or, view the Mississippi River aboard local excursion boats which operate from Memorial Day through October.

For a subterranean sidetrip, follow Hwy. 60 east to Wauzeka and the Kickapoo Indian Caverns. Open mid-May through October, the caverns are the largest underground caves in Wisconsin and once sheltered local Indians. They were re-discovered by lead miners in the 1800s.

8 LYNXVILLE — From Wauzeka, travel Cty. N west to return to the Great River Road. Drive north along Hwy. 35 to Lynxville, once a busy rail center. Watch the river traffic pass through **Lock and Dam No. 9**.

For another interesting side trip, follow Hwy. 171 east to Gays Mills. This is apple country and you'll soon find yourself surrounded by orchards. The best times to visit Gays Mills are in the spring for the blossoms and in the fall for the apples. The city celebrates both with appropriate festivals. Stop at the Log Cabin Village, open May through October, to tour a collection of original historic buildings from the area.

Follow Hwy. 131 northeast to **Soldiers Grove**, a solar-powered community. In 1978, a disastrous flood destroyed the village. Afterwards, the business district was relocated and an energy-efficient community was created using solar power. At **Solar Town Center**, all of the buildings are designed to capture at least 50 percent of their heat from the sun.

9 FERRYVILLE — Retrace your steps to the Great River Road and continue north on Hwy. 35 to Ferryville, the longest one-street village in the world. The village clings to the bluffs along the river, leaving barely enough room for Hwy. 35 and the railroad tracks. For a special treat, stop and sample some of Wisconsin's famous cheese at the **Ferryville Cheese Factory**.

10 DESOTO — This tiny village has the distinction of being located in two counties and is named for the famous Spanish explorer Fernando DeSoto, the first European to see the Mississippi River.

North of DeSoto and just south of the Village of Victory on Hwy. 35, visit **Blackhawk Park**. Operated by the Army Corps of Engineers, the park has direct access to the main channel of the river and is open year 'round.

11 VICTORY — Just north of the park, the village of Victory is the site of the decisive battle of the Black Hawk War of 1832 in which Chief Black Hawk and his band of Fox and Sac Indians were defeated. Zachary Taylor, Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis all served in the war as young army officers.

At the mouth of the Bad Ax River about three miles north of Victory, you can tour the rearing ponds of a National Fish Hatchery.

12 GENOA — A village of 283, Genoa was originally named Bad Ax. But in 1868, Italian immigrants rechristened the town in honor of Christopher Columbus. On the south side of the village, visitors can see **Lock & Dam No. 8** from a viewer platform. Nearby, a wayside park offers a scenic overlook and a historical marker describes the navigational lock and dam system. Genoa is the home port of several commercial fishing operations and two fresh fish markets. Two miles north of Genoa, **Old Settlers Overlook** allows you to drive to the top of the bluffs and view the river from your auto. Three states are visible; Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Picnic tables, grills, water, toilets and a shelter house make this a fine rest stop.

13 STODDARD — The town was originally located inland from the main river channel along the sandy delta of Coon Creek. However, the construction of the Genoa Lock and Dam in 1937 flooded 18,000 acres of delta farmland and brought the river to Stoddard. The village of 760 offers a fine river beach at Stoddard Park as well as a marina and campground.

As a short side trip, follow Hwy. 162 east from Stoddard through Chasaburg to Coon Valley, home of Norskedalen, a 350-acre arboretum offering a historic glimpse of the lives of the area's Norwegian pioneers. Costumed volunteers guide you through a museum, cultural center, blacksmith shop, and authentic Norwegian log homes and farm buildings. The Norskedalen complex is open daily through the summer.

From Coon Valley, return to the Great River Road by traveling west on Hwys. 14/61. Five miles south of La Crosse visit **Goose Island County Park**. The park spreads out over several islands in the river and offers more than 400 campsites and a fine swimming beach.

14 LA CROSSE — La Crosse is, by far, Wisconsin's largest city on the Mississippi. Located at the confluence of three rivers, the city spreads out on a broad plain that was a natural rendezvous site for Indians and for traders.

Within ten years of its founding, La Crosse became known as the "Gateway City," a focal point for river traffic, stage routes and the railroad. The city rapidly became a major port with as many as two hundred boats stopping in La Crosse in a month.

Today, La Crosse is a lively, attractive city offering a host of vacation adventures. A **Wisconsin Travel Information Center** is located in La Crosse at Rest Area 31 on Interstate 90-east. And check with the **La Crosse Convention and Visitors Bureau**, located in the city's beautiful Riverside Park. The park is also the home of "**Riverside USA**," an animated exhibit describing life on the Mississippi. Enjoy a river excursion aboard the sternwheeler "**La Crosse Queen**," docked nearby, or the **Island Girl Cruiselineer**. Boat tours are offered May through October.

In the downtown area, **Pettibone Park** — on Barron Island — offers a delightful swimming beach and bathhouse surrounded by the Mississippi River. **Myrick Park**, near the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse campus, has Indian mounds, a playground, kiddie rides, and a children's zoo.

At the **Pump House Regional Center for the Arts**, open year 'round, you can pick up information on local arts activities and performances. Two tours, complete with samples, tempt the visitor: **Christina Winery** offers a look at local winemaking; and the **G. Heileman Brewery** offers tours with samples of their beers for the thirsty tourist. Don't miss the world's largest six-pack! Both tours are available year 'round.

Open all year, the **Swarthout Museum** provides a first-rate glimpse of local history. **Hixon House**, another historic treasure, is unique in that it is furnished today exactly as it was when the Hixon family left it in the 1800s. The house is open daily June through Labor Day. From an elevation of 1,172-feet, **Granddad Bluff**, tallest of the rocky bluffs overlooking the city, offers magnificent views of the Mississippi River Valley from a park about two miles east of the river. From the lookout, you can see thirty miles downriver into both Minnesota and Iowa.

For bikers and hikers, La Crosse is the crossroads of two important trail systems: **The Great River State Trail** runs north 22.5 miles to Trempealeau and Perrot State Park crossing 18 bridges as it winds its way through the backwaters of the Mississippi; and the **La Crosse River Bike Trail** runs 23.5 miles east along the shimmering banks of the La Crosse River to Sparta. At Sparta, bikers can connect with the nationally-famous **Eloy-Sparta Bike Trail** offering recreation-alike nearly 75 miles of biking and biking through some of Wisconsin's finest scenery, plus three railroad tunnels between Sparta and Eloy.

15 ONALASKA — Just north of La Crosse, the city of Onalaska has access to the Mississippi and to **Lake Onalaska** (Pool No. 7). The Wisconsin DNR reports that more fish are caught in Lake Onalaska than in any other pool on the Mississippi. On the north end of the city, you can enjoy a beach and bathhouse at Black River Beach.

For a fascinating sidetrip, follow Interstate Highway I-90 east to West Salem, where you can tour the boyhood home of Wisconsin author Hamlin Garland. Thirteen miles further east brings you to Sparta, home of one of the nation's premier bicycle trails featuring three railway tunnels along its 35-mile grade. Follow Hwy. 21 northeast to Fort McCoy, the nation's largest Army Reserve and mobilization center. The 60,000-acre military post is open for tours offering a recreation area on Squaw Lake and a small waterfall.

16 MIDWAY — Backtrack to Hwy. 35 and continue your journey along Wisconsin's Great River Road. Five miles north of Onalaska, Midway is the home of two interesting river sideights. **The Circle D Buffalo Ranch** there is one of the most successful commercial buffalo ranches in the country with a herd of 300 American Bison. Midway is also the site of an important, and on-going, archaeological excavation documenting the **Oneta Indians** who lived and farmed in the area more than 500 years ago.

17 HOLMEN — Just north on Hwy. 35, stop at the **County Park** in Holmen to find picnic sites, a shelter, hiking trails and a lovely foot bridge over Halfway Creek Ravine.

18 TREMPEALEAU — The village is named after Trempealeau Mountain — a navigational landmark used by the early French fur traders. Main Street, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, dates from the 1890s. An 1888 fire destroyed the town's original business district leaving the historic **Trempealeau Hotel** the only surviving structure.

Today, a full-service marina offers river access and houseboat rentals. An observation area is available for those who wish to watch the operation of the river locks. The **Trempealeau Lakes**, a chain of seven small spring-fed lakes, are popular for fishing and canoeing. The village also offers an outdoor, olympic-size swimming pool as well as the sandbars of the Mississippi for summertime swimming.

The **Van Loon Wildlife Area** located east of Trempealeau and used primarily for deer and waterfowl hunting, provides fishing, canoeing and primitive camping. The 6-1/2

square mile refuge is the location of the historic **McGilvray Road** with its five steel bowstring, arch-truss bridges now being restored by the Wisconsin DNR.

West of Trempealeau is **Perrot State Park**, named after French explorer Nicholas Perrot, who built a trading post here in 1665. Located where the Trempealeau and Mississippi Rivers meet, the park's 500-foot river bluffs afford breathtaking views. Burial and ceremonial mounds can be found in the park as well as petroglyphs marking the equinox and summer solstice. The park is open all year.

Four miles north of Perrot State Park you'll find the **Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge**. Managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the 6,000-acre refuge hugs the banks of the Mississippi. Its wetlands are home to a wide range of waterfowl including ducks, geese, herons and egrets. It is not unusual to observe the flight of the refuge's most important resident — the American Bald Eagle. The refuge is open daily during daylight hours.

From Trempealeau, take a short 7-mile sidetrip inland via Cty. K and Hwys. 93/54 to visit charming Galesville. Founded in 1853 along the bluffs of Beaver Creek and the banks of Lake Marinika, Galesville offers many lovely Victorian homes, a bluff park with a swinging footbridge, and the historic A.A. Arnold Eastside Farm. The city is ringed by apple orchards which thrive in the more-temperate climates of the Trempealeau Plain, surrounded by a great circle of river bluffs. In 1869, the surpassing beauty of the area led a Galesville minister, Rev. Slyke, to publish a booklet, "Garden of Eden", in which he put forth the theory that the Trempealeau Plain was indeed, the Biblical Garden of Eden.

19 FOUNTAIN CITY — Return to Hwy. 35 at Centerville and follow the Great River Road north to Fountain City. One of Wisconsin's most-picturesque river towns, the city clings to 550-foot **Eagle Bluff** and **Indian Head Rock**. Fountain City is a maintenance depot for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The large dredging barge and other work boats harbored here are used to maintain a 9-foot deep navigational channel on the Upper Mississippi. Two miles north of Fountain City enjoy the delights of **Merrick State Park**, open all year.

20 COCHRANE — Continue north on Hwy. 35 to Cochrane. Stop at **Goose Lake Memorial Park**. It's a great picnic spot with a swimming pool and a shelter house.

21 BUFFALO — Buffalo is Wisconsin's smallest incorporated city. Known as the "City of Parks", Buffalo boasts seven public parks as well as a campground and full-service marina.

22 ALMA — Alma is the next stop north with many charming, waterfront shops and elegant, turn-of-the-century homes. The entire city is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Visitors will enjoy the charming waterfront shops.

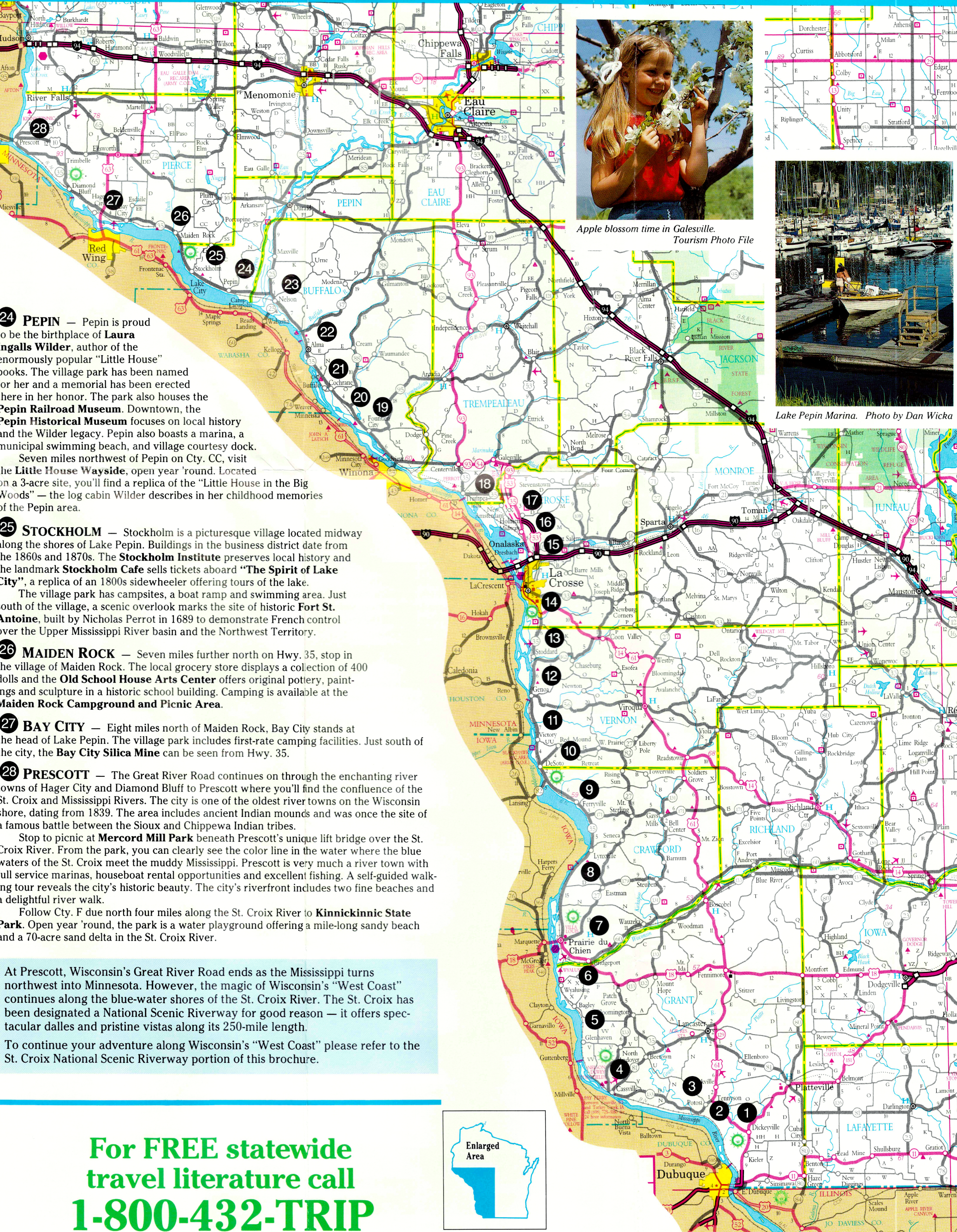
Built by Swiss settlers, Alma is nestled in a narrow corridor between the river and **Twelve Mile Bluff**, rising 500 feet above the Mississippi. The city is only two streets wide — but it's seven miles long! The downtown offers an observation deck at **Lock and Dam No. 4**. As the lock is flooded, watch as the huge barges are lifted to the level above the dam.

Alma includes two marinas, two full-service campgrounds, a municipal pool, a delightful 300-foot sand beach along the river, and excellent fishing. Hike or drive up to **Buena Vista Park**, located on the bluffs above the river providing a fantastic view. In the fall, stop at **Rieck's Lake Park** just north of Alma to see hundreds of migrating Tundra Swans.

23 NELSON — Stop to tour the **Nelson Cheese Factory** and taste Wisconsin's rich dairy heritage. **Castleberg Park** on the south end of town is a favorite picnic spot.

For an exciting sidetrip, head north from Nelson on Hwy. 25. The road follows the enchanting Chippewa River through Durand to Dounsenville where you can tour a wonderful logging museum as well as Caddie Woodlaun County Park — named for the famous children's book. Eight miles further north on Hwy. 25 brings you to Menomonie, home of the beautifully-restored Mabel Tainter Memorial Building & Theater, as well as two excellent museums of local history. Menomonie is also the gateway to the Red Cedar State Trail for panoramic hiking and biking; and the Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area. Head west from Menomonie on Hwy. 29 to Spring Valley and tour Crystal Cave, with more than 30 "rooms" to explore.

From Nelson head north on Hwy. 35 past the **Tiffany Wildlife Area** and the mouth of the Chippewa River.



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