



Tales of the Road: Highway 61

Cathy Wurzer

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Highway 61 traces approximately 440 miles through Minnesota, from Pigeon Falls at the Canadian border south to La Crescent. Along the way, the road hugs the North Shore, zips through St. Paul, and navigates bluffs along the Mississippi River. While places such as Split Rock Lighthouse or Sugar Loaf Mountain offer well-documented stopping-off points, observant travelers may wonder about historic buildings, abandoned sites, and decaying structures they see along the way.

In this companion book to a new Twin Cities Public Television documentary also called *Tales of the Road* (airing in November 2008), Cathy Wurzer unearths stories about these places and more as she travels down the road and into the past, spotlighting famous and fascinating locations, many of them little remembered today. Learn about bootleggers crossing the St. Croix by ferry or importing hooch from Canada onboard vessels designed in White Bear Lake. Visualize--or maybe even visit--the quaint tourist cabins, supper clubs, and lodges that served tourists who began motoring up the road in the 1920s. Take stock of historic and current industries: Russ Kendall's Smokehouse in Knife River, a rutabaga plant in Willow River, the pottery factory in Red Wing. Each tale is illustrated with historic and current views to show how much--or how little--Highway 61 has changed. Here's one road trip you won't want to miss!

Cathy Wurzer is host of *Morning Edition* on Minnesota Public Radio and cohost of *Almanac* on Twin Cities Public Television. She has been honored with four Emmys for her work on *Almanac*.

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