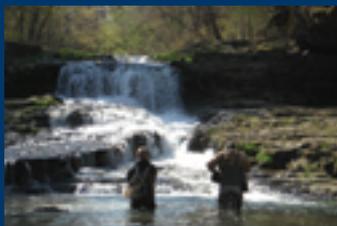
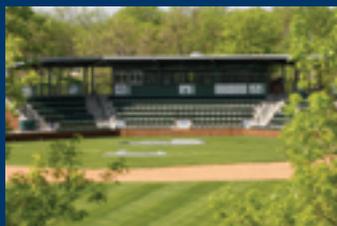


A Toast to the Valley

A stylized graphic of a bright yellow sun with rays, partially obscured by two green leaves. A blue decorative flourish extends from the bottom right of the sun.

*Taste from a unique collection of inns,
wineries, breweries, historic sites, & adventures
in the scenic St. Croix Valley.*





Experience River Falls

the city on the Kinni

HISTORIC MAIN STREET

adorned with specialty shops & family-friendly restaurants

KINNICKINNIC RIVER

class 1 trout stream enjoyed by fly fishing enthusiasts & coveted by kayak adventurers

DESIGNATED BRONZE-LEVEL BIKING COMMUNITY

by the League of American Bicyclists

miles of scenic and rugged trails for touring and mountain biking



FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

farmer's market, summer concerts, River Falls Roots and Bluegrass Music Festival, River Falls Days, Bacon Bash & more!

GOLF COURSES & DISC GOLF

excellent greens at affordable prices

AREA ATTRACTIONS

area parks, trails & more!

First National Bank of River Falls Field

local wineries & breweries

Tri Angels Playground

Just 30 minutes east of the Twin Cities & home of the University of Wisconsin River Falls



RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN • 715-425-2533 • RFCHAMBER.COM



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2016 Hastings MN. May be viewed online at www.atoasttothevalley.org
651-235-4802 toast@innsotthevalley.com

The innkeepers, wine makers, brewmasters and history hosts of the St. Croix Valley applaud your arrival with this toast.

“Welcome dear and gentle guests...

May all your travels here be joyous and abundant.

May the scenic river road and river rise up to greet you.

May you rest well at many fine enchanted inns

servicing bountiful breakfasts and be nourished there for this adventure.

May you return again and again.”

Inns of the Scenic St. Croix Valley is an organization with members hailing from many small towns in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The owners/innkeepers have in common the beautiful scenic region surrounding the St. Croix River, as well as their focus on providing outstanding hospitality. These like-minded business people promote the beautiful scenic valley so their guests can know about and enjoy the whole region, not just one town, one state or one inn. Innkeepers by their very nature share the many potential adventures of their area – thus the **“Toast to the Valley”** was born.

This guidebook is a traveler’s companion, making it easier to find the “trails” connecting the small, unique independent businesses, where you can have fun tasting and touring a variety of places. The Falls Chamber plays a role in promoting the two towns of St. Croix Falls and Taylor Falls, in two states. Once they joined this “toast”, other chambers and convention and visitor bureaus in the valley did as well. All of their connections are listed in this book and on the website. Celebrations, events and unique festivals are another part of small town life and the adventure you can experience on this journey.

Beyond the guidebook:

To aid in this journey, in addition to this guide, check out www.AToasttotheValley.org, and our Facebook page.

If you have a group wanting a tour of the area’s many bounties, it can be arranged. Comprehensive packages with suggested itineraries will be added to the Facebook page, and can also be arranged with innkeepers. Packaging the valley is a part of what innkeepers do naturally.

Win the Valley!

Exciting offers will be shown on the Facebook page, and if you are signing up for “A Toast to the Valley” specials, they will be emailed. The sweepstake prizes include stays at Inns of the Valley inns with tours of wineries, breweries and historic sites. Another fun part of the adventure is taking photos while you and friends are “toasting the valley” at any of the partner spots, and then send to toast@innsofthevalley.com. Winning photographs will be used in promotions, and the photographers will win a Toast to the Valley package. More details about the contests are on the website and Facebook pages.



So lift your glasses and toast to enjoying the Scenic St. Croix Valley!

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AFTON

Afton Area Business Association
P.O. Box 102
Afton, MN 55001
651-436-8883



CHISAGO LAKES AREA

Chisago Lakes Chamber
& Information Center
30525 Linden Street, P.O. Box 283
Lindstrom, MN 55045
651-257-1177



STILLWATER

Stillwater & Oak Park Heights
Convention & Visitor Bureau
101 Water Street South
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-351-1717



TAYLORS FALLS and ST. CROIX FALLS

The Falls Chamber
106 S. Washington Street,
P.O. Box 178
St. Croix Falls, WI 54024
715-483-3580



HUDSON

Hudson Area Chamber
of Commerce & Tourism Bureau
502 2nd Street
Hudson, WI 54016-1542
800-657-6775 • 715-386-8411



PRESCOTT

Prescott Area
Chamber of Commerce
237 Broad Street North
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-3284



RIVER FALLS

River Falls Area
Chamber of Commerce
214 North Main
River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-2533



HASTINGS

Hastings Area Chamber
and Tourism Bureau
314 Vermillion Street
Hastings, MN 55033
651-437-6775





JAMES PERRY VINEYARDS

4790 480th Street, Rush City, MN

651-528-2858 • jamesperryvineyards.com

James Perry Vineyards is a small farm winery. But it's big on taste. Our customers have tagged us as the hidden little gem. Stop in for a taste yourselves. See if we live up to our tagged name.



NORTH FOLK WINERY

43150 Blackhawk Road, Harris, MN

651-674-7548 • www.northfolkwinery.com

The tasting room is a beautiful, timber frame located in east central Minnesota. The relaxing atmosphere of the tasting room and beautiful surrounding gardens, and vineyard make this the perfect destination to romance your sweetheart or have fun with friends.



WILD MOUNTAIN WINERY

16906 Wild Mountain Road, Taylors Falls, MN

651-583-3585 • www.wildmountainwinery.com

Wild Mountain Winery is one of Minnesota's premier wineries. We are proud to produce 100% locally grown, handcrafted wines and ciders of the highest quality showing the best viticulture and enological techniques of Minnesota.



CHATEAU ST. CROIX WINERY

1998 Highway 87, St. Croix Falls, WI

715-483-2556 • www.chateaucroix.com

A true appreciation for wine can be uncovered in the lush wine valleys of Europe. Chateau St. Croix brings a European winery experience to the St Croix Valley, complete with vineyard, a carriage house, art gallery, and gardens.



FESTIVAL THEATRE

Franklin Square Black Box

125 N. Washington Street, St. Croix Falls, WI

715-483-3387 • www.festivaltheatre.org

Festival Theatre has been producing live professional theatre for over 25 years in the St. Croix Valley. With a wide variety of theatre, music, and comedy events happening year round, there is something for everyone to enjoy.



DANCING DRAGONFLY WINERY

2013 120th Avenue, St. Croix Falls, WI

715-483-WINE • www.dancingdragonflywinery.com

Located near the St. Croix River Valley, our spacious tasting room is open year-round for wine tasting. Enjoy cold-hardy grape varieties, as well as classics like Chardonnay. We also offer artisan food options every day.

THE COTTAGE

950 Fox Glen Drive, Taylors Falls, MN

651-465-3595 • www.the-cottage.com

The Cottage, designed as an 18th Century English Country House, stands on a secluded wooded bluff, overlooking the beautiful St. Croix River between Minnesota and Wisconsin. Relax in the cozy, casual elegance of the English/French décor. From the bedroom balcony above, the view of the Dalles of the St. Croix River and Wisconsin Interstate Park is breath taking.



SUMMIT INN

208 Summit Ave., Center City, MN

651-257-4987 • www.summitinnbb.com

Elegance, Comfort, Romance and History meet here. Watch sunsets over the lake from all guestrooms or in the screened gazebo. Stroll by fountains through English Cottage gardens or sit and read by fireplaces. Enjoy gourmet food and quiet, unobtrusive, over the top service. We will make your stay unforgettable. Restore!



WINEHAVEN WINERY AND VINEYARD

9757 292nd Street, Chisago City, MN

612-867-6848 • www.winehaven.com

Situated on a 50 acre estate overlooking two lakes, Winehaven is one of the largest and most awarded wineries in the Upper Midwest. Winehaven produces nearly two-dozen varieties of popular grape, honey and fruit wines.



GAMMELGÅRDEN MUSEUM

2880 Olinda Trail, Scandia, MN

651-433-5053 • www.gammelgardenumuseum.org

Step back to 1860 and experience the lives of early Swedish immigrants at Gammelgården Museum's 11 acre site. At this "Old Small Farm", in buildings that have been carefully preserved and restored, visitors take a walk into the daily lives of immigrants building a new life in Amerika!

ST. CROIX RIVER INN

305 River Street, Osceola, WI

715-294-4248 • www.stcroixriverinn.com

Nestled on the bluffs on the St. Croix River, the Inn offers spectacular river views that are enhanced by the elegant and comfortable ambiance with its dramatic windows to the river. Guests can watch the morning light shine upon the waters as a sumptuous breakfast is served to their room.



PLEASANT LAKE

2238 60th Avenue, Osceola, WI

715-294-2545 • www.pleasantlake.com

Relaxation, Rejuvenation and even a little Romance await when you drive up the wooded lane and arrive at the bed and breakfast with the semi-private lake as its backdrop. Three lake view rooms, bird watching, wildlife, paddle boating the lake, crackling campfires, full breakfasts all help you to unwind.



*Here's to the nights we'll never remember
with the friends we'll never forget.*



DISCOVER
STILLWATER
BIRTHPLACE OF MINNESOTA

YEAR-ROUND GETAWAY ON THE ST. CROIX RIVER

Minutes East of the Twin Cities on WI Border



- America's Prettiest Towns
- Top Midwestern Small Towns to Visit
- Most Romantic Places

River Cruises • Golf • Boutiques • Antiques
Foodie Scene • Bike Trail • Art Galleries • Festivals
Historic Inns & Mansions • Wineries & Breweries



Order a FREE 2016 Visitor's Guide: DiscoverStillwater.com

AURORA STAPLES INN

303 N. 4th Street, Stillwater, MN
651-351-1187 • www.aurorastaplesinn.com

Just three blocks from Historic downtown Stillwater, the Aurora Staples Inn will help bring out your romantic spirit. Our beautiful Victorian Inn offers period décor with all the amenities; double whirlpool tubs, gas fireplaces, private baths, and very comfortable beds! We believe in making each stay a special occasion.



COVER PARK MANOR

15330 58th Street N., Stillwater, MN
651-430-9292 • www.coverpark.com

A comfortable Bed & Breakfast surrounded by miles of parkland and walking trails and yet just minutes from historic Stillwater and St. Croix River. Best of both worlds! Each suite offers private deck or porch, private baths, whirlpools, fireplaces, and 4 course breakfast delivered to the privacy of your room!



THE OUTING LODGE AT PINE POINT

11661 Myeron Road N., Stillwater MN
651-439-9747 • www.outinglodge.com

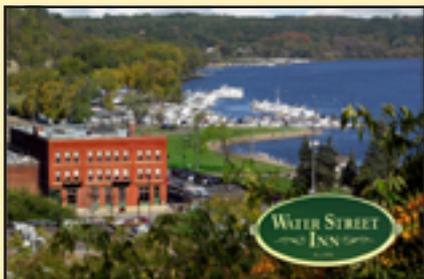
Home of the historic Washington County Farm, this Georgian estate is surrounded by native gardens ~ a la Jane Austen's novels. Ideal venue for private events and romantic getaways all year round. Located in Pine Point Park, at the Gateway trail, with miles of wooded paths for skiing or biking.



WATER STREET INN

101 Water Street S., Stillwater, MN
651-439-6000 • www.WaterStreetInn.us

Located in the heart of Downtown Stillwater at the foot of the Lift Bridge. All guestrooms with double whirlpools, most with fireplaces and balconies overlooking the St. Croix River. Charlie's Restaurant and Irish Pub with indoor and outdoor seating overlooking the river. Stillwater's only Inn on the River.



A toast to bread, as without bread, we'd have no toast.



ST. CROIX VINEYARDS

6428 Manning Ave., Stillwater, MN

651-430-3310 • www.scvwines.com

Established in 1992, Saint Croix Vineyards has built a reputation for producing fine Minnesota wines. We welcome you to visit our rustic tasting room, sample our wines, and enjoy a stroll through our picturesque vineyards.



NORTHERN VINEYARDS WINERY

223 Main Street North, Stillwater, MN

651-430-1032 • www.northernvineyards.com

Northern Vineyards Winery is one of the oldest of Minnesota's wineries. We are located in downtown Stillwater, Minnesota. Relax with a glass or bottle of our award winning wine on our deck overlooking the beautiful St. Croix River.



WARDENS HOUSE MUSEUM

602 N. Main Street, Stillwater, MN

651-439-5956 • www.wchsmn.org

The 1853 Museum today shares late 19th and early 20th century style as well as history of lumbering industry, the 1965 St. Croix Valley Flood, the Civil War, and of course, the Old Stillwater Prison.



ST. CROIX BREWING COMPANY

114 Chestnut Street East, Stillwater, MN

651-387-0708 • www.stcroixbeer.com

The St. Croix Brewery roots in Stillwater date back to the winter of 1858. Today its rich brewing tradition is being brought back to its home town with the location in the city's oldest building "The Brunswick House". Look for our opening in 2016.



MAPLE ISLAND BREWING

225 Main Street North, Stillwater, MN

651-430-0044 • www.mapleislandbrewing.com

Maple Island Brewing is a craft micro-brewery/tap room in historic downtown Stillwater, MN. Enjoying full flavored craft beers with good friends is our inspiration, always thoughtfully and creatively crafting each beer using unique ingredients.



THE PHIPPS INN

1005 Third Street, Hudson, WI

715-386-0800 • www.phippssinn.com

The Phipps Inn is the "Grand Dame" of Queen Anne houses in the St. Croix Valley. It is a luxurious 1884 Victorian mansion on Hudson's historic Third Street – close to the river and downtown Hudson. Enjoy delectable breakfasts and spacious surroundings. All guestrooms have fireplaces, whirlpool tubs, and private baths.



HISTORIC OCTAGON HOUSE

1004 Third Street, Hudson, WI

715-386-2654 • community.pressenter.net

This unique Victorian era, eight-sided house was built in 1855 as a private home. Guided tours are available May to October and December. The museum is famous for its holiday decor to be enjoyed weekends before Christmas.



NEGRET WINE COMPANY

310 2nd Street, Hudson, WI

715-531-4004 • www.negretwinecompany.com

We are an urban winery in downtown Hudson, WI, with wine on tap and by the bottle! Visit our tasting room to savor our hand-crafted wine blends made by our founder, 3rd generation winemaker Vincent Negret.



*Here's to a temperance supper. With water in glasses tall.
And coffee and tea to end with. And me not there at all.*

DISCOVER YOUR SEASON...YEAR ROUND!

HUDSON, WISCONSIN



Hudson has the perfect blend of unique restaurants, boutiques, history and a scenic river that is the Spirit of the St. Croix! Come discover Hudson, Wisconsin today!

www.DiscoverHudsonWI.com •



Photos: ©Bucklew Photography

AFTON HOUSE INN

3291 St. Croix Trail S., Afton, MN

651-436-8883 • www.aftonhouseinn.com

Enjoy Fine Dining and Casual Dining at the two restaurants. Romantic 25 Room Inn with Jacuzzi and Fireplaces some with River views. Public and Private Cruises on the St. Croix River. The Perfect Get A Way. Weddings, Anniversaries and Private Events year round. Enjoy Swirl Wine Bar!



65 VINES WINERY

1105 Coulee Trail, Roberts, WI

651-245-3400 • www.65vines.com

St. Croix County's first winery! Open 12-6 PM Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays in August through-November. Our goal is to produce excellent wine, have stellar customer service and provide an outstanding vineyard/winery experience to all visitors! Cheers.



BELLE VINEZ

W10829 875th Ave., River Falls, WI

715-426-9463 • www.bellevinez.com

Enjoy great wine, Tuscan eats and delicious brick fired pizza from this picturesque winery set in the heart of the vineyard. Visit, relax and enjoy.



Here's to wine wit and wisdom

Wine enough to sharpen wit:

Wit enough to give zest to wine and

wisdom enough to know when we have had enough.

SWiRL

WINE CLUB • SHOP • BAR



651-436-2010

Unlike any other in the area, we've brought together everything that you've been asking for: enjoy a glass of wine while you shop, sit back and relax for dinner or just hang out! amazing and hard to find wines at a great value; a wine bar that offers 6 or more wines by the glass that change weekly and a menu that changes seasonally offering small plates, entrees, dessert and truffles; great outdoor patio, your wine club with benefits and more; exclusive tastings, multi-course dinners and special events; wine education; and of course, fun! Swirl means a new experience every time you visit. Come see for yourself in Afton!

www.Swirlmywine.com



David Wynia Photography

CARPENTER ST. CROIX VALLEY NATURE CENTER

2805 St. Croix Trail S., Hastings, MN

Wisconsin Campus: 300 E. Cove Road, Hudson, WI

651-437-4359 • www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org

Hiking trails, prairies, river bluffs and forests provide opportunities for year-round recreation and environmental education along the St. Croix River in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Open seven days a week, 8:00-4:30. Free admission.



THE BORNER FARM PROJECT

1266 Walnut Street, Prescott, WI

651-235-4906 • www.bornerfarmproject.com

The Borner Farm Project is a historical farmstead in the heart of Prescott, WI. We sell our organic vegetables in our on-site market, host biweekly pizza nights, and offer educational and experiential opportunities for all ages!



GREAT RIVER ROAD VISITOR AND LEARNING CENTER AT FREEDOM PARK

200 Monroe Street, Prescott, WI

715-262-0104 • www.freedomparkwi.org

From atop the bluffs at Freedom Park in Prescott, enjoy stunning vistas of the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers' confluence. On-site visitor/learning center welcomes guests for education and enjoyment year round, free of charge.



LEDUC HISTORIC ESTATE

1629 Vermillion Street, Hastings, MN

651-438-8480 • www.leduchistoricestate.org

The LeDuc Historic Estate, built during the years of the Civil War, sheltered the LeDuc family for 76 years. Today, not only a lovely site to visit but also enjoy teas, weddings, bourbon tastings and more. Bring this guidebook for a BOGO free for tours.

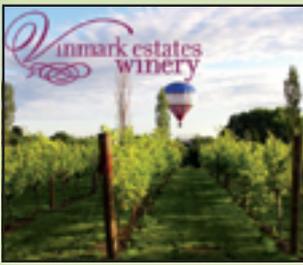


ALEXIS BAILLY VINEYARD

18200 Kirby Ave., Hastings, MN

651-437-1413 • www.abvwines.com

Alexis Bailly Vineyard is Minnesota's oldest winery and vineyard, established in the upper Mississippi River Valley just outside of Hastings since 1973. We welcome visitors to sample our wines, picnic in our vineyards, play bocce ball on our courts, and enjoy a relaxing and enjoyable day at our winery.



VINMARK ESTATES

13310 80th Street Court, Hastings, MN

651-436-8401 • www.vinmarkestates.com

Vinmark Estates Located in the southeast Twin Cities metro, our mission is simple; educate and share with our customers the cold hardy variety grapes and wine produced in the upper midwest.

Gems of the Vine

RAISE YOUR GLASS WITH CLASS
MAGNETIC WINE CHARMS
MADE FROM VINTAGE JEWELRY OR
CUSTOM MADE FROM YOUR OWN

AVAILABLE AT EYENIQUE VISION IN HASTINGS ONLINE AT WWW.GEMSOFTHEVINE.COM ON FACEBOOK AT GEMSOFTHEVINE
GEMSOFTHEVINE@GMAIL.COM 651-341-3331

The advertisement features a close-up photograph of several wine glasses with decorative charms hanging from them. The charms include a diamond ring and a necklace with blue gemstones. The background is dark with a glowing vine graphic.

Toast to The Arts in the Valley

The arts are a living organic part of the St. Croix Valley. All this energy culminates in the forming of supportive nonprofits who organize galleries, festivals and events. Here are a few:

River Falls

Community Arts Base CAB

Since 1996 CAB has sponsored such events as the annual Spring Art Gala, Music in the Park, CAB Barn Dances, Art on the Kinni, Main Street Art Crawl. Find them at Arts House, 108 E Maple Street. River Falls. www.riverfallscab.org

Art Reach St. Croix Art Reach is doing tremendous work in sharing and inspiring art in the Valley through classes, exhibits, sponsoring events and intern programs. The Galleries of Art Reach www.artreachstcroix.org features the work of local, regional and national artists in rotating exhibits. 224 N 4th Street, Stillwater 651-439-1465

Take Me To the River The last weeks in September art and nature explode in the River Valley and art organizers from Art Reach have invented a unique grouping of celebrations called Take Me To the River. For this multi town schedule of events visit the website www.Takemetotheriver.org

Hastings Prescott Area Art Council HPAAC

The Orange Dragon Art Gallery in Prescott is a small but sweet example of what HPAAC has invented. An annual tour of homes and gardens called Sanctuaries, concerts, workshops, scholarships and recently an artist loft space housing project on the river in Hastings being developed by nationally acclaimed Art Space are all inspired by the hard work of HPAAC volunteers. www.hpaac.org

Earth Arts: Artists of the Upper St. Croix

From a Spring Art Show to a Fall Salon Exhibition this nonprofit group inspires traveling the valley to enjoy talented artists along the way. www.earthartswi.org



More than a Daytrip.

Visit the Upper St. Croix Valley Long Weekends. Short Drive....

Less than ONE HOUR north of the Twin Cities there are spectacular landscapes, grandeur and adventure that awaits .

We are well known for outdoor recreational opportunities such as canoeing, kayaking, hiking, fishing, biking, and skiing. The area is chock full of gorgeous lakes, trails of all kinds, and of course, the breathtaking and scenic St. Croix River. There are four state parks, and one national park that guarantee you will see enough impressive and historic rock formations, cliffs and rapids to fill your camera and create a lovely scrapbook.

Come for the day. Stay the weekend. We are "More than a Daytrip".

TAYLORS FALLS, MN & ST. CROIX FALLS, WI

Visit us during the Falls Chamber Signature Events:

- Chamber Gala & Annual Meeting
- Falls Sampler
- Wannigan Days
- Music on the Overlook
- Christmas in July
- Ribfest
- AutumnFest
- Brat Feed & Pie Social
- Taylors Falls Lighting Festival
- Rivertown Holiday



Brought to you by



Taylors Falls, Minnesota & St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin

Choose Your Adventure



SLEEP TIGHT
and Relax



OUTDOOR
Adventure



SEE, DO
and Shop

Visit our website to plan your next trip.
www.thecroixvalley.com

The Art of Toasting

Offering a toast can indeed turn the simplest of occasions into a memorable event. Enjoying many unique settings in the St Croix Valley might inspire toasts and return trips. That is the wish of innkeepers, winemakers and brewmasters and Toast to the Valley hosts.

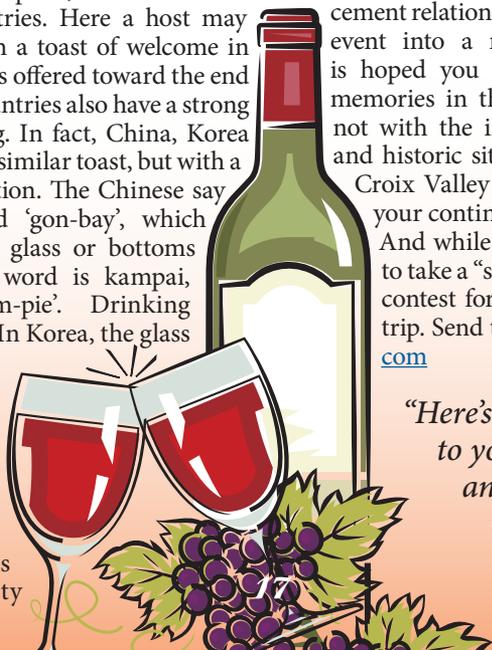
The History of Toasting: Did you know toasting started with the ancient Greeks who had an interesting habit of spiking the punch with poison?. Offering a toast was a gesture of good faith. The term toasting comes from the Roman practice of putting a piece of burnt bread into the goblet to mellow the flavor of the wine. In Olde England, a piece of toast bread was put into the bottom of the glass, and you drank until you got to it. A number of theories exist about clinking glasses with a toast. One theory is that by clinking glasses, you could slosh the poison someone may have put into your wine back into theirs. Another theory is that the sound of clinking glasses was thought to drive the evil spirits out of the spirits, making it safe to drink. Clinking could also be a way to make contact since we no longer all drink from the same bowl.

Toasting Traditions: The strongest and most formal toasting traditions are found in the eastern European, Germanic and Scandinavian countries. Here a host may begin the meal with a toast of welcome in addition to the toasts offered toward the end of a meal. Asian countries also have a strong tradition of toasting. In fact, China, Korea and Japan all have a similar toast, but with a different pronunciation. The Chinese say ganbei, pronounced 'gon-bay', which literally means dry glass or bottoms up. In Japan, the word is kampai, pronounced 'kahm-pie'. Drinking customs also differ. In Korea, the glass is emptied and the last few drops are shaken out, then it is passed to the guest and the host refills the glass. A glass is never refilled until it is completely empty

in Korea, whereas in Japan the glass is constantly refilled so it is never empty.

Toasting Rules: Never drink when a toast is offered to you. It's like applauding yourself. Nor should you stand. But afterwards, stand up and respond to the toast, even if it is only to thank the host for the toast. Never toast the guest of honor before the host does. In fact, no toasts should be made until after the host has had the opportunity. If half way through the dessert it becomes apparent that the host has no intention of offering any toasts, a guest may quietly request the host's indulgence to offer a toast. Never refuse to participate in a toast. While it is ideal to have saved some wine or champagne for the toast, it is perfectly acceptable to toast with a non-alcoholic beverage. Water is not suitable for a toast because it is bad luck according to superstition. It would be preferable to raise an empty glass.

And so a well-tendered toast is a gift that can cement relationships or turn an ordinary event into a memorable occasion. It is hoped you will enjoy many happy memories in the Valley. How can you not with the inns, wineries, breweries and historic sites to visit? Allow the St Croix Valley hosts to raise a glass to your continued return to the Valley! And while toasting, you might like to take a "selfie" and enter the photo contest for chance to win a return trip. Send to toast@innsofthevalley.com



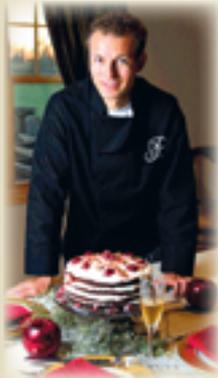
*“Here’s to us that are here,
to you that are there,
and the rest of us
everywhere.”*

Rudyard Kipling

Foodie Fun Festivals

Small town festivals are not very festive without the food. It is difficult to remember a festival weekend without conjuring up memories of our favorite food item and how somehow it tasted better because we were outside with friends and enjoying the sights and smells of a great small town festival. Listed here are a few perennials focused on food (they happen every year around the same time). But there are many more in the St Croix Valley. Check with the local chambers listed on page 4 for their full lists. Also like the A Toast to the Valley Facebook Page for notifications.

The Chocolate March reigns supreme for chocolate and wine lovers. Several Sundays in March, tour 3 or 4 inns (InnsoftheValley.com) and taste their chocolate specialties and a tour. Each Sunday also includes a historic site and a winery stop and tasting. In 2016, Sundays are March 6, 13 and 20. If you have a group interested in a private Chocolate March, arrangement can be made throughout the year and may include lunch. For groups, contact Kathy or Dan at Afton House Inn. For Chocolate March tickets visit innsofthevalley.com.



The Falls Sampler in the beautiful St. Croix Valley, traditionally held the first Friday in May. Celebrate spring with this tasting extravaganza. Twenty-five – and often many more - area restaurants, food shops, wineries, craft brews, bakeries, dairies, farms and orchards come together to offer a bounty of bites and satisfying sips. Great group outing – grab your friends and come fill up on the outrageous offerings. Visit fallschamber.org for details.

Ribfest, held the last Saturday in August, is a celebration all things barbecue. Succulent ribs that rival any you've ever eaten, regionally famous pulled pork sandwiches, scrumptious sides and more. This event gets bigger and better every year! Enjoy a plate and stay for the music! Visit fallschamber.org for more information.

Pleasant Valley Orchard in Shafer, MN, hosts a good old-fashioned **Brat Feed**, featuring mouthwatering chicken-apple brats and homemade apple pie the last Saturday in September. Orchard-grown apples and sumptuous sundries are for sale too. You don't need to wait until the Brat Feed to enjoy Pleasant Valley Orchard. They offer a full array of family orientated activities, bakery, pumpkins and gifts. Visit fallschamber.org for more information on the Brat Feed.

Beer and wine connoisseurs will not want to miss the **2016 River Falls Roots & Bluegrass Festival** on Friday, April 8th at the **3rd Annual Beer & Wine Tasting!** Attendees at this ticketed event can sample a variety of savory wines plus refreshing beers from local craft breweries including Rush River Brewing Company produced in River Falls. Visitors will want to stick around to enjoy 50+ hours of foot stompin' Bluegrass, Cajun and Roots music from regional and local artists at this free music weekend to find bluegrass music on every corner! www.riverfallsbluegrass.com

Bacon lovers looking for a 'baconlicious' event will want to attend **Bacon Bash**—the nation's largest free bacon festival. This free, two-day event—September 17 – 18—celebrates all things bacon and features bacon-inspired food booths, cook-offs, and pig-themed activities for the entire family. The Bacon Bash also includes live music, merchandise from local artists and the best craft beers in the area. To learn more visit www.riverfallsbaconbash.com or call (715) 425-2533.

B & B Inns that Serve Dinner

All Inns of the Valley inns include breakfast some even dubbed “breakfasts”, but a few also offer dinner. So in addition to starting a day with a most amazing experience, there is great benefit in ending the day with one of these delightful options. There is such variety in what they offer, thought it fun to explain. Guests staying at other inns and day-trippers may also reserve dinner here. From casual patio dining to prix fixe menus to dinner on the boat to themed dining experiences, lift your glasses to dining at the inn!

St. Croix River Inn Osceola - 715-294-4248 Enjoy some of the finest local cuisine in the awe-inspiring setting of the intimate dining room overlooking the St. Croix River. Featuring an innovative, five course, seasonal, prix fixe menu, utilizing local and organic fare. This is available Fridays and Saturdays only with limited seating and reservations required. Wine selections are available for pairing.

Water Street Inn Stillwater - 651-439-6000 “Charlie’s Restaurant & Irish Pub” at The Water Street Inn is an ideal location for indoor & outdoor dining along the St. Croix. Located at the foot of the lift bridge “Charlie’s” serves breakfast, lunch and dinner with menu options as varied as its surroundings. If looking to enjoy the sun try the patio bar, or for more of a formal menu the dining room or covered patio. The Pub offers live Irish Music every weekend.

Historic Afton House Inn Afton - 651-436-8883 Offering fine dining in the Wheel or Pennington Room, the Afton House Inn is one of few restaurants offering Tableside Cooking. Either may be reserved for a private event. Or enjoy a Tasting at Swirl Wine Bar and for casual dining try their CURRENT Restaurant. And in addition to these four wonderful options, the Afton Cruise Line serves meals catered by the Afton House Inn.

Outing Lodge Stillwater - 651-439-9747 The Outing Lodge’s theme events are unique experiences with one seating at specific dates. Imagine a several course dinner with a paired wine with each course at a rustic lodge at an elegant chef’s table in which all guests share the same meal. Their theme dinners include an Argentine Grill, a *Babettes’ Feast*, a Spring in Tuscany and a *Downton Abbey* Christmas with Sleigh rides. Quite simply it is divine dining.



A composite advertisement for Charlie's Irish Pub. The top left features a Jameson Irish Whiskey logo. The top center has the text "Charlie's Irish Pub" with a green shamrock logo and the website "charliesrestaurant.us". The top right shows a plate of food. The middle section is a collage of photos: a smiling man and woman, a bar scene with patrons, and an outdoor event with a large crowd. At the bottom, contact information "651-439-6000 101 WATER STREET S, STILLWATER, MN 55082" is displayed, followed by the text "• Live Irish Music Every Weekend • Indoor & Outdoor Dining".



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