MSP Cultural Spotlights

Local food spots to explore

Spaces for events & connection

Tools to stay updated

WINTER 2019
Through this guide, the BE MSP team aims to shine a spotlight on existing culturally-relevant spaces, places and amenities across MSP. It is our hope that by doing so, individuals will be able to create new connections in spaces that celebrate and elevate diverse cultures.

This resource is an entry-point; a snapshot created by people of color for people of color of all different communities. We know there are many more assets across the region that serve our communities of color. Hopefully, this resource will help you find what speaks to you and feels relevant to your professional and personal life.

The BE MSP team and our partners gathered this content from diverse communities across MSP. We want to hear from you, too. We welcome more suggestions and hope this resource can grow and evolve as an annual guide.

Where do you go for authentic cultural experiences? What is your favorite place to make personal connections? Where do you go to find and build community?

Share your ideas and examples at bemsp@makeitmsp.org

Links to all featured assets & amenities are located at the back of this resource!
Coming together over food is a powerful way to build community, unwind, and enjoy each other’s company. Likewise, culinary traditions have long been an important way to celebrate families and communities during significant milestones. This section features several food options to check out with your friends or coworkers as you explore culinary experiences across MSP.

**Hubs**

**Mercado Central**

The Mercado Central market features Mexican and Central American food and is a great place to experience these cultural food traditions in a casual environment. Founded by community with a goal of advancing and empowering Latinx business owners, this marketplace supports authentic Mexican and Central American food vendors and retail spaces.

**Community Connections:**

Connect to MSP’s Latinx community with other individuals and groups from across the region.

**When to Go:**

Spend a morning buying tamales at La Loma or visit over lunch when the market bustles with patrons purchasing food at different stands.

**Midtown Global Market**

With 45+ businesses, restaurants and shops, the public Midtown Global Market is a laid-back, family-friendly collection of shops featuring food, jewelry, clothing and home items from around the world.

**Community Connections:**

Connect to MSP’s global community with various offerings from around the world.

**When to Go:**

Check out their calendar for cultural events throughout the year.
**Food**

**Gandhi Mahal**
Gandhi Mahal is a restaurant where people can come together to enjoy authentic Bangladeshi and Indian cuisine.

**Why Go:**
Enjoy Bangladeshi and Indian food that is high-quality, healthy, and locally-sourced.

**Community Connections:**
Connect to people from all backgrounds over the specific influences of Bangladeshi and Indian cultures.

**When to Go:**
Pile your plate at the daily all-you-can-eat lunch buffet or visit in the evening for a peaceful dinner.

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**Breaking Bread**
Breaking Bread’s restaurant service is temporarily halted, but catering and community event spaces exist to offer opportunities to enjoy soul food.

**Community Connections:**
Gather in the North Minneapolis community around soul food from African American inspirations.

**Type of Food:**
Comfort food

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**Cocina Latina**
Enjoy Latin American recipes in an environment where Spanish is frequently spoken.

**Type of Food:**
Latin American

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It’s important to have spaces where you can connect with others and build community. Doing so can help to break away from feelings of isolation, inspire creativity and expression, and serve as a reminder that it’s important to prioritize social connections beyond the confines of the workplace.

Arts & Creative

Spaces featuring artists and creatives of color

Loft Literary Center

As a gathering space with a mission to advance the artistic development of writers, the Loft Literary Center fosters a thriving literary community and inspires passion for literature.

What Our Peers are Saying:

“They do a great job of bringing in writers from around the country for readings as well as highlighting the voices of local artists of color. They also have course offerings specifically catered for people of color at all writing levels.”

When to Go:

Check out their calendar for more details on special programming as well as frequent readings throughout the week and on the weekend.
**Space**

**Penumbra Theatre**

The Penumbra Theatre provides a performance space where you can experience captivating shows and performances from a wide breadth of black actors and storytellers. Shows run throughout the year including seasonal favorites like *Black Nativity*.

_What Our Peers are Saying:_

“The Penumbra Theatre is a great place to see thought-provoking, and relevant theater lifting up the lives and stories of the African American experience.”

**Ricardo Levins Morales Art Studio**

Ricardo Levins Morales’ studio showcases his powerful art telling the story of struggle and solidarity across social justice movements.

_Why Go:_

*Ricardo Levins Morales’ art invites us to experience laughter, hope, love and anger; moving us towards a better world.* In addition to Ricardo Morales, you will find other artists, activists and community members in this space.
The Minneapolis American Indian Center focuses on serving MSP’s large and tribally diverse urban Native population - a population numbering well over 35,000.

**What You Will Find:**

The Minneapolis American Indian Center is a community space honoring the art and culture of Indigenous Peoples. Their programs are guided by strong Native values, including preserving and supporting cultural traditions through art as well as youth and inter-generational programs that promote healthy lifestyles.

**When to Go:**

Check out their events calendar to learn more about the many activities year-round including drumming and dancing, powwows, language tables, recreational sports and more.
Hmong Village

Located in the heart of Eastside Saint Paul, Hmong Village is a shopping center with more than 250 vendors.

Why Go:

_Hmong Village is one of the region’s premier places to experience the unique foods, farmers market, goods, and services of Hmong and other Southeast Asian communities._

When to Go:

_Among other events, Hmong Village hosts annual Hmong Town festivals and a July 4th Hmong Freedom Celebration._

Minneapolis Urban League

The Minneapolis Urban League is a community service organization committed to uplifting the voices of the black community with engagement, employment, and education opportunities and services.

Why Go:

_Their Young Professionals Chapter offers a unique opportunity to connect with individuals - strong-minded professionals who love to advocate, empower, and serve the community - who share a common passion._

When to Go:

_Attend the general body meeting and social gathering or workshop hosted the last Wednesday of each month. Visit mul.org for more information._
Digital spaces provide opportunities to learn the latest from across the region and get plugged into the many assets here. We encourage people to check out Facebook groups, meetups, and other digital communities to get connected to events and opportunities.

Professional

Digital communities providing and connecting people of color to resources to build professional networks

There are hundreds of local professional groups and organizations across MSP’s network of diverse communities. Learn more about these groups, their focus areas, and events to find the one that best fits your interests.

Get Connected

Join the BE MSP mailing list for updates on social and professional events and opportunities for people of color at makeitmsp.org/bemsp

Find a comprehensive list of MSP professional associations and affinity groups for people of color at saintpaulchamber.com/affiliation-partners
Social Platforms

Stay up to date on the latest opportunities and make social connections with these great social accounts:

• Meet other leaders through the Minneapolis Urban League Young Professionals Facebook page - www.facebook.com/MULYoungProfessionals

• Find new networking opportunities through the Twin Cities Professionals of Color Events Facebook group - www.facebook.com/TCPOCEvents

• Connect with LOCUS, a private Facebook group and local community providing space and opportunities by and for POCI - locusmn.org

• Follow Anthony Taylor’s Facebook group for seasonal outdoor activities - www.facebook.com/Major-Taylor-365-MT365-2763886957472

Follow the BE MSP Calendar

Follow the BE MSP calendar of events to stay update on upcoming events - dojour.us/u/makeitmsp
Links & References

Restaurants
- Mercado Central - mimercadocentral.com
- Midtown Global Market - midtownglobalmarket.org
- Breaking Bread - breakingbreadfoods.com
- Cocina Latina - lacocinalatinamn.com
- Gandhi Mahal - gandhimahal.com

Space
- Loft Literary Center - loft.org
- Penumbra Theatre - penumbratheatre.org
- Ricardo Levins Morales Art Studio - rlmartstudio.com
- Minneapolis American Indian Center - maicnet.org
- Hmong Village - hmongvillagemn.com
- Minneapolis Urban League - mul.org

*Images used are from the Make It MSP Flickr account - flickr.com/photos/133938606@N03/albums
*Large food images on pages 3-4 were gathered from Unsplash
WHO WE ARE: BE MSP is a collaborative partnership between the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, the GREATER MSP Partnership and the Minneapolis Regional Chamber with the goal of connecting and retaining professionals of color in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region. The partnership originated as a project of the Make It. MSP. initiative.

WHAT WE DO: We provide professional and social opportunities for people of color to connect to professional and social resources, events and communities.

OUR VISION: Guided by data showing that the MSP region fails to retain professionals of color at the same rate as white professionals, BE MSP’s vision is to make MSP a region where all can thrive by providing an inclusive, supportive professional and community environment.

Thank you!

Thank you to the individuals and organizations who provided feedback and contributed to this resource.

To share more examples of culturally-relevant spaces, places and amenities, please send your thoughts to bemsp@makeitmsp.org