



Bde Maka Ska Lake



Lake of the Isles



Cedar Lake Canal



Cedar Lake

Points of Interest: Bde Maka Ska Self Guided Paddling Tour

Just a hop-and-a-skip from downtown Minneapolis, Bde Maka Ska, Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, and Brownie Lake offer smooth water for paddling. With views of the Minneapolis skyline and some of Minneapolis' nicest homes, there's a lot to see while paddling the Chain of Lakes, which are part of Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park and a popular destination in the Minneapolis Park System.

Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park

The Chain of Lakes span through Minneapolis and includes four of the largest lakes in Minneapolis: Lake Harriet, Bde Maka Ska, Lake of the Isles, and Cedar Lake. The lakes are connected by 13 miles of paved walking and biking paths along the shoreline, and all but Lake Harriet are connected with water throughways. Motorized boats aren't allowed on the city lakes, which makes paddling the perfect way to explore the natural beauty of the lakes.

Bde Maka Ska

Bde Maka Ska is the largest lake in the Minneapolis area. This scenic body of water is part of the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway, connecting with Lake of the Isles on the northeast, Cedar Lake and Brownie Lake on the northwest, and Lake Harriet on the south. The north end of Bde Maka Ska, west of the boat dock is where you'll find the connecting waterway to Lake of the Isles. After passing under two bridges, you'll know you have reached Lake of the Isles when you see the two-forested islets the lake was named after.

Lake of the Isles

As a paddler, you cannot walk on the islands, since they are strictly protected wildlife refuges, but you can get a good glimpse of them. Over a hundred migratory birds visit or spend their summer on the Lake of the Isles islets, including the mallard duck, Canadian goose, and the great blue heron. If you are patient, you may see the elusive night heron or horned grebe along the island's shore. Paddle west to get to the bridge, where there are patches of lily pads.

Cedar Lake

Cedar Lake tends to be quieter than the other lakes, which makes it photogenic as well. In the fall, trees bordering the lake turn a vibrant yellow and reflect from the still water like in a painting. Thousands of native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs and trees have been planted. Reclamation projects are restoring the landscape and providing new habitat for wildlife.

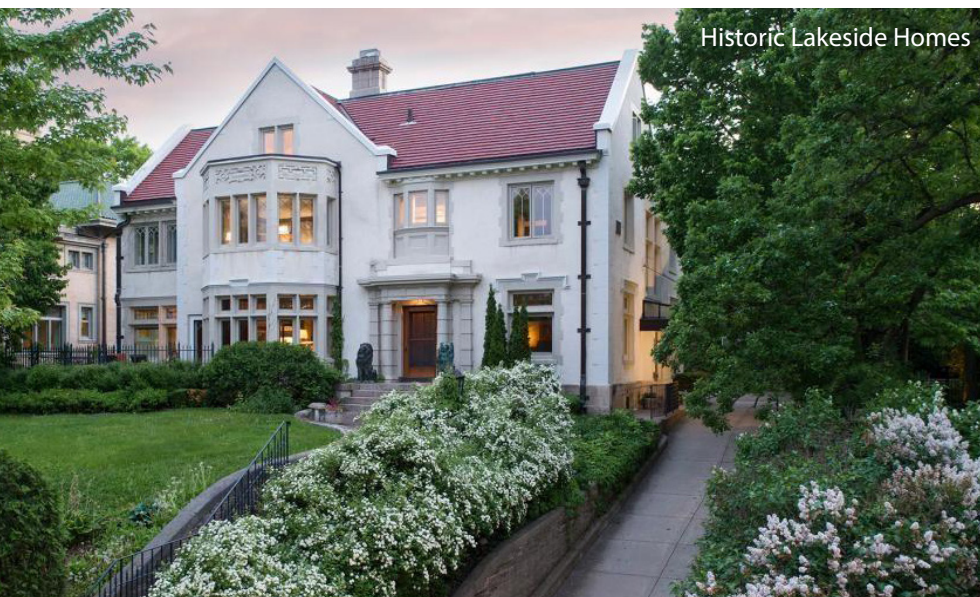
There are three official swimming beaches at the lake, Cedar Lake East Beach, Cedar Lake Point Beach, and Cedar Lake South Beach.

History

From 1829-1839, **Bde Maka Ska** was the site of the Bde wákhathuŋwaŋ Dakota agricultural village known as Heyate Otunwe. A plaque on the east side of the lake commemorates the mission station built by Samuel and Gideon Pond. On the west side is The Bakken, an old mansion with medicinal gardens and a library and museum devoted to medical electricity and the history of electromagnetism. The Como-Harriet Streetcar Line operates between the lake and Lake Harriet.

Lake of the Isles was named for small islands that used to exist in this wetlands area, and it was used from the early days of settlement. Along the shoreline are the historic and stately houses of the Kenwood, Lowry Hill, and East Isles neighborhoods.

Just west of downtown Minneapolis, **Cedar Lake** is situated within the banks of an ancient riverbed that eventually became the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes. Until about 1980, the huge railroad yards that dominated the north and east sides of Cedar Lake ceased operations.



Historic Lakeside Homes



Great Blue Heron



Muskie






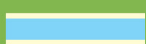




Loon with Chick



Safe Paddling

- Wear a life jacket.
- Make sure you understand rules and training, before starting tour.
- Don't forget comfortable clothing, sunscreen and water.
- Alcohol is not allowed.

3 Tour Routes

-  **Starting Point**
-  **Bde Maka Ska: 1.5 - 2 hours**
-  **Lake of the Isles: 45 min - 1 hour**
-  **Cedar Lake: 45 min - 1 hour**
-  **Optional Route**
-  **Swimming Allowed Beaches**
-  **Area Off Limits**
-  **Restroom**

Total time for all 3 routes:
approximately 3 - 4 hours

