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# The Bemidji Pioneer

Wednesday, November 27, 2019

All of this and more at [bemidjipioneer.com](http://bemidjipioneer.com)

TRIP ON A TANKFUL

## AN ELEGANT TRIP THROUGH TIME



Photos by Bria Barton | Bemidji Pioneer

The Palace Car at the Whistle Stop B&B was built in 1909 and was used as a dining car by the Northern Pacific Railway until the 1960s. After its retirement, the car served as a storage shed until its roof gave way.

### Whistle Stop Bed and Breakfast calls to days past

New York Mills, Minn. Just as the luxury airbuses of Emirates and the self-driving cars of Tesla embody the extravagance of travel today, it was an illustrious trans-European train that defined the golden era of rail travel nearly a century ago. Along the rails fusing Paris to Constantinople, passengers cruised in the lap of luxury — tranquil, pampered days turned into glamorous, pampered evenings — while mingling within ornate carriages trundling across the landscape of Europe. A name synonymous with high-end travel, the famed Orient Express still arouses a sense of intrigue and romanticism years after the completion of its reign.



BRIA BARTON



Each train car at the Whistle Stop B&B in New York Mills has been restored to former glory and remodeled as guest rooms. Every car is painted a distinctive color to set it apart from the others.

WHISTLE STOP: Page A11



File photo

Americans take in 3,000 to 4,500 calories celebrating Thanksgiving, according to estimates by the Calorie Control Council.

### Thanksgiving calories are easier to consume than to burn off

By Frank Lee  
 Forum News Service  
**BRAINERD** — With Thanksgiving Day just days away, maybe it wouldn't be a bad idea to start working out now in anticipation of the national holiday known for overeating.

As Americans traditionally overindulge on the festive fixings and desserts, it's a safe bet the turkey won't be the only one feeling stuffed Thursday, Nov. 28.

"I just don't think they think about strategies to try to decrease their intake simply because it's a feast, and people don't really stop and think ahead of time of what their plan is going to be," said Mary Ambroz, a registered dietitian with Essentia Health in Brainerd. "It's hard not to overeat on holidays."

Minnesota is the No. 1 producer of turkeys in the United States, raising 45 million birds annually, according to the state Department of Agriculture. Founding Father Benjamin Franklin even once advocated the turkey to represent the fledgling nation instead of the bald eagle.

Americans take in 3,000 to 4,500 calories celebrating Thanksgiving, according to estimates by the Calo-

#### CALORIES IN THE THANKSGIVING CLASSICS, PER SERVING

- ▶ Mashed potatoes: 400 calories — lots of butter and cream.
- ▶ Green bean casserole: 500 calories — cream and creamy canned soup mixes.
- ▶ Sweet potato casserole with marshmallows — 460 calories, loads of butter and sugar.
- ▶ Meaty stuffing: 425 calories — fatty meats and too much butter.
- ▶ Creamy soups: 250-350 calories — large doses of cream.
- ▶ Apple pie: 475 calories — large portions and a high-fat crust.
- ▶ Pumpkin pie: 400 calories — large portions and a high-fat crust.

Source: Food Network.

rie Control Council, an international association representing the low- and reduced-calorie food and beverage industry.

#### Thanksgiving calories

Depending on age, weight and gender, most people should have between 1,600 and 2,800 calories daily, according to a Consumer Reports dish-by-dish guide to eating healthier.

CALORIES: Page A10

## Bigger, brighter Night We Light

More events added for annual event

By Annalise Braught  
 abraught@bemidjipioneer.com  
**BEMIDJI** — This year's Night We Light celebration will be a little bit bigger and a whole lot brighter. Festivities will kick off with Santa's Workshop events at 11 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 29 and will culminate with the First City of Lights Parade, set to kick off at 6 p.m. downtown. Events will continue at multiple locations on Saturday. Santa's Workshop will be held from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 29 and from 10 a.m. to 2

p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 30, at Paul Bunyan Park and the Tourist Information Center, 300 Bemidji Ave. N. Santa's workshop will be closed during the parade, but will reopen soon afterward.

There will be an opportunity to take photos with Santa and write him a letter, along with a chance to make some crafts and eat some treats. Buddy the Elf will also be making an appearance throughout the day each day.

Window display voting will begin Friday, there will be a ballot box at the Tourist Information Center. A panel of judges will award the grand champion for the best window display downtown. Maps for the Tour of Homes will also be available, listing all the best Christmas light displays in

and around Bemidji.

New this year, there will be two Pop-Up Christmas Marketplace events on Friday and Saturday. Hill's Country Greenhouse will be set up at the Tourist Information Center from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, selling fresh-cut Christmas trees, wreaths and more. Natures Edge Garden Center and Nursery will be set up at the Sanford Center on Saturday during the Christmas on Ice event to be held from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

"We are trying to build up the experience for everyone, so they can see Santa, eat some treats, enjoy the parade, see the lights, get their Christmas tree, and make family traditions and memories all together," Bemidji Jaycees President Josh Peterson said.



Jillian Gansdery | Bemidji Pioneer

Brittany Batchelder hands out candy during last year's Night We Light Parade in downtown Bemidji.

The First City of Lights parade will start at 6 p.m. and will travel south along Beltrami Avenue from Eighth Street, turn west on Third Street and end at Irvine Avenue. No parking is allowed along the parade route starting at 5:30 p.m.

LIGHT: Page A10



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**WHISTLE STOP**

From Page A1

Yet while this grandeur is hard to come by nowadays — albeit you can still experience it for a pretty penny — a ride aboard the Whistle Stop Limited in New York Mills offers all the indulgence of bygone rail-riding glory days without breaking the bank.

Here, at the Whistle Stop Bed and Breakfast, guests are transported to a simpler — and arguably more fashionable — time upon staying in one of the inn's four remodeled antique train cars dubbed the Whistle Stop Limited.

Salvaged and restored to their previous vintage elegance, the cars — which range from a former day coach to a dining car — are equipped with modern amenities for additional guest comfort. From mini fridges and microwaves to Whirlpool tubs and even a sauna, the contemporary intermingles with tasteful period furnishings and decor.

Perhaps some of the most unique yard ornaments — even for small-town Minnesota — the multicolored fleet occupy the property of an imposing white Victorian estate, the nerve center for the train-themed lodging attraction.

And with active rail tracks nearby, there's no question from where the charming theme halls — the occasional blast of a train whistle giving added ambience and authenticity to one's stay.

**All aboard**

I've never been much of a train person. Once



Photos by Bria Barton | Bemidji Pioneer

Each morning at the Whistle Stop B&B, a hot breakfast is delivered in a picnic basket to each guest's train car door. On this particular day, the innkeeper prepared a meal of scrambled eggs, sausage links, croissants with a side of fruity syrup and fresh strawberries and watermelon.

you've battled your way through New York's chaotic Penn Station, strapped yourself into an Amtrak seat for 18-hours and returned awkward pleasantries with a strange seatmate, you quickly realize it's not an experience one hopes to relive.

Yet on a snowy evening in New York Mills, the lull of piano music and the glow of twinkling lights lured me into the warmth of my retro night's stay at the Whistle Stop's green Palace Car.

Immediately, like an encapsulated blast from the past, I was transported to another time — another century — where fine taste was revered over the sterile monotony of today's preferred hotel chains. It soon became apparent that the only traveling train could now do was through time — and to regard it with the likes of Amtrak would be comparing Beethoven

to elevator music.

As I ventured further into the train for closer inspection, I noticed a welcome guide laid upon the antique bed, which revealed the car's rich history: Built in 1909, the Palace Car was formerly a dining car used by the Northern Pacific Railway. But taken out of service in the 1960s, it became a meeting room for railroad workers.

Eventually downgraded to a storage shed, the neglected car was rescued from an existence of perpetual decay by Whistle Stop innkeepers in 1997. It then underwent extensive and detailed remodeling.

Today, nestled among its fellow refurbished brothers, the Palace Car is one of the property's four testaments to the golden era of luxury train travel. And while the 2017 film "Murder on the Orient Express" highlighted the splendor of the period on screen, I'd have to



A stay at the Whistle Stop B&B in New York Mills is like taking a trip back in time to the golden age of train travel. Here, train cars have been remodeled and furnished with tasteful antiques and memorabilia faithful to the bygone era.

argue that the Palace Car does it better — and the contemporary updates don't hurt either.

For instance, the car's complimentary WiFi came in handy when ordering dinner, and a soak in the Whirlpool tub provided supplemental stress relief to an already quaint and relaxing evening.

To stay in one of the cars is to be suspended in a cocoon, the Whistle Stop's website said, and I couldn't agree more: the experience is truly like being removed from the present world. The only reminder of outside existence was the occasional train horn, and although the noise failed to disrupt my sleep, I recommend light sleepers bring earplugs along for their stay.

The novel experience continued well into the morning when a knock at my door signaled breakfast was served.

Delivered in a picnic basket full of surprises, my meal consisted of fluffy scrambled eggs, savory sausage links and warm flaky croissants lightly sprinkled with powdered sugar and accompanied by a miniature sauce boat filled with fruity syrup jam. The dish was finished with an accent of fresh strawberries and watermelon slices.

The basket also contained a pitcher of hot coffee and another filled with orange juice. And to my utter delight, there was also a small glass vase of freshly cut Peruvian lilies. Up until that moment of discovery, I question if I ever fully understood the power of the little details in life.

But upon reflection, a stay at the Whistle Stop is made up of those tiny but meaningful details, and failure to acknowledge them would be a

disservice to the dedicated innkeepers as well as the powerful theme and history they accentuate.

Who can deny attention to detail when guests are treated to specialty-made soap in the shape of a train? Or, even reach for a lowly toothpick and uncover a small porcelain container resembling a locomotive. I'm completely sure a second night's stay would've revealed additional curious delights hidden in plain sight.

Nevertheless, even a single night's sojourn at the Whistle Stop B&B is an unparalleled opportunity to let off steam from the stress of life. One could even go so far as to say you'll be put on the right track and seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Bria Barton is a Travel and Tourism reporter for the Bemidji Pioneer and Forum Communications Co. She can be reached at (218) 333-9778.

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