

## Minneapolis, MN



StoneRidge Golf Club

The Ryder Cup gets underway this weekend at Hazeltine National in the Minneapolis suburb of Chaska. Suffice to say, both the U.S. side, captained by Davis Love III and touting the likes of Jordan Speith, Dustin Johnson, and Phil Mickelson, and the European side, helmed by Darren Clarke and populated by Rory McIlroy, Danny Willett, and Justin Rose among others, will feature golfers capable of putting on a spectacular show.

The thing about watching great golf in person is it makes us want to go out and play a round or two ourselves. If you have the fortune to make the trip to Minnesota for the 41<sup>st</sup> installment of the Cup, or if you can't make it now but want to experience the area at a later date, the good news is there are a number of excellent options in and around the Twin Cities to help you scratch that itch.



StoneRidge Golf Club

**StoneRidge Golf Club** in the town of Stillwater is considered by many to be in the very top tier of public-access facilities in the Twin Cities. In fact Golfweek magazine rates it as the best public course in the region. This links-style layout designed by Bobby Weed features generously proportioned, rolling bent grass fairways, framed by native fescue grass. Though the highway is close at hand, the setting is serene, hearkening back to the farmland property it once was (there's even a barn in play on the eleventh hole). The entire opening nine is visible from the first tee box, so players can get a sense of the rustic nature of the bunkering, and the undulations of the greens. The opener is a downhill, potentially drive-able par-4, setting the tone for the rousing golf experience to come.



Chaska Town Course

Municipally-owned courses are rarely considered must-plays, but the **Chaska Town Course**, not even three miles from the Ryder Cup venue of Hazeltine National, is a notable exception. In fact, the course is held in such high regard it co-hosted both the National Amputee Tournament in 2003 and United States Amateur in 2006 with its more famous (and very private) neighbor. Woods, wetlands and water

features abound, tricky green surrounds add intrigue and difficulty to pitching and chipping, and overall this is a delightfully bucolic golf experience. This Arthur Hills design is capacious in scope. Most courses are laid upon 150 acres, but the Chaska Town Course is nearly twice that size, sprawling over 285 acres of oak groves, open prairie and marshlands.



Keller Golf Course

Finally, [Keller Golf Course](#) in the town of Maplewood offers an antiquity not found in the other recommendations. (Both StoneRidge and the Chaska Town Course are less than twenty years old.) Dating from 1929, this municipal facility twice hosted the PGA Championship, and even a Western Open captured by Sam Snead. It has a reputation for some of the best par-3 holes in the area, including the daunting sixth, stretching more than 220 yards in length. The course was shut down in October 2012 for major renovations, so all of the greens and bunkers could be brought up to modern standards. It reopened to fine reviews in July 2014, and has reclaimed its position as one of the best (and certainly most historic) public venues in the Twin Cities.

Minneapolis doesn't have the overt culinary reputation compared to places like New York, San Francisco or New Orleans, but there are loads of exceptional eateries. Among the notable might be [Lola's Lakehouse](#) in Waconia, with a great lake setting and outstanding food. Stone-fired pizza is always popular, but seafood abounds, including

specialties like lobster-and-shrimp pie, a cast iron seafood stewpot, Chilean sea bass, diver scallops and many more. [The Strip Club](#) in St. Paul is another choice of the cognoscenti. Cozy space, small plates, and fresh food are the watchwords at this unique eatery. Grass-fed beef is one of their calling cards, along with artisanal cocktails. It's probably not the best choice for the non-carnivores among us, particularly as the menu clearly states, "Vegetarians regarded with benevolent amusement."

Lastly, there must be a brief mention of a highly unusual bistro called [Betty Danger's Country Club](#). Billing themselves as "a country club for the 99%," they offer a unique array of 'Mexhampton' food, (IE—inspired by Mexico and the posh Hamptons of Long Island.) Guacamole, fried calamari and enchiladas are among the favorites, as is their on-site miniature golf course and striking views of the city skyline. Suffice it to say eateries like this are the exception, not the norm.