

GROUP TOUR GUIDE



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VisitWinona.com

“ Thank you for the wonderful job setting up for our group tour. Everything was perfect!! And our guide was fantastic. Winona will always be a favorite place in my heart!”

- Dianne Wright, Goodhue County Home Study

This group guide offers you a look at experiential tours, themed and sample itineraries and a list of group friendly attractions, lodging, and dining.

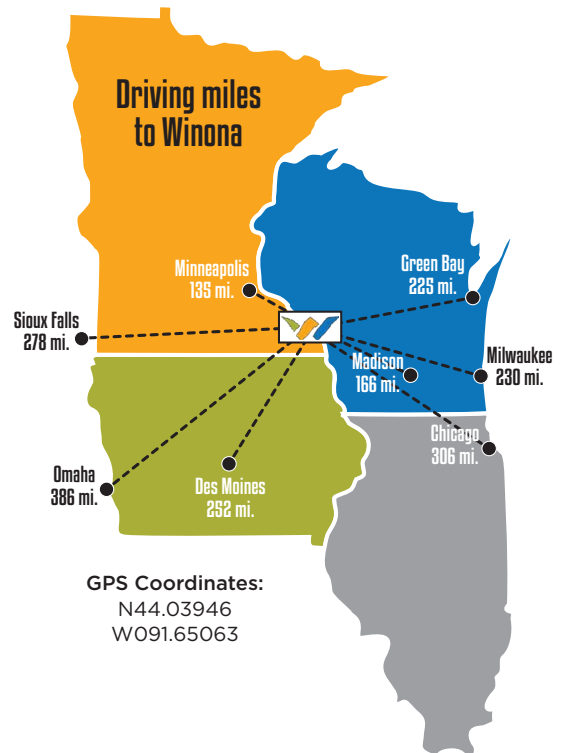


We believe your guests want experiences - **UNIQUE ONES** - that bring their vacations to life, and so, in the world of group tours, Winona has undergone an exciting transformation.

You may already know about our fine art museum, our national Shakespeare festival, and our charming old-world vibe. You can immerse your guests in an **on-farm experience**, explore **great art** inspired by water, or help them experience the joy of **padding Mark Twain's Mississippi**. These and many other experiential group tours await you in Winona.

Our historic river city is conveniently located six miles from Interstate 90, cradled by towering limestone bluffs on one side and the Mississippi River on the other. But don't let our boutique size of 27,000 fool you - Winona is hitting way above its weight class in terms of art and entertainment, with names like Tiffany and Yo-Yo Ma gracing our walls and halls. A cultural mecca in the Midwest, we are home to a spate of signature festivals as well as year-round arts and theater events that feature performers from around the nation and the world. Beautiful scenery, interesting folklore, and delicious local flavors top off the reasons why groups love to experience Winona.

Whether you come for an overnight or are just passing through, our professional staff is ready to help you design a visit that will keep your buses full and your customers **happy** again and again.



For group tour assistance, contact:
Visit Winona
info@visitwinona.com
507-452-0735

VisitWinona.com

EXPERIENTIAL GROUP TOURS

Click on each tour for more information.

Ranging from Outdoor Adventure to Arts & Culture, Winona Experiential Tours offer exclusive and interactive ways to see all that our city has to offer.

GROUP PADDLE

Lake Lodge Recreation Center EAST LAKE WINONA • Minimum 10 / Maximum 60

Interested in getting your group out on the lake? Join us for a group paddle! Every group paddle comes with one staff member, access to bathrooms, the use of life jackets, paddles and desired watercraft. We can tailor each group paddle to fit the kind of experience you are looking for. Some groups prefer “free paddle” where they have access to all the boats and get tutorials on how to use them...but don't have staff facilitate team challenges. Other groups prefer a very structured paddle with staff-facilitated challenges.

FARM TOURS

Heart and Soil Ridge DAKOTA, MN

Catch a glimpse what life on the farm is really like. Catch a chicken, scratch a pig, learn about regenerative agriculture, embark on an artistic journey by arranging flowers grown on the farm. Customize your own tour with any of these experiences.

GUIDED BACKWATER CANOE OR KAYAK PADDLE

Prairie Island Campground & Front Porch Excursions WINONA

The Upper Mississippi River around Winona is home to many critters. Paddling its forested sloughs is a sure way to observe the abundance of wildlife up close. Depending on the skill level of your group, we offer paddles to match a range of abilities and desired time on the water, with trained guides who are knowledgeable in local ecology and history. We are able to transport a group of up to 10 with gear to various launches in the area. *Call to discuss your ideas and pricing.*

ROCK CLIMBING

Big River Climbing Guides WINONA • Minimum 1 / Maximum 6+

SUGAR LOAF SUMMIT

Standing 600ft above Winona, this amazing 4-hr rock climbing trip is an experience you will never forget! After warming up and learning some basic climbing techniques, your guide will lead you and your group to the airy summit of Sugar Loaf, one of the few true summits in the Midwest!

INTRO TO ROCK CLIMBING

New to the vertical world? This classic introduction to rock climbing is the perfect way to try out one of the fastest growing sports in the world. Join our guides for a fun, relaxing but exhilarating time climbing some of the fun “cruiser” routes on Sugar Loaf. Enjoy the amazing views of Winona and the Mississippi River while choosing the level of challenge that is just right. We will begin on some shorter and easier climbs to get adjusted and then it's up to you where we go from there. Challenge by choice philosophy is a guiding principle at BRCC which means you will never feel pressured to step too far out of your comfort zone.



EXPERIENTIAL GROUP TOURS

Click on each tour for more information.

DOCENT LED AND SELF-GUIDED ART TOURS

Minnesota Marine Art Museum WINONA

SELF-GUIDED GROUP VISIT • Minimum 10 / Maximum 200

Explore the Museum at your own pace, without a docent guide. Receive a great rate on group admission.

GUIDED GROUP TOURS • Minimum 10 / Maximum 72

Participate in a tour led by one of the Museum's expert docents. Highlight tours of the museum's exhibitions will connect you with artworks inspired by water. If you're feeling playful, ask to have tour guides engage your group in a gallery activity.

CREATOR LED OR SELF-GUIDED LAND-ART EXPERIENCE: **Kinstone** FOUNTAIN CITY, WI

Just 7 miles from Winona, Kinstone is a 15-acre modern megalithic (i.e. huge stone) site on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. Called "Wisconsin's Stonehenge" it features three stone circles, a dolmen, classical labyrinth, thatched cordwood chapel with bottle art glass designs, dry-stack stone sculpture, acres of prairie, and much more. Immerse your group in nature and land-art on a grand scale.

SELF-GUIDED GROUP EXPERIENCE: • Minimum 10 / Maximum 200

Immerse yourselves in nature while exploring Kinstone on mown grass paths; go at your own pace, without a guide. **Average time to plan for: 1-3 hours.**

GUIDED GROUP WALKING EXPERIENCE: • Minimum 5 / Maximum 20

Join Kinstone creator, Kristine Beck, for a **90-minute walking tour** to experience several of her land-art features. Hear stories of each and the intention behind them. Participants must be able to walk or otherwise traverse rough terrain and generally level but uneven, mowed grass paths. **Average time to plan for: 1.5 hours; add time to stay afterwards to experience the grounds on your own if desired.**

GUIDED GROUP VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE: • Minimum 5 / Maximum 20

Join Kinstone creator, Kristine Beck, for a **60-minute slideshow presentation** in the comfort of our Education Center. Hear the story of Kinstone and see a photographic tour showcasing its main features followed by time for discussion. This option works best for groups with participants who have difficulty walking. **Average time to plan for: 1.5 hours; add time to stay afterwards to experience the grounds on your own if desired and able.**

GO OFF THE BEATEN PATH IN A 12-PERSON SPRINTER VAN!

Prairie Island Campground & Front Porch Excursions WINONA

Whether your group is interested in a hike at one of the local state parks, or wanting to tour the area vineyards and orchards, this tour vehicle can get you there. Whatever the adventure, be sure to bring sun protection, water, and sturdy shoes. A uniquely Upper Mississippi River experience awaits! *Call to discuss your ideas and pricing.*



THEMED ITINERARIES

Click on bolded text for more information.

Check out some **suggestions** that are uniquely Winona below, or call **507-452-0735** to create the perfect custom itinerary for your group today.

ARTS LOVERS

Begin your Winona experience by making a sweet stop at **Bloedow Bakery**, Winona's famous hometown bakery since 1924, featuring original recipes for doughnuts, rolls, bread, cookies and pastries. Try a Maple Long John, a local favorite.

Whether your taste is for legends like Yo-Yo Ma, or icons like Shakespeare, prepare to be blown away by what you'll find in Winona. Your next stop is bound to be the **Minnesota Marine Art Museum**, home to a world-class collection that includes historic works of art. After enjoying the Mississippi views from the MMAM Riverwalk, have lunch downtown at a restaurant of your choice.

In the afternoon, experience masterpieces in the making during a tour of **Associated Crafts & Willet Hauser** and watch artists demonstrate the process of crafting a stained-glass window. Check into your hotel, then enjoy a pampered evening of fine dining at **Signatures**, overlooking the rolling 18-hole golf course in the bluffs.

Winona's stages boast a year-round slate of professional productions and performers. Whether it is a free **Winona Municipal Band Concert**, a professional show from the **Great River Shakespeare Festival** company of artists, or live music at **Blooming Grounds Coffee House** downtown, there is always so much to choose from!



OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

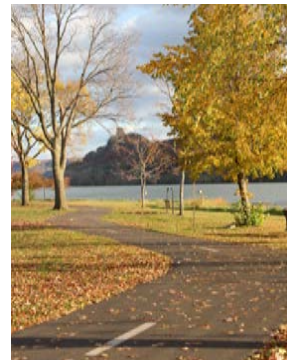
Winona will prove that getting here is at least half the fun. Home of the annual **Trinona triathlon**, Winona's challenging terrain has long attracted avid bicyclists. Pick up some wholesome picnic fare from **Bluff Country Co-op** or a boxed lunch from classic **Beno's Deli** and saddle up.

Exhilarating

If you decide to wind your way up to the top of the bluff, a breathtaking view from **Garvin Heights Park** is your first reward. Experience the bluffs on the **Holzinger Trail** system with your mountain bike. You might also stop at **Garvin Heights Vineyards** for tastings and a bottle to take with you. Glide back into town for a fresh pint at **Island City Brewing Company** and live music at hopping **No Name Bar**, an authentic Winona experience.

...or leisurely

A less rigorous outing might include a group paddle around serene **Lake Winona**, or head over to **Prairie Island Campground** to rent a set of canoes or kayaks for the afternoon and explore the backwaters of the **Mississippi River**. In the evening, enjoy Winona's favorite downtown restaurants like **Bub's Brewing Company**—try the stuffed mushrooms—and soak up some of our many live music options at **Peter's Biergarten** and more.



HISTORY BUFFS

So prized is Winona's historic architecture that eleven entire downtown blocks have been added to the **National Register of Historic Districts**. From its stained glass and stone masterpieces to its majestic basilica, Winona is a town that cherishes its history.

Experience Winona's past with a docent-led tour of the **Winona County History Center**. The Laird/Norton addition is an architectural gem. The museum shop is full of books, local art, and children's gifts.

Shop the historic downtown area or take a **self-guided walking tour** of the town's two historic districts and enjoy lunch at a restaurant or deli of your choice downtown. Beautiful Outside? - Grab a sandwich and ice cream and take it to the **newly-renovated Levee Park on the Mississippi** for a picnic. Continue your Winona history lesson by touring and shopping the famous **Watkins Museum/Gift Store** and bring home a bottle of Watkins Vanilla Extract - made using the same recipe that won world recognition at the Paris Exposition in 1928.

From Watkins, walk across the street to the **Polish Cultural Institute**, otherwise known as the Polish Museum. Journey through the cultural and religious heritage of the large number of Kashubian Poles who settled in Winona.

Stop over at **Lakeview Drive Inn**, Winona's oldest restaurant, featuring car hop service, home-brewed root beer, great burgers and countless ice cream treats.

End your day by touring the historic **Pickwick Mill**, a 120-year-old flour mill that ground flour for the Civil War.



DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN?

Check out the sample itinerary below. Call **507-452-0735** for ideas or to schedule a tour.

DAY 1

9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

Stop at the **Winona Visitor Center** for a “*welcome to Winona*” greeting. The Center provides visitor information, restroom, an hospitable atmosphere for travelers far and wide, and a gift shop with a variety of local and state souvenirs.

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Museum and City Tour. Stop at the **Winona County History Center** for a tour of Winona County’s storied past followed by a city tour with a **step-on guided bus tour**. Highlights include Winona’s **historic district**, a **scenic overlook** with a view of the Mississippi River Valley, and **Victorian architecture**.

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Enjoy lunch at a restaurant, deli or coffeehouse of your choice in historic downtown. Sicilian pasta, walleye tacos or a Super Duper Panini anyone?

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

River Cruise. The **Winona Tour Boat** holds 45 passengers and its captain provides a narrated **sightseeing** tour that educates and entertains about the natural habitat and commercial use of the Mississippi River.

3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Minnesota Marine Art Museum. Take in the beauty of the MMAM which features “great art inspired by water”. When you have had your fill of indoor art, explore the six-acre garden of native plants, trees, and flowers.

4:30 p.m. Check In

Check into your hotel and rest before dinner and a big night out.

5:15 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Treat yourself to an evening of dining at **River City Grill**, which features steaks, salmon and pastas or try the signature hand patted 1/3 lb. burger “The Wellington,” at **Wellington’s Pub and Grill**.

After 7:00 p.m.

Depending on the season, the challenge is whether to see a **Great River Shakespeare Festival** play, **Minnesota Beethoven Festival** concert, or an intimate acoustic set while enjoying a glass of wine or beer at **Blooming Grounds Coffee House** or **Island City Brewing Co.**

DAY 2

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Experience art in the making during a tour of **Associated Crafts & Willet Hauser** and watch artists demonstrate from concept to completion the process of crafting a **stained-glass** window.

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Tour and shop the famous **Watkins Museum and Gift Store** and bring home a bottle of Watkins Vanilla Extract—made using the same recipe that won world recognition at the Paris Exposition in 1928.

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch at one of several restaurants, bar and grills, or delis in Winona.

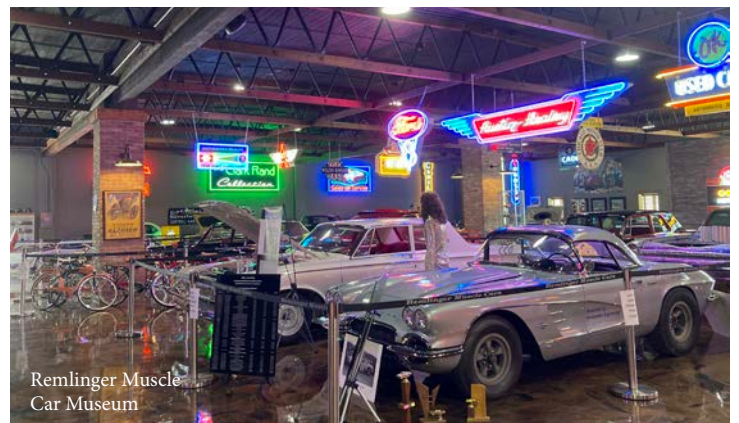
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Remlinger Muscle Car Museum: Explore the classic vintage collection of cars, bicycles and go karts, one of the finest collections in the Midwest.

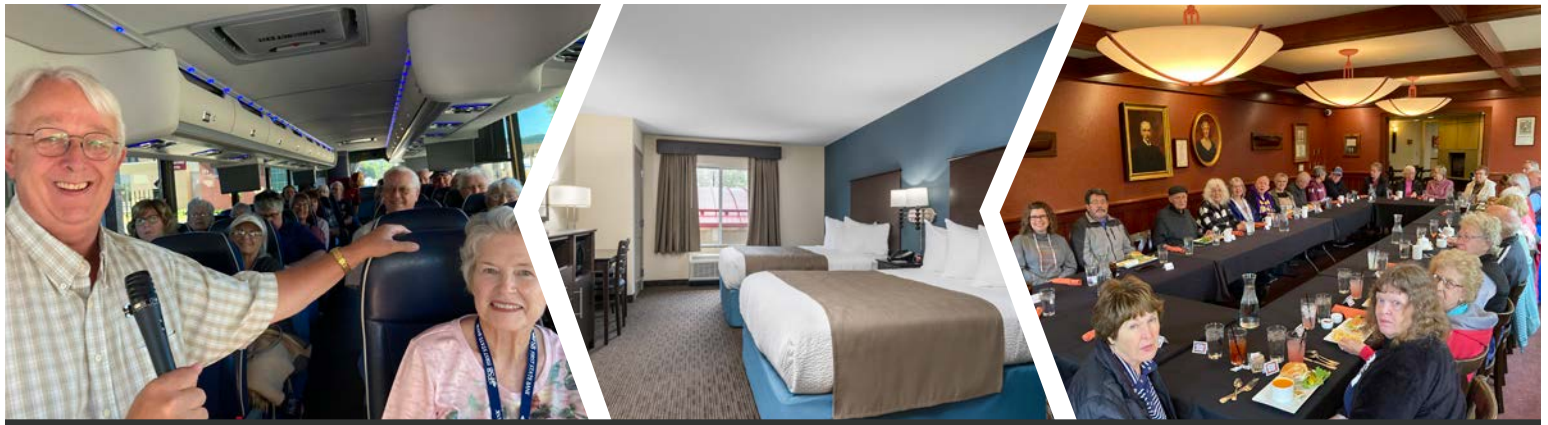
Depart for home or your next destination, but please come back again soon!



Great River Shakespeare Festival,
Photo by Dan Norman



Remlinger Muscle
Car Museum



GROUP TOUR ATTRACTIONS, LODGING & DINING

Click on each attraction, hotel or restaurant for more information. 

ATTRACTIONS

Associated Crafts & Willet Hauser

Minimum: 6 / Maximum: 54

Tour of a renowned stained glass studio.

Big Valley Ranch

Minimum: 5 / Maximum: 50

Free Half hour tour of horse ranch.

History Center and City Tour

Tour of the Winona County History Center followed by a city tour with a step-on guide.

Cal Fremling Floating Classroom

Minimum: 10 / Maximum: 49

Experience and explore the Mississippi River.

Garvin Heights Vineyards

Minimum: 10 / Maximum: 40

Wine tasting of local wines from local vines.

Winona County History Center

Minimum: 10 / Maximum: 55

Engaging exhibits that examine life in Winona County and an art gallery gift shop featuring regional artists.

Minnesota Marine Art Museum

Minimum: 12 / Maximum: 72

"Great Art Inspired by Water".

Pickwick Mill

Tour of an historic flour mill dating back to the 1850's.

Polish Cultural Institute

Minimum: 10 / Maximum: 50

History of the Polish Kashubian culture.

Remlinger Muscle Car Museum

Minimum: 10 / Maximum: 50

Guided tour of classic vintage cars, bicycles and go karts.

Treasures Under Sugar Loaf

Minimum: 1 / Maximum: 50

35,000 square feet of antiques and crafts.

Watkins Museum

Minimum: 12 / Maximum: 55

Self-guided tour of museum featuring historical exhibits and gift shop with Watkins products available for purchase.

Winona Tour Boat

Minimum: 5 / Maximum: 45

90 minute narrated river cruise on the Mississippi River.

LODGING

AmericInn

Days Inn

Fairfield Inn & Suites

Holiday Inn Express & Suites

Riverport Inn Express Suites

Super 8

The Plaza Hotel and Suites

DINING

Black Horse Bar & Grill

Bub's Brewing Company Bar & Grill

Nosh Scratch Kitchen

River City Grill

Sammy's Pizza & Restaurant

Sapori di Sicilia

Signatures Restaurant

Wellington's Pub & Grill

VISIT WINONA

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