

# Adventuring into Hidden Valleys ~ Driving Tours

## So you're on your way to Wisconsin's Hidden Valleys . . .

- Rolling down the wide highway in your RV, bicycles strapped to the back, motorboat towed behind, coolers ready to chill the catch of the day.

- Leaning into those curves on a shiny Harley, wind in your hair and sun on your back, best friends keeping pace just behind you on the open road.

- Cruising in the family sedan, Rover and kids in the back seat, portable DVD players, license plate scavenger hunt, and lots of snacks. 'Are we there yet?'

Pick your favorite way to travel, and then head to the Hidden Valleys. This guide showcases the best of southwestern Wisconsin. Use the pull-out map at the center to plot out your own itinerary. Or if you're looking for some insider travel tips, we invite you to follow one of our driving tours. Of course you can set off from any location, but here are some "points of beginning" to get you started:

**FROM DUBUQUE, IA – GOING NORTH:** Take Hwys. 35 and 151 north. The drive north is an easy glide on the two-lane highway, through an area featuring farms tucked into the valleys and the horizon punctuated by the steeples of country churches. You're following Wisconsin's Great River Road on Hwy. 35/61 north toward **Dickeyville**.

Your first "must see" stop is the **Dickeyville Grotto**. At **Tennyson**, take Hwy. 133 west to Wisconsin's Catfish Capital, **Potosi**. Potosi's main street seems to go forever with no intersections, and the community is literally wedged between two bluffs leading to the **Mississippi River**. You'll get just close enough to the river to get a taste of what is to come.



Continue west, and see if you can identify the crops in the fields (hint: corn, soybeans, and alfalfa are common). And what do a railroad, an airport runway, and a river have in common? All are within about 150 yards of each other and set against the backdrop of a magnificent limestone cliff at the southern entrance to **Cassville's Riverside Park**. Stick around, you may see barges navigating here through one of the river's most narrow points. From Cassville, you can follow our **GREAT RIVER ROAD DRIVING TOUR** (starting at the southern end), found on pages 34 and 35. Or, take Hwy. 81 to Lancaster and follow a driving tour through the **HEART OF HIDDEN VALLEYS**, details on pages 56 and 57.

### FROM

#### **DUBUQUE, IA – GOING EAST:**

Take Hwy. 11 east toward **Sinsinawa**. Of course you expect to see cattle grazing on the hillsides, but what about dinosaurs? Shortly after crossing Hwy. Z, check out the prehistoric creatures on the right side of the road.

Continue on to the home base to 750 Dominican Sisters for more than 135 years. **Sinsinawa Mound** is your "must see" stop. Well actually, it is also a "must taste", with such specialties in the bakery as cinnamon bread, caramel rolls, and Irish soda bread.

At **Hazel Green**, follow Hwy. 11/80 north, and then continue on Hwy. 11 east to **Benton**. From Benton, join up with the **CHEESE COUNTRY DRIVING TOUR**, a tasty adventure through the countryside in Lafayette, Green, and Iowa counties. See pages 96 and 97.

#### **FROM MARQUETTE, IA / PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WI:**

You'll know you're in the right spot with your first greeting being an offer to buy fresh Wisconsin cheese curds. Right after crossing the **Mississippi River**, stop in at the **Prairie du Chien Regional Tourism Center** (staffed May thru October but open year round). Follow Hwy. 18 to **Bridgeport**, and then take Hwy. 60 east for a journey along the banks of the **Wisconsin River** – railroad tracks to your right



and limestone outcroppings and giant mounded bluffs to your left.

Turn left on Hwy. 131 to **Steuben**, and follow the **Kickapoo River** to the north. Your “must see” stop is on Hwy. 171 east at the scenic view overlooking **Gays Mills** - known as Apple Country - with fluffy white blossoms in spring, lush greenery in summer, and shiny red apples in fall. Your “must taste” opportunity is at any one of the apple orchards, with apples (obviously), apple cider, and even apple donuts! Return to Hwy. 131 north. Motorcyclists will welcome the winding curves, and all travelers will enjoy the gentle warm glow of the setting sun on the bluffs to the east. Travel north to experience the **BIKES AND BERRIES DRIVING TOUR**, pages 98 and 99.



**FROM LA CROSSE, WI:** Your official “must see” stop in **La Crosse** is **Grandad Bluff**. From 90 east, take the Hwy. 16 exit west, and travel south on Losey Blvd. Turn left on Main Street and wind your way up the bluff. From the parking area it is a quick

walk to the top. Carry in a picnic lunch and enjoy the view from the shelter.

On your way back down, turn right on Hwy. F (right in front of the Alpine Inn), and then go left on Hwy. 33 for about 2 miles to the scenic overlook of the **Coulee Region** – worth a stop day or night.

Further east, you may have to pause for an impromptu “cow crossing” when the herd ambles home for evening milking. In addition to lots of farms and fields, you’ll start to spot signs for Amish businesses offering furniture, bakery, candy, rugs, and baskets. You might even witness a barn raising along the way.

In **Cashton** (truly a rural community with a farm implement dealer right downtown), you can either proceed to the **BIKES AND BERRIES DRIVING TOUR** (see pages 98 and 99), or the **LAKES, TRAILS, AND STREAMS DRIVING TOUR** (pages 84 and 85) offering spectacular scenery in Monroe, Juneau, and Vernon Counties.

#### **FROM MADISON, WI – GOING SOUTH:**

Follow Hwy. 14 south toward Fitchburg, go west on Hwy. 92 to Brooklyn. Turn left on Hwy. 104, which is a straight drive south to Brodhead, and the beginning of the **CHEESE COUNTRY DRIVING TOUR**, pages 96 and 97.

#### **FROM MADISON, WI – GOING WEST:**

Follow Hwy. 18/151 west to Mt. Horeb – the Troll Capital of Wisconsin. Continue west toward Dodgeville. Or proceed a bit further on Hwy. 18 to our **HEART OF HIDDEN VALLEYS DRIVING TOUR** (pages 56 and 57) looping through Richland, Crawford, and Grant counties.

And our new tour helps you discover the best of **WINERIES AND VINEYARD TOUR** (road tour pages 24 and 25). Be sure to taste-test the luscious wines and beers of the Hidden Valleys area.

*Hidden Valleys - nine counties, hundreds of fun things to see and do, and thousands of memories waiting to be made.*

