Welcome to the 2026 Tour of Minnesota

"Official Rider Guide"

(mostly) everything you need to be in the know for the bike tour

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Introduction/History

Formerly known as the Klobuchar Ride, or "Jaunt w/ Jim", this bike tour was started in 1974 by Jim Klobuchar, the well-known columnist for the Star Tribune newspaper in Minneapolis, MN. After 39 years of organizing the ride, longtime rider, Bob Lincoln, was asked by Jim to serve as the leader of the ride in 2014 and it was renamed the Tour of Minnesota (aka TOM.) In 2021, assistant director, **Doobie Kurus**, transitioned into the **lead director** role, supervising a team of over 35 paid/volunteer staff. In 2024, we celebrated our 50th Anniversary.

The Tour of Minnesota has three main objectives, set forth by Jim Klobuchar himself:

1. Visit out of the way small towns and vistas.
2. Enjoy the heritage and culture of those towns.
3. Bring economic development to the local businesses.

General Schedule

(for full itinerary, see Appendix A)

June 13 (Day #0) Meet up (that evening) at Wheeler Park in N. Mankato and camp

June 14 (Day #1) bike ride and camp in N. Mankato

June 15 (Day #2) bike ride in N. Mankato, camp in Albert Lea

June 16 (Day #3) bike ride and camp in Albert Lea

June 17 (Day #4) bike ride in Albert Lea, camp in Faribault

June 18 (Day #5) bike ride and camp in Faribault

June 19 (Day #6) bike ride in Faribault, then head home!

On **Saturday, June 13 (Day 0)** people make their way to our starting location at **Wheeler Park** (402 Page Ave. N. Mankato) for **event check in from 4:15-5:30 p.m. or from 7:00-9:00 p.m.** We will have our **"welcome and safety meeting" at 5:30 p.m.** Dinner this night is on your own, and we encourage you to enjoy one of the numerous restaurants in the area. Camping is available in Wheeler Park Saturday and Sunday night, or you may choose to find your own overnight accommodations.

Daily announcements, including any updates/changes to the route will be relayed either verbally, through signage, or through texts (via the Remind app). **Rest stops, sweepers, and SAG support are based on a 7:15-8:15 a.m. start time.** If you choose to leave before/after this time, please realize that you may be unsupported. The "sweepers" (volunteer riders that ride at the back of the group) head out at 8:15 a.m. each morning.

Typical Daily Schedule:

6:30-8:00 a.m. breakfast served

7:15-8:15 a.m. riders head out on the route. Be safe and have fun!

Riders return to camp after each day's ride. A shower truck will be available. Lunch is ON YOUR OWN each day. On Mon. and Wed., people will drive to the next host city, set up tents/go to a hotel, and enjoy the evening entertainment/activities.

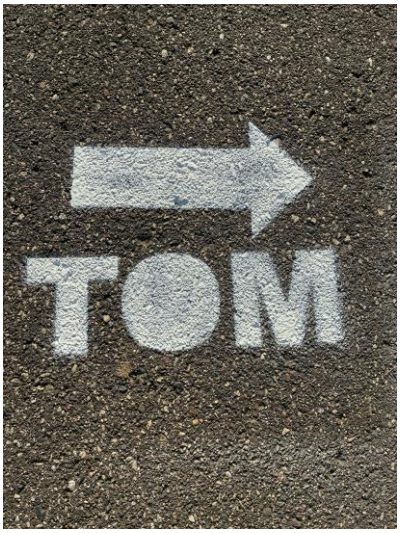
5:30-6:30 p.m. dinner provided (Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings)

7:15 p.m. optional Q&A (in camp)

What to Pack

While each person tends to have certain items that they like to bring with them on bike tours, there are some basic items you will probably want. See Appendix B for a sample packing list of items you may want to consider, especially if this is your first time on a bike tour. Since you will be transporting your own gear, you can bring (almost) whatever you want, like a lawn chair, a cot, a shade canopy, or even a second bike.

Route



In 2025, we tested out a different format, by where we stayed overnight for 2 nights in 3 different host cities. The results were extremely positive, and we will continue with this format in 2026, visiting N. Mankato, Albert Lea, and Faribault for 2 days each. This allows people to spend less time setting up/taking down their gear and more time enjoying our host cities. Don't worry though! We will have a brand-new route each day of the tour, including shorter options too.

The route is marked with **painted white arrows** (see photo L) on the ground ~100 feet and ~20 feet before any turns and a confirmation arrow ~20 feet after a turn. Unless you see our white arrows assume you are continuing straight. We will provide digital PDFs of the **maps and directions** that you can use to print off your own paper copies, as well as access through the **Ride with GPS app**. Note: Due to revisions, side excursions, and any detours, "your mileage may vary!"

Rules on the Road

While on the TOM, we require that our riders/participants follow some important safety rules:

1. You MUST wear an ANSI-approved biking helmet at all times while on your bicycle. This includes even when you are taking short rides, like testing out your bike after an adjustment from the bike mechanic or riding from your tent to the bathroom. It is the first question our insurance person will ask!
2. You MUST ride as close to the right side of the road as safely possible except for when you are about to make a left turn.
3. Riders may ride 2 abreast, but no more than that. Pace lines are allowed, but we ask that you limit them to smaller groups of 6-8 riders.
4. You MUST obey all traffic devices and signage (including traffic lights and stop signs), lest be subject to penalty by the local authorities. In MN, you are allowed to "roll through" stop signs, but NOT stop lights.
5. Call "ON YOUR LEFT" to alert a rider you intend to pass, as you should only pass from the left side. The call "CAR BACK" passes the message forward when a vehicle is approaching from behind. Use your arm to indicate turns by pointing left or right. Point out hazards to those behind you. Signal your intention to stop.
6. When crossing roads, refrain from announcing "ALL CLEAR" or "CLEAR", as by the time others get to the same spot, it may no longer be safe anymore.
7. We will have 3-5 SAG (support and gear) vehicles out on the route each day we have scheduled rides. The SAG vehicles can offer transport in the event your bike becomes inoperable or unsafe. SAG vehicles are NOT for transporting riders because they are feeling tired. If transported by a SAG vehicle, you may need to remain with the vehicle until the driver is able to

return to the day's final destination. Please bring spare tubes with you on your bike each day.

8. Should any incidents occur while riding, or anywhere during the TOM, we ask that you help the individual(s) get to a safe place, **contact the main SAG vehicle**, and wait with them, if necessary, until assistance arrives. Please refrain from offering medical attention, advice, or diagnosis. Also, due to basic health data privacy laws, **DO NOT discuss details** with anyone besides TOM staff.
9. A basic first aid kit will be available at all rest stops and in all SAG vehicles. Realize that our staff can only offer the first aid kit. Due to liability and biohazard risks, they cannot perform any first aid actions other than calling for professional medical support should it be deemed necessary.

Meals and Rest Stops

The Tour of MN is known for feeding its riders well. Your registration includes breakfast every day and 3 dinners (1 in each host city) throughout the week. Lunch will be ON YOUR OWN each day. See Appendix A for more specific meal information. Our menus will offer a vegetarian and a "gluten-friendly" option. Any special dietary requests beyond that are your responsibility. We also offer complimentary snacks, water, and electrolytes at the rest stops. Along the routes and in the towns we visit, there will be opportunities to purchase additional items from the various businesses and restaurants.

Overnight Accommodations

Each night of the tour, we offer a complimentary group location for outdoor camping in tents, usually at a local school or park. This is a great way to get to know other riders. Most people bring their own tent, sleeping bag and mattress. Amenities include access to bathrooms/portapotties, showers, and a covered electrical charging station. Note: We are not responsible for theft or damage.

However, if you are not interested in pitching your own tent, we have a couple of other options for you to consider (additional cost involved.) Indoor camping is only offered if severe weather is expected. Luggage is transported by you all week.

Tent & Porter Service

For a fee ($275), you get a "4-person size tent" (for up to 2 people to share) that our staff set up/take down, daily towel service, access to a shade area, chairs, charging station, and complimentary n/a beverages/snacks while in camp. If you want a mattress, you can either grab one of ours (10" thick Intex twin size) or bring your own. We will have air pumps available for you to inflate it yourself to your liking.

Hotels/Motels

We have reserved a block of rooms at one hotel in each host city. See appendix C. You may also choose to stay at a different hotel, a B&B, a rental by owner, a friend's/family member's home, etc. Note: You need to transport your own luggage.

Miscellaneous Items

Bike Mechanic

Tonka Cycle & Ski of Minnetonka, MN will once again be the official bike support for the Tour of Minnesota. Luther and Joseph will be our mechanics for the week. Be sure to stop by the Tonka Cycle tent each day to top off your tires, get adjustments made, or have repairs done while on the tour. Note: The service is free, but you are expected to pay for any parts needed. Please have your bike inspected, tuned up, and repaired prior to riding the TOM, as Luther and Joseph will have limited time during the tour. Also, **remember to bring extra tubes, or even a tire**, especially if you have something more unique. Luther can keep it on his truck during the week. If you want to **ship your bike**, contact Tonka Cycle to arrange that in advance, and Luther can bring your bike to the starting host city and reassemble it if needed. Mention the Tour of Minnesota.

E-Bikes

Pedal assist e-bikes (types 1 and 3) are allowed. We simply ask that you be responsible for maintaining a proper daily charge and for getting from one destination to the other on your own, even if one's bike is out of power. We will have an e-bike charging station in camp. NOTE: **There is a $25 (payable upon check in) fee** to use our designated e-bike charging station for the week ($10 for a 2-day-sampler.)

With that, welcome to the 2026 Tour of Minnesota!

Doobie Kurus

Tour Director

www.tourofminnesota.com

Appendices

Appendix A: Itinerary

(subject to change) updated November 5, 2025

6/13 **DAY #0 (Saturday) North Mankato**
Check-in (4:15-5:30 or 7:30-9:00 p.m.) Wheeler Park (402 Page Ave, N. Mankato)
Dinner: **ON YOUR OWN**
Welcome & Safety meeting at the campground (5:30 p.m.)
Camping: Wheeler Park (402 Page Ave, N. Mankato)

6/14 **DAY #1 (Sunday) North Mankato**
Breakfast: at campsite
Rest stop #1: Minneopa State Park (54497 Gadwall Rd, Mankato)
Rest stop #2: Good Thunder City Park (Miner St, Good Thunder)
Camping: Wheeler Park (402 Page Ave, N. Mankato)
Dinner: at campsite

6/15 **DAY #2 (Monday) North Mankato and then Albert Lea**
Breakfast: at campsite
Rest stop #1&3: Anchor Bar & Grill (301 Main St., Madison Lake)
Rest stop #2: Sakatah State Park (50499 Sakatah Lake St Park Rd., Waterville)
Camping: Freeborn County Fairgrounds (1105 Bridge Ave, Albert Lea)
Dinner: **ON YOUR OWN**

6/16 **DAY #3 (Tuesday) Albert Lea**
Breakfast: at campsite
Rest stop #1: Bob Hanson Park (104 Main St, Clarks Grove)
Rest stop #2: Frontier Family Farm (21463-700th Ave, Albert Lea)
Camping: Freeborn County Fairgrounds (1105 Bridge Ave, Albert Lea)
Dinner: at campsite

6/17 **DAY #4 (Wednesday) Albert Lea and then Faribault**
Breakfast: at campsite
Rest stop #1 Bohemian Brick Hall (17509-850th Ave, Glenville)
Rest stop #2 Glenville City Park (Glenville)
Camping: Rice County Fairgrounds, (1814-2nd Ave NW, Faribault)
Dinner: **ON YOUR OWN**

6/18 **DAY #5 (Thursday) Faribault**
Breakfast: at campsite
Rest stop #1: Sechler Park, Sechler Park Rd., Northfield)
Rest stop #2: Hirdler Park (15100 Gary Ave, Shieldsville)
Camping: Rice County Fairgrounds, (1814-2nd Ave NW, Faribault)
Dinner: at campsite

6/19 **DAY #6 (Friday) Faribault**
Breakfast: at campsite
Rest stop: Sakatah State Park (50499 Sakatah Lake St Park Rd., Waterville)

Good job! Safe travels!

Appendix B: Packing List

Shelter and bedding

- ☐ Tent (w/ all poles, stakes, and rain fly)
- ☐ Tarp or a sheet of plastic
- ☐ Rope (doubles as a clothesline)
- ☐ Sleeping pad, mat, or air mattress
- ☐ Blanket or sleeping bag
- ☐ Pillow (or pillowcase filled w/ clothes)

Bike Gear

- ☐ Bike
- ☐ Helmet
- ☐ Extra tubes
- ☐ Chamois cream
- ☐ Simple tool kit
- ☐ Rear view mirror
- ☐ Biking shorts (3-4 pairs)
- ☐ Long biking shorts or leggings (1 pair)
- ☐ Biking jerseys (3-4)
- ☐ Biking shoes
- ☐ Neck gaiter/buff
- ☐ Windbreaker

Clothing and laundry

- ☐ T-shirts (4-5; 1 long sleeve)
- ☐ Shorts (2-3 pairs),
- ☐ Long pants (1-2 pairs)
- ☐ Socks (4-5 pairs)
- ☐ Hat (fleece one for cool nights) and, or cap
- ☐ Sweater, jacket
- ☐ Underwear (4-5 pair)
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Towel and/or washcloth
- ☐ Laundry bag
- ☐ Travel-size packets of laundry soap,
- ☐ Rain jacket or umbrella
- ☐ Shoes and/or sandals/flip-flops

First aid & hygiene

- ☐ Medications, prescriptions
- ☐ Aspirin, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.
- ☐ Feminine hygiene products
- ☐ Sunscreen, sunburn lotion, or ointment
- ☐ Scissors, tweezers, nail clippers, razor
- ☐ Bug spray
- ☐ Bar of soap
- ☐ Shampoo and conditioner

Miscellaneous

- ☐ Ear plugs (for snoring tent neighbors)
- ☐ Some cash (just in case)
- ☐ Personal identification/insurance card
- ☐ Charger (charging block) for your device(s)
- ☐ Sunglasses (or prescription glasses)
- ☐ Flashlight (extra batteries)
- ☐ Folding chair, shade canopy, cooler, whatever really

Appendix C: Hotels

We have 20 rooms reserved each night at one hotel in each of the 3 host cities. They are on a first come, first reserved basis by calling in to the specific hotel and mentioning the Tour of MN. This helps you get the prices quoted below, as well as helps us reach our room minimums. If you are unable to reserve a room at one of these hotels, or simply would prefer to stay somewhere else, that is totally fine but totally on you to research and vet further.

Saturday, June 13 and Sunday, June 14 (leaving Monday morning June 15)

Hilton Garden Hotel (20 Civic Center Plaza, Mankato)
(507) 344-1111 Use this LINK to book

King Room OR Double Queen Room: $181 plus tax (Sat. night) and $119 plus tax (on Sun. night)

Monday, June 15 and Tuesday, June 16 (leaving Wednesday morning June 17)

Country Inn & Suites (2214 Main St, Albert Lea)
(507) 373-5513

Double Queen Room: $120 a night plus tax

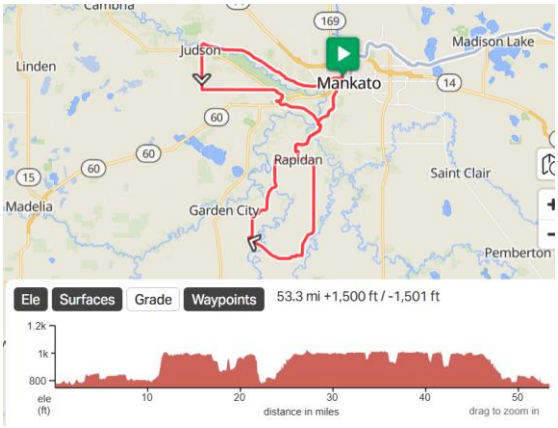
Wednesday, June 17 and Thursday, June 18 in Faribault (leaving Friday morning June 19)

Grandstay Faribault (1500-20th St. NW, Faribault)
(507) 334-2888

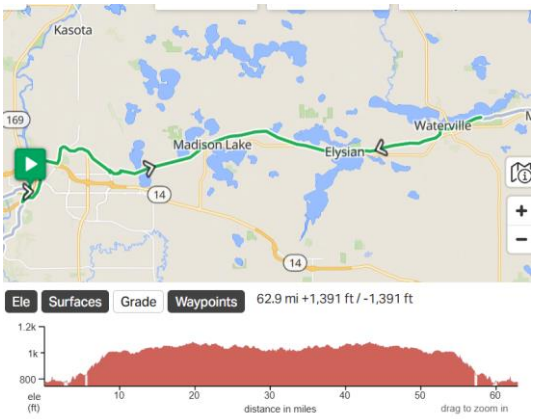
King suite (w/ kitchenette): $115 a night plus tax

Appendix D: Routes

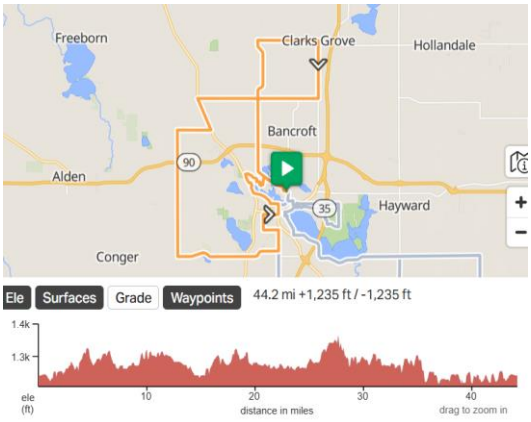
Day 1 (26 or 52 miles)



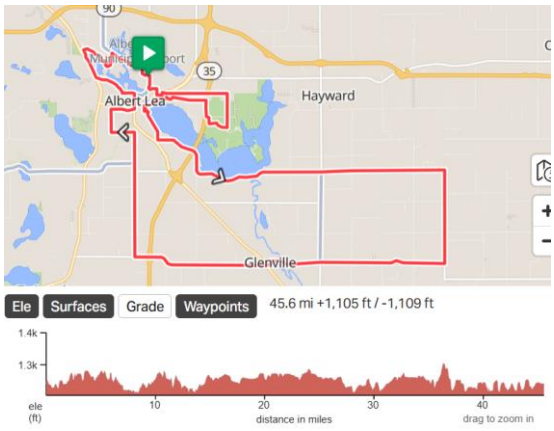
Day 2 (32 or 64 miles)



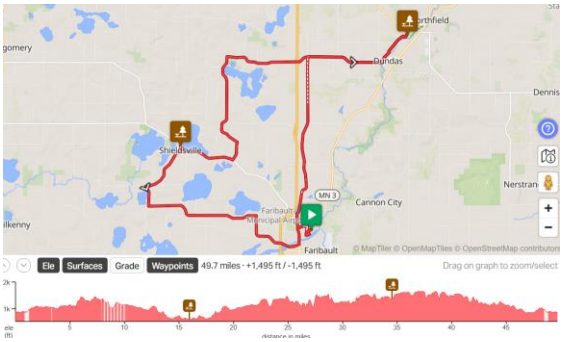
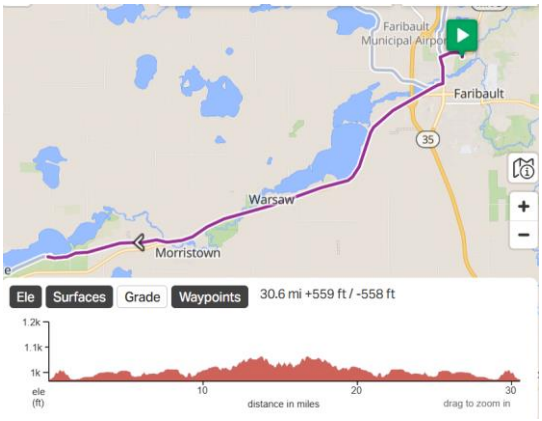
Day 3 (22 or 44 miles)



Day 42 (26 or 46 miles)



Day 5 (31 or 47 miles)



Day 6 (31 miles)