



Minneapolis & Tours Blog

A friendship between the cities of Minneapolis & Tours

Entre Amis – Tours Delegation Visits Minneapolis

Posted on [August 5, 2016](#) by [Sarah Johnson](#)



The Tours delegation gets lined up to participate in the Minneapolis Aquatennial Parade

In July, an eleven person delegation from Tours, France visited Minneapolis for an introduction to the cultural and economic fabric of our community and a celebration of our 25th anniversary as sister cities. They braved a near record heat wave – temperatures soared into the 90s, accompanied by the stifling humidity Minnesotans complain about almost as much as the wind chill in the winter. But the bonds of friendship reignited or established during their weeklong visit were not dampened by the weather.

On the cultural front, they cheered on the Twins at Target Field (and were given that most American of souvenirs, a baseball cap), were treated to a sneak peak of the newest addition to Minneapolis (U.S. Bank Stadium) and visited some of our most renowned museums and theatres – the Weisman, the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Guthrie. Shouts of “Vive la France!” were heard repeatedly when the delegation walked down Hennepin Avenue in the Aquatennial Parade. “What a wonderful parade,” one of the members of the delegation said afterward. “So many people and so well organized!”

During the day, elected officials including Tours Mayor Serge Babary met with Minneapolis representatives to learn about the city's 311 (information) system and riverfront development. Others in the delegation learned about medical technology at the University of Minnesota. And yes, they also stopped at the Mall of America.

When entertaining the French, one question always vexes: how do you feed them? In 2010, the gastronomic meal of the French was added to UNESCO's list of the world's intangible heritage. I'm sure everyone present from Minneapolis and Tours would agree that the French have an unparalleled reputation in the world of culinary excellence. Visitors were treated to some American favorites including steak and salmon at formal dinners along with, of course, hot dogs and bratwurst at the baseball game. Frequently, a toast included wine and "À votre santé," a French saying meaning "to your health."

The history of the United States and France is inextricably linked. Visitors honored the sacrifices of those from Hennepin County in World War I at the Victory Memorial Drive flagpole and monument in north Minneapolis and marveled at the beauty of the Minneapolis park system. They learned about the early French voyageurs at the Minnesota History Center and were also able to go below ground into the archives and see the outfit Prince wore in the movie "Purple Rain."



Visiting Minnehaha Falls in South Minneapolis

One of the main reasons for the visit was also to further the planning process for the 2017 Foire de Tours. The Foire is a regional exhibition similar to our state fair and Minnesota has been invited to be the featured guest for next year's edition. You can learn more about this and how you can get involved by [visiting our web page](#) about it. With our friends from Europe, we shared somber times, such as holding a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Nice attack, and fun times, such as enjoying a panoramic view of the city from the 50th floor of the IDS Center. In our increasingly global world, we look forward to bringing the best of Minnesota to France next year and continuing to build a relationship with those we share a common bond.