

MY PHOTOGRAPHY LIFE Road Trips Part 9

Stillwater, Minnesota



Starting in the autumn of 2011 my roommate and I decided to take some road trips. We would do some short one-day trips. We first went nearby to Stillwater, Minnesota which is about 30 miles east of Minneapolis right up to the Wisconsin border on the St. Croix River. This bridge crossed from Stillwater into Houton, Wisconsin. I photographed the famous historical vertical-lift bridge in Stillwater and boats along the St. Croix

River. Recently the bridge was updated to a new modern bridge. The new St. Croix crossing is east on Minnesota highway 36 into Houton, Wisconsin. The old historic bridge as you see in the photograph was recently converted to a bicycle and pedestrian bridge. I am glad they kept this historic bridge.



Redwing, Minnesota

During the summer of 2012, another trip Mike and I planned to southern Minnesota was Red Wing, Minnesota which is known for Red Wing boots and shoes, the historic railroad station, and Barn Bluff. We hiked up Barn Bluff and I took numerous photos of the landscape. It was a combination of forest and rock. If you go completely to the top at 340 feet high, you can view the entire city of Red Wing and the Mississippi River.



I always wanted to photograph the historic railroad station. The most photogenic railroad station in southern Minnesota. It was built in 1905 by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad. Its services were open to both passengers and freight.



The Lake Superior Project

One day while on the bus to go to work I was reading the magazine, *Outdoor Photographer*. In that magazine an article caught my attention about a photographer who photographed the circumference of Lake Superior. His photography was all in black-and-white and covered all four seasons. I thought that this would be a very gratifying photographic project. Since I did not have a car at this time, I decided to ask my roommate if he would be interested in taking some trips around Lake Superior. If he supplied the wheels, I would pay for many of the expenses. He

Minnesota



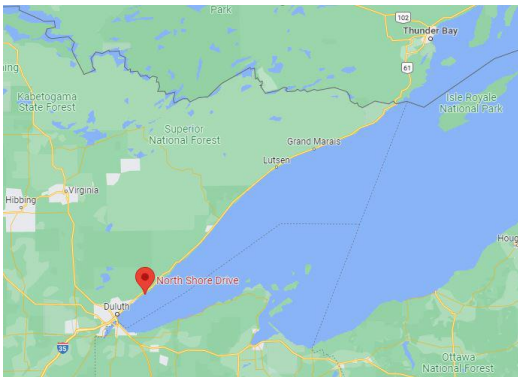
thought it would be a great short-term vacation. He would even bring his small digital camera along to take some photos too.

Lake Superior in Northern Minnesota Duluth

Since Mike and I lived in Minnesota we wanted to first become more familiar with our home state. We decided to drive up to the city of Duluth. In July of 2014 we drove up to Duluth, Minnesota. Duluth is the fifth largest city in Minnesota and is known for its shipping. Lake Superior is what built this city. Duluth is known for its aerial lift bridge which is part of Canal Park downtown. Canal Park has a museum of early maritime history. I took photos of the aerial lift bridge as you see here which is a major landmark in northern Minnesota. At Canal Park I took a



wide-angle view from the shore of Lake Superior showing the Duluth North Pier lighthouse in the background at the end of the dock.



North Shore Drive

We left Duluth to drive farther north on what is known as the picturesque North Shore Scenic Drive into northern Minnesota on highway 61 which stretches all the way from Duluth overlooking the shore of Lake Superior into Canada. There is a lot to see on this drive along Lake Superior. You have the Lake itself which is the largest of the Great

Lakes. The famous Minnesota Hamm's Beer television commercial would use film footage of Lake Superior advertising Hamm's the Beer from the "Land of Sky-Blue Waters." As you can see the water is blue.



Gooseberry Falls

One of the most photogenic waterfalls in Minnesota is on Lake Shore Drive and is known as Gooseberry Falls. I have sold license rights to this photo I took of Gooseberry Falls many times. It is like a postcard shot of this famous landmark. I use a polarizing filter to make my blue skies pop. You just can't get that effect in Photoshop; it must be done in the camera. The

following year July 2015 I returned with my tripod and made a very long exposure of the falls with a special 10-stop neutral density filter which slowed down my exposure to 25 seconds at f/22 with ISO 200. I like the effect on the moving water. In Photoshop I converted this photo to black-and-white which I thought would enhance the photo. I slightly blue toned it.



Split Rock Lighthouse



Driving north on the Lake Shore Drive from Gooseberry Falls you can see one of the most famous landmarks in Minnesota known as the Split Rock Lighthouse which sits on a 130-foot cliff on the edge of Lake Superior. It is my favorite landmark in Minnesota. Once again in October of 2014 we went back to northern Minnesota to photograph Lake Shore Drive in the autumn. Here is the same view taken with the same lens but in autumn. I have sold rights and prints to the autumn image far more than the summer image. I also made a black-and-white interpretation of an autumn image which was a horizontal which I brown toned in Photoshop. I had a customer from Fine Art America who bought that and had it mounted in a brown wooden frame.



Grand Marais



Our next stop on the North Shore Drive would be in Grand Marais. The main attraction to Grand Marais is Lake Superior and its harbor. We saw many sailboats docked here. My roommate had reserved a motel eight miles north of Grand Marais on North Shore Drive. We stayed there a couple of days. Right across the highway was the shore of Lake Superior. I spent some time on this shore just walking around and taking photos. The lake side view from this motel was very pictorial. After sunset I got some beautiful colors in the sky. My camera of choice was my Nikon D90. I had just purchased a new ultra-wide angle zoom, a Tamron 10-24mm f/3.5-f/4.5 zoom lens. To get this photograph I used a tripod and a shutter speed of $\frac{1}{2}$ second at f/8 with an ISO of 400. The zoom setting was 10mm.



The northern skies of Minnesota explode with bright stars at night. On a clear dark night in northern Minnesota, you may not be able to see your hand in front of your face, but if you look up to the skies—you see bright stars shine like diamonds in our Milky Way galaxy. When I saw the stars and the Milky Way, I knew I had to photograph the sky. I grabbed my Nikon D90 with my new Tamron 10-24mm f/3.5-f/4.5 lens. I set the back of the camera on the sandy shore of Lake Superior. I wanted as wide of an image I could get of all the stars, so I made sure my zoom lens was set at the widest at 10mm. I set my ISO at 3200 since I needed that speed and my



aperture had to be wide open at f/3.5 to get an exposure and my shutter was set for 30 seconds. This is a nice shot of the Milky Way Galaxy. In Photoshop I converted the image to black-and-white which I prefer.

Since I am a photographer and a space enthusiast, I want to make a comment here about why the astronauts on the Moon could not photograph stars along with the other astronaut and the lunar lander and other apparatus. I just told you above that I was photographing the night sky which I had to use a 30 second exposure at a high ISO of 3200 and a wide-open lens at f/3.5. When the astronauts were on the Moon it was daytime, and the sun was very bright. The exposures that the astronauts were using were like what you use on a bright day here on Earth. Those exposures would have been so short that you could not possibly see any stars if there were stars visible. So here is a bit of information that you can share with your friends that believe we never went to the Moon. Every photographic hobbyist knows this basic fact about photography.



When we were in Grand Marais most of the time spent was at the harbor. We saw many sailboats come and go. All the activity here seems to be on the water. Grand Marais is a great tourist stop, especially if you're into boat sailing. In the harbor is the U.S. Coast Guard Station of North Superior. I photographed this area and uploaded



the image of the Coast Guard Station, and I began to get many downloads of this image and still do today. To me the photo wasn't very artistic, but it made a lot of sales.

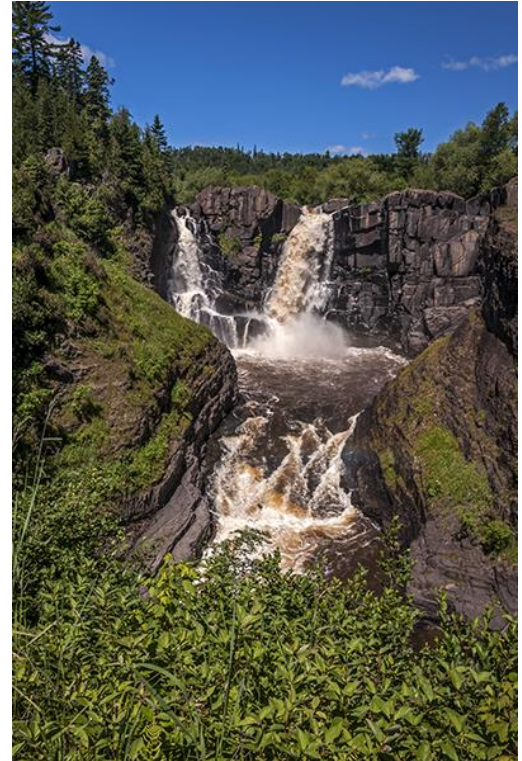


Grand Portage



We finally made it all the way north on North Shore Drive. Driving farther north would bring us into Ontario, Canada. We found that Grand Portage was not really a town. It has a lot to offer though. It is where the Grand Portage National Park is located. We went into the park to photograph Minnesota's highest waterfall, known as the High Falls, which is on the Pigeon River. The water from High Falls drops from a 120-foot cliff. See the photo on the right. High up where I photographed this waterfall you can see Canada in the distance.

Besides the Grand Portage National Park there is the National Monument which also has a museum inside and is an historic place where fur trading took place. Entertainment is big here since it is way out of the way many people come here to have fun. There is the Casino which draws people and at least three fine restaurants. There is a lounge for banquets, meetings, weddings, etc. You can go hiking through the park and there are many snowmobile trails.



New Photo Equipment

Before I get into the trips we took to Wisconsin and Michigan I want to mention some new photo equipment that I bought for the trips. The first item I bought was a Tamron 10-24mm f/3.5-f/4.5 ultra-wide angle zoom lens which I have previously mentioned. This lens would help me expand space in landscapes so I could show more detail in the foreground.



I wanted to buy another camera body that had a larger pixel count. I decided to buy the Nikon D7200 which has an APS crop sensor like the Nikon D90. Besides being 24.2 mega-pixels, the camera had larger files. I would then use my Nikon D90 as a backup camera.

To complete my photographic kit, I needed a longer lens to pull in faraway scenes and objects. The NIKKOR 18-105mm f/3.5-f/5.6 kit lens that I bought with the Nikon D90 does not reach that far. I needed a long telephoto zoom lens to complete my basic kit. At an economical price I found the Nikon NIKKOR 70-300mm f/4.5-f/5.6 zoom lens. Nikon did have a slower lens in that focal length, but I wasn't going to go slower than f/4.5-f/5.6 since I could afford it. The lens also has vibration reduction (VR). This allows me to hand hold this lens at slower shutter speeds. The VR for this lens is in two modes, one for normal and the other mode for active. The active mode is for shooting in a moving vehicle.



Tamron 10-24mm f/3.5-f/4.5
Ultra-Wide Angle zoom



NIKKOR
70-300mm f/4.5-f/5.6
ZOOM



I always liked macro photography. I wanted to buy a dedicated macro lens. I bought a NIKKOR 60mm f/2.8 macro lens. This lens became one of my favorites. I would use it for not only macro images, but it is a sharp lens for still life. A couple years later I would use it to photograph items for selling on E-bay. When I moved to Arizona it was stolen, but I was able to buy a new one.

I had bought other accessories and the 10-stop neutral density filter that I used for slow exposures during the day. I like to use this filter to slow down the exposure when photographing a waterfall. I bought a backpack type of camera bag to help keep all my gear in. In 2015 I upgraded my photo website through Squarespace. I also picked a new domain name so lonniepaulson.com was no



more. My new domain and website with Squarespace is lonniepaulsonphoto.com. I still have that website. I had changed my operating system on my computer, but I could not get a new driver for my photo scanner. I had to buy a new photo scanner. I bought the Epson Perfection V550 Photo flatbed scanner. I still have it. It can scan both 35mm film and medium format up to 6x9cm along with reflective copy.



I always wanted a copy stand. A copy stand is not only used to photograph flat two-dimensional photographs and documents but also can be used when you want to photograph something at 90-degree angles. Instead of setting up your camera on a tripod and pointing the tripod down to the floor you simply can put your camera on a copy stand which is already set up.

I was photographing the Twin City area and adding those photos to my files in hopes of offering them as stock photography. I got an e-mail from a local company that does art displays. The name of the company is Art Partners Group, and they work out of St. Louis Park, Minnesota. Art Partners saw a couple of my Twin City photos on Fine Art America. However, they said they needed larger prints than Fine Art America could print. Art Partners contacted me for license rights of two of my images. I offered the two One-Time managerial photo rights for \$200. They told me to send an invoice and they paid from the invoice.

With the money I decided to buy a copy stand. I saw one I liked at West Photo in Minneapolis which was already assembled, so I bought it. It was an RPS Studio Copy stand. I added a small Manfrotto tripod head so I could adjust the angle. I have used the copy stand numerous times.



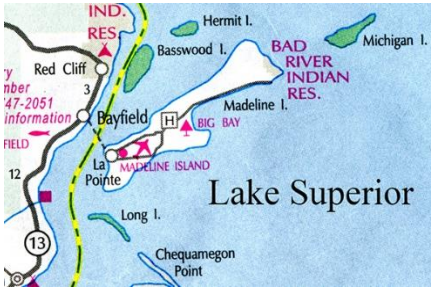


Wisconsin Bayfield

Continuing with the Lake Superior project, here is where we went in northern Wisconsin. In the fall of October 2015, we decided to get some fall colors in northern Wisconsin by the shores of Lake Superior. We stayed at Bayfield, Wisconsin. It also had a harbor that was not too active in the fall. We were amazed how colorful the leaves are in Wisconsin. I believe Wisconsin has the most beautiful fall colors in the Midwest.



Although it was late in the tourist season, we wanted to see Madeline Island which is the largest of the Apostle islands near the northern tip of Wisconsin. My roommate



drove his truck on a ferry boat, so we took the boat from Bayfield into Madeline Island. When you get off the boat you enter the city of LaPointe where the harbor is but there isn't much going on in town in October when we were there so Mike said we



would return in the summer. The island was very scenic. Mike drove all around the island; I think we got lost. A lot of colorful autumn trees. We almost had an eagle fly into the windshield of the truck. We drove more than an hour till we found ourselves back at LaPointe to catch the next ferry back to Bayfield.

Bayfield is known for their many independent restaurants. There are no fast-food restaurants



here. The city will not let them in. You have a choice of very good quality dining. Since they are right on Lake Superior, they have a lot of freshwater fish on the menu. All the restaurants have what I thought was a strange or eccentric appetizer on the menu. Bayfield, Wisconsin is the only place I heard that you could order white fish livers as an appetizer.

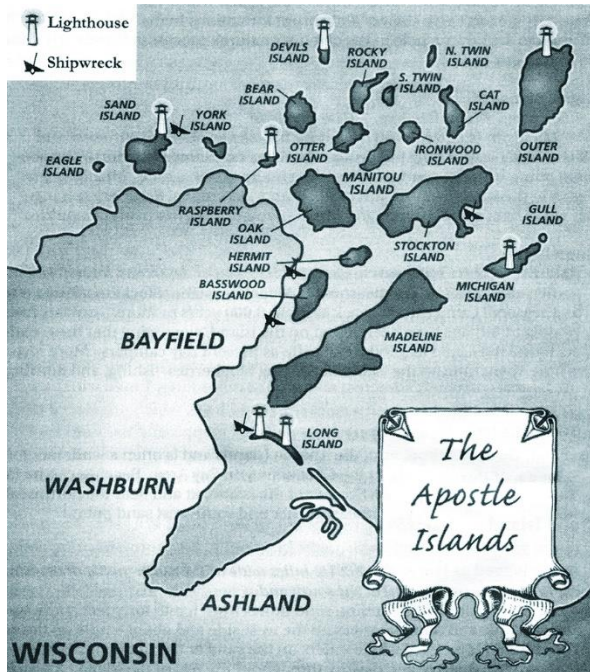
In July of 2016 we went back to Bayfield, and this time we would take a cruise to the Apostle Islands on the northern tip of Wisconsin. There are a lot more boats in the harbor in the summer. By the harbor there is a large garden known as the Dobson Flower Garden. I had to get pictures of that.





The Apostle Islands

Since it was the summer, this would be a good time to take a cruise on Lake Superior to visit the Apostle Islands. These islands were the farthest north you could get into Wisconsin. We ventured out in the evening. I figured the lighting would be at its best this time of the day. Traveling on the boat we saw the sun slowly going down.



My favorite island is one of the farthest north islands which went by the name Devil's Island. It was very rocky looking, and it had an impressive lighthouse.



Munising, Michigan



Lake Superior serves the state of Michigan too. In the upper peninsula of Michigan is a city on the shore of Lake Superior known for its “picture rock” cruises along the edge of Lake Superior. The upper peninsula is also known for its dense forests and many waterfalls. We stayed in Munising.



Munising has great restaurants and a great harbor. Vacations do not stop in the winter in Michigan since Michigan is known for being a “winter wonderland.”

In Munising we would eat at a place called the Dog Patch. The restaurant took on a “Hillbilly” theme.

Common American food was served there such as Pizza,

sandwiches, salad bar, soups, steaks, and of course Lake Superior White Fish. I also wanted to see the in-town lighthouse known as the Munising Range Lighthouse.



The Upper Peninsula Forests & Waterfalls



In the upper peninsula of Michigan there are dense forests and many waterfalls. We went to Michigan to see the fall colors along Lake Superior. We discovered dense forests with moss and mushrooms. We visited many waterfalls, and all this scenic wonderland was just a close drive away from Munising.



We visited several waterfalls. My favorite was the Horseshoe Falls. In the photo I took of the Horseshoe Falls I like the plants on the lower right side that is why I composed the photo the way I did we photographers call this type of balance asymmetrical.



With Miners Falls I was impressed with the huge volume of water cascading down. I captured this with a longer zoom lens so I could get close. The Munising Falls has a fifty-foot drop of cascading water over a sandstone cliff.



Horseshoe Falls

When we took the Picture Rock Cruise along Lake Superior, I'll never forget the beautiful Bridalveil Falls. The cascading water from the Bridalveil Falls that slides down the enormous sandstone cliff is measured at a 45-degree angle.



Miners Falls



Munising Falls



Bridalveil Falls

The Picture Rock Cruise

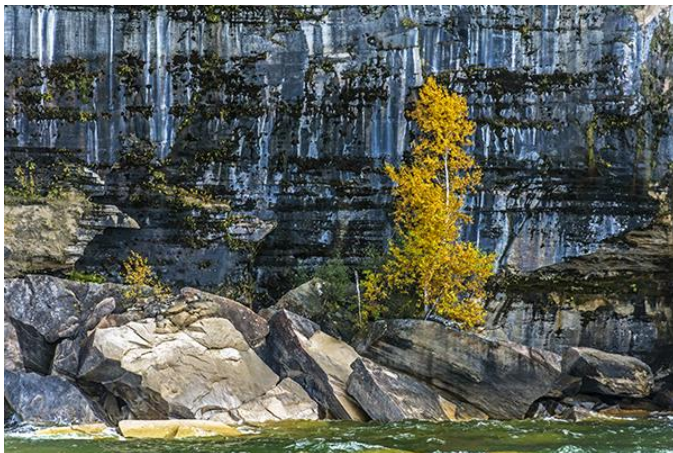


We step into the boat and are ready to take the Lake Superior cruise to view the interesting sandstone formations forming cliffs along the shoreline of Munising and the surrounding area.

I enjoy looking at all the beautiful colorful sandstone rock mixed with some fall color and water and more rock.

These sandstone cliffs get high out here on the Lake Superior shoreline. On this cliff you can see the bright colors of the autumn leaves on the very top of the cliff.

One of the exciting features we saw on the cruise and what the Munising area is known for is the very famous and scenic East Channel Lighthouse.



I'm very glad that I took many views of this lighthouse, because I have sold license rights to various views of the East Channel Lighthouse multiple times. I guess since it was photographed in the fall with all that color it brought in a lot of sales. Of course, to get those

colors to pop out I always use a polarizing filter on my lens to saturate colors. You can saturate color in Photoshop, but you still cannot duplicate the effect of a polarizing filter.



In closing to see more photography of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan go to my website. I also put a couple of power point slide presentations there too.

<http://www.lonniepaulsonphoto.com>

**The End of Part 9
Road Trips**