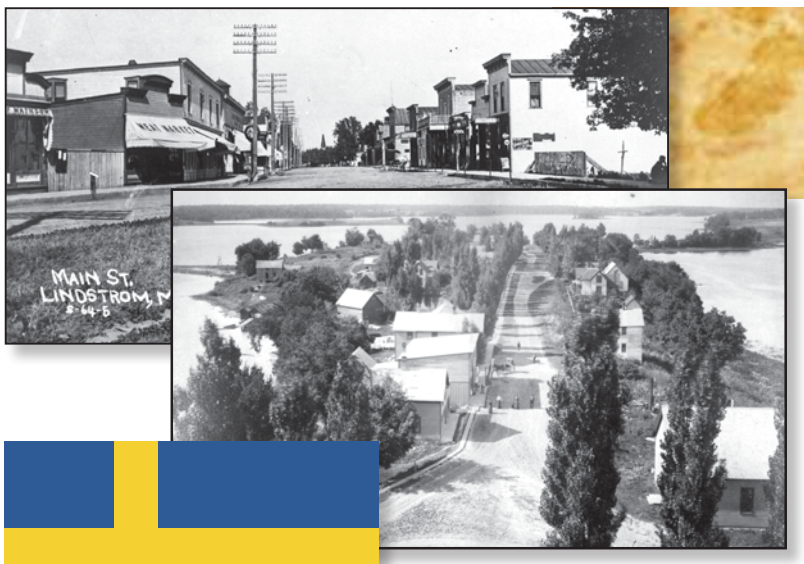
SWEDISH RING

69 Mile Swedish Experience

ST CROIX SCENIC BYWAY

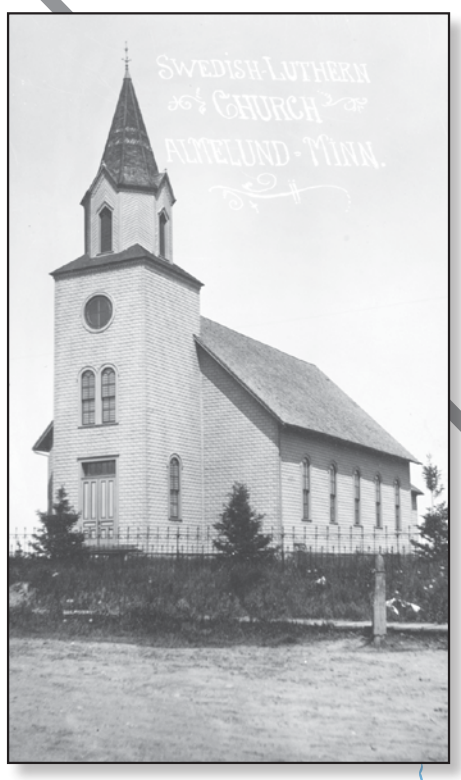


Main Street, Lindström, Minnesota Historical Society

View of Center City circa 1890, Minnesota Historical Society

The Swedish Ring Historic Backway highlights the Scandinavian heritage of this portion of the Byway. The Swedish Ring roads wind in and out of historic villages and settlement sites that pre-date the Minnesota Territory and State. While the outer Swedish Ring road is hardly circular, it presents a well-rounded Swedish immigrant experience and explores the contemporary Swedish heritage that grew out of those 19th century pioneer arrivals. The Swedish Ring has its roots firmly in the yellow/gold cross and blue of the Swedish flag.

The Swedish Ring Historic Backway departs from the Byway in Marine on St. Croix, the oldest European settlement site in Minnesota, takes Old Marine Trail to the site of the first Swedish settlement in Minnesota, travels through the beautiful Chisago Lakes area and the communities of Scandia, Chisago City, Lindström and Center City, turns north through rolling farmland to the Swedish community of Almelund, and makes its way back south along a segment of the Scenic Byway that leads to the old river towns of Franconia and Taylors Falls, from which many 19th century Swedish immigrants, after arriving by riverboat, set out on foot or by wagon to stake a claim to land on the American frontier as they pursued a new and better life in America.



Almelund Swedish Lutheran Church, Minnesota Historical Society

The Swedish Ring roads were selected to guide appreciation for Swedish heritage experiences that date from the 1850s, or even earlier, and continue to this day. The Ring route is a way to retell important immigrant arrival stories and to reveal the triumphs and travails the American frontier had in store for these early pioneers. The Swedish Ring experience is also devoted to highlighting traditions passed down from earlier generations, and to telling simple stories that are emblematic of Swedish immigrant families. Finally, to complete the journey, the physical Swedish Ring route leads back to a point of logical beginning, Scandia, site of the first Swedish settlement in Minnesota.

Swedish Ring Driving Summary: The south end of the Swedish Ring Historic Backway route departs from the St. Croix Scenic Byway at MP 35.4 in Marine and embarks on a 69-mile long ring road drive that highlights the Scandinavian immigrant heritage of the area, and winds its way to the west of the Byway through the beautiful Chisago Lakes area and the communities of Scandia, Chisago City, Lindström and Center City, turns north through rolling farmland to the Swedish community of Almelund, and makes its way back south along a segment of the Byway that leads to the old river towns of Franconia and Taylors Falls. A shorter option is also provided via a Pleasant Valley Road connection from Center City, which shortens the Swedish Ring drive to 49 miles, thus creating a southern "half" Ring route that returns visitors to the City of Scandia, as does the longer route. Please refer to Map Legend on p. 1

12 Almelund
16
95
16
12
North Center Lake
North Lindstrom Lake
37
9
10 Lindstrom
11 Center City
8
82
8
South Center Lake
25
Pleasant Valley Rd
Franconia Trail
14
Franconia Historic District
Taylors Falls 13
St. Croix River
26
7
6
Glader Blvd.
Chisago City
9
South Lindstrom Lake
24
Chisago Lake
25
95
16
8
23
23
26
Pleasant Valley Rd
91
Lofton Ave
25
Green Lake
95
8
Chisago Co.
Washington Co.
95
3
Lofton Ave
97
97
97
4
5 Scandia
3
St. Croix River
3
2
William O'Brien State Park
1 Marine on St. Croix

Top photo: Karl Oskar and Kristina Sculpture, Lindström, photographer Bill Neuman

Bottom photo: Vilhelm Moberg Sculpture, Chisago City, photographer Bill Neuman