

## MGFA Pre-Convention Tour - St. Paul's Notorious Past

Baby Face Nelson...Machine Gun Kelly...Kid Caan...Ma Barker...those are the names Americans--especially Minnesotans, St. Paulites in particular--were familiar with during prohibition. Alvin "Creepy" Karpis once said, "if you were looking for a guy you had not seen in a few months, you usually thought of two places: Prison or St. Paul."

As we enter St. Paul, a costumed gangster guide will hi-jack our motorcoach at the Caves and take us on a gangster riding tour. Our guide is the embodiment of the "untouchables" that busted kegs and hustled thugs off to the hoosegow during the days of prohibition. This was an era when things were not always what they seemed...St. Paul was more than a quiet, picturesque river town! We will drive by the place where one local gangster blew up a rival, see where Dillinger had a shoot-out with St. Paul police and pass the former most-exclusive speakeasy in the area!

This city tour with a unique twist will include a drive by of the Landmark Center. Once the site of famous gangster trials (J. Edgar Hoover personally escorted public enemy #1, Al Karpis, through the doors for his trial), the restored federal courts building still commands respect. Originally conceived as a post office, custom house, and courthouse, the building eventually became the headquarters for all federal offices in the upper Midwest. This grand edifice has been honored with numerous awards for its architectural genius.

And finally, we will stop at the Wabasha Street Caves. The "Caves" were dug in the early 1800s out of a layer of rock known as St. Peter Sandstone. The sand which forms this rock was once the beach of a warm inland sea, over 400 million years ago. During our cold Minnesota winters, it is reassuring to see this remnant of a tropical Minnesota. In the 1800s, a mushroom-growing business was established in the Caves, then a nightclub and restaurant was opened in the 1930s; if you listen carefully, you can still hear bands such as the Dorsey Brothers and Cab Calloway playing in the stage area with the adjoining dance floor. In addition to these two areas, there is also a fireplace area with bullet holes from the 1930's gangsters in the mantle to remind us of a rowdier era. St. Paul served as a cooling-off area for gangsters, and you'll even see a "Gangster Gallery" to show off some of the Caves' more notorious past visitors.

Light Hors d'oeuvres and beverages to follow at Buca di Beppo.

**Timing:** 2:45 p.m. departure, hotel north entrance – return approx. 7:00 p.m.

**Price:** \$65.00 per person

**Includes:** Deluxe transportation/driver, metroConnections escort, Gangster Tour guide, hi-jacking, Caves tour, Buca reception, server gratuity and applicable tax.

