

BY SARAH JOHNSON



Harmony, Minn.

“Let’s have harmony here!” This remark at a contentious meeting of settlers in the late-1800s led to the naming of small-town Harmony, a stone’s throw from the Iowa border. During its early years, the town actually moved a half-mile closer to the Southern Minnesota Railroad.

At Trailhead Park, located at the terminus of the 60-mile Harmony-Preston State Bike Trail, are six life-size wooden statues that commemorate the men who traveled America’s rails. Today, you can reach Harmony the same way by paved bike path, which also wheels through the nearby towns of Preston, Lanesboro, Fountain, Peterson and Rushford.

Distance from the Twin Cities:

130 miles

What to Do

At Niagara Cave, located about five miles south of Harmony, you’ll descend 100 steps into a sinkhole and walk approximately a half-mile through an underground labyrinth while discovering a 60-foot waterfall and a crystal wedding chapel. Look up to see the exposed rock stretching as far as the eye can see, and heed the

plea of the National Cave Association sign on the wall: “Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, kill nothing but time.”

Where to Eat

As you gaze down Harmony’s Main Street, lined with alternating American and Minnesota flags hanging from streetlights, you’ll notice a redbrick building with a green awning. It’s home to On the Crunchy Side, a pub-style

eatory serving a variety of items, including delicious chili.

Where to Stay

The Asahi Loft, a Japanese-style vacation rental just blocks off Main Street, provides a convenient respite complete with a deck and full kitchen.

While You’re There

Check out the one-screen Jem Theatre, the only movie theater in Fillmore County,

boasting past lives as an opera house and bowling alley. Popcorn lovers beware: This snack will be topped with real butter.

For more information on Harmony, visit harmony.mn.us. For travel-planning assistance, contact your local AAA Travel agent or AAA.com/travel.

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