

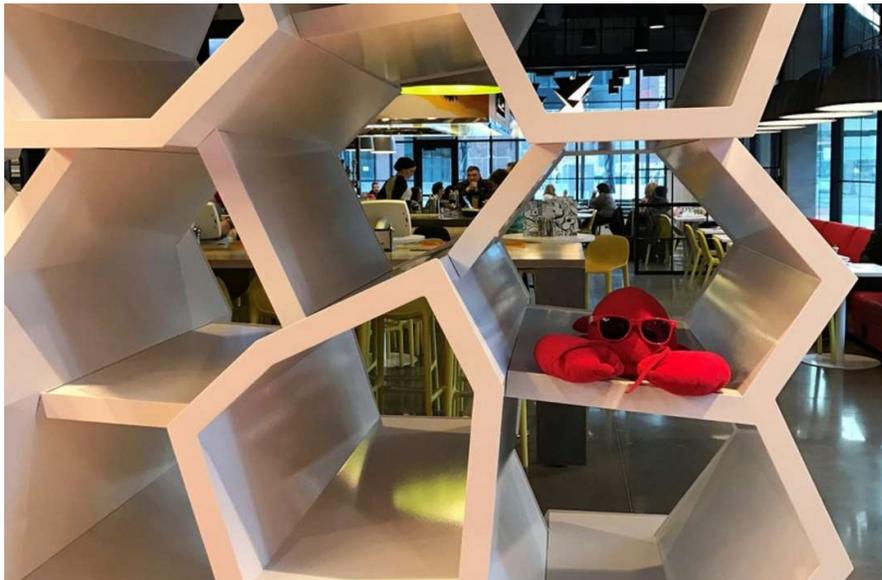


Tiffany Leigh, Contributor

Freelance Journalist - Food, Travel, Science

48 Hours in Minneapolis, Minnesota

03/09/2017 07:42 pm ET | Updated Mar 14, 2017



Minneapolis is a city that boasts plenty of urban charm and natural beauty. In fact, no other city has a chain of lakes, the mighty Mississippi in its backyard, and over 200 miles of terrain for walking, biking, and cross-country skiing. But if you're a bit of a city-slicker like myself, you won't mind wandering the streets for adventure: there are many great museums, theaters, and dining options to take advantage of. Here are my recommendations for where to stay and play:

Day 1

Stay - Radisson RED

Opened in November 2016, Radisson RED is a departure from traditional hotels and the primary reason why I wanted to try it out - it's different. This brand is trying to create a more relaxed environment — think of it as an upscale coffee house meets college dorm. I like that the rooms themselves aren't cluttered - in fact - they're pretty minimalist, and tastefully decorated with local art. Also handy: the feature where you can sync wireless devices (ipad, phone) up with the television and play e.g. Netflix off it. But perhaps the most interesting aspect to this hotel is that everything is done on the RED app. I'm personally a tad old-school, so if you're like me, there's a bit of a learning curve to this; besides, I don't mind checking-in with a real person. Despite the unconventional approach, even the most technologically challenged should be able

to download the app and use it to check-in, order food, and connect with other hotel guests to socialize via chat (if desired). It's a new, interesting concept and time will tell if the general populace will embrace it.



Wander - Paisley Park

About a half hour drive outside the city, many make the pilgrimage to Prince's Paisley Park in Chanhassen, Minnesota. Dubbed as a "mythical creative sanctuary", from the exterior, it looks like a very stark white, non-descript building. However, inside - there is 65,000 sq. feet of music recordings, clothing production, art work, graphic design, music videos, and full length films. Tours started very recently, in fact, just a few months after Prince's passing...but he is never far from his creative space - his ashes rest inside an urn located in the main hall. It is here where fans are able to pay their respects to this music icon. Even if you're not a fan of his work, a visit to Paisely Park is still a must - his contributions to the industry were immense - and for anyone seeking to appreciate the fine arts, this is the ideal place to do so.

Sip - Dangerous Man Brewing Company

If you've ever wanted to try mad-scientist concoctions (that work!) such as Chocolate Peanut Butter Stout, there's no better place than at DMBC. From coconut-milk stout to classic IPAs and pale ales, there's a brew for everyone here. This spot focuses on small-batch, quality beers. The taps are frequently rotating with the latest creations. If you're not chatting it up with the locals, then soak up the atmosphere: this taproom was once a bank; there are still remnants of it that you can spot including the original pillars and the iron bank door.

Eat - Young Joni

A few steps from DMBC is Young Joni. This is restaurateur Ann Kim's award-winning pizza spot; in fact, its chef was recently nominated for a James Beard Award for Best Chef - Midwest. Young Joni offers wood-fired pizzas, grilled meats and vegetables with dashes of global influences. For instance, the Korean Beef pizza offers fiery spices with grilled short-rib, and

nods to France with the Parisienne that features Gruyere, ricotta and brown butter. The flavours of East and West greet one another harmoniously in this casual neighborhood eatery.

Day 2

Wander - U.S. Bank Stadium

Although I I'm not a football fanatic, I can appreciate architectural beauty of the U.S. Bank Stadium, which is owned and operated by the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority; the multi-purpose stadium is home to the Minnesota Vikings. And what a grandiose stadium it is — it is a tour not to be missed— at 137,000 square feet, there are 66,200 seats available and six club spaces throughout the building. Personally, I love the art that is strewn throughout the space and pays homage to local talents. Also, when you're there, look out for the collage of helmets that showcases all the local high school football teams. In addition to hosting Super Bowl LII (2018), it also will be welcoming the Summer X Games (2017 and 2018), and the NCAAMen's Final Four (2019).

Eat - World Street Kitchen

The popularity of the World Street Kitchen food truck birthed the addition of a bricks and mortar operation. Created by brothers Sameh and Saed Wadi, World Street Kitchen is a local gem that features flavors from around the world – from Asia to the Caribbean and everything in between — the food here is colorful and flavorful. I highly recommend their Yum Yum Rice Bowls - opt for the caramelized lamb belly which features pickled cucumbers, daikon, and crunchy bean sprouts; it's juicy, succulent and hearty fare.

Party - First Avenue

Prince fans know that a tour of Minneapolis isn't complete without a visit to First Avenue and nabbing tickets to its backstage tour. The space itself is steeped in culture and history; from photos to literal writing on the wall, it is something people will get to see firsthand. Prince fans will relish all the places the man himself resided — from the green room to the stage, it's a bit of a game of Where's Waldo Prince which include his sets listed on A/V tape and his iconic symbol scrawled on the backdoor entrance to the venue. First Avenue remains the premier downtown music club to soak up famous and budding talents.