

# GP Minneapolis: A guide to traveling in the western Twin City

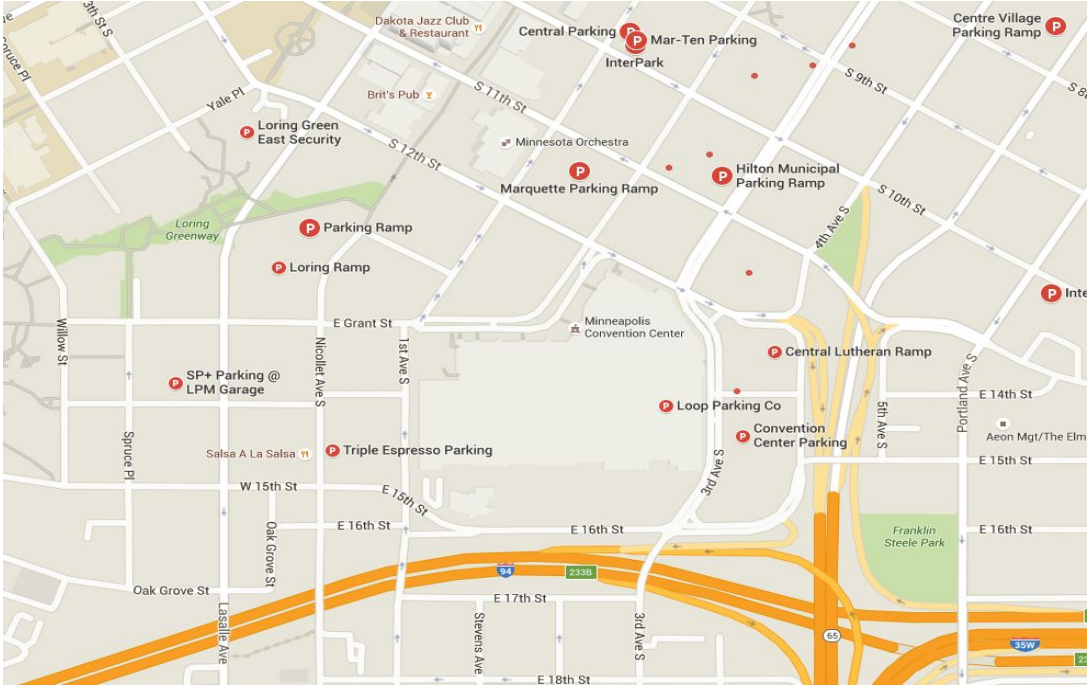
## The City -

Minneapolis is a wonderful city with a great deal of options for entertainment, nightlife, and good food. Nearly everything is within walking distance of the convention center, although for some of the further out things there are other options for transportation.

Weather in Minnesota is notoriously unpredictable, but at the end of May we should be in for some fairly nice weather. The predicted temperatures for May/June are mid 50s to low 70s based on past averages. Given the wide possibilities, it is important to check in the week before the trip and get a better idea for how well dressed you will need to be. But hey, at least you won't need snow boots!...\*ahem\*

## The Venue -

The Minneapolis Convention Center is located at the heart of downtown Minneapolis just a couple blocks from the Nicollet Mall. Parking around the convention center comes in a wide array of options. See map below for lots available for parking. Typical downtown parking is anywhere between 10-20\$ for the day during event time. If it is available the east lot on 3rd Ave is by far the best of the options as it is the closest lot to the side of the building that the GP will be taking place in.



There is also street parking available on many Minneapolis streets, but per usual be aware of differing timing restrictions as they may change from street to street.

## Getting Here -

If you are planning on flying to the Grand Prix, MSP International Airport is your go to as the only commercial airport in the city. MSP is a Delta hub, so Delta flights from just about anywhere are fairly easy to find coming in.

As far as transportation from the airport, there are several options. A couple of these are cheap and some of them not so cheap.

**Taxi** - Because of where the airport is in relation to downtown, taking a taxi can be prohibitively expensive (~\$40-\$50+). This is a reasonable option if you have a group of people willing to split the fare.

**Uber** - Uber does operate in the MSP/STP area and as with any taxi/car service rates that range from reasonable to outrageous, recommended if you have a group to split. Currently the only Uber service from MSP is Uber Black. It is cheaper to hit up the light rail and take it downtown to one of the several downtown stops and walk or Uber from there. See details on the light rail system below.

**Light Rail** - This option is likely the best option for most individuals coming into the city. The light rail has a station at the airport and you can ride that all the way downtown for \$1.75 during normal traffic and \$2.75 during rush times. The ride on the Blue Line is around 30 min from the airport, which is both a huge money and time saver in the grand scheme of things. There are 4 downtown stations for the light rail. Nicollet Mall, and Gov't Plaza are the 2 closest to the venue both being about 7 blocks from the Convention Center. Both US Bank Plaza and Target Field are close enough to be mentioned but I would recommend expecting to take a short Uber from either of these stations to the venue or your hotel as they are a bit of a trek.

## Lodging/Hotel -

Prices listed are the refundable rates at the relevant hotels. Lower prices are possible if you pay up front.

**Hyatt Regency** - (~\$209 / night) - The Hyatt is one of the closest hotels in the area, being only a couple blocks from the convention center right on Nicollet Mall. One of the spicier options by a fair margin.

**Millennium Hotel** - (~\$149/night) - The Millennium Hotel is kiddy corner from the convention center making this a very convenient option if you have other people to split a room.

**Hilton Garden Inn** - (~\$149/night) - The Hilton Garden Inn is located on the east side of the convention center less than a block away. Once again a great hotel for convenience.

**Hilton Minneapolis** - (~\$199/night) - 2 blocks away from the convention center and priced similarly to the Regency.

**DoubleTree Suites Minneapolis** - (~\$129/night) - Also ~2 blocks from the convention center this is a slightly more affordable option than the others listed.

This section could go on into eternity due to the number of hotels within the immediate area around the convention center. A search of Minneapolis hotels on Google Maps will produce a more comprehensive list of options in the broader downtown area.

**PSA** - Hotwire is a good tool for downtown Minneapolis as long as you can pay up front for your room. Many of the hotels have better rates that are much better on there. Select the "Downtown Minneapolis" area when searching and you will get hotels in the convention center area. It is recommended that if you use hotwire to book your hotel, you have your own means of transportation, as it will occasionally book you out of walking distance of the location you are looking for.

## Food/Drinks -

Walking distance of the venue there are many good food options, many of them on the Nicollet Mall . This is by no means an exhaustive list of restaurants and eateries in the MSP downtown area. There are huge numbers of good places to go in the downtown area, all of which are fantastic. If you have questions about where to go or what's good feel free to contact one of the MSP local judges and they can rant and rave about their favorite options to you.

**Brit's Pub (\$)** - Reasonably priced food and drink within 3 blocks of the convention center in a good pub atmosphere. (Highly recommended while you are here).

**Salsa la Salsa (\$\$)** - One block off the west end of the convention center, this place is a good option for good Mexican food. Not terribly priced but also not the cheapest place to go either.

**Jerusalem's (\$\$)** - Middle Eastern Food just southwest of the convention center. Vegetarian friendly.

**Muffin Top (\$)** - In the same block as Salsa la Salsa this is great little coffee shop. Good for breakfast or just a pick me up in the middle of the day.

**Manny's Steakhouse (\$\$\$)** - If you hate your money and love good steak, this is the place to go. If you think you might want to go here, consider getting a reservation as it is very popular. 5 blocks from convention center

**Butcher and the Boar (\$\$\$)** - Another I hate money but love good food option is the Butcher and the Boar. As Rob McKenzie puts it "They are absurd good".

**Fogo de Chao (\$\$)** - Brazilian steakhouse . Infinite meat on swords...vegetarians beware. 8 blocks walking. If you don't feel up to that, it's probably 5\$ for an Uber driver to come drive you.

**Mall of 'Murica (\$-\$\$\$)**- If you have the time some night after a shift or on an extra day while you are here, there a great number of options including Bubba Gump, Benihana's, and several other restaurants. Of course while you are there you can go shopping at one of the several hundred shops they have.

## Entertainment -

**Walker Art Center/Sculpture Garden (Free/\$)** - 20 minute walk from the convention center. If you like good local art, the garden is fun to take a walk around while you are in the area. The Walker also has exhibits and you can pay \$14 (students are \$9) to get inside to see them.

**Target Field** - If you come into town early, the Twins are playing the Kansas City Royals on the Wednesday before the event. You can get tickets at [twins.mlb.com/Tickets](http://twins.mlb.com/Tickets)

**Orpheum** - Book of Mormon is playing over the weekend of the Grand Prix and is a fantastic show. If you have a free evening or are in town early/late due to the holiday you can go see this show. Tickets are available at [orpheum.theatreminneapolis.com](http://orpheum.theatreminneapolis.com)

**Science Museum** - A 45-60 minute ride via public transit can land you in front of the Science Museum of Minnesota . Good for an entertaining time, family friendly.

## Local Game Shops

**Dreamers Vault Games** (Burnsville, St Louis Park, Minneapolis) Brett Schoppert

**Universe Games** (Uptown Minneapolis) Leon Henderson, Dan Milavitz

**Mead Hall comics and Games** (Minneapolis) Zach Rivers, April King

**Tower Games** (Minneapolis), Brenden Weiskotten

**Good Games N More** (Inver Grove Heights) current contact unknown

**Phantasy Hobbies** (Shakopee) Mike Combs, Brandon Arsenault

**Air Traffic** (Maple Grove) Mike Combs, Leon Henderson, Peter Gilbertson

**Fantasy Flight Games Center** (Roseville) Brenden Weiskotten

**The Source Comics and Games** (Roseville) ?

**Level Up Games** (S St Paul) Chad Divine

## **Other Questions**

If you have any other questions that are not answered in this guide feel free to contact a local judge for information about the area. Please do not troll the local contacts. It is suggested that you reach out by email first before calling any of the individuals below. It will make sure they know you are trying to get in contact with them so they actually answer the call from {what area code is that?}.

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