go west

It’s easy to drive into Duluth and head straight for the big lake, never realizing the mix of wild and urban offerings in the city’s great western half. There are countless ways to spend an afternoon or entire vacation — boating, biking, hiking, dining and more.

EXPLORE THESE SHORES

At the westernmost tip of Lake Superior, Duluth forms the cusp of two distinct coastlines: the rugged, rocky North Shore and the sandy beached South Shore. Here, the world’s greatest lake spills into historic harbors fed by an estuary unlike any in the Great Lakes.

StLouisRiver.org lists places to pick up an On-The-Water Guide for Paddlers & Boaters, an invaluable source for understanding the natural and cultural history of the lower St. Louis River.
On the Mountain
Spirit Mountain, a winter wonderland and hub for summer thrills, also offers one of many access points to the Superior Hiking Trail—a section with stunning ridgeline vistas like Bardon’s Peak and Ely’s Peak, and tromps through old growth forest.

In the Valley
Hunt historic neighborhoods for signs of iconic public works projects—from Miller Creek in Lincoln Park to Kingsbury Creek near the Lake Superior Zoo, whose 16-acre grounds are home to hundreds of native and exotic animals.

Sports Fans
Take in a ballgame at the vintage Wade Stadium, a WPA-era structure where you feel the bygone glory of America’s favorite pastime. Or visit the Duluth Heritage Sports Center, a former iron factory that’s now a hockey and soccer hub—with adjoining restaurant, bar and concert venue.

Hit the Road
Go for a drive on Scenic Highway 23 to discover a cluster of river neighborhoods with historic charm and abundant natural beauty.

The Western Waterfront Trail offers a perfect bird-lover’s day hike. It’s also the start of the Willard Munger Trail, a 70-mile paved stretch considered among the most scenic bike routes in Minnesota.