

*It's All About The Journey...*



ONE MILLION STORIES • ONE HUNDRED CULTURES • ONE ROAD

# *Media Menu*

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# About This Project

"ONE MILLION STORIES. ONE HUNDRED CULTURES. ONE ROAD. HIGHWAY 51"

Highway 51 is the ribbon that ties the north and south, creating a link between the people of Highway 51, and a pathway for travelers to explore the many cultures, cuisines and nostalgia of mid-America.

This promotion will encourage travelers to linger on Wisconsin's Highway 51, stopping to explore as they go along. The real appeal of Highway 51 is the road trip, the meandering journey from small town to small town, going wherever your fancy takes you. The leisurely pace of this journey encourages overnight stays, as the traveler sinks into the feel of their location, learns the quirks and routines of each portion of the highway, ventures into the roadside diners for breakfast or takes in the fish fry and country music concert at the VFW. These places are not found whizzing along at 65 miles per hour. They are spotted, like items in a travel bingo square, as you travel from one community to the next.

The idea to promote Highway 51, similar to The Yellowstone Trail and Route 66, had its birth in Louisiana several years ago. After meeting with representatives from each of the six states that are home to Highway 51 the project took on life and grew. Each state has started to take stock, research and rediscover Highway 51's history and future. These ideas were distilled into a common purpose and focus at a recent meeting in Memphis. It was at this national meeting that Wisconsin assumed the lead in the creation of this promotion.

## Components of this project include:

**WEBSITE ([www.ExploreHwy51.com](http://www.ExploreHwy51.com))** This website will focus on Wisconsin's stretch of Highway 51. It will contain information on the communities, current events, cultures, attractions, and history. We will also include downloadable items to draw the traveler into the Highway 51 experience.

The downloads will include car games, maps, escort notes, and eventually recordings that immerse travelers into the culture through storytelling and music. The car games can be brought along for the kids to play while traveling. The escort notes will add depth to the travel experience with tales from history, local quirks to look for and music to travel by. They will also act as further encouragement to not just drive by, but experience life along Highway 51. As the project progresses we will be able to include verbal histories, local interviews and more.

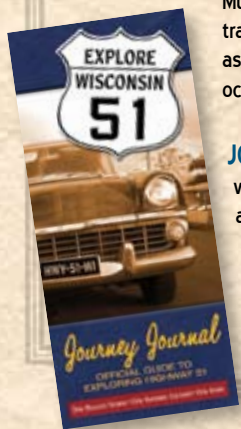
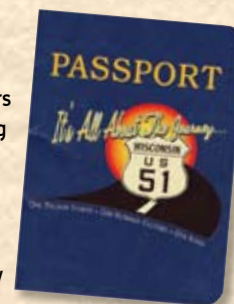
Additional states will be added as they develop their program. These separate websites will be tied together through a national portal. This will increase the visibility of the Wisconsin site, as well as the project as a whole. Much like [www.portalwisconsin.org](http://www.portalwisconsin.org), this portal will allow travelers to easily direct their searches to specific interests, as well as present opportunities that had not previously occurred to the traveler.

**JOURNEY JOURNAL** This map will include the route as well as information about the destinations. This will act as our main fulfillment piece and will also be available along the route at various attractions, restaurants, hotels, and destination marketing organizations. There will be 50,000 copies of the Journey Journal available.

**PASSPORTS** These will be available to travelers from participating Wisconsin communities along Highway 51. At a designated site (or several sites) the traveler can stop and have his or her passport stamped by a special stamp designed by each entity. A completed passport form can then be turned in to be entered into a quarterly drawing for destination packages.

**"BEST OF" CONTESTS** Posters at locations along the highway will encourage travelers to vote for their favorite accommodations, cuisine, architecture and more found on Highway 51. Posters with mail in forms will be placed in restaurants, service stations, visitor information sites, hotels and attractions. Travelers will also be able to vote on line at [www.ExploreHwy51.com](http://www.ExploreHwy51.com). Certificates and publicity will be given to winning entities each year.

**GEO-CACHING SITES** This is an exciting new way to use your GPS Unit to explore the country. Caches (a container with items from the area) will be placed within each community. The cache's coordinates will then be put onto the local websites, as well as the state website. Within each cache will be a disposable camera to allow "geo-cachers" to document their find and the photos can then be placed on the websites of the communities and state, and even the national project. The provision of these coupons for travelers will be one way for local entities to become involved in the project. A notebook for comments from "geo-cachers" to leave comments will also be included at each cache site.



# Entrées

All of our entrées come complete with fantastic dining, comfortable accommodations, unique shopping opportunities and, of course, a warm Wisconsin welcome.

## *Beloit*

Combine a lively riverfront, a friendly, historic downtown, beautiful Beloit College and Class A baseball, top it off with first rate events like the fresh Farmer's Market, Heritage Days, the music stages of Riverfest, or the pure joy of playing in the snow at Winterfest and you've got a delightful visit to Beloit.

## *Janesville*

Wisconsin's Park Place offers 2,000 acres of parkland, 25 miles of hiking/biking/cross country ski trails, 13 area golf courses and 20 acres of botanical gardens. Janesville features 10 historic districts and a quarter of Wisconsin's buildings on the National Register of historic places, including The Lincoln Tallman House.

## *Edgerton*

Start with a turn of the century R.R. Depot—add an Art Pottery & Porcelain Museum in the old baggage room and you have a fine base for this charming small town dish. On the side, see the boyhood home of Sterling North, where, in 1918, 11 year-old Sterling lived with his "ringtailed wonder" pet raccoon RASCAL.

## *Stoughton*

A charming blend of history, beauty, and culture with the scenic Yahara River generously ladled through the center of town, and sprinkled with the beauty of Lake Kegonsa State Park nearby. The Downtown is filled with the spirit and traditions of the prominent Norwegian heritage. Savor a walk through the streets decorated with Norwegian flags, as well as some Norwegian rosette cookies or traditional lefse.

## *Madison*

This is a triple decker sandwich of history, culture and fun so big you'll wish you could take some home. So many things to choose from, but remember to leave room for the basics, the Capitol Square and State Street, the University and of course, the lakes. Appetizers could include Olbrich Gardens, a gallery tour, or even a trip to the zoo, still free and still fabulous.

## *Portage*

History is a main course in Columbia County! Since 1673 Portage has been known for its rolling hills, quiet countryside and gorgeous waterways. Take in a full helping of history at the Indian Agency House Museum, Fort Winnebago Surgeon's Quarters, Portage Canal and more.

## *Marquette County*

It's all about the presentation, and in Marquette County nature shows her best! Come and explore the thousands of acres of woodlands and marshes that Naturalist John Muir called home. Add a side visit to a prairie plant nursery, buffalo or miniature horse ranch.

## *Waushara County*

Nature and history will fill your travel appetite in Waushara County. If fish is what you crave, visit one of our 100 lakes, wade into our 150 miles of trout fishing or visit the state's largest and oldest fish hatchery. Top off your visit with a trip down the Ice Age Trail.

## *Stevens Point*

Getting to the center is the best part, when it's nestled amidst an abundance of green space and waterways, highlighted by cross country ski trails, numerous biking trails or a game of golf. This dish is dotted with art and culture with just a hint of beer from the our own brewery. The "Point" is... to have a great getaway!

## *Wausau*

Wausau's mix of flavors would make even Emeril Lagasse jealous. From the red hot spots of The Woodson Art Museum, ArtsBlock, Rib Mountain State Park and Whitewater park; to the cool adventures of Granite Peak Ski Area, Nine Mile Recreation Area and Lake Wausau. Don't forget to feed your craving at one of our great festivals throughout the summer!

## *Merrill*

Echoes of a rich logging history flavor this beautiful city wrapped around the Wisconsin River. Savor the crisp, clean air as you enjoy nature or a historical stroll, and top it off with a visit to our many charming and unique shops.

# Entrées

All of our entrées come complete with fantastic dining, comfortable accommodations, unique shopping opportunities and, of course, a warm Wisconsin welcome.

## *Tomahawk*

A beautiful small town of 3,700 nestled in the Northwoods of Wisconsin where three rivers converge. Tomahawk has a rich history of being the natural vacation destination for all seasons. We are proud of our natural resources, and we invite you to explore our lakes and extensive trail system. Here, you will notice a friendly and relaxed small-town community with a unique spirit that has all the major amenities of a larger city.

## *Minocqua*

Abundant water sports liberally mixed with shopping, museum-going, mini-golfing and go-karting, not to mention a wide variety of land based recreation form the basis of this rich vacation dish.

## *Manitowish Waters*

Surrounded by state forest and crystal clear lakes, you can savor this platter of four season outdoor recreational activities seasoned liberally with cultural and historical resources like the John Dillinger exhibit at famous Little Bohemia. We've Got It All in Manitowish Waters!

## *Hurley*

The spot "where 51 ends and the fun begins." Hurley offers the visitor a spicy mix of year round outdoor recreation, luscious scenic beauty and rich "Wild West" roots. Finnish cultural accents and mining history add a nice twist to this dish.

# On The Side

To add a little extra spice to your trip, choose one or more of these side dishes to sample.

## *Geo-caching*

Try the latest craze in combining modern technology with a good old-fashioned scavenger hunt. Geo-caching is the sport of finding a hidden treasure using a GPS (Global Positioning Scanner) and coordinates you get from a website. For Highway 51 geo-caches, visit [www.explorehwy51.com](http://www.explorehwy51.com).

## *Wild & Wacky Sites*

Ever had a tickle to see the world's largest penny? A museum full of angels? Or maybe take a ride on a miniature train. Sample our generous servings of wild and wacky fun all along Highway 51.

## *Make Your Own Manufacturing Tour*

Take a brewery tour, learn about mining or making cars. If you have a yen to learn, we'll set you up.

## *Cultural Sampler*

One hundred cultures, and all of them waiting to be discovered. Ethnic, avocation or passion, choose a culture to explore and we can help you find it. Art, history, and contemporary clans brought together by a common interest all share the space along Highway 51.

Discover more about these tasty treats at [www.ExploreHwy51.com](http://www.ExploreHwy51.com), or call 866.HWY-51-WI.



# Appetizers

Some newsworthy tidbits about Highway 51.  
Sprinkle liberally throughout publications to whet a travel-ready appetite.

## "ONE MILLION STORIES. ONE HUNDRED CULTURES. ONE ROAD: A SHORT HISTORY OF HIGHWAY 51"

It began as the dusty trail followed by the pioneers with their oxen carts. As towns were settled and travel increased it became Route 10 (Wisconsin was the first to number its highway system,) connecting Beloit to Hurley and beyond. When the rest of the nation numbered its highway system in 1924, Highway 51 debuted. Today this highway connects not just cities, but the people, culture and stories of Mid-America, from Hurley, Wisconsin to La Place, Louisiana.

In 1947 Highway 51 became part of the "Silent Cross Highway," which was created to honor all soldiers, living and dead, of all wars in which the United States of America has engaged. The cross was created vertically by Highway 51 and horizontally by I-94 to Madison and then over to LaCrosse or Prairie du Chein. Unfortunately this legislation only existed on paper. The Silent Cross was also part of the nationwide Blue Star Memorial Highway, and markers were placed along Highway 51. These markers are located at the beginning, middle and end of the highway. In Beloit the marker is located in Riverside Park and in Hurley it can be found at the intersection of Third Street and Highway 51. The middle plaque, located at the halfway point of Highway 51, is being refurbished and will be placed once again in Rothschild in the near future.

Highway 51 has been immortalized in song by Bob Dylan's version of "Highway 51 Blues," (written by Curtis Jones) and many blues singers such as Bill "Jazz" Gillum and JW Warren. For many the highway became representative of rambling around and of the Great Migration of African-Americans from the south to the north.

Chris Consani pays homage to the highway in his artwork, Highway 51. It features legends James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Humphry Bogart and Elvis Presley at the Five and Dime. This artwork can be found as posters (with neon and LED lighting) and has been made into puzzles.

In Wisconsin, Highway 51 has been a part of "heading north for the weekend" since its birth. No matter the season the road is filled with travelers enjoying the many cultures, cuisines and quirks of the heart of Wisconsin.

From Beloit to Hurley this road is all about the journey.

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## "THE WILD AND WACKY SIDE OF HIGHWAY 51"

In the 1996 movie, *Michael*, John Travolta played an angel come to earth to do a good deed. As he traveled by car across mid-America from Iowa to Chicago with his three human companions, Michael demanded a stop at the world's largest ball of twine. It is perhaps a universal human trait, or even, as some screenwriters would imply, simply universal, to want to see the unusual; the biggest, the smallest, the most bizarre. This gentle curiosity is the reason people stand in line at Graceland, put their hands in the impressions in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre, and climb the stairs to stand in a giant Musky's mouth in Hayward, Wisconsin.

Highway 51, the highway that stretches through Wisconsin from Hurley at its northernmost point to Beloit, before it continues on through five other states and fetches up outside of New Orleans, has a wealth of unusual spots to attract the back roads traveler. From the home of Miracle the Buffalo in

Janesville to the world's largest penny in Woodruff, unusual statues and sites can be found along the route including several giant cows and one pink elephant (DeForest).

In Madison visit the Cress Funeral Home to see Sam Sanfillipo's stuffed animal displays, including squirrels playing poker and a chipmunk girly show. Looking for something a little more metaphysical? Michael would be sure to include a visit to the Angel Museum in Beloit, and of course in Stoughton he would stop in at Deer Park's authentic Tibetan temple.

So while Highway 51 is loaded with culture, history, great dining and beautiful scenery, it is also home to those things that make us a little bit more human, the funny and weird spots that link us to the divine creativity in everyone.

**Want to experience Highway 51 yourself? Contact us to set up a personalized tour!**

# Contacts

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