

A Visitor's Guide to Rochester MN

Located in Olmsted County in the Southeast Corner of Minnesota, Rochester is often described as a city that has the sophistication of a larger metro area, but still retains that small town feel that many people love. The city has been near the top of many "Best Places to Live in the US" lists in the past few years, and with a population over 100,000, it is Minnesota's third largest city.

When planning a visit to Rochester, there are activities and points of interests to satisfy any sightseer. For those that want to spend the day indoors shopping, the Apache Mall is a popular location, along with extensive downtown shops and many well-known department stores spread throughout the city. Several indoor sporting and entertainment venues are available including a golf dome, indoor pools and ice rinks, all season sporting arenas, an Olympic quality National Volleyball Center, theatres and the multi-purpose Mayo Civic Auditorium.

For a visitor that is more interested in exploring the outdoors, Rochester has a Park and Recreation department that includes over 3,500 acres of parkland. Quarry Hill Nature Center provides educational programs and miles of hiking trails in both the summer and winter. In the autumn, the trees here definitely show the artistic talents of Mother Nature. Another popular attraction is Silver Lake Park, which offers a chance for relaxing strolls amid the beautiful Canadian Geese that enjoy Silver Lake year round. The Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial is also a popular destination. One of the finest memorials in the country, it was erected to honor those from Rochester and Minnesota who have served in the military throughout America's history.

Rochester is also home to the world-renowned Mayo Clinic. The medical center covers much of the downtown area and includes a number of both modern and historic buildings. Besides admiring the beauty and construction of these downtown buildings, there are also a number of historical sites throughout the city that hold significance to both the Mayo Clinic and the city itself. Guided tours of the Clinic and city are available.

After a day of hiking, shopping, or touring, Rochester offers a wide variety of restaurants to satisfy any appetite. Apart from the standard fast-food and bar and grill style restaurants, a number of international menus are offered as well, such as Mexican, Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Indian, Middle Eastern and African. Visitors can enjoy a smoke free meal, as well, thanks to Minnesota's Freedom to Breathe Act, which bans smoking in any indoor public area. As for nightlife, the city has a number of popular settings including but not limited to ballroom dancing, a comedy club, three multi-screen movie theaters, five live theatre stages and bars of every kind.

Accommodations are spread throughout the city, offering prices from affordable to exclusive in both the downtown area and the edges of the city. Many of the hotels also provide shuttles to the Mayo Clinic for those visiting for medical reasons.

Rochester, MN provides attractions and activities for any interests a visitor may have. The residents pride themselves on the ability to offer all they do while maintaining a friendly small town atmosphere. Visitors should attempt to experience as much of the city as possible in order to understand why so many people are proud to call Rochester home.

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About the Author

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