

# CHISAGO LAKES

— explore —

## "The Emigrants" Itinerary

Chisago Lakes is often noted for its Scandinavian heritage, especially the world-famous series *The Emigrants*, written by Swedish author Vilhelm Moberg in the 1940s. Moberg's stories follow a fictional family who settled in this region. Read on to experience your own version of "The Emigrants" journey in Chisago Lakes!





# The Emigrants Itinerary

What to Bring:  
Wallet, camera, walking shoes,  
clothing layers, picnic blanket  
and your imagination!

During your "Emigrants" journey you'll visit the towns of Taylors Falls, Shafer, Center City, Lindström, Chisago City and Scandia. For food/drink, hotel and shopping options in each town, please visit [chisagolakes.org](http://chisagolakes.org)!

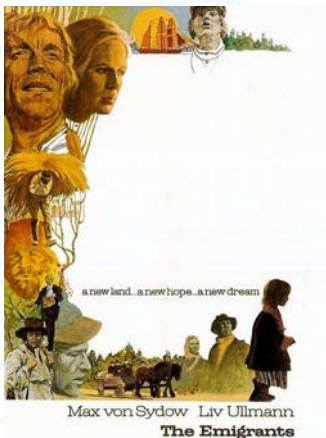
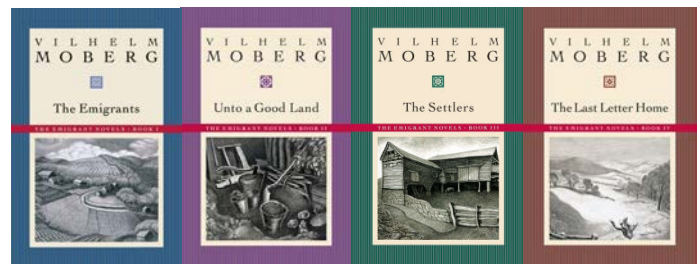


The Chisago Lakes area is proud to promote "The Emigrants" novels by Vilhelm Moberg. When you see this stamp you'll know the location, event or information provided is relative to these historic novels.



## The Novels

Considered one of Sweden's greatest 20th-century writers, Vilhelm Moberg created Karl Oskar and Kristina Nilsson to portray the joys and tragedies of daily life for early Swedish pioneers in America. First published between 1949 and 1959 in Swedish, they are described as a series of novels about poor Swedes who emigrate from Småland, Sweden, in the mid-19th century and make their home in Minnesota. Much like many American students are required to read *Little House on the Prairie*, many Swedish students are required to read *The Emigrants*.



## The Films

In 1971 *The Emigrants* film was released in Sweden, and its sequel *The New Land* in 1972. Both films were produced concurrently and are based on the first two novels.

In 2021, a remake of *The Emigrants* was released in Sweden and has reinvigorated the popularity of the world-famous story.

# The Emigrants Itinerary

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Begin your "Emigrants" journey along the St. Croix River in Taylors Falls, where hundreds of thousands of immigrants landed before traveling west to settle their new homesteads.

Imagine yourself as Karl Oskar or Kristina, taking in the sights and sounds of the river rapids and a bustling village. This area was thick with forests and lakes, very similar to Sweden. The location of what is now called Taylors Falls was created thousands of years ago by glaciers. Native Americans traveled through this area. The Chippewa Indians called this land Kichi Saga, meaning fair and lovely waters. The earliest European populations in the area were fur traders then lumberers. Taylors Falls first saw these settlements in 1838, with most populations from New England, on the Eastern end of the United States.



## Minnesota Interstate Park

Visit world-famous glacial potholes, miles of hiking trails, camping sites, and [Visitor Center](#). The lower boat landing you see today was used by immigrants!



## Taylors Falls Boat Tours

Learn early history of the area during your [tour](#) and view first-hand what the immigrants saw when they arrived by boat. Open May to mid October.

## Angel Hill and Folsom House Historic Site

Explore the National Historic District known as [Angel Hill](#). Explore beautiful homes, the [Folsom House Historic Site](#)\*, historic schoolhouse, railroad depot, Methodist Church, and [Old Jail Bed and Breakfast](#), all built between 1850 and 1900 in the traditional New England style. Mr. Folsom was influential in the lumbering business and the establishment of Taylors Falls and Chisago County. He owned a great deal of land that immigrants rented, and boarding houses where they lived.

\*Some of these sites are seasonal

While you're exploring Angel Hill, take care to notice the Stone Retaining Walls, built by Swedish immigrants in the Swedish tradition with no mortar.



Continue your trip westward, just as Karl and Kristina would have, with a visit to the [Swedish Emigrant Trailhead](#). 637 1st St, Taylors Falls, MN 55084

This trail travels over 20 miles west, following the "trail" that thousands of immigrants traveled to new homesteads in Minnesota. Then drive west on County Rd. 82 from Taylors Falls towards Center City (7 mi/11.3 km). As you drive you'll see old farms and barns, and beautiful scenery.



# The Emigrants Itinerary

On your way to Center City you'll pass through Shafer, Sister-City to Nöbbele, Sweden.

This was a farming community, and at one time a hub for growing potatoes. The town was named after a transient farm worker, Jacob Shafer, who was from Sweden and worked as a hay cutter. Shafer is a stop on the Swedish Immigrant Trail.



### History Highlight:

1869 Lars J. Thorsander House (Torsås Bondegård)  
Today, this home is the [Country Bed & Breakfast](#).

The Thorsanders were immigrants from östra Torsås Parish, Småland. Vilhelm Moberg visited this house in 1948 to deliver a wedding gift to Lois Anderson Barott. The original log home from 1869 is still on property.



The next town on your journey is Center City, Sister-City to Hassela, Sweden. Founded in 1851 on the shores of Kichi-Saga, "The Big Lake," it is the oldest continuously settled Swedish community in Minnesota.

As you enter Center City you'll see a cemetery on your left and Chisago Lakes Lutheran Church. The church was organized May 12, 1854 with a congregation of about 100. This current church was built in 1889. Book a tour for a small fee to visit their [Heritage Room](#).



The obelisk outside the church is Per Berg's Monument that marks the site of the log barn where the first 100 Swedes organized.

Drive past the church on Hwy. 82 and stop at the large red Adirondack chair to take in North Center Lake.

This lake has been called the following over time: Chisago Lake, Kichi Saga, Buried Eagle Lake, and Swede Lake.

- Kichi Saga is a Native American (Ojibwe/Chippewa) word meaning "Fair and Lovely Waters."
- The lake was called "Buried Eagle Lake" by explorer Joseph Nicollet, who explored and mapped this region in the 1830s. It was also known as "Swede Lake" by the first European settlers.
- It was called "Chisago Lake" by W.H.C. Folsom from Taylors Falls.



### History Highlight:

North Center Lake was once a large, connected lake before the railroad split it into five separate lakes. Today, they are known as North Center Lake in Center City, South Center Lake in Center City, North Lindström Lake, South Lindström Lake in Lindström, and Chisago Lake in Chisago City.



# The Emigrants Itinerary

Continue your journey by turning west onto Hwy 8 and drive 1.25 mi (2 km) towards Lindström, Sister-City to Tingsryd, Sweden.

Lindström was founded in 1894 and named after Daniel Lindström, a Swedish immigrant to the area. Turn north onto Olinda Trail and drive 1 mi (1.6 km) to visit Allemansrätt Swedish Heritage Park.



In Swedish, **Allemansrätt** (pronounced "almonds rot") means the right to roam in the wilderness with a "Do Not Disturb or Destroy Nature" philosophy. Allemansrätt Park occupies 125 acres of wilderness, including over 10,000 feet of shoreline on three lakes. Allemansrätt has several miles of trails and showcases unique ecological features such as glacial eskers and ephemeral wetlands, a high quality oak forest, over 100 species of birds, and diverse wildlife.

Two first come, first serve campsites are available on the Anderson Peninsula for \$15/night. Allemansrätt is a "Carry in, Carry out" Park.



Visit the historic 1890s Anderson House and explore 19 interpretive panels, uniquely covering the house's door and windows, that tell the story of the property, the immigrant family that settled there, and the notable person who visited them: the first Swede in Minnesota, Jacob Fahlstrom, visited this site in 1854, when he knocked on the door of John and Maja Lena Anderson. He had not spoken a word of Swedish for forty years and had come to the Chisago Lakes settlement because of some Chippewa friends who traveled far and wide and told him some of "his kind of people" had settled there.



## Coffee Pot Water Tower

Head back to Lake Blvd. then drive west to the heart of Lindstrom. Stop at the 1908 water tower that was converted to a Swedish Coffee Pot in 1992. There is an interpretive panel and public area beneath the water tower. "Välkommen till Lindström...Where the Kaffe's Always On!"



History Highlight:  
The Swedish custom "Fika" is a break from activity during which people drink coffee, eat cakes or other light snacks, and relax with others.

## Per Andersson, Daniel Lindström, Erik Norelius Statues

West end of Lake Blvd, Lindström, MN 55045

In 2013, Lindström revealed four statues to honor Swedish pioneers, created by sculptor Ian Dudley. At this location, Per Andersson, Per's half-brother Daniel Lindström and Erik Norelius, all from Hassela, Sweden. Per Andersson arrived in Taylors Falls on April 23, 1851. **He was a real-life Karl Oskar Nilsson.**





# The Emigrants Itinerary

Travel west on Hwy 8 and drive 3 mi (4.8 km) to Chisago City, Sister-City to Algutsboda, Sweden.

This was a farming community platted in 1857. It became a tourist resort destination after the 1880 railroad was built.



## Vilhelm Moberg statue at Moberg Park

10625 Railroad Ave, Chisago City, MN 55013

Vilhelm Moberg, the famous Swedish author and historian, spent much of 1948 traveling around Chisago Lakes on his bicycle while doing research for his four-part Emigrant novels. The Moberg statue was created by sculpture Ian Dudley and Moberg Park was dedicated September 7, 1996. The park also includes a caboose exhibit, pavilion, drinking fountain, and green space.



History Highlight:  
Swedish King Carl XVI  
and Queen Silvia  
visited the area on  
September 13, 1996.

Head back towards Lindström to see Karl Oskar and Kristina.

12631 Lake Blvd, Lindström, MN 55045

This statue is a replica of the original statue in Karlshamn, Sweden. Karl Oskar Nilsson and his wife Kristina are the main fictitious characters in the Moberg novels. Kristina is looking back to her homeland of Sweden and Karl Oskar is looking forward to the new land, "Amerika!" The boulder is from Duvemåla (Småland) Sweden.

Stop in at 'The Chisago County Press' newspaper office next to the Karl Oskar and Kristina statue to view the desk Vilhelm Moberg used here in Chisago Lakes in 1948.



Insider Tip:  
Home of the award-winning Best Swedish Donut in Minnesota, the Lindström Bakery is a must-stop!

Can you spot the two murals adjacent to main street in Lindström?



1. The Emigrant Mural on the west side of the Lindström Bakery building.
2. The Swedish Flag was painted for Their Majesties' Royal Visit on September 13, 1996.



Enjoy some more of Lindström, America's "Little Sweden."



## Chisago County Historical Society

13112 N 3rd Ave, Lindstrom, MN 55045

Explore hundreds of years of local history at the [Chisago County Historical Society](#)! Part museum, part gift shop, part research library, there is so much to see and learn. CCHS offers rotating exhibits, classes and events.



Insider Tip:  
Try the lemon malted milk balls in the candy section!

## Glädje Gallery

13025 Lake Blvd, Lindström, MN 55045

[Glädje](#) is a regional, fine art gallery dedicated to giving local artists a voice and celebrating the Scandinavian history of the community. A 6,000 square foot gallery full of fine art, handcrafted furniture, pottery, wood crafts, Scandinavian gifts, books, fine jewelry, and more. They offer custom framing and classes, too!



## 1890 Gustaf Anderson House - Gustaf's on Main Eatery

13045 Lake Blvd, Lindström, MN 55045

Visit the historic home of Gustaf Anderson while choosing from a variety of breakfast, lunch and ice cream options! Gustaf came from Stockholm in 1864. He participated in the Montana Gold Rush and struck it rich! He was known as "Guldgubben" (The Old Gold Man).



## Head south out of Lindström on Olinda Trail to visit the "Karl Oskar House" (Nya Duvemåla).

29061 Glader Boulevard, Lindström, MN 55045

Find a parking spot then explore the Karl Oskar House and surrounding area. Swedish immigrant Carl Linn built this home in 1854, and it became the inspiration for the Minnesota home of the Karl Oskar family in Swedish author Vilhelm Moberg's series *The Emigrants*. The house and books became synonymous with one another, and the Linn family farmhouse was moved from its original site 1/4 mile west to this location in 1995 and eventually renamed the Karl Oskar House (see next page)!





# The Emigrants Itinerary



### History Highlight:

The Linn family in front of their farmhouse, now the Karl Oskar House.  
L to R: Luther (with horse), Carl (sitting), Wilhelmina, Lena Kajsa, Maria Charlotta.



The Linn Family: Luther (with horse), Carl, Wilhelmina (Mina), Lena Kajsa, Maria Charlotta (Lotta - married Frank Noren)

Photo courtesy of the Noren family

Photo courtesy of Gary Noren

Next Stop: Find famous characters "buried" at Glader Cemetery

Glader Boulevard, Lindström, MN 55045



Drive or walk the trails 1/8 mile east of Ki-Chi-Saga Park on Glader Blvd. to Glader Cemetery. This is the oldest Swedish pioneer cemetery in Minnesota. **Karl Oskar and Kristina Nilsson from *The Emigrants* series are fictionally buried here!** Park on the roadside then take some time to explore the tombstones while listening to the sounds of South Center Lake. Find the Linn tombstone to see the resting place of Lena Kajsa and Carl Linn.

End your "Emigrants" journey 9.6 mi (15 km) south in Scandia, where the first Swedish settlement in Minnesota started during the winter of 1849-1850.

## Gammelgården Museum

20880 Olinda Trail North, Scandia, MN 55073

Meaning "old farm" in Swedish, the [Gammelgården Museum](#) is an open-air museum devoted to preserving, presenting, and promoting Swedish immigrant heritage in the United States. Visit the museum to get a feeling of what life in Minnesota would have been like for Karl Oskar and Kristina. Don't miss the "Butik" gift shop, featuring Scandinavian gifts and treats!



Looking for other Minnesota towns with strong Swedish heritage?

- Almelund
- Mora
- Waconia



Thanks for visiting!

Come back and see us in Chisago Lakes soon → Find more itineraries at [chisagolakes.org](http://chisagolakes.org).