



Northwoods Vacation Activity Guide

Welcome to your Minnesota Resort Vacation!



From Paul Bunyan to the Mississippi Headwaters, from state forests to clear blue lakes, from craft villages and art fairs to bustling city scenes, Northwest Minnesota is full of interest, beauty and excitement.



Located in the heart of Minnesota's Northwoods, **Eagle Ridge Resort** offers a perfect mix of the serenity and adventure you're looking for when you come on a family lake vacation.

There's so much to see and do that it can be hard to plan for everything.

We know you won't do it all, nor should you.

In fact, sometimes the best plan is to do nothing at all.

It is your vacation after all.

However... between visits to the hammock, boat, or beach, you may want to get out and take advantage of all we've got to offer up here. In this itinerary we've done some of the work for you, to help you discover your favorite activities. No one is keeping score, and most things can be done any day of the week. So take a peek, star your favorites, and get ready for good times!

Saturday | Check-in



Unwind, stock up, eat well

Check-in at 3pm, and unwind from the drive. Explore the resort grounds and walk along the shoreline, or through our wooded walking trails. Each cabin comes equipped with all the necessary kitchen utensils and a BBQ grill, so you can menu plan and cook to your heart's content. For the camp cook in the group there are several grocery stores nearby. Blackduck Family Foods (13 mi.) is close, convenient, and near to gas, liquor, and other supplies. In Bemidji the employee-owned Lueken's Village Foods (18 mi.) offers high quality goods, a very large selection, and a full Deli. Harmony Natural Foods Co-op (18 mi.) sells locally-sourced, organic ingredients. On the north end of town you'll find several big box stores including the locally-famous L&M Fleet store, and of course there's always the good ol' Walmart for affordable groceries, pharmacy, and inflatable kiddie water wings!



Sunday | Golf



Hit the links, walk it off

Minnesota is the proud host of this year's Ryder Cup, and there's a reason major tournaments frequent the state. Northwest Minnesota offers over 50 golf courses to choose from, the beauty of northern forests adding more to the experience. Castle Highlands Golf Course, less than 6 miles away from the resort, offers terrific views and challenging play for golfers at every skill level. Located on Lake Bemidji, the Bemidji Town & Country Club (12 mi.) offers a golf course in pristine condition that was renovated in 2014. If your little ones would like to join in on the fun, Putt-N-Go (17 mi.) is a small, action-packed amusement park with a miniature golf course, go karts, bumper boats and a big water slide.

When you get back to the lake, think about loading the cooler and the family and taking the Eagle Ridge family-sized pontoon out for a relaxing evening cruise. The slow boat around the lake is a traditional family activity that's good anytime, but the evening cruise is something special. Be sure to listen for loons staking their claim out on the water.

Monday | Itasca Park



Discover the source, talk to the trees

Itasca State Park is a sacred spot to Minnesotans, where generations of families have made memories. Wake up early, pack your swimsuits and drive 52 miles north to the park entrance. Activities include:

- *Tour by car on the Wilderness Drive*
- *Walk across the Mississippi at its headwaters*
- *Ride the Chester Charles historic tour boat*
- *Ride paved bike trails (rentals available)*
- *Discover even more trails on foot*
- *Climb a fire tower for amazing views*
- *Visit the Jacob V. Brower visitor's center*
- *Dine at the famous old Douglas Lodge*



Itasca is a big park, filled with ancient trees, beautiful lakes, and well-kept trails. Facilities include modern interpretive centers and rustic log homes and lodges. Comfortable wooded picnic sites accommodate day trippers, and Itasca Sports rental office provides all kinds of land and water equipment right by the lake. Rent a kayak, paddleboard, or canoe—or bring your own. Wilderness Drive gets you to most scenic sites by car, including the Aiton Heights Fire Tower for a dizzying view from above the tree tops. The Bohall Trail and many others take you through old-growth pines. The world's largest White Pine and Red Pine are on the map and you can visit them. Eat at the Douglas Lodge. Take the two-hour Lake Itasca cruise on the Chester Charles II. See the sunset from Peace Pipe Vista or Preacher's Grove. Walk across the Mississippi River headwaters and make sure to get a photo! There's enough to keep you busy for days, so get your group together and drive over early, you'll be glad you did.

Tuesday | Fishing

Get a line in the water

In the land of 10,000 Lakes, it's no wonder that fishing is one of the most popular activities. Regardless of your experience, fishing has something to offer everyone. There's the connection with nature, the thrill of catching, the interaction with your loved ones, and (sometimes) the delicious fish to eat at the end of the day.

Gull Lake is a natural spring-fed lake with a great deal of

underwater structure for great fishing. It is one of Northern Minnesota's finest bluegill lakes, but also has significant populations of northern pike, walleye, largemouth bass, crappie and perch for your fish fry. You can bring your own boat, rent a boat and motor at Eagle Ridge Resort, or go take advantage of Eagle Ridge's guide service led by a pro. The fish cleaning station is located in the new utility building by the beach. Interested in fishing all week? Use your cabin as headquarters and visit a different lake every day. Public accesses in the area are easy to find and well-maintained. Whether you are dock-casting with the grandkids or hunting muskie, you'll find the fishing is good, and the company even better.



Wednesday | Visit Bemidji

First city, true north

Bemidji, known as “the first city on the Mississippi,” is a charming and beautiful Northwoods city that offers many attractions to keep you on the go all day. The downtown lies along the Mississippi river, between Lake Bemidji and Lake Irving. Visit early and walk the shoreline path. Stop for coffee along the way and sit outside to watch the sunrise over the lake.



Paul Bunyan & Babe the Blue Ox stand near the lake in Bemidji's Waterfront Park right at the end of 3rd Street downtown. Walk across the street to Big River Scoop for ice cream. Follow your eyes around town; you'll find art in the shops and on the streets. The Bemidji Sculpture Walk places dozens of sculptures throughout downtown every year. With art and craft shops like Yellow Umbrella and local clothiers like Bemidji Woolen Mills your souvenir shopping will be easy.



9 am - 12 pm

Have breakfast or lunch Downtown (try Minnesota Nice Cafe, The Cabin, or Tutto Bene)

Noon - 1:00 pm

Pick up ice cream at Big River Scoop and take a picture with Paul & Babe

1:30 pm

Visit the Chamber Building, the History Center or the Science Center

3:00 pm

Shop downtown (find maps in Waterfront Park and on kiosks around town)



Want to explore further out? There are several parks around the lake, including Lake Bemidji State Park at the north end, near the Bemidji Town and Country Club. You can rent canoes, kayaks, or sailboats at the Outdoor Program Center located in Diamond Point Park on the campus of Bemidji State University. Did you know there's a zoo in town? At Paul Bunyan's Animal Land on Hwy 2 East you can see and feed local and exotic animals up close. It's still a family-favorite.

Thursday | Wildlife watching



Familiar fins and feathers

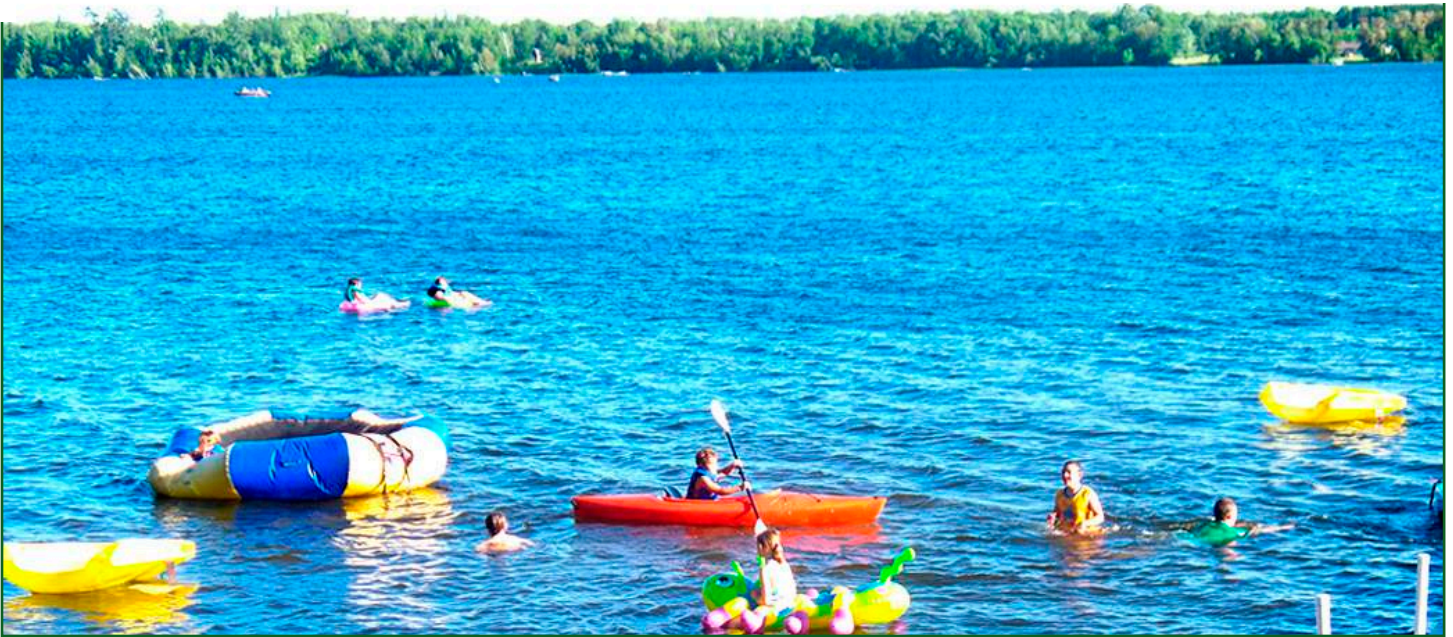
A pair of Bald Eagles return to their nest at Eagle Ridge every year. The nest is located less than 50 yards behind cabin 6, where you can watch them raise their young ones. In June you can see the adults bringing fish to the eaglets, and by August you can watch the first flights of those juveniles. In addition, you can walk through the trails behind the resort to observe over 50 different species of birds that have been identified by an ornithologist.



We've already mentioned the Eagle Ridge pontoon and the fun of a relaxing evening cruise. Why not take a daytime trip? Of course you can fish, but have you ever gone out to swim in the middle of the lake? Snorkel from your own "dive platform" and you may see fish below and fowl nearby. Picnic and swim and maybe even nap out there. Kids love this stuff.

When you get back, it'd be a perfect time to have a bonfire, eat some hot dogs, beans, and Jello salad, then make s'mores. Maybe some flashlight tag and card games afterwards. Perfect day.





Friday | Water Activity Wrap-up



Take it all in, come back again

It's the last day at the resort, and what better time to relax, stay close to the cabin, and enjoy more activities on the lake? Rent a kayak or canoe from Eagle Ridge and explore the 11.5 mile stretch of shoreline. Use us the last steaks and burgers by having a delicious daytime BBQ at the grill and picnic table available with each cabin. In the afternoon you can swim in the lake, balance on stand-up paddle boards, and play with various water toys. Cast off of the dock just for fun before putting the fishing rods away. Maybe take your favorite beverage to a lawn chair and just sunbath a while. If the new pontoon is at the dock take it out for another spin and soak up the rays in style.

It's your last day, so don't think too hard. Just kick back and enjoy. While you are packing things up for the drive home, take a moment to reflect on what you did this week. Maybe you'll want to record some of it. Now, start to get the family excited about what you'll do next year! The Northwoods will be here.

A stay at a classic Minnesota Lake Resort is a unique experience. Whether it's a new adventure for your family or a nostalgic return of generations, you'll find yourself loving summer in Northern Minnesota. It's a place like no other.

What will you do this summer?



Thanks for reading our 7-Day Family Resort Vacation Itinerary. We hope that it helps you get excited about everything you can do in the Minnesota Northwoods.



If you would like to find out more about vacationing in the Blackduck, Minnesota area, including Eagle Ridge Resort on Gull Lake, please contact **Janine or Mark** today by phone or email and we'll help you any way we can. Remember to think summer, smile, and plan now!

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